An Unexpected Revelation

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Summary

Marinette ends up accidentally finding out Adrien is Cat Noir. How will that change things for them?

For the better, of course!

Notes

Hi everyone! So I've been totally obsessed with this amazing show ever since I started watching it about a month ago. I knew I had to write something for it! And I've seen a lot of fics where Adrien finds out Marinette's identity first, so I wanted to do something different. This story is going to be mostly fluff with smut thrown in in later chapters (hence the Mature rating), with just a smidgen of actual plot. xD I also decided to set the story when everyone is 18, because I couldn't bring myself to write about teens getting down and dirty, even fictional ones. =P A heads up: I watched the English version, since I couldn't find a good source for the original French with subtitles, so the names and personalities of the characters are based off of the dub. This will also start out as predominantly LadyNoir, but eventually all parts of the Love Square will make an appearance. :) I'm already working on chapter ten of this baby, so I figured I might as well get off my lazy butt and post the first chapter already! So here
goes!
Chapter 1

It had started out innocently enough.

Usually, Cat Noir and Ladybug would patrol Paris together. But as time wore on, they found themselves becoming more bogged down with homework and other commitments. And Hawk Moth didn’t seem to be letting up his akuma attacks any time soon, despite the weeks turning to months and the months turning to years, so Paris’s superhero duo ended up making a schedule where some nights they would take turns doing rounds by themselves.

So on nights where she had to patrol alone, Marinette eventually found herself often stopping by Alya’s house to watch her friend through the window. More often then not she was glued to her phone, updating the Ladyblog. Marinette made sure she stayed in the shadows, lest she be spotted and have Alya chasing after Ladybug for another exclusive interview.

Then she started to add Nino’s house to her list of places to stop by on her route. He was usually blasting music, working on his next set. He also spent a lot of time playing video games too. Of course, all the practice in the world wouldn’t get him to Max’s level. Or to her level, she thought with a giggle.

After a couple of months, she played around with the idea of putting the Agreste Mansion on her list of homes to swing by. Imagine it: being able to see Adrien when he was alone, being totally himself. His truest likes and dislikes. His little quirks. The mere idea made her giddy and a blush nearly as red as her suit colored her cheeks.

It took some time to build up the courage to even entertain the idea. When she was at home, she would talk it over with Tikki at length (who was honestly probably tired of hearing about it, Marinette thought distractedly) who had enthusiastically told her to give it a go. Maybe this would help build up her confidence! If she could get more comfortable with watching him from afar, then it should help her be able to get closer to him at school.

Really, what harm could it do, right?

So the first night she was going to attempt to swing by, she sat on a rooftop a couple blocks away just steadying her breathing. Marinette scrunched her eyes shut and shook her head to try and settle down. She was Ladybug, damnit! Not-scared-of-anything Ladybug! ‘Stop letting the nerves get the best of you, you big wimp,’ She told herself as she stood up. ‘You’re not a little girl. You’re 18 and you’ve been a superhero for years now to boot. You can do this!’

Swallowing hard, Marinette threw her yo-yo into the distance and swung into the night. Closer and closer to the Mansion with every movement. She looked for the window she new to be Adrien’s room…and her shoulders sagged in disappointment.

The lights were out.

‘Maybe he’s not home?’ She wondered, latching her yo-yo onto a higher part of the house to allow herself to hang in front of the window. Marinette peered inside and saw no one, Adrien’s room looking just as she remembered it from the last time she had breezed in as Ladybug. The only lights on were the blinking lights signaling power travelling to his large computer. The window was open a few inches to let in fresh air, and she could faintly hear the hum of the expensive machine.

Marinette chuckled in spite of herself. All that nervousness for nothing.
She was about to leave when she made out the sound of keys in the doorknob break the silence. Panicking, the superhero zipped herself higher on her string so she was hanging just above his wall of windows. She pulled up her legs tightly to her belly to be sure she wouldn’t be seen as the door creaked open and the lights went on, spilling out from the window below her. ‘Abort, abort, abort!’ Marinette’s brain screamed at her, but she was frozen.

“Finally…” Adrien’s voice reached her ears and she heard the door shut. “All locked up. You can come out now, Plagg.”

“It’s about time!” Another voice shouted. An unfamiliar voice. “I’m starving!”

“You’re always starving.” Adrien groaned and she could hear his footsteps grow closer to the windows. “Why do you have to be obsessed with such disgusting-smelling cheese? Is that a normal kwami thing?” Marinette’s heart stopped. Did he just say kwami?!

“Well we each have our own favorite food. So that means I’m special. You’re lucky to have one as wonderful as me.”

“Lucky, huh. I bet Ladybug’s kwami likes normal food.”

“Tikki likes sweets, especially cookies. That’s also why she adores me, because I’m sweet like dark chocolate.”

“Right. Sure.”

“Hey! Tikki and I have been together for thousands of years. Always have been. I love her because she’s caring and thoughtful and adorable. And she loves me because I’m amazing.”

“Uh huh.”

“You’re just jealous because Ladybug doesn’t take your feelings seriously.”

Adrien’s laugh sounded very close to the windows now. “I’ll win her over, you’ll see. I know she’s the one for me. And besides, my Lady can only resist my romantic charm for so long. I can be a patient cat.”

Marinette’s heart had finally started beating again and it was now racing a mile a minute. ‘Adrien can’t actually be…Am I really hearing what I’m hearing?!’

“And until then you can keep spending your lonely nights with that trash you call fanfiction, your weird Ladybug merchandise collection, and your hand.”

“Plagg!” Adrien roared, and Marinette could hear him running away from the windows to chase him.

Now is when she should leave! But she still couldn’t bring herself to move. What if he looked out the windows and saw her swinging off? She couldn’t get caught now!

He must not have caught his kwami because she soon heard a heavy sigh. “You’re an idiot.” Adrien said with as much malice as he could muster, and was met with a snicker. Marinette heard him walk close to the windows again, and her breath caught in her throat. The window slid open all the way, and she saw Adrien’s fingers resting against the windowpane. She could hear him inhale the summer air and begged any powers that be that were listening to keep him from looking up.

“Come on, don’t pout. I doubt Ladybug likes a sore loser.” She heard Plagg sing-song from further
“Can you just go be annoying somewhere else?” Adrien’s hands moved slightly as he must’ve turned to look over his shoulder. “I’m sure there’s more camembert in the kitchen, I told them to buy more.”

“Why didn’t you say that earlier?” Plagg’s voice grew even fainter as she heard him add, “You know where to find me if an Akuma shows up!”

Adrien groaned and Marinette briefly saw the top of his head as he put his forehead in his hands. He stayed like that for a moment, an agonizingly long moment. Then he stepped back and the bluenette allowed herself to breathe once more. The window slid shut beneath her, but she still didn’t let herself move a muscle. The lights stayed on for a good ten more minutes, and Marinette’s arms were starting to ache. But she waited longer still once the lights were out before she felt like she could swing away.

Once she finally made it safely back home, she collapsed onto her bed and stared at the trapdoor in the ceiling. “Spots off.” She whispered, then asked, “Tikki?”

“…Did you know?”

Tikki sighed and sat on Marinette’s stomach. “I did. But you said you wanted to keep your secret identities a secret from one another. When you said you wanted to try vising Adrien’s house, I encouraged you because I wanted to build your confidence around him. I had no idea this would happen. I’m sorry you had to find out before you were ready.”

Marinette was silent for a while, then she looked down at Tikki. “So Adrien Agreste is really Cat Noir.”

“He is.”

“So…since Cat Noir is in love with Ladybug, that means Adrien is too.”

“It does.”

“But I’m Ladybug.”

Tikki giggled. “Yes you are.”

Another period of silence. “That means Adrien…is in love with…me.” Marientte felt herself blush and a small smile tugged at her lips. “Adrien is in love with me.”

“And by the sounds of it, he really has it bad for you.”

Blush darkening, Marinette thought back to the conversation she’d overheard. It did sound that way. It sounded like he even thought about her when he was alone with himself and he would…A shiver crept over her body and Tikki floated off her belly at the sensation. “Yeah…”

“Does that mean you’re not mad you found out his identity, then?”

Marinette chewed her lip. “I don’t know.” She said honestly. “I’m not sure if this will make it easier to be around Adrien and Cat Noir or not.”

Her kwami flew off to the plate of cookies Marinette had left by her computer. “Well you’ll find out
at school tomorrow, I suppose.” She mused, picking up a cookie and taking a big bite.

“School!” Marinette sat straight up, eyes wide. “Oh no…H-How am I supposed to face him tomorrow?!”

Tikki tried not to laugh, crumbs lining on her mouth. “I’m sure you’ll do just fine.”

Panic now filling her brain, Marinette watched Tikki eat for a moment more before forcing herself to change into her PJs. ‘A whole day of school tomorrow…knowing that Adrien is…’ She shivered again as she went back to bed and laid down. She pulled the covers over herself and forced her eyelids shut.

It took a long time before she finally fell asleep.
When Marinette awoke that morning, her stomach was still full of butterflies. She followed the motions of eating breakfast, showering, getting dressed and preparing for school, but her brain was definitely somewhere else.

“I can’t do this.” She said quietly as she grabbed the small purse Tikki would hide out in from her desk.

“Marinette, you’ll be fine,” Tikki assured her, lightly patting her shoulder with a warm smile.

“We’ve been in the same class for years now and I still can’t even properly talk to him.” Massaging her forehead in frustration, Marinette gazed absently through her window. “We’re about to graduate, and yet I still make a fool of myself whenever he’s around.”

“You don’t when he’s Cat Noir.”

“That’s because I didn’t know he was Adrien!”

“Shouldn’t this make it easier to be around him?” Tikki hovered over to look her bonded directly in the eyes. “You’ve been able to trust Cat Noir as your partner since day one. Relax around him, be yourself around him. So you can do that with Adrien too. He’s the same person.”

Sighing, Marinette slipped the strap over her head to rest on her shoulder. “You know I want to be able to tell him how much I love him.”

“That’s because I didn’t know he was Adrien!”

“Adrien doesn’t know Ladybug is Marinette yet. He still thinks that they’re two different people. So he could end up turning me down since he’s in love with ‘someone else’.” The bluenette made quotation marks in the air at the words.

“What if you told him who you are?”

“I don’t know. I always said how we should keep our identities secret. Wouldn’t it seem weird for me to suddenly change now?”

Tikki paused, thinking hard. “Well…what if you try talking to him while you’re being Ladybug? I know you feel more at ease with the mask on.”

That thought hadn’t crossed her mind. “You mean, talk to Adrien as Ladybug? Or talk to Cat Noir?”
“That’s up to you.” Tiki said with a shrug.

“Marinette!” She heard her mother call from below. “You’re going to be late!”

“No again…” Her kwami quickly zipped into her purse as Marinette hurriedly grabbed the rest of her things before scurrying downstairs. She kissed her parents good-bye as she raced through the bakery, then was out the door in a flash and ran all the way to school.

Luck must’ve been on her side today because she managed to burst through the door of her homeroom class before the bell rang. Alya laughed at her disheveled expression and Nino clapped at her entrance. “Safe!” He said with a thumbs-up.

Back in the first year Adrien started attending school, Chloe had demanded her father use his influence to ensure she wasn’t separated from him or Sabrina, and the Mayor had taken that to mean keeping her class exactly the same for the rest of her school career. Needless to say, she hadn’t been impressed when she realized it meant having to put up with some of her more annoying classmates for the next few years (Marinette knew her name to be the top of the list), but Chloe had allowed it for the sake of being able to stay with her best friend and her crush. The situation did have its perks though, as the rest of teens had become a close-knit group from spending so much time together over the years.

“Get up late again?” Alya asked as her best friend slumped into the desk beside her.

“Sort of. I didn’t really sleep well either.” Marinette answered vaguely. She was getting very used to telling her friends parts of the truth.

“Ugh, I know. Finals are coming up way to fast and it’s stressing me out too.” Alya patted her shoulder. “But don’t worry, girl. We’ll help each other study. With obligatory snacks, of course.”

Marinette cracked a smile. “Of course.”

“Hey, I like snacks!” Nino’s ears must’ve honed in on the possibility of food because he was suddenly turned their way with an eager look in his eyes.

Alya rolled her eyes and playfully punched her boyfriend’s shoulder. “Yeah, I know, my fridge gets a lot emptier whenever you come over.”

They kept talking as Marinette watched with a pleased expression. Alya and Nino had been a couple for what, two years now? Three? She couldn’t keep track. She was just glad they made each other happy. That reminded her…

“Where’s Adrien?” She tried to ask casually, noting his empty seat.

“He’s modeling today.” Nino told her. “His old man just won’t let up, even with all the extra school work we keep getting slammed with. Total bummer. I feel bad for him.”

Phew, dodged a bullet there. That should give her several more hours to try and formulate a plan of action before she had to see him again. She hoped, anyway.

“Okay, settle down everyone!” Their teacher shouted over the noise. Everyone quieted down as class got under way, and Marinette tried to pay attention. She really did. But all she could think of was blonde-haired boys with alternating heart-melting smiles and devilishly mischievous grins.

By end of the day, she was fairly sure she had zoned out on most of the important points of each lesson. Sure, she had made some notes, but they already didn’t make any sense to her. She was
sitting on the steps of the school, trying to make heads or tails of them, when Alya sat down beside her. “You were out in space all day,” She joked as she put her hand against Marinette’s forehead, pretending to check for a temperature. “I diagnose another bout of severe Adrien fever.”

“Is it that obvious?” Marinette looked sheepish.

“I’d be a terrible best friend if I couldn’t tell.” Alya gave her a knowing look. “Now I know you must’ve missed being able to see him today, but you really should try and focus. You can borrow my notes so you don’t have to use…those…” She gestured to the notebook in Marinette’s lap, eyes scanning over the page. “Really, girl? I can’t even read some of this, there’s parts that are just scribbles where words should be.”

Marinette’s cheeks warmed in embarrassment. “Oops.”

Alya closed her friend’s notebook. “I’ll type up my notes from today and email them to you, don’t worry. I’m such a lifesaver.” She gave a dramatic flip of her hair, to which Marinette couldn’t help but giggle.

“Thanks. What will it cost me this time?”

“Cheesecake. Any kind is fine, I’m not picky.”

“Deal.”

They sat and chatted for a few moments more before Alya got up to leave. Marinette waved at her friend but opted to stay behind, opening up her sketchpad. She began to doodle, trying to relax and bring her thoughts back down to Earth. She was in the process of working on the sleeves of a new shirt when the ground shook hard and screams rang through the once-peaceful air.

Jumping to her feet, Marinette shoved her books into her bag before trying to find the source of the commotion. She didn’t have to go far before she saw a woman hovering in the sky, dressed in a dark purple ballet outfit with large feathery wings sprouting from the back of her dress. “I deserve to be Odette!” She screeched. “I’m the best dancer! I know the routine inside out! The star of Swan Lake should be me!”

Tikki poked her head out of Marinette’s purse. “Find somewhere to transform!”

“Already on it!” Ducking into an alley, she glanced over it quickly to make sure that no one was around. “Okay Tikki, spots on!”

When Ladybug emerged a moment later, the disgruntled ballerina had started to float away. “I’ll make them regret this great lack in judgment! They’ll have no choice but to change their mind when I destroy the studio!” She was monologuing.

“Seriously? How is that going to make them pick you instead?” Marinette called, grabbing her attention. “It’s a terrible plan, really.”

“You don’t know anything!” She watched as the akumatized young woman landed a short distance from her. “I am Prima Donna, and I will make them choose me!” The villain began to twirl and winds swept up from her body, blasting in every direction.

Marinette covered her face, trying not to get blown away. Through squinted eyes, she tried to look for anything standing out on Prima Donna that the akuma could be hiding inside. ‘I can barely see… how am I supposed to find what’s possessed?’ She thought in frustration.
Prima Donna had stopped dancing while she was thinking to run towards her, and Marinette swung her yo-yo up to pull herself high and dodge the attack. “Get back here!” Prima Donna yelled, launching herself into the sky and flying after her.

“You’ll have to catch me first!” Marinette wanted to lead her somewhere with less people so no one would get hurt. She eventually chose a small park several blocks away that thankfully was already deserted. Landing gently, Marinette pulled back her yo-yo and quickly looked over Prima Donna again properly as she continued to approach. That was when she noticed the bright purple sparkly plastic headband she was wearing. It looked very out of place with the rest of her outfit, and that was enough to signal that it was where the akuma was hiding.

“No more running!” Prima Donna landed just in front of her and pointed to her earrings. “Give me your Miraculous or I’ll-“

“Ladybug!” A familiar voice rang out and both superhero and villain looked up at the sound. Cat Noir landed beside his crime-fighting partner with an easy grin. “Sorry I’m a little late, my Lady.” He turned to Prima Donna and took a fighting stance. “Bad news for you – cats love chasing birds!”

Eyes widening, Prima Donna stumbled backwards as Cat Noir – Adrien, Marinette reminded herself – launched himself at her. Wailing in terror, she began to run around the empty park as fast as her toe shoes would take her to stay out of reach of the clawed hands chasing close behind. “Get away, get away! I hate cats!”

Honestly, it was rather comical to watch. Marinette fought hard to suppress a giggle.

“Now’s your chance, Ladybug!” She heard her partner call over his shoulder.

Forcing herself back to reality, Marinette grabbed her yo-yo. “Lucky Charm!” In a flurry of pink and red lights, a big jar of red and black beads landed in her outstretched hands. “How are these supposed to help?” Glancing back at the pair still running through the park, she quickly realized what she needed to do.

Ducking behind a nearby tree, she waited until Prima Donna was almost beside her before opening the jar and rolling the beads into her path. They immediately caught under the villain’s feet and sent her tumbling to the ground. While she was still laying there, dazed, Marinette casually walked over and pulled the headband from the young woman’s head before snapping the accessory in half. She easily captured the akuma emerging from inside with her yo-yo and purified it before letting the now white butterfly flutter off into the sky.

A purple light enveloped the girl beside her and when it faded away, she was back to normal. “Huh…Where am I?” She looked around in confusion.

Smiling a little at the all-too-familiar response, Marinette helped her up. She made sure she was stable on her own two feet before she threw the now empty jar high over their heads. “Miraculous Ladybug!” Cleansing lights erupted into the air, making the beads disappear, fixing the broken headband and zooming off to fix the damage where Prima Donna had first made her grand appearance. “It’s all right now. I’m sure you’re a wonderful dancer. You’ll knock their socks off in whatever role you have.” Marinette told her, handing her the headband with an encouraging smile. The young woman looked awe-struck at the praise from the superhero and thanked her profusely before scampering off.

“Pound it!” An out-of-breath Cat Noir was suddenly beside her, fist outstretched expectantly for their usual knuckle bump. Marinette’s face heated up but she did her best to nonchalantly tap her fist to his. “Hey, you feeling okay, LB?” He asked, noting her reddening face. “You coming down with
“N-No, I…” Marinette tried to think of an excuse fast but was at a loss for words. She couldn’t tear her eyes away from him. ‘It really is just Adrien’s face wearing cat ears and a mask…how did I not notice this long ago?!’

“Well if you’re not sick…” Suddenly a light seemed to go off in his head and a wide, cheeky smirk crossed his face. “Oh…could it be that a cat’s got your tongue?”

She had thought it was impossible to blush more, but no, her face still managed to turn redder somehow. “Cut it out,” Marinette tried her best to sound stern but it was hard to do so when her voice had squeaked like a chipmunk. “I’m perfectly fine, you big goof. I just…have a sunburn. That’s all.”

“Sure you do.” He waggled his eyebrows at her. “It’s paw-sitively cloudy.”

“So? It hasn’t been like that the whole day.”

“Fair enough. But sunburns don’t get darker every couple seconds, meow do they?”

“Well mine do, I happen to have very sensitive skin.”

“Uh huh.” He couldn’t help but laugh at her thoroughly exasperated expression, and was about to say more before a warning beep sounded from her earring. “Aww, too bad. I guess we’ll have to continue this wonderful conversation later, bugaboo.”

Never had Marinette been so happy to hear that noise! She grabbed her yo-yo and swung it into the air, hooking it onto a street-lamp. Giving him a little wave, she quickly pulled herself high and escaped into the Parisian skyline. Heaven help her if all future interactions with him were going to be that horrendously awkward!

As soon as Ladybug had disappeared from sight, Adrien whooped with joy. “She loves me!”
Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

I'm up late so I figured I would post the next chapter instead of waiting till the morning. It's technically tomorrow where I live, anyway. xD Thanks for the new Kudos, I'm still tickled pink so many people are enjoying this. ♥ Be prepared, adorable fluff ahead!

“That was awful.” Marinette groaned, flopping face-first onto her chaise lounge.

“Hey, you actually had a conversation while knowing it was Adrien!” Tikki said reassuringly. “I think that’s got to be the most you’ve ever talked to him!”

“I know you’re trying to help, but that makes me feel even more pathetic.”

Tikki rolled her eyes. “But I was right, wasn’t I? You were able to talk to him easier as Ladybug.”

“I guess…” Marinette forced herself to sit up and glanced at her floating kwami. “I actually didn’t feel as nervous once we were already talking. Maybe I’m getting used to the idea of the two of them being the same person? I don’t know.” She paused. “And I suppose it really could’ve gone a lot worse, right?”

“That’s the spirit!” Tikki clapped.

Marinette smiled as she stood and went over to her computer. Logging on, she quickly opened her email and found the notes from Alya waiting for her. “I’m definitely making her homemade whipped cream to go with her cheesecake. I’d be lost without her.”

Tikki giggled. “Be careful, or you’re going to have to start paying her dental bills!”

Laughing too, Marinette got to work on her homework while eating the slices of banana bread she had gotten herself when she had finally arrived home after the akuma attack. She had apologized to her parents for missing dinner, claiming to have been caught up in the craziness from Prima Donna, who had already been on the news, then grabbed something she could snack on in her room.

After working for what seemed like a long time, her banana bread was finished and so was her homework. Standing up to stretch, she grabbed the novel she was currently reading, a bottle of water and headed up the trapdoor to the rooftop. She unfolded the lawn chair she kept there and sat down, getting nice and comfortable before she opened her book and started to read.

It wasn’t until she had to keep moving her book closer to her face before she really noticed it was getting dark out. She stood up and looked over at the sunset. It was absolutely beautiful, deep colors painting the sky and clouds in vivid hues as the sun slipped ever lower behind the horizon. Grabbing her phone from her pocket, she took a couple pictures to use as design inspiration later. She felt a lot better now then when she had arrived home. ‘I’d be lost without Tikki too,’ Marinette thought with a smile. ‘Hmm…I wonder if she’s ever tried cheesecake before?’

She was about to take another photo when she saw a dark blur moving in the distance over her screen. Lowering her phone and squinting, she watched the shape got closer for a moment or two before the realization of who it was hit her like a wall of bricks. Of course, how could she forget?
Yesterday had been her night, so obviously it was his night to patrol! She needed to get down the trapdoor into her room and fast, before he could notice her!

“Oh, hey Princess!”

…Too late.

Marinette waved as casually as she could as he vaulted from the roof across the street to land next to her. “Hi Cat Noir,” She cleared her throat. “Must be a quiet night for you to be bored enough to wander over here, huh?”

“Noat all, today’s been awesome!” He exclaimed.

“You mean the weather?” Marinette tried her best to act oblivious. “Yeah, I’m glad the clouds cleared up, that sunset is pretty spectacular.”

“No, not that.” Adrien did take a moment to glance over his leather-clad shoulder at the sky behind them. “Well sure, that’s nice, but I mean something even better! I have to tell somebody or I’m going to explode!”

“You’re sure in a good mood,” Marinette tried to not make it obvious that she had been staring at him as he looked back at her.

“Of course I am!” He said gleefully while she was taking a swig from her bottle of water. “Ladybug likes me!”

Spewing all the water she had just sipped, Marinette coughed and spluttered as she dropped her empty water bottle, which was already long forgotten. “Y-You think so?” She managed to say.

Adrien gently patted her back to help keep her from choking again, not noticing her freeze at his touch. “You okay?”

Nodding, Marinette took a deep breath to steady herself. “It, uh, went down the wrong way. I’ll be fine.”

“Oh good, I’m glad.” He smiled at her, and Marinette practically swooned.

“So, uh…you were talking about Ladybug…?” She tried to start their conversation back up, not wanting to end up staring at him again.

A love-struck expression crossed Adrien’s face. “You should’ve seen it…she totally blushed at me, and then she blushed even more at my famous cat puns!” He sighed dreamily. “I knew being patient would pay off! I could’ve waited forever for her, but I’m really glad that it only took a couple of years!”

“What if she’s not the same kind of person when she’s out of the suit then she is when she’s Ladybug?” Marinette found herself asking, immediately scolding herself for saying something like that. But she couldn’t help herself, she needed to know.

“Are you kidding?” Adrien laughed. “It doesn’t matter to me what she’s like when she’s not being Ladybug. I already know she’s my soul mate.”

Marinette was shocked by the sheer amount of passion behind his words. She could tell he really meant it. “What if she’s kind of clumsy?” She said quietly.
“She could be the clumsiest person in history, and I wouldn’t care.” Adrien replied with conviction.

“What if she’s really awkward sometimes?”

“Then I’ll make her feel more comfortable.”

“What if she gets painfully shy?”

“I’ll help her build up her confidence.”

“What if she’s the most oblivious person on the face of the entire planet?!”

“It wouldn’t change anything. I love her, all of her. No matter what.”

Before she realized what she was doing, Marinette had thrown her arms around him and buried her face in his chest. “I shouldn’t have made you wait…” She breathed, squeezing her eyelids tightly shut.

Surprised by the sudden hug, Adrien didn’t catch what she had said so he just stood there for a second until she pulled away, her eyes shiny with unshed tears. “You sure you’re all right?” He asked.

“Positive,” Marinette wiped her face quickly and gave him a small smile. “It’s just really touching, how much you care for Ladybug.”

“Always have, always will.” He looked back at the still-darkening horizon again. “I should probably be getting back to my patrol. See you around, Princess. And thanks for listening!”

She watched as he extended his staff and launched himself onto another rooftop. As he got smaller into the distance, Marinette picked up the empty bottle that had been still sitting her feet. She folded the lawn chair before tucking her book under her arm to open her trap door.

Jumping down onto her bed, she saw Tikki hovering nearby with a wide smile. “I heard the whole thing. You did that all on your own, you didn’t need any help from being Ladybug. I’m so proud of you, Marinette!” Her kwami gushed.

“Thanks.” Marinette set the empty bottle and book at the end of her bed. “I still can’t believe how much he really loves…” She didn’t finish her sentence, feeling a sudden pang of guilt grip her heart. “I’ve been so stupid to make him wait for so long…”

“You didn’t know who he was-”

“Which is my fault.”

“-so you were just trying to wait for Adrien.”

“Yeah, by rejecting Adrien!”

“Please Marinette, stop being so hard on yourself.”

“The love of my life was right in front of my nose the whole time, and I turned him down over and over like an idiot.”

“Don’t worry, you can always just make it up to him,” Tikki told her. “There’s no time like the present.”
Marinette was quiet for a moment. That gave her a lot of ideas. She climbed down the stairs leading to her bed and sat down at her desk, turning her computer back on. “You’re right Tikki. I’m going to make up for all the time we lost because of my foolishness. I’m not going to waste one more moment.”

Tikki floated over to her and sat on her shoulder. “What are you going to do?”

“I’m going to romance the pants off of him.”
Hey everyone! =) I've had a couple questions the last chapter so I figured I would summarize my answers here in the notes so everyone can read them easily. First, there will definitely be flustered Adrien in later chapters, though for now the role of being shy belongs to Marinette. As someone who deals with anxiety myself, I know getting over your nerves takes time so she will build her confidence, but not right away. But when she does, the role-reversal will have quite an effect on Adrien and he'll be an embarrassed mess. =P Second, I have the rating set at Mature for now but may end up changing it higher if that's where the story takes me. At the moment I'm writing in to chapter thirteen and there hasn't been anything raunchier then heavy make-out sessions so far. But I'll be warning everyone if and when the heavy stuff comes, so no one ends up reading something they weren't ready for. That being said, if you're okay with some spiciness (like I am), you're probably going to eventually get your wish because the story definitely seems to be heading that way. ;) Anyway, now that that's all sorted out, I'm up late again and dying to post the next chapter, so here it is! =D I'm pretty proud of this one, and even more proud of chapter five. But I told myself one chapter a day, so here's chapter four for now. Hope you all enjoy! ^^

When Adrien finished his rounds of the city, he jumped into his open bedroom window and shut it behind him. “Claws in.” His transformation melted away and he could soon see Plagg giving him an annoyed look. “Go ahead. Say whatever you want, it’s not going to change today from being fantastic.”

“You’re such a moron.”

“Why thank you.”

“It’s not a compliment.”

“I don’t care.”

Plagg snorted and floated away, vanishing through the wall to presumably head to the kitchen. Adrien quickly changed out of his clothes before grabbing on his sleep pants. He would wear a top to bed in the winter, but other then that he would usually get to warm to be comfortable with one on the rest of the year. “I deserve way more cheese for putting up with all of this.” Plagg said as he reappeared before chomping down on the large camembert slice he had been holding.

“Do you think Ladybug likes flowers?” Adrien mused, totally ignoring his kwami as he pulled on his sleep pants.

“Well, she’s a girl, so I’m going to go with yes.”

Adrien laid down on his bed. “We patrol together tomorrow. Maybe I’ll bring her some roses. No, that would be boring, too cliché…maybe carnations? Or daisies?”

“Are you going to keep talking even if I ignore you?”
“Of course.”

“Then…I pick daisies. Good night.”

Chuckling, Adrien rolled onto his side before closing his eyes. Somehow he knew tomorrow was going to be a very good day…he could just feel it.

Marinette was having trouble sleeping again, although this time it was for reasons entirely different than the previous evening. Despite being up late into the night to keep ironing the details of her master plan, she wasn’t really feeling tired at all. She could barely contain her excitement. So long as her nerves didn’t end up getting the best of her, she had vowed she was going to do her best to make every dream of Adrien’s come true.

Okay, and maybe a few of her own.

When she finally decided there was no point in trying to sleep anymore, her clock read 7:12 AM. She headed downstairs to the kitchen and found her mother sitting at the kitchen table with a plate of scrambled eggs. “Morning sweetheart,” Sabine said with a smile. “You’re up early for a Saturday.”

“Couldn’t sleep.” Marinette opened the fridge and grabbed the carton of orange juice. “Do you think Dad needs an extra pair of hands in the bakery?”

“I’m sure he’d love some help.” Sabine watched her pour the juice into a glass before downing it quickly and putting away the carton again. “There’s still some eggs in the pan if you want some.”

“That’s okay.” Marinette practically skipped to the table to give her mother a big hug. “I’m not very hungry.”

“What’s got you so cheerful?” Sabine asked, gladly returning the hug.

“I’ve decided that I’m going to finally make a move on the guy I like.” Marinette declared proudly. “Congratulations, honey!” Sabine kissed her daughter’s forehead. “Well then, I wish you and Adrien the best of luck!”

Momentarily caught off-guard, Marinette quickly brushed it off. Of course her Mom would know who she was talking about – she’d had his posters all over her bedroom walls for years now. It really shouldn’t have surprised her. “Thank you.” She pulled away and gave her a bright smile before grabbing an apple on her way back up to her room to change into some clothes.

After Marinette had closed the door behind, Sabine couldn’t help but chuckle to herself. “It’s about time.”

Working in the bakery allowed Marinette to focus on the task at hand, instead of letting her mind wander. She had been working for a couple of hours and was in the middle of mixing up the dry ingredients for a carrot cake when she noticed her father standing in the doorway. “Yes Dad?”

“Your mother just told me something interesting.”

Blushing, Marinette kept stirring. “Do you not approve?”

“Of course I approve. We’ve always liked Adrien.” Tom walked over to stand across from her, a
serious expression on his face. “I just want you to know that if things don’t work out the way you want them to – even though I’m sure they will – I can be pretty scary if my baby’s been hurt.”

Marinette giggled and stuck her tongue out at him. “Don’t worry, I’m pretty sure everything will work out too.”

“Good. You deserve it.” Tom ruffled his daughter’s hair before grabbing the mixing bowl full of eggs and butter for the cake to mix himself.

“And I’m not a baby anymore.”

“Oh, I know. I can’t believe how much you’ve grown.”

“I’m barely as tall as Mom.”

“Growth doesn’t necessarily mean height. You’ve become an amazing young woman, Marinette, and your mother and I are very proud. You know that, right?”

Cheeks reddening, Marinette smiled a little. “I do.”

They continued working together in a comfortable silence for a while before Tom said, “And please, when the time comes, make sure you two use protection.”

“Dad!”

The rest of the day breezed by. Marinette had a light lunch before taking the afternoon to work on some of her designs, wanting to add more to the portfolio she’d been building for some time now. She even managed to get a little bit of sewing done, too. By supper she was ravenous, so she sat down with her parents and enjoyed every minute of their company as they ate together. She felt really grateful to have a Mom and Dad as wonderful as she did.

By the time the evening finally rolled around, Marinette was practically itching to go on patrol. Wishing her parents good night, she scurried upstairs before locking the door to her room and greeting Tikki with an eager smile. “Spots on!” A flash of light later and Ladybug poked her head through the trapdoor in the roof, making sure no one was around before swinging off into the sky.

Some time ago, the two of them had made their unofficial meeting place the roof of a very average-looking apartment building. They chose said building because of the fact it was completely ordinary, so none of the press wouldn’t think of looking for Paris’s superheroes in such a plain, boring spot. Marinette made it there with ease, knowing the route to it now like the back of her hand. She landed on the rooftop and looked around, but didn’t see her partner. Deciding to get comfortable, she sat down along the edge and let her feet dangle over the side.

She had only been waiting a few moments when she heard the sound of boots touching down behind her. “Hi there, beautiful!” Marinette turned and saw her leather-clad partner standing a few feet away, a big grin on his face and one of his hands behind his back.

Marinette swallowed hard and willed her stomach to stop doing back flips. “Hi yourself. What are you holding?” She asked curiously, standing up and walking over to him slowly. Summoning up all the resolve she could muster to act normal, she flashed him a smile and tried to peek around him. “Please don’t tell me you caught a mouse or something.”

His laugh was so unmistakably Adrien’s that she felt her heartbeat quicken at the sound. “No mice.
Just a little surprise for you.” Pausing for a moment, Marinette could’ve sworn she saw a faint blush tint his cheeks. “I wasn’t sure what kind you’d like best…” He pulled his arm from behind his back and revealed a large bouquet of assorted flowers. “So I tried to get you one of everything.”

Eyes widening, Marinette’s jaw dropped. There really was one of everything! A red rose, a pink carnation, a snow-white daisy, a yellow marigold, a purplish-blue violet, and several others she couldn’t even name. “W-Wow…”

“Do you like them?” Adrien looked hopeful. “After yesterday, when we had that moment in the park, I realized that I’d never bought you flowers before, even after all this time, and so I figured that now was as good a time as any, because it’s not like it has to be a special occasion to give someone flowers, and…”

He kept talking and Marinette soon realized he was babbling. ‘Just like I get around him.’ He must’ve been nervous. Seriously? Adrien Agreste, nervous? Was that even physically possible?

Apparently it was.

And it really was all because of her.

Marinette stretched out her hands and clapsed the bouquet gently. Adrien stopped talking abruptly and let go of them, and she pulled the flowers close to her heart with a small smile. “Thank you. They’re amazing.”

“And I wanted to tell you something,” He said quietly. “I know that I’ve said this before over the years, but I want to say it again.” Adrien gently took one of her hands and Marinette’s face turned every shade of red as he looked directly into her eyes before kissing her fingers. “I love you, Ladybug.”

Doing her best to not melt into a puddle of polka-dotted goo, Marinette could feel tears start to trickle down her cheeks. “I…I…” She really tried to speak but a lump had formed in her throat, and her shoulders started to shake as she fought back the urge to cry.

“Hey, what’s wrong?” Adrien let go of her fingers to cupped her face in his hands and brushed away her tears with his clawed thumbs. “I’m really sorry, I didn’t mean to upset you. Was this…too much?”

“N-No,” Marinette said immediately, not wanting to give him the wrong idea. She sniffled a little as she looked up at him. “Not at all. This was perfect.” She took a deep breath before taking the plunge into the first step of her plan. “And I…I actually wanted to give you something too.”

“It’s a surprise.” She moved back a step and used her free hand to wipe her eyes quickly. “I’ll give it to you once we’re done patrol. You take the south end and I’ll take the north.” Marinette tucked her bouquet under her arm as she unhooked her yo-yo from around her waist. “We’ll meet back here once we finish, okay?”

“Your wish is my command, my Lady!” Adrien gave her a two-finger salute before grabbing his staff from its spot on his back and extending it to propel himself onto the neighboring building. He waved at her and watched Ladybug soon swing off in the other direction, and he could already feel butterflies in his stomach.

He was definitely intrigued by what she could possibly want to give him. She hadn’t been holding anything when he arrived…maybe she had to go back to wherever she lived to get it. Would it be
something small? Probably, if it was something big it would be impossible to carry while travelling by yo-yo. Would it be something that she went out of her way to pick just for him from a store? Or maybe something she had made with her own two hands?

Curiosity was definitely bad for cats, he decided.

This patrol could not go by fast enough.
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

At last, it's tomorrow where I am again so that means one of my favorite chapters gets to debut! 😊 I can still hardly believe all the amazing feedback I've been getting from you guys for this story - the amount of comments, kudos, bookmarks and views is utterly mind-boggling! And definitely in a good way. =) I put a lot of heart into this chapter, as well as a little something extra, too. =P Enjoy everyone!

Marinette had stopped by her house to quickly sneak into her room and set the bouquet on her desk. She was still reeling from it all. Sure, Cat Noir had told her he loved her before but she had playfully brushed it off, not taking it seriously.

But now she knew that it was Adrien behind the mask, and everything had changed.

She soon left her home behind her again and went back to work on her half of the patrol, heart still aflutter. Only having to do half the city should’ve meant that it would go by a lot quicker then normal, but she made sure she took her time so she could calm her nerves.

Plus, that would mean he’d probably beat her back to the apartment. And the thought of him waiting impatiently for her arrival excited her.

Eventually she had gotten her heart to stop beating like crazy and her rounds went by uneventfully. Marinette had never been so thankful for a ‘boring’ patrol. She leisurely made her way back to the apartment, and as she had expected, she wasn’t the first one to get there this time.

“I beat you.” Adrien smirked at her as she landed close to where he had already been standing for a few minutes.

“Not surprised.” Marinette poked his nose. “You better not have rushed your patrol just to get here faster.”

“I would never!” He tried to look hurt, and Marinette found herself giggling.

“Good, or you wouldn’t have gotten your present.”

“So what is it?” Adrien had watched her approach and had been rather confused when she had returned not holding anything.

This was it. Marinette took a breath and said quietly, “Close your eyes.”

He did immediately, and she took a moment to gaze at him fondly. He really was a sight to behold. Tall and lean, with years of fighting Hawk Moth’s akumas building muscle in all the right places for good measure. The leather suit could no longer hide from her how familiar the broad shoulders, strong arms and powerful legs were. It was the same golden hair, the same facial features, the same everything.

This was Cat Noir, the crime-fighting partner she’d been lucky to have since day one that she trusted with her life.
This was Adrien, the one she had loved since the second she had fallen for him that moment under his umbrella in the rain.

Gathering all her courage, she stood on her tiptoes, shut her eyes, and pressed her lips to his.

Completely taken by surprise, Adrien opened his eyes for a second before quickly closing them again. This was actually happening! Ladybug was kissing him! And he certainly wasn’t going to let that go to waste! Hesitantly, he snaked his arms around her waist and kissed her back with everything he had.

Sparks.

Marinette reached up to put her hands on his shoulders and leaned into him. This was nothing like the quick peck she had given him when he had been infected by the powers of Dark Cupid so long ago. She hadn’t even given it a second thought back then; it had been to break the spell and nothing more. No, this was different…so very different. It was everything she had always imagined it to be. She parted her lips and gently licked at his, silently asking for entry. It was granted to her a second later, and their tongues met.

Fireworks.

It wasn’t long before she found her arms moving on their own, and her fingers were curling into his hair. His had changed position as well so his hands now rested on her hips, and Marinette couldn’t help but shiver. They stayed that way for what seemed like ages and as much as she wanted this moment to last forever, she eventually forced herself to pull away so she could fill her lungs with some of the cool night air.

She was breathless, and so was he.

Feeling still somewhat stunned as he gazed down at her, Adrien’s cheeks were hot and his heart was hammering in his chest. “That was…”

“I know.” Marinette blushed and looked down shyly.

“I’m serious, that was…”

“I know.”

Their world was silent for a moment before Adrien reached a clawed finger under her chin and titled her head up to look into her eyes. “Can I…have another one?”

Smiling a little, Marinette nodded. “I’m never going to turn you down again.”

Her words echoed in his ears as he captured her lips once more. He pulled her closer, one hand sitting on the back of her head and the other running slowly down her back. Adrien wanted to be able to memorize every last inch of her, to cherish every second of how perfect this felt. This was Heaven.

But after a few more minutes of this Heaven, he began to wish his suit didn’t conform to his body so snugly, because it was starting to feel rather increasingly tight below his belt.

When Marinette felt his growing problem brush up against her, her eyes opened in shock and moved her head back. “Sorry! I-I’m so sorry!” She stammered, blushing deeply. “I didn’t mean to…t-to do that…to you…”
Adrien kissed her forehead. “Don’t be.” He absently thought how adorable she looked when she was flustered. But even though he felt self-conscious now too, he was more concerned with making her more relaxed. After all, if his Lady somehow got thinking this was a bad thing, she might never do this with him again. And that simply wouldn’t do. “I don’t want you to think for one second that you did anything wrong, or that you did something that I didn’t enjoy.” He thought for a moment before adding, “Although I suppose that’s fairly obvious now.”

“So you’re…you’re not…uncomfortable?” Marinette tried not to squeak.

“Maybe a little bit,” Adrien moved slightly so he could kiss her cheek this time to keep reassuring her more. “And I didn’t try to embarrass you. I just couldn’t really help it. You made me feel amazing, in more ways then one.”

“I guess I did,” She murmured, and he was glad she seemed to be less ashamed at what had happened now.

So that meant it was time to pour on the charm again. “But if I may be so bold, this isn’t the first time you’ve done this to me.”

Though she had overheard as much from outside his window just a few days before, Marinette still couldn’t believe it. Despite how she still felt kind of embarrassed, she couldn’t deny that there was a devious part of her wanted, needed to know more. To have him directly tell her himself this time. Instead of making her want to hide her face, that statement emboldened her. So she gave in. “This isn’t the first time I’ve…turned you on?”

Smirking, Adrien now began to slowly trail soft kisses down her neck. “How about instead of saying how you’ve made me feel before…” He felt her shudder against him as he whispered, “I’ll show you.”

Marinette could tell a fire was beginning to burn in her core. She felt his clawed hands caress her sides as he continued to focus his attention on her neck. Her knees were starting to feel weak, and soon she realized she was moaning.

He still could hardly believe this was real and not just his imagination. Ladybug was really here; really letting him kiss her and hold her and touch her in ways he had only ever fantasized about. Adrien wanted her to feel every ounce of his love for her, to make her feel all the pleasure he so adamantly felt she deserved. When he heard her moan, it was music to his ears. His Lady was in the same state as he was, and it was all because of him – it was like a dream come true.

So much was happening all at once. Her brain was on overload and it took all the will power she possessed to get herself to speak. “W-Wait…” He looked up at her, vivid green eyes looking a little confused. “It’s not that I don’t want this, believe me I do…” Marinette licked her lips and tried to bring herself back to her senses. “This is just going so fast…”

Pulling back, Adrien straightened and gazed at her intently. Face bright red, eyes dark and burning, chest rising and falling as she tried to catch her breath. He decided she was even more stunning now then ever before. He didn’t want to ruin the chance at seeing her this way again. “It’s okay, I understand.”

She knew he was trying to hide his disappointment, because so was she. “Baby steps for now.” Marinette took his hands in hers. “I need to be able walk before I can run.”

Adrien allowed himself to grin. “You can take all the time you need, Ladybug. I can wait as long as it takes. I’ll be ready whenever you are.” He winked at her. “To be purr-fectly honest though, I’m
definitely looking forward to the running.”

Blushing, Marinette let go of his hands so she could lightly smack his arm. “Way to ruin the moment.”

He laughed, and even she began to smile eventually. “See? You totally can’t resist.”

“That’s it, I’m going home now.” She announced before sticking her tongue out at him and turning on her heel. Marinette stopped abruptly however when she felt him grab her wrist.

“You promise we will do this again?” Adrien asked quietly.

“I do.” Turning back to face him, Marinette looked him straight in the eye. “But I want this to stay our little secret for now, so we’ll need to act normal any time we’re together out in the open where people can see.”

“Are you implying I wouldn’t be professional?” The look she gave him made Adrien put up his hands in a gesture of defeat. “Okay, okay. Act casual, got it.” Then he leaned in to whisper in her ear, “But when we’re alone, you’re all mine.”

Marinette shivered and stepped backward, detaching her yo-yo from her waist. “If you can handle me.” She blew him a kiss before tossing her yo-yo high and swung off. It was a good thing too, because inside she was screaming. ‘I can’t believe I just said that!’

For a moment he just stood there, astonished and captivated by the playfulness of her last words. Then he grabbed his staff and shook his head. “I think she’s trying to kill me.” And with that Adrien left the rooftop to begin the now somewhat awkward-to-maneuver trek home, so he could take a very long, very cold shower.
Chapter 6

This time, Marinette slept like a rock. Not getting much sleep the last few nights and all the effort she had put in to being brave to execute her plan had caught up to her, and she didn’t even wake up once in the night. When she did finally force herself out of bed late the next morning, she had been beginning to wonder if the events on the rooftop had just been a dream.

But the bouquet still sitting beside her computer said otherwise.

Just seeing the flowers sitting there made all the emotions from the night before come crashing back, and Marinette could feel her face turning red again. She got up and sat down in her desk chair, replaying everything that had happened over again in her mind. The first step of her plan had been such a success! All she had wanted to do was give him a kiss but everything had fallen into place so perfectly.

“Good morning Marinette!” Tikki floated over and sat down on the monitor.

She looked up at her kwami and felt her blush grow darker. “I really did it, Tikki. I actually kissed him.”

Tikki couldn’t help but smile. “You sure did!”

“And he kissed me back.”

“I know.”

“He kissed me back…a lot.”

Giggling, Tikki was so pleased to see the blissful expression on Marinette’s face. “I’m really happy for you, for both of you.”

Marinette picked up the bouquet and a sudden thought crossed her mind. “What am I going to do with these?”

“What do you mean?” Tikki asked. “I know they’re supposed to go in water and they need to get plenty of sunlight, if that helps.”

“But I can’t really let my parents see them,” Marinette looked around her room. “If they see these flowers they’re going to ask where I got them. And it would be really hard to explain that they’re from the guy I like who doesn’t actually know that I’m the one he gave them to.”
They were both silent a moment before Tikki got an idea. “Could you put them up on the roof? Your parents don’t go up there.”

The bluenette frowned. “What if Adrien sees them while he’s being Cat Noir? I know I’ll have to tell him who I am eventually but I want to do it when the time is right, not because of having to say why I happen to have a very specific bouquet.”

“Oh! How about putting them behind your computer screen?” Tikki looked behind her at the aforementioned spot. “It’s close enough to the window so they would get some sun, but they wouldn’t be totally visible from the outside for parents or even possible kitties to see.”

“Hmm…I think that could work.” Smiling, Marinette put the flowers back down so she could scoop her kwami up in her hands and hug her close. “You’re a genius.”

She got up and opened the door, quickly looking around downstairs to see if anyone was around. Thankfully the coast was clear – her Mom and Dad were busy working down in the bakery. Marinette crept down quietly though, fearing if she made too much noise the whole world may discover what she was doing. She grabbed herself a plain plastic container that would be tall enough to hold the flowers, as she didn’t want to take an actual vase in case it was somehow discovered to be missing from it’s usual place and cause a game of 20 Questions.

Filling it halfway with warm water, she shook in a tablespoon of sugar and stirred them together. She had learned that trick from her mother, since the powdered flower food usually given out from the florists would only last for so long. Marinette carefully walked back upstairs and set the container down before closing the door safely behind her.

“Mission accomplished!” Tikki declared and Marinette laughed, loving her energy.

“The first part is, thankfully. But now I need to get them in here and make it so they’re hidden without making a complete mess.” Marinette hoped that her clumsy side could take a leave of absence for the next few minutes, or else she could have a very wet mess on her hands soon.

Fortunately she got her wish, and she was able to easily transfer her flowers to the container and slip it behind her computer monitor without a hitch. She even put a couple books just beneath the monitor on the right-hand side so the bottom of the container wouldn’t be seen, and some on the left side too so it wouldn’t seem out-of-the-ordinary and raise suspicion.

Marinette flopped back down into her desk chair and sighed. “That was stressful.”

“You’ve battled magical villains for years and handled it no problem. You’ve got this.” Tikki told her encouragingly.

For a moment Marinette idly thought that fighting an akuma seemed like it would be a lot easier right now. She sat for a moment more before forced herself to get up and get dressed so she could get on with the day.

She first grabbed herself something to eat before she went into the shop portion of the bakery to help her parents for a few hours. Once they had told her she was free to go, it was back up to her room to finish her homework and take some time to study as well. Alya had been right earlier, exams were definitely on the horizon and Marinette didn’t want to be caught unprepared.

That reminded her. What was she going to tell Alya? Her best friend was very perceptive and would immediately notice that something was different about her. It wouldn’t be something she could just casually brush off, either, as Alya could be very persistent as well. She supposed she could tell her...
she was trying her best to swallow her fears and be less nervous around Adrien, similar to what she had told her mother. But Marinette didn’t think that would appease her for very long.

Sure, after last night she was pretty sure she would still feel shy around Adrien, although now it was for entirely different reasons. But she definitely felt she had made strides in being able to actually speak in coherent sentences when talking with him. Although now that she thought about it, maybe it would be easier if she tried to act as she usually did, being timid and at a loss for words, so perhaps Alya wouldn’t suspect anything was out of the ordinary?

Why did everything have to be so complicated?

Groaning, Marinette pushed her chair away from her desk so she could lean back to stretch. Things definitely seemed to be getting a lot more chaotic rather fast. In all fairness, it was her own fault. If she hadn’t gone to Adrien’s house that night and stumbled upon his identity, none of this would be happening right now. She would still be blissfully unaware.

She quickly shook that thought from her mind. Despite how crazy things seemed to be becoming, Marinette wouldn’t change a thing. She finally knew how all the pieces of the puzzle fit together, and because of that she wasn’t going to needlessly keep her beloved pining for her for no reason. She had made him wait too long as it was – something she would probably always regret to a small degree.

‘But Tikki’s right. I’ll make it up to him.’ She thought, wheeling her chair close to the desk again and pulling up the file on her computer entitled Operation Romance. Step one had been to open the doors by kissing him, and which had clearly been a roaring success. The next phases of her plan could be a little trickier to execute, as eventually she wanted to find out more of what he had dreamed of doing together with Ladybug, so she could make them come true.

Little things first of course, Marinette told herself. There were obviously certain things Adrien wanted to do but she definitely wasn’t ready to dive head-first into the deep end yet when she was trying to get used to sticking her toes into the shallows.

There were several other steps that she had typed in that were in no real particular order, such as cuddle with him, spend more time together, talk for hours about nothing in particular, etc. Just some easy things she could start with while being Ladybug. And then there were the two big ones staring back at her from the bottom of the page: reveal her identity and confess her feelings. Just reading them was all it took and she could feel her nervousness coming back with a vengeance.

She must’ve looked anxious because she soon felt Tikki patting her hand. “It’s all going to work out,” She told her bonded with a smile. “You’re going to be just fine.”

“I just don’t want to mess things up,” Marinette admitted honestly. “Things are finally going great and I don’t think I would be able to live with myself if everything fell apart now.”

“Well I think you should have more faith in yourself.” Tikki said. “You two are clearly meant for each other, and nothing’s going to keep you apart anymore.”

Marinette’s cheeks reddened at the words. “I guess…you really like being able to play matchmaker, don’t you?”

Tikki got a dreamy look in her eyes. “You aren’t the first Ladybug and Cat Noir that were destined to be together, Marinette. And I love seeing my partners happy more then anything else. So yes, being matchmaker is one of the perks of my job!”
“Sometimes I forget how long you’ve been doing this.” Marinette still felt like it was hard to believe her cute little kwami was thousands of years old. “There were really others like us?”

“Of course there were. Some Ladybugs and Cat Noirs ended up only being the best of friends. There’s nothing wrong with that, of course…” Tikki floated up to hover in front of Marinette’s face. “But there were some who were two halves of the same whole, meant to share a powerful love. And right from the beginning I could feel you two were like them.”

“And you didn’t tell me?” Marinette sighed, and noticed the frown on her kwami’s face. “I know, I didn’t exactly make it easy.”

“I didn’t want to scare you,” Tikki poked Marinette’s nose. “Since you didn’t want to know who Cat Noir was, because you didn’t realize he was Adrien, I felt like you had to come to learn it on your own. Because if I went ahead told you about your fates, before you were ready, you never would have believed me.”

“Sorry. I know I’ve been a pain, and that it must’ve been hard to watch.” Marinette grimaced, knowing it would’ve been hard for her to just sit by if Alya and Nino kept dancing around their feelings for each other all this time.

“Being as old as I am has taught me to be patient,” Tikki moved through the air to sit on Marinette’s head. “I’m just glad things are moving forward for you two at last.”

“Me too.” Marinette agreed. She glanced at the clock on her computer screen before moving to shut it off. It was almost time for dinner, and later tonight it was her turn to patrol again. She stood slowly so she wouldn’t send Tikki tumbling off her head. “I wonder what he’s doing right now…”

Her kwami glided down and gave a little shrug. “You could always go see him.”

“Considering what happened last time I went over there, I think I’ll just wait until school tomorrow.” She said with a laugh.

“Hey, it was just a thought. I mean, he really might be not home this time.”

“You’re a bad influence, Tikki.” Marinette told her playfully before she headed downstairs. She ate her supper with her parents and after sneaking a few ginger snaps for Tikki, she went back into her room so she could sew for a while before she would have to get ready to go out on another solo patrol.

After she put the finishing touches on the skirt she had been working on, and all of Tikki’s cookies had been happily devoured, Marinette transformed and headed out into the night. It was cooler then it had been the last few days, but she didn’t mind. It was definitely very helpful to be clad in a magical suit from head to toe. She wound her way through Paris, stopping by Alya’s and Nino’s but resisting the urge to go by the Agreste Mansion again.

She had just landed in the middle of the roof of a large office building at the end of her rounds when suddenly Marinette found hands covering her eyes. “Caught you!”
Battle instincts kicked in and Marinette reached behind her to grab at her assailant, digging in her heels and flinging the person up and over her head. “Whoa!” Her vision now restored, she grabbed at her yo-yo and was about to continue attacking when she realized that the figure laying stunned on the rooftop before her looked very familiar.

“Cat Noir?” She asked exasperatedly. “What are you doing here?”

He looked rather sheepish as he slowly sat up, rubbing the sore spot on the back of his head. “Well I was trying to surprise you, but I guess that backfired on me.”

“I was about to yo-yo you into next week!” Marinette put her hands on her hips, glowering down at him. “You can’t just sneak up like that! How was I supposed to know it was you? I thought it was an akuma trying to capture me!”

“Sorry.”

“Why are you even out here, anyway? It’s my night to patrol.”

To her surprise, Adrien looked away in embarrassment. “I know, I just…I needed to see you.”

Her anger melted away in an instant, and Marinette knelt down beside him. “Next time, start with that, so I don’t try and beat you into a pulp.” She extended her hand to him, smiling to show she wasn’t upset anymore.

Adrien took her hand and they stood up. “Sorry again, my Lady.”

“It’s okay.” Marinette assured him, then she cocked her head to the side. “But why did you need to see me? Is there trouble somewhere?”

“No, no, it’s nothing like that.” She could’ve sworn saw Adrien blush. “Go ahead and call me crazy but I’m going to be honest: I really missed you a lot today.”

Marinette was caught off-guard. “But we just saw each other last night.”

“Last night…” Adrien repeated quietly, looking sentimental at the memory. “That’s part of the reason why I wanted to talk to you.” He took a deep breath. “I want to ask if we could go back to patrolling every night together. So I can see you more.”

The ‘spend more time together’ line on her Operation Romance document flashed in her mind. “But what about our other responsibilities?” Marinette asked. “I know I’ve been getting a lot more
assignments from school lately.”

“So have I, and I still have work and extra-curricular things on top of that, but I’ll start finishing my homework as soon as I get home every day so I can still have time for all that stuff and be able to see you in the evenings too.” Adrien replied, looking desperate. “Please, Ladybug.”

“Well…” Marinette thought a moment. “I suppose we could…”

“Thank you!” Was the immediate response, relief visible on his face.

“However,” She quickly added. “We need to figure out a system of letting each other know if we can’t make it.”

“Sure!” Adrien nodded vigorously. “Great plan. Love it.”

Rolling her eyes, Marinette gave him a look. “One kiss and you’re a lovesick fool.”

“It was actually two kisses, thank you.” Adrien stepped closer to her. “And for the record, I’m ready for a third whenever you are, bugaboo.”

Marinette put her hand over Adrien’s masked face. “Remember how yesterday I said baby steps?”

“Yes.” His voice came out muffled with her palm over his mouth.

“One day afterward is not baby steps.”

“It could be!”

“In what reality?”

“Come on, pretty please?”

“They won’t be special if I give you them all the time.” Marinette folded her arms across her chest. “Besides, the moment’s not right, there’s no mood.”

Adrien’s eyes grew wicked as he got an idea. “So you’re saying it’s because you’re just not in the mood to kiss me?”

“Wait, what?” That hadn’t been what she had meant at all, what on Earth…

In one smooth motion he had backed her up against the door that led to the office building’s stairwell, keeping her hands trapped to her sides. “Allow me to help change that…”

Marinette felt her breath catch in her throat as he started nibbling the shell of her ear. Her eyes were wide and she was blushing as red as her suit, but she didn’t make any real effort to try and move him away. Adrien felt her fidget slightly at his ministrations and stopped to look at her, then smirked before he started to do the same to her other ear. It was a second before she realized what was going on.

He was teasing her.

Well, baby steps be damned. Marinette tilted her head away and when he moved his head because of it, she turned back so she could catch his lips with hers.

Victorious, Adrien kissed her back happily. He kept it short though, and broke away a short time later. “I see your point. The moment is all wrong.”
“Sometimes I really hate you.” Marinette tried to sound serious but her facial expression said otherwise.

“I doubt that.” Adrien chuckled before stepping back. “Come relax with me, the view of the sky is amazing tonight.”

He then went over a ways to sit down and lay back on the rooftop to look up at the stars, patting the spot next to him. Standing there a moment more, she eventually shrugged her shoulders with a little sigh. She was done her patrol anyway. So Marinette walked over beside him before she laid down too, staring into the abyss.

They stayed that way for moment, then she felt Adrien grab her hand. Her cheeks warmed again but she appreciated the gesture, curling her fingers around his. It felt so right. A minute passed, and then another, before he broke the silence. “What do you think about using emails to keep in contact? For how you wanted to let each other know if something comes up and we can’t make patrol?”

That wasn’t a bad idea. Having something that would work regardless of whether they were transformed or not was a good option. “Sounds fair.”

“And we can make ourselves new accounts without using our real names on them if you want.” He added quickly, wanting to respect her privacy.

“Um, sure I guess.” The thought hadn’t even crossed her mind. He had already come up with a way to try and keep within the ‘rule’ she had imposed upon them of keeping their lives secret. Marinette was touched, though she did feel a little guilty that she already knew who he was.

“Great! We can tell each other the addresses tomorrow night.” Adrien sounded rather excited, and it made her smile.

“These should be business emails, you know.” Marinette told him, looking over at her crime-fighting partner. “So if you send me a whole bunch of cat pictures I’m deleting you.”

He laughed and stuck his tongue out at her. “Okay, I’ll be a gentleman.”

“Good.”

“One picture a day.”

“Don’t make me hit you.”

“You wouldn’t!”

Her response was to playfully whack him on the nose. He immediately smacked her shoulder, and so the two began to wrestle. They laughed as they tussled for a good few minutes before suddenly they realized where they had ended up. Somehow, Adrien had become pinned beneath Marinette, her hands at either side of his head and her knees straddling his waist.

And as they looked at each other, the air around them instantly became charged.

Marinette stared into his eyes and saw the want there. She was faintly surprised that she didn’t feel nervous by this, not embarrassed by where she was. Instead she felt the same yearning she was sure that he did, and without another thought she leaned in to kiss him passionately.

Baby steps be damned indeed.
Adrien returned her kiss with much more fervor then he had earlier tonight. He let his hands move up to rest on her hips, pleased with the murmur it elicited from the beautiful woman above him. Fingers rubbing against the material hugging her skin, he wanted to be able to hear more from her.

She resisted the urge to melt at his touch and instead moved her head to the side so that she could kiss along his cheek and then down his neck. Marinette wanted to prove that two could play at this game.

Gasping at the sudden change, he inadvertently pulled her closer to him. Adrien shut his eyes as she continued, completely lost in the sensation.

‘I’ve got you now.’ She thought with glee, a grin on her lips as she adjusted her position with purpose. Marinette inched down so her knees pressed against his upper thighs and he trembled beneath her, but she kept her legs flush against him so he wouldn’t be able to move.

When she had started to move for a second he was afraid she was going to stop what she was doing, but when she pinned him with her knees he decided this was much worse. Adrien’s body was liquid flame at this point, and not being able to press closer to her was driving him mad. He opened his eyes and looked up at her, and was shocked to see the triumphant look on her face.

Yes, she would definitely be the death of him.

“This,” Marinette lifted her hands to grab his shoulders, keeping them pressed to the rooftop. “Is payback,” She said each word slowly, purposefully. “For being,” A smirk crossed her lips. “A tease.”

He couldn’t get his brain and mouth to work together for what seemed like a long time. “Y-You know what,” He finally managed. “Sometimes I really hate you.”

“I doubt that.” She replied deliberately, sticking out her tongue at him. Marinette loved how he looked beneath her – hair mussed, trying not to pout as his emerald orbs looked hungrily up at her. She could get used to seeing him this way.

“My Lady…” Adrien tried to hide the need in his voice but couldn’t.

“Yes, kitty cat?” Marinette was loving this.

A futile attempt to get free later and he sighed. She was just as strong as he was, of course, so there was no getting out of this unless she let him. “Are you going to keep me stuck here forever?”

“Until you’ve learned your lesson.”

“What lesson?”

“Be prepared to get back what you dish out.” Marinette had laid down the gauntlet.

The thought of Ladybug being a vixen like this on a regular basis made his eyes widen with desire. “Well then, I’ll keep that in mind.” He tried to sound casual, but both of them could tell he meant.

Challenge accepted.

She easily got to her feet, and watching as he sat up with a grimace just made Marinette even more satisfied. “I’ll see you tomorrow.” She winked while she grabbed her yo-yo. “And try not hurt yourself on the way home, okay?” She teased before she disappeared through the night, her laughter trailing through the air.
Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

Another day, another chapter! ^^ Marinette's slowly but surely getting her confidence up, huzzah! She'll become a lot more forward as time goes on. ;) I'm currently finishing up chapter eighteen in the Word document of this story, and I can promise you all with certainty it's definitely coming. =P I also really love the exchange with Alya and Chloe this chapter, I was quite amused while I was picturing it in my head. xD Anyway, hope you all enjoy!

Seeing the effect she had had on him was a potent confidence boost. When Marinette awoke in the morning, she was still smiling. She ate her breakfast, showered, got dressed and readied herself for school in plenty of time, and sauntered her way to school without having to worry about the possibility of being late.

“Morning!” She heard Alya before she saw her. “So where were you? I didn’t hear from you all weekend!”

“Sorry, I was working a lot in the bakery and adding to my portfolio.” Which was mostly the truth.

“Oh, gotcha.” Alya frowned then. “Hey, where’s my cheesecake?”

“You really thought I was going to bring a whole cheesecake to school?” Marinette laughed as she fell into step next to her. “I made it while I was helping in the bakery on Saturday but I left it at home so you wouldn’t have to fight piranhas trying to steal it from you.”

“Good plan.” She took a moment to study the new light shimmering in her best friend’s eyes curiously. “Okay, tell me what happened.”

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

“You’re glowing, girl!” Alya declared. “I could see it a from mile away even if I was blindfolded and had a box over my head!”

Marinette laughed. “Nothing really. I’ve just decided I’m not going be a nervous wreck around Adrien anymore, that’s all.”

The response was immediate. “Good for you!” Alya hugged her shoulders as they made their way towards homeroom. “You can do it, I totally believe in you!”

“Thanks Alya.” Their class was fairly empty still because it was a while before the bells would start to ring.

“Morning ladies!” Nino greeted. “Aww, no cheesecake Marinette?”

She rolled her eyes. Of course Alya would have told him about the cheesecake, that boy could hone in on the mention of food across time and space. “To keep greedy gremlins like you from eating it all on her, I left Alya’s cheesecake at home.”
“Dude, not fair.” He complained. “She said she would share! Ask her!”

Alya snickered and feigned innocence. “I never said that.”

“Did too!” Nino looked at Marinette in desperation. “She really did, I swear!” The two girls giggled at the frustration they were causing him. “Totally harsh, you guys.” He tried to sound mad but he was laughing too.

“What did I miss?” Adrien asked as he walked over to them.

She focused all her will power to not start to panic at the sight of him. She had definitely gotten a lot more used to talking to him – and more, she might add – when he was being Cat Noir. But seeing him without the mask made everything seem more…real? She swallowed the lump in her throat. Alya was about to say something for her when Marinette decided to go for it. “I made Alya a cheesecake this weekend and Nino’s trying to steal it.” She was quite happy with herself, she had actually made an actual proper sentence that time!

“What is it with you and food these days?” Adrien looked at Nino who shrugged.

“They’re just being stubborn dude, Alya said we could share it.” He quickly defended himself. “And besides, it’s not here anyway. Marinette left it at home on purpose.”

She could tell that Alya was looking at her with pride, so she spoke again. “Don’t believe him Adrien, he already ate it!”

“Marinette!” Nino whined, and Adrien laughed. Marinette positively beamed; this was going so well!

And Adrien definitely welcomed the change. He knew that she could be fierce and spunky with most people but for some strange reason, whenever he was there, Marinette was usually very quiet and hesitant. So for her to show this side to him was new, and he enjoyed it. He was glad to finally be seeing her looking more at ease. “You have to admit Nino, that was pretty funny.”

“Do not.” Nino said stubbornly before giving in. “Okay, maybe a little.”

“Oh Adrien…!” Came Chloe’s voice as she practically skipped through the door, draping her arms around him. “It’s so good to see you, gorgeous! I missed you so much on Friday!” Adrien looked rather unhappy at how she was fawning over him, but she was too oblivious to notice or care.

Instantly bristling, Marinette gritted her teeth and clenched her fists. Alya grabbed her hand, honestly worried she was going to punch the blonde. “That reminds me Chloe, Sabrina was looking for you,” Alya hoped she didn’t sound totally full of it.

“Honestly, that girl can’t live without me.” Chloe sighed dramatically before scanning the room with a frown. “But she’s not in here.”

“I think she went to the bathroom, it was a hair problem,” Alya hoped she didn’t sound totally full of it.

“Not surprised, her hair really is terrible. Good thing I always come prepared with only the best products money can buy.” Chloe shifted her new large designer purse on her shoulder before turning and walking away.

“Phew,” Alya looked relieved, knowing that could’ve gone a lot worse.
“Thanks for that, Alya,” Adrien told her. “The rescue is much appreciated.”

Alya didn’t really hear him as she let go of Marinette’s hand. “She’s gone now, you can breathe.”

Marinette allowed her body to relax but still didn’t look pleased. “It won’t be long before she comes back.”

“You really hate her, don’t you?” Nino asked.

“I just don’t like how she thinks she’s better than everyone else, like that gives her some sort of license to treat people however she wants.” Marinette said. “Did you hear how she was talking about Sabrina just now, the girl she claims all these years to be her best friend? And look at how uncomfortable she was making Adrien!”

“But she always talks about Sabrina like that.” Adrien couldn’t deny he was moved by how worried Marinette seemed to be for him though. “And I don’t really know how to tell her I’m not interested, I don’t want to upset her or anything.”

So he was just too nice for his own good, not that Marinette was really surprised by that fact. “If she ever gets too pushy, let me know,” She cracked her knuckles.

Adrien couldn’t help but grin. “So I have knight in shining armor now?” He joked. “I’ll make sure to keep you informed, then.”

She had to turn away quickly as she blushed. Luckily the sound of the bell blaring loud a second later saved her, and everyone went to take their seats as class got underway. Chloe came in a minute afterward, looking positively baffled by how Sabrina was now sitting in her desk already. Their teacher gave her a warning for being late, and Marinette couldn’t help but enjoy it as the other girl looked annoyed while she went to sit down.

The morning went by uneventfully, and once lunch had rolled around Alya was singing her praises. “You were amazing!” She sang as they made their way outside.

“I was, wasn’t I?” Marinette smiled.

“This is so fantastic, you guys had a real conversation and you didn’t even stutter once!” Alya held out her hand for a high-five, which Marinette did with gusto. “And you look so good with this all new confidence! Hell, he won’t have any choice but to fall head over heels for you!”

“One thing at a time.” Marinette said, glancing over at Adrien as he talked with Nino a little ways ahead of them.

“But you’re on a roll now!” Alya protested, but when Marinette shook her head she decided to relent, not wanting to push her too far out of her comfort zone. This was a huge step for her as it was, she didn’t want to her to end up clamping back up in her shell after so much improvement had been made today. “Okay, if you insist. I’ll keep being your cheering squad as long as you need.”

“You’re the best.”

“I know.”

The two girls were still giggling as they caught up with Nino and Adrien. “We’re going to Marinette’s to eat, see you guys after lunch.” Alya told them, giving Nino a quick peck on the cheek.

“Sure thing.” Nino gave his girlfriend a hug. “Maybe bring me back a cupcake, since you insist on
being such a drag and hoarding the cheesecake for yourself!”

“If you’re lucky.” Alya stuck her tongue out at him before she and Marinette headed off in the direction of the Dupain-Cheng bakery.

Nino sighed dreamily as they walk away. “Sometimes I forget how lucky I am.”

Adrien grinned. “You mean lucky to have her, or lucky she doesn’t kick your ass?”

“Both.”
New chapter time! =) I started a week-long staycation from my two jobs today, so I'm planning on doing nothing but sleep, eat and write for the next seven days! =D All the support I've been getting from you all has been such a boost. The ideas are still flowing and I'm itching to write everyday, especially knowing that my story is liked by other then just me, LOL. =P More fluff ahead today, ladies and gentlemen. <3 Enjoy everyone!

Alya had been ecstatic when Marinette presented her with the chocolate-raspberry cheesecake, complete with a small plastic bucket of fresh whipped cream to go with it. The girls had quickly made themselves sandwiches in Marinette’s kitchen to munch on while they made their way over to Alya’s to drop off the cheesecake and whipped cream. They managed to get it there and make it back to school on time, and class went on as normal throughout the afternoon.

After school was over, everyone went their separate ways. Well, except for Nino and Alya, as once Nino heard the cheesecake was at her house now he insisted that he was coming over. She didn’t object, content with the amount of torture she’d made him endure throughout the day, so they went back together. Marinette thought wistfully how she couldn’t wait for Adrien to want to come back with her to her house someday.

‘For dessert.’ She quickly told herself when she found her imagination start to wander, but that just made it worse. ‘I mean for cheesecake! Just for totally normal, not-at-all-sexual cheesecake! Damnit, I’m getting such a one-track mind…’

She retreated into her room and rubbed her face as she sat down on her chaise lounge. She had brought a fresh plate of sugar cookies with her and Tikki zipped out her purse to where she had left them at the end of the cushions so she could start chowing down. Marinette just sat there for a while, forcibly dragging her mind out of the gutter, before she pulled out her phone.

It was the middle of the afternoon when she had realized she still hadn’t made herself a new email address. She had wanted to wait to do it when no one was around though, just in case someone saw what she was doing. Now that Marinette was finally alone with Tikki, she came up with a new account quickly and left the last name space blank, and only an ambiguous ‘Spots’ in the first name section.

The idea of being able to secretly exchange messages with Adrien made her heart race. She knew she had said they should be for business, but she also knew her partner well enough to know he wouldn’t be able to only use it when something came up with patrol. And to be honest, she didn’t mind. She would give him a bit of a hard time for it, of course, but she was going to reply to every one he sent. Marinette wasn’t going to let opportunities to talk to him pass her by any longer.

Once that had been settled, she worked on her homework for a while before going to see her Mom and Dad in the bakery, helping out for a while before the three of them went back upstairs to eat supper together.

“So how did it go today?” Her father asked once they had all sat down.
“Yes, tell us everything sweetheart.” Sabine told her.

Marinette looked a little self-conscious at being put on the spot. “Y-You mean with Adrien?” They nodded eagerly, and she tried to quell the rise of her suddenly returning nerves. “Nothing much, I guess. I did get to talk to him for a bit this morning without stumbling over my words, though.”

“That’s my girl!” Tom beamed. “You can do anything that you put your mind to. Soon you’ll be sweeping him off his feet!”

“It’ll all come in time.” Sabine said as she noticed the embarrassed look on her daughter’s face. “Just go at your own speed, and everything will fall into place.”

“I will.” Marinette soon finished eating the rest of her meal and got up to put her dishes into the sink. Her phone rang in her pocket, and when she pulled it out she saw it was Alya. “Can I take this?”

“Go ahead.” Her parents gave her a wave as she answered the call, meandering back up to her room.

Alya was enthusiastically telling her about how delicious the cheesecake had been, and how Nino had actually licked his plate. They talked for over an hour, about a little bit of everything, before Marinette told her she had to go. She blamed it on her homework, even though it was mostly done. But she wanted to make sure she got it completed before she had to go out on patrol tonight. So they said their good byes and Marinette worked quickly to finish what was left of her homework, getting it done in plenty of time before she would have to leave.

She had written down her new email address on a small piece of paper, but was unsure how she was going to bring it with her, because she didn’t have the luxury of pockets on her suit like Adrien did. Marinette eventually came up with the idea of rolling the paper up and using a piece of ribbon to tie it to her arm. Hopefully it wouldn’t get dislodged while she was travelling by yo-yo and go fluttering off into the streets of Paris.

That was the last thing she would need, some crazed fan ending up with direct access to Ladybug’s email!

Once she was transformed, Marinette made sure she tied the paper good and tight to her wrist. She double-knotted the bow for good measure, and waved her hand a few times through the air to test if it was secure. It didn’t move, thankfully enough. So she made her way out through the trapdoor in the roof, checked to make the coast was clear before she headed off to the usual apartment to meet up with Adrien.

Every couple of seconds she kept checking to see if the paper had come loose, but she was able to get all the way to their unofficially official meeting spot without it moving an inch. Marinette knew she was early, but even so she wasn’t alone. She tried not to smile as she landed on the rooftop as he sauntered over to her.

“Hello love bug,” He said, bowing with a flourish. “You’re looking especially fabulous this evening.”

Marinette gave a pretend curtsy. “And you’re such a dork.”

“One of my many talents.” Adrien was quick to notice the ribbon wound around her wrist. “What’s that?”

She presented her hand to him. “Untie it, please.”

Carefully, he used his claws to easily undo the double-knotted bow and unravel the ribbon before
picking up the paper. He unrolled it and grinned at what he read. “Is this your new email?”

“It is.” Marinette confirmed with a nod.

Adrien unzipped one of his pockets and slipped it inside, zipping it up securely right after doing so. “I’ll send you something tonight when I get home. I think it should be easy to know it’s me, because I doubt you’re giving out this address to anyone else.”

“And if you spam my Inbox…”

“Yeah, I know!” Adrien sighed dramatically. “You should know it’s going to take a lot of will power to be a good cat.”

“Yet somehow I still doubt you’ll actually be good.”

“Me-ouch.”

“Enough talk, it’s time to work.” Marinette pointed out into the dark skyline. “You want to switch halves of the city this time?”

“Whatever works for you, precious.” He crooned, not surprised when she rolled her eyes at him.

They separated and went on their separate routes. Marinette ended up finding a couple of crooks trying to break into a jewelry store, but she easily caught the would-be crooks and kept them tied up until the police arrived due to the tripped alarm. She released them into their custody and the officers thanked her for the help, then she was off again, finishing the rest of her circuit without any hiccups.

Because of the time she had spent with the jewelry store incident, she was expecting Adrien to be waiting for her. But she was actually the first one to get back to the apartment’s roof. Marinette stood there and waited a bit, then eventually sat down when he still hadn’t come back after fifteen more minutes. She was starting to get worried that something bad had happened when he finally arrived, looking tired.

“Sorry about that,” Adrien apologized as he plopped down beside her. “Someone spotted me and I had to outrun a whole bunch of people and their cameras. It took forever to lose them.”

“That’s okay, I haven’t been back too long. I caught two people trying to break into a jewelry store and had to wait for the police to come get them.” Marinette replied.

“Being a superhero can be hard.” He told her with a grin.

“Honestly, just being normal can be hard.” She said truthfully.

“You’re telling me.” Adrien agreed, moving his arms high over his head as he stretched lazily.

She tried not to stare at him while he did so. “Do you want to watch the stars again?”

“No.”

“Anytime.” He was about to lay back when he got an idea, and moved himself so that when he did lay back, his head was on her lap.

Marinette stared down at him, doing everything she could to not let a blush creep onto her face. “What do you think you’re doing?”

“Watching the stars.”

“Why there?”
“It’s much more comfy this way.”

“I could punch you.”

“But you won’t.”

Huffing in exasperation, she laid back herself so she wouldn’t have to look at his perfectly impish grin. “Sometimes, Cat Noir…”

“Let me guess, you really hate me?” Adrien laughed, moving his head up into the air a few inches to let her adjust into a comfortable position before laying right back down once she was settled.

“Really, really hate you.”

“I love you too.”

She was glad he wouldn’t be to see her face from here so she allowed herself to blush this time. Marinette went to smack him but he grabbed her hand. “Hey!”

“Remember what happened the last time you hit me?” She could tell he was smirking even though he couldn’t see him.

“So?” Marinette allowed herself to enjoy the memory while sounding casual.

“My kwami practically killed me last night when I got home because of everything we had been doing.” Adrien admitted.

“What, does he not like me?” She hoped that wasn’t the case. “Mine’s happy for us.”

“Plagg likes you,” He assured her, not wanting her to think otherwise. “He just doesn’t like that I was, uh…excited, in the suit. Again.” Adrien coughed awkwardly, then he realized what she had said. “Yours is happy about…all of this?”

“Oh yeah, Tikki’s a big hopeless romantic so she’s practically waving pom-poms.”

He groaned as he threw up his hands. “I knew I got stuck with the weird one!”

They started laughing, then eventually quieted down and simply laid there a while, enjoying being near one another. It was actually Adrien who sat up first, and though Marinette wouldn’t admit to it out loud, her legs felt cold without his head on her lap. “We should get going.” He said, trying to smile even though he really wished they could just stay this way for hours.

Sitting up too, Marinette nodded. “Make sure you send me an email when you get home, okay? I’ll reply as soon as I get it.”

“Will do.” Adrien moved to kiss her forehead, catching Marinette by surprise. “Good night my Lady.” She watched him leave, and stayed sitting for a little longer before getting to her feet.

So he’d gotten a leg up on her there. That was fine. He may have won this battle, but the war was far from over. She was feeling less and less shy around him now, so it seemed like high time to beat him at his own game. Tomorrow night she vowed that she would render him speechless…and that she would make Plagg angry again for good measure.
Marinette arrived home soon later, dropping through the trapdoor to her bed with ease. “Spots off.” She watched her transformation evaporate away and climbed down the ladder to sit down at her chaise lounge.

“I wonder how long it takes for him to get back to his place.” Tikki followed behind her bonded. “Do you think he’s sent it yet?”

“Maybe,” Marinette said as she took her phone from her pocket. She unlocked it and logged in to her new email address, pursing her lips when she saw her Inbox was still completely empty. “I guess not.”

Locking her phone again, Marinette was about to get up when it vibrated in her hand. She looked at the screen and saw the pop up telling her she had a new message – though since she had changed the settings earlier, none of the actual content of the email was showed. To help keep as much hidden from possible prying eyes, she wanted to take every precaution. So because of this the notification just said the first name of the sender, which was simply Jaguar, and the title of the message: You’ve Got Mail.

She slid her finger over the alert and put in her password to open the email. It loaded quickly as it was short, just one sentence long.

~Like the name I picked? It’s because I’m just as mysterious as the coolest bad-asses of the jungle. =3

Marinette found herself rolling her eyes even though she knew he obviously wouldn’t be able to see her reaction. She typed up a reply right away.

~If a Jaguar is black it’s usually referred to as a Panther, for the record. And you’re still a dork.

Hitting the little ‘Send’ button as she got up, Marinette set it down on the desk and was in the middle of getting undressed when her phone vibrated again. A grin tugged at the corners of her lips as she got into her PJs and unlocked her phone once more to read the new message.

~Obligatory cat picture!

Below the text was a snapshot of a white kitten playing with large balls of yarn in a brown wicker basket.
“And there we go, ladies and gentleman. That took about two minutes.” Marinette observed, amused as Tikki looked over her shoulder at the aforementioned image, fawning over how cute it was. Her thumbs nimbly danced over the keys as she made a short response.

~Business. Email.

She was climbing up to her bed when her phone vibrated for the third time. ‘I think I’ve created a monster,’ She pondered idly as she opened up the message.

~Hey, I did tell you I was going to send one a day, remember? =P See you tomorrow for patrol, Spots.

Shutting off her phone for the night, Marinette got comfortably snuggled under the covers and bid Tikki good night before rolling on her side and drifting off to sleep.

_____________________________________________________________________

Morning came again bright and early, and she wasn’t at all surprised when she turned her phone back on that there was another email already waiting for her.

~Rise and shine! Time for obligatory cat picture: day two!

This time it was a picture of a tabby sunbathing on the armrest of a recliner.

“Yup, I’ve definitely created a monster.” Marinette thought aloud, though the fact she had basically gotten ‘good morning’ text from Adrien left her completely thrilled.

By the time she was making her way to school, she made sure to try and keep a lid on her exuberance. She got to homeroom and was surprised to not see Alya or Nino there yet. Adrien was already in his desk however, and he waved at her when he noticed her come in. Taking a deep breath and reminding herself talking to him was a lot easier now, she waved back as she walked over to him and took her seat. “Good morning, my knight in shining armor,” He greeted her with a grin.

She willed herself not to turn red like she had yesterday when he called her that the first time. “So if I’m the knight,” Marinette began. “Doesn’t that make you the damsel in distress?” She asked cheekily, although she instantly regretted it and hoped such a statement wouldn’t get taken the wrong way.

But he laughed uproariously, so she allowed herself to breathe. “I guess it does!”

“Chloe’s obviously the dragon,” Marinette went on quietly, not wanting the blonde in question to overhear her from where she was sitting while reapplying her favorite lipstick. “Trying to steal you and lock you away in a tower for the rest of your days so she can have you all to herself.” Adrien had tears in his eyes, he was laughing so hard by now. “And Alya would be my squire.”

“What about Nino?”

“He could be…your handmaiden!”

“Yes! It’s so perfect!” Adrien took a couple deep breaths to try and calm down, but he was losing the battle and it was making Marinette giggle too.

Once they finally managed to be able to keep a straight face for more then a few seconds, Marinette noticed their respective best friends still hadn’t arrived. “Have you seen them yet today?” She gestured to their empty spots.
“Janitor’s closet.” Adrien replied, and instantly Marinette knew what he meant.

“They’re making out again?” He nodded, and she sighed. Opening up her backpack and fishing around for a moment, she soon pulled out a light cotton infinity scarf decorated with little flowers.

“What’s that?” Adrien looked at it curiously. He recognized it, but at first he couldn’t remember where from.

“Besides being a knight in shining armor, I’m also the guardian of Alya’s patented Hickey Hiding Scarf.” Marinette told him, and now he knew why it looked so familiar. Now that he thought about it, Alya did seem to wear that exact scarf at school rather regularly lately. “And I’ve been friends with her long enough to know she’s going to need this when those two finally do show up.”

“Speak of the devil,” Adrien said as he noticed the two scurrying through the door, as the bell had started ringing. Both of their cheeks were still pink as Marinette held out the scarf and Alya took it from her without a word, throwing it on as she sat down. Nino took his spot next to Adrien with a blissful look on his face, and Adrien just rolled his eyes as homeroom got started.

Sometime during mid-morning, Marinette started to feel some very strong temptation eating away at her. She wanted to see how Adrien would react if he got an email from Ladybug. So as stealthily as she could, she made a little message and sent it off.

For ten agonizingly long minutes, he didn’t move. But when their teacher told them they could start reading from their textbooks, she saw him grab his phone. Though Adrien did a very good job of keep it hidden, she of course already knew what the email he was looking at said.

~I might be a little bit late tonight. Hope that’s okay.

His arms move a little as he typed out his response, then he casually put away his phone. Soon after she felt hers vibrate in her pocket, but she forced herself to wait a safe amount of time before finally allowing herself to open the new email.

~Not a problem at all. However, you will be charged one smooch after every set of five minutes that I’m at the meeting place before you can get there, so you can judge yourself accordingly. ;)

Well, shit.

Now all of a sudden what had started as something so simple and innocent as having him waiting for her at the apartment’s rooftop seemed like something so scandalous and irresistible. But Marinette pushed the idea of making herself late on purpose out of her mind as she put her phone in her pocket again. ‘And don’t you dare blush!’ She thought pointedly to her own face, already feeling it warming due to the ideas that the message had sent floating around in her brain.

She had already decided to one up him tonight, so it was out of the question.

Well, at least until maybe tomorrow, anyway.

The rest of the day proved to be far less entertaining. Lunch break came and went, afternoon classes came and went. At the end of the day, Alya promised to return the scarf to her tomorrow morning so she could wear it home, though Marinette told her there was no real need to hurry. “Unless you plan on making another trip to the janitor’s closet everyday.” She couldn’t help but tease.

“Mock all you want,” Alya was not easily rattled so this was nothing to her. “But you’re going to regret making fun at me when all of a sudden you need bailing out with a Hickey Hiding Scarf too.” Marinette blushed deeply, and Alya knew she had already won. “And if you keep making progress
like you were yesterday with you-know-who, I’ll bet it’s going to be pretty soon, too!”

“**Alya!**” Marinette whispered sharply at her, desperately hoping the two boys walking ahead of them hadn’t heard.

“Girl, you are way too easy to wind up.” Alya laughed. “And you can’t tell me you haven’t thought of what it would be like to head to the janitor’s closet with Adrien.”

The bluenette had been about to rebuttal profusely when the guy in question turned around, having heard his name. “What was that Alya?”

“Oh nothing.” She replied, deciding she had given Marinette enough payback. “I was just saying I think we should all go out on the town and do something fun together this weekend.”

“I second that!” Nino agreed.

“Yeah, that’s a great idea.” Adrien smiled, glancing at Marinette as he added, “Just the four of us – the knight, the damsel, the squire and the handmaiden.”

Marinette practically snorted, causing Alya and Nino looked at each other rather baffled. “I guess… so we’ll plan more tomorrow?” Alya still sounded confused.

“Sounds good. Bye guys.” Adrien waved as he headed over to the usual silver car that was already waiting to pick him up.

The three waved until he drove out of site, then Nino and Alya turned to stare at Marinette. “Was that…an inside joke?” Nino asked, and Marinette just grinned.

“Spill!” Alya demanded. “You two totally must’ve had a moment this morning and I’m sorry I missed it and I want to know everything!”

“Nope, sorry. It’s a secret.” Marinette announced, flouncing off and leaving the two behind in a stunned silence.

“So…they really talked?”

“Must have.”

“Like, full sentences and everything?”

“I guess so.”

“Without us there?”

“Apparently.”

Nino looked impressed. “Dude, I am so proud of her.”

Alya smiled a little, then she took his hand as they too started walking. “So am I.”
Chapter 11

The clock was Marinette’s current enemy. It was ticking by far too slowly for her liking. Her parents had gone out to treat themselves to dinner, so she had made herself something small because she was too antsy to eat anything else. After downing her food, she got fresh water for her thankfully-still-a-secret bouquet, then decided to rehearse what she was going to do tonight over and over in her head, so when the time came, she wouldn’t be too afraid to go through with it.

She hoped, anyway. Really, really hoped.

The plate of Tikki’s cookies held shortbread tonight. She watched her kwami nibble away as she sat cross-legged on the floor, feeling more anxious the longer she had to wait. “I hate being such a bundle of nerves.” She grumbled.

“Would it help if I started eating faster?” Tikki asked.

“It’s not your fault. Thanks for offering though.” It always warmed her heart how much Tikki cared about her. “I keep thinking of all the different ways things could go horribly wrong.”

“The more you worry, the less it helps.”

“I know that, but it doesn’t make it stop.”

“Don’t think at all, then. Just go with your heart.”

Marinette got to her feet and moved to her computer, which was still on from when she had left it earlier. It was open to her document from before, however she had recently renamed it to Operation Romance & Seduce. There were a lot of new points on the page as well, ones she knew she would have to work her way up towards but still wanted to list so she could get used to the idea of reading the words, let alone doing the actions.

She was done sticking her toes in the shallows. But she wasn’t about to plunge into the deep end either. So she was going to try and find a happy medium of starting to wade in, at least to her metaphorical knees.

Clicking ‘Save’ so she wouldn’t lose the new work she had added to the file and shutting down her computer, Marinette took a second to inhale through her nose and exhale through her mouth. ‘Just be confident,’ She told herself. ‘Confidence is sexy. Right?’

Her mind wandered to the way Adrien had been so at ease with holding her close, and to when he had pressed her against the stairwell door on the office building. Her cheeks began to tingle. ‘Okay,
yup, definitely sexy. At least when he does it.’

Next she thought back to how he had looked when she had held him captive that same night, and the need in his eyes. Now her whole body was tingling. ‘And I guess it must be when I do it too…’

“Earth to Marinette!” She suddenly realized Tikki was shouting. Her kwami just grinned and waved her off when she went to apologize. “I was just trying to tell you I was ready to go.”

“Oh good.” Marinette looked relieved. “Spots on!”

Since she had already dismissed the thought of being late on purpose, she made sure she got to the meeting spot a little early. She could already see him making his way over as she touched down on the rooftop. “Managed to get here on time, sorry for the false alarm.” Marinette fibbed when he landed.

“Don’t worry about it.” Adrien put his hands on his hips. “Although I had been looking forward to the thought of charging you a late fee and getting free kisses.”

“The night’s still young.” Marinette let her words hang as she tapped her yo-yo, looking at a map of Paris that opened up on the surface. “Hawk Moth hasn’t sent out an akuma in a few days so I think we should be extra vigilant.”

Adrien had still been letting his mind wander at what she had meant with her first sentence when he saw her looking up at him. “Yeah,” He said, trying to pretend he had been listening the entire time. “Wait, I mean no. Maybe?”

Marinette grinned. “Tell me what I just said.”

“He’s still young.” Marinette let her words hang as she tapped her yo-yo, looking at a map of Paris that opened up on the surface. “Hawk Moth hasn’t sent out an akuma in a few days so I think we should be extra vigilant.”

Adrien had still been letting his mind wander at what she had meant with her first sentence when he saw her looking up at him. “Yeah,” He said, trying to pretend he had been listening the entire time. “Wait, I mean no. Maybe?”

Marinette grinned. “Tell me what I just said.”

“Um…”

“Wrong answer, kitty cat.”

The last time she had called him that he had been trapped underneath her. He tried to shove that thought away but the way the moonlight was getting caught in her eyes was taking his breath away too. Adrien’s hormones were definitely taking him for a ride tonight as he cleared his throat. “I’m sorry, can you say it again? I swear I’m listening now.”

Seeing him get flustered for once like this made her feel a lot better, definitely less worried. It was quite a bolster to see she really did seem to hold a lot of power over him. “I had just been saying that because Hawk Moth hasn’t sent out an akuma in a few days, I think we should be extra vigilant.”

“Right.” Adrien nodded in approval. “What’s your plan, since I’m sure you have one?”

“I do have one, actually.” Marinette tapped her yo-yo again so it went back to normal. “I think we should patrol the whole city together.”

“So I get more time to be with you? Count me in.”

“Try and focus.”

“Aye aye, Captain.”

With that they were off, diligently working their way through every street one by one. They did find some drunk college students making a scene around the Eiffel Tower, though they were quick to high-tail it out of sight when Ladybug and Cat Noir showed up. They found some rowdy bikers
about to get into a fistfight, but they also backed off when confronted by the superhero duo. They even found a man angrily throwing eggs at his ex-girlfriend’s house, which they dragged kicking and screaming down to the police station.

But no akumas.

“Maybe Hawk Moth has finally given up?” Adrien pondered hopefully as they got back to the rooftop of the apartment building.

“Doubtful.” Marinette said warily. “But at least the city’s safe for now.”

“So I say we celebrate.” He leaned in expectantly, but she turned her head and sidestepped him.

“Aww, come on.”

“Nope, time for stars.” She sat down and laid back, mimicking him from two nights previous by patting the spot next to her.

It was his turn to grumble before he walked over to lay down beside her. Marinette made herself wait a good few minutes before she moved over and climbed on top of him. “You know, I can’t really see the sky this way.” His voice was soft, though he could truly care less – he thought this was a much better view.

“My apologies.” Marinette replied, but she didn’t mean a word.

“Would I be correct in assuming waiting to do this is why you moved away before?”

“Perhaps.”

“And could I also hazard a guess that you had actually planned to do this right from the beginning?”

“Perhaps.”

Adrien’s throat felt dry. “So…does this mean I can kiss you now?”

“Perhaps.” Marinette felt adrenaline pushing her on and she whispered to him softly, dangerously, “Perhaps more.”

Wasting no time, he lifted his shoulders from the rooftop to kiss her. She kissed him back, and soon she rolled their bodies so he was above her now. This change in positions surprised Adrien; the love of his life was beneath him and it was doing simply dreadful things to his imagination. And to make matters worse, suddenly she was grabbing his hands and moving them…to her chest.

He broke their kiss, completely in shock now. “L-Ladybug!” He stammered, trying to move his hands off but she forcibly kept them there.

“It’s okay,” The look in her eyes told him that she really meant it. “I want you to.”

“But…” Adrien looked shy. “I’ve never done anything like this before.”

“Neither have I,” She admitted. “And I know they’re small, but…”

“No, they’re perfect.” Taking a moment to steel his resolve, Adrien tentatively gave one breast a gentle squeeze and enjoyed the breathy sigh it elicited from her. Next he squeezed both this time, and she moved in a delicious little squirm. He could already feel heat travelling to his groin as he kissed her again, allowing his hands to start massaging them slowly.
Marinette found herself grabbing his waist, whimpering into his mouth. All traces of being nervous had long since left her mind as lust took over. When one of his thumbs brushed over her nipple through the material her suit, she gasped and arched her back. “A-Ah!”

Oh, what she was doing to him. He could feel her fingers tightening their hold on his hips as he continued and it was getting very hard to think straight anymore. Adrien wanted to hear every noise she could make, though he was still vaguely aware they were only on the rooftop. Sure, it was quite high up so there wouldn’t be prying eyes, but the chance of residents on the upper floors possibly listening in to the sounds from her that he wanted to keep for himself was definitely not ideal. He did not want to share.

But all proper thoughts dissolved as she happened to bring up her knees at that exact moment and her right thigh touched against his arousal. He moaned, and when this time she pressed even closer to him on purpose, he did so again. Adrien’s whole body was a shuddering mess and he had to pull back for air, panting heavily. “God, My Lady…”

Despite the fact Marinette hadn’t worked up the courage to move her hands any further down then his hips, she decided let her thigh do what they could not. She let it rock against him slowly and he had to press his forehead against her shoulder as his breathing hitched. “I think your kwami is going to be furious tonight.” She told him with a bit of a smirk.

“Y-You can still think?” Adrien managed to say, brain still swimming. “That needs to change…” He was not going to be so easily beaten. Lightly pinching her nipples, he brought his own knee slowly forward to push between the apex of her thighs, and was delighted when she threw her head back and covered her mouth with one hand to stifle a squeal.

All of a sudden, they heard a loud boom in the distance. They looked at each other and their eyes locked, wide with disbelief. “This can’t be happening.” Marinette said as the superhero duo forced themselves apart and shakily got to their feet.

With the vantage point the rooftop provided them, they could see beams of purple light shooting this way and that from several blocks away and there was screaming coming from the streets below. “You’ve got to be kidding me…” Adrien hissed, but they both knew this was no false alarm, not something that could be handled by the normal authorities.

“Looks like we’re needed,” Marinette sighed heavily as she tried smoothing down her hair. “I’ll head over there right now, you go take some time to…”

“Calm down?” Adrien finished her sentence for her, blushing in embarrassment. She nodded and unhooked her yo-yo. “I’ll go find a pool to jump into, I guess.”

“You can stay behind, I won’t blame you.” Marinette told him.

“No, I’m not going to make you fight whatever that thing is alone just because of me being so turned on.” He nervously scratched at the back of his head. “I mean, besides, you’re going to be going straight to it, I have to at least come be your back up as soon as I can.”

“Only because it’s easier for me to act like I’m feeling normal.” Marinette saw he still looked displeased. “All right, fine, I’ll stall it until you can meet up with me.” She threw her yo-yo and swung off.

Adrien took some deep breaths before he tried to recall somewhere that had an outdoor pool nearby. He went to walk to the edge of the rooftop but found it was still very uncomfortable to do so, and he clenched his fists, thoroughly frustrated for more then one reason.
That akuma victim would be lucky he didn’t break their nose if he got the chance.
Chapter 12

Chapter Notes

Hi everyone! ^^ I'm really happy you all liked the last chapter so much! =D The stats and feedback I keep getting for this story continue to blow my mind, so thank you all once again. <3 A note about this chapter: I know they usually rip or crush or break or snap or do whatever to the item the akuma is hiding in, but when I was researching boxing helmets they looked pretty tough, and for good reason. So I figured it would be too strong to wreck normally, and that it would be best to have Adrien use Cataclysm to destroy the helmet to get it out. And that way both he and Marinette would have their transformation time winding down on them, so it would be fair. That was my thought process anyway. =P Enjoy guys! ♥

When Marinette arrived on the scene, it was chaos. “Ladybug!” Someone shouted when they saw her there. “Please, help us!”

They were a small group of terrified civilians huddled behind a parked bus to try and hide from the shots of energy being fired every which way. The akuma victim was a young man dressed in a tank top and shorts, a padded helmet and large purple boxing gloves on his hands; every time he punched the air, the blasts of dark magic erupted outward from his fists. And whenever they managed to come into contact with something, there was a small explosion. That would have been the cause of all the commotion. “I should be the champion!” He bellowed. “But that doesn’t matter anymore. Soon everyone will know the name of Knockout!”

Marinette carefully weaved her way through the volleys of light until she was able to land nearby the villain. “I’m only going to tell you this once, so listen up,” She shouted, getting his attention. “This isn’t a good time for me. Let’s hurry up and make this quick.”

Knockout glared at her. “You think you can beat me?”

“I know I can!” He started to rapidly punch the air in her direction, and she spun her yo-yo as fast as she could to create a shield to block the blows. Marinette was fairly certain the akuma would be hiding in his helmet, as that made the most sense, but being able to get close enough to get it off his head could prove to be a problem.

“Let’s see you try!” Knockout laughed, undeterred as he kept sending wave after wave of magical punches her way.

During this exchange the people behind the bus had managed to scamper away to safety while he was focusing his attacks at her, so at least that was a plus. But she was getting rather tired of this stalemate between them rather fast. She started stepping forward as she kept her yo-yo spinning, using the shield it created to keep her safe as she began to close the distance between them. Marinette saw him falter when he realized she was getting closer, and he went to back up.

“Scared?” She called, wanting to keep him sidetracked. “You should be. I’m normally pretty nice but I’d really rather be somewhere else right now.”

Out of the corner of her eye she saw someone move to stand next to her, and she didn’t even need to
turn her head to know who it was. “What an odd coincidence Ladybug, so would I.” Adrien was still shaking water out of his hair, and he looked thoroughly drenched.

She fought to keep a straight face, and even Knockout was staring. “What the Hell happened to you?” The villain asked incredulously.

“Just out for a swim,” Adrien replied nonchalantly. “And then you had to go and interrupt it. Bad move.” He grabbed his staff and rolled his shoulders. “Trust me, I’m looking forward to fighting you.”

“That’s because I’m the best fighter there is!” Knockout announced, charging forward to try and land a blow, but the two superheroes leapt away in opposite directions. Adrien whistled at him to keep him focused his way, and the two began to alternate swinging and dodging.

Knowing he was doing this to make a distraction for her, Marinette tossed her yo-yo high. “Lucky Charm!” A second later a small empty trashcan dropped into her hands and she caught it with a scowl. “For Pete’s sake, why can’t I ever get something that makes sense?”

After scanning the area and devising a plan, she crept over to where Adrien and Knockout were. When she was sure the villain was going to take a step backward, she shoved the trashcan into the path so he stepped right into it. “What the…” He stopped immediately, trying to shake the trashcan off his foot.

“Made you look,” Marinette said sweetly, and Knockout turned his head back only to get punched right under the chin by a certain clawed fist. He then collapsed in a heap, out cold. “You didn’t have to hit him that hard,” She chided as she bent to undo the chin strap of the helmet and pull it gingerly off of Knockout’s head.

“Oh yes I did.” Adrien rubbed his knuckles a bit. “After all, that little shit-bird ruined a perfectly good…uh, swim.”

Marinette did her best to act oblivious to what he could’ve possibly meant as she studied the helmet. “Now how do you think we’re supposed to get the akuma out of this thing? It looks pretty sturdy and I don’t think it’ll rip or crush very easily.”

“Allow me.” Adrien took it from her and set it on the ground before he held up his hand. “Cataclysm!” He then merely touched the helmet and it disintegrated into a pile of dust, leaving the akuma exposed.

Easily catching the butterfly and purifying it, the two watched it fly off as Marinette pulled the trashcan loose and tossed it into the sky. “Miraculous Ladybug!” The magical lights easily cleaned up the mess Knockout had made, restored the helmet to it’s original state and even wrapped around the young man after the purple glow had faded away, so he was now back to normal and he wouldn’t have one killer headache to wake up to anymore.

“Ugh…” He groaned, opening his eyes and looking around in confusion. “What happened? Where am I?”

“It’s all right now, you can head on home.” Marinette forced a smile and the young man got up and wandered off, still rather perplexed. She looked over at her partner, holding out her fist.

He returned the gesture with a small smile, though both of them knew their hearts weren’t really in their usual congratulatory fist bump. They each knew the other to be putting on a show for the sake of onlookers. “Guess I’ll see you next time?” Adrien extended his staff.
“Yup, catch you later.” Marinette grabbed her yo-yo and threw it long, sighing as she swung off. Her earrings were already beginning to beep, and she knew his ring would be doing the same. There would be no going back to the apartment’s rooftop now. They both would have to head straight home.

When Marinette finally made it back to the safety of her room, the last spot on her earring timed out and soon Tikki reappeared. The bluenette held out her hands and her kwami slumped into them tiredly. “I’m sorry so Marinette.” She even sounded exhausted. “I really wish I could’ve kept you transformed for longer so you could’ve gone back with him.”

“Don’t even think about blaming yourself.” Marinette hugged Tikki close to her cheek. “You couldn’t have done anything different. I had to use the Lucky Charm, and he had to use his Cataclysm. Both of us would’ve been reverting back to normal in minutes. The rules are the rules.” She gave her a grin. “So if you want to blame someone, you should be blaming Hawk Moth. It’s really all his fault that Adrien and I were so rudely interrupted.”

Tikki yawned and Marinette carried her over to the chaise lounge, setting her on the comfiest cushions so she could get herself some much-earned sleep. Marinette quickly got changed, climbed the ladder to her bed and laid down underneath the covers. Grabbing her phone, she decided to break her own ‘business email’ rule and send Adrien a message.

~And henceforth, I shall now think of boxing as the worst mood killer ever.

It wasn’t long before she got a reply.

~I know. I nearly died when I heard that first bang. ;-;

She was about to start typing when she got a second email.

~And you were right, Plagg is currently still kicking the back of my head for what he deems to be fair payback.

Marinette covered her mouth to keep from laughing, not wanting to wake Tikki.

~Would it help your case if I said I was sorry?

Now she wasn’t even bothering to lock her phone anymore, she just kept refreshing her Inbox.

~He says he doesn’t believe you.

~That’s okay, I don’t believe me either.

~I wouldn’t want you to be sorry anyway. That. Was. Incredible.~

Allowing herself to smile proudly, Marinette decided to be let herself be daring.

~You mean your swim? It was really hard not to laugh at you when you came back, you looked like a drowned rat.

~Ha ha, funny girl. You know what I mean.

~Do I?

~…Spots.

~Jaguar.
Her phone didn’t vibrate for a while, then when it finally did and Marinette opened the email, her eyes grew wide.

~Go ahead, have your fun. It’ll just give me more things to have to punish you for tomorrow night. ;3

Something about the word ‘punish’ sent heat flooding through her body. Very salacious mental images were now running rampant in her mind’s eye and she had to admit, she liked it.

Did she dare further this conversation?

‘Confidence, confidence!’ Reciting this mantra, Marinette took one last breath to cement her resolution and made up her reply.

______________________________

Despite how late it had gotten, there was one room still alight at the Agreste Mansion. Adrien was sitting in bed with his phone glued to his hands, a smirk on his face as he thought about Ladybug’s possible reactions to reading his email. He was quite satisfied with himself.

Plagg, having become tired of kicking the back his bonded’s head, had gone to the kitchen and come back with as much camembert as his little arms could carry. He had been filling his face for a while before he glanced over at Adrien. “It’s one in the morning.” He finally said through a mouthful of cheese.

“So?”

“You have school tomorrow, you know.”

“I’m surprised you care.”

“Not really, I just was hoping you’d finally go to bed if I told you.”

Adrien laughed. “Thanks for sort of caring, then.” He was going to say more but his phone vibrated in his hand, and he quickly unlocked it to open the message. His jaw dropped as he read the words there.

~I recall saying something along the lines of be prepared to get back what you dish out, did I not?

And just like that, all the red-hot need he had felt from earlier tonight came storming back with a vengeance. Adrien’s heartbeat went double time and he wished for nothing more then to be kissing her right now. To have her in his arms again, and to be able to do every little thing he could think of to make her need him as much as he needed her.

Because the thought of her returning the favor practically unraveled his sanity.

A Herculean effort was needed to force his thoughts out of the gutter so he could try and be sensible with his response.

~That you did. So I guess we’ll both keep each other on our toes, hmm? For now though we should probably turn in, or getting up tomorrow is going to be rough.

He forced himself to get up and switch off the lights before shuffling back to bed and climbing in with a sigh. Damn his ingrained sense of responsibility! Adrien’s phone vibrated and he read the short reply with a little smile.
~Probably a good idea. Night Jaguar, I can’t wait to see you again tomorrow.

~Neither can I. Good night, Spots.

Though it was quite a while before either of them would fall into a restless sleep.
Chapter 13

Chapter Notes

Next chapter! <3 I had some fun with writing this one. Another one of my head-canons is Tom is the biggest shipper of Marinette and Adrien, so he always gets very excited whenever he sees them together. xD This will also continue into further chapters as their relationship grows. But shh, you didn't hear that from me! ;P As for the Word document of this story, I'm on page 120 and chapter 26. Still don't have an ending in sight, either. So there's definitely lots more coming! ^^ As for right now, please enjoy today's installment! =)

Getting up that morning was still decidedly rough. Marinette dragged herself through the house at a snail’s pace, and she only managed to get to school with mere minutes to spare. “You okay Marinette?” Alya asked as she trudged over to her desk, sitting down less-then-gracefully and rubbing her eyes.

“You totally look like death.” Nino agreed.

“I’m just tired.” Marinette stifled a yawn, though she did take a moment to enjoy the fact Adrien was sitting with his head on his own desk. “What’s wrong with him?”

“Headache.” Was Adrien’s quick, though muffled, response.

She fought the urge to grin at the fact that he was obviously just as exhausted as she was. “Oh, that sucks. I have some pain killer in my backpack if you need some.” She offered, and he sat up to look at her.

“Thanks, but I, uh…I took some this morning. I’ll be fine.” He gave a quick smile, and she knew he was lying.

“Thanks, but I, uh…I took some this morning. I’ll be fine.” He gave a quick smile, and she knew he was lying.

“Okay, well, keep me posted.” She said as the bell ring long and loud. Marinette was feeling more alert now, because although a part of her did feel a little guilty for keeping him up so late, another part of her was enjoying that it really was all her doing. That made being feeling as tired as she was oh so worth it.

Once it was time for lunch, the group of four decided they wanted to eat together so they could make plans for the weekend. It was Alya’s idea, and before she could even try and goad her friend into it, Marinette was already saying they could go to her house to eat. After all, there was plenty of food for them all there. So they made their way to the Dupain-Cheng bakery, with Alya giving Marinette a big thumbs-up.

Tom and Sabine welcomed them with open arms, quickly gathering some still-warm cinnamon buns for them to eat. Sabine gave her daughter an encouraging shoulder squeeze and Tom was grinning from ear to ear. Marinette guided her friends upstairs into the living room area, purposefully not taking them into her room for reasons mostly consisting of certain posters and hidden bouquets. They made themselves comfortable on the couches and the floor, eating the warm cinnamon buns in contented silence for a while.
“How about having a picnic on Saturday?” Alya suggested.

“Yeah, and then we can hang out in the park all afternoon.” Nino added, starting to tick off ideas with his fingers. “We could eat good food, we could play Frisbee, we could eat good food…”

Marinette laughed and rolled her eyes. “I’ll have to make sure I bring something freshly made for us to have.” Nino looked ecstatic, but then she noticed that Adrien was frowning. “Is something wrong?”

He just sighed. “I have a piano thing Saturday afternoon.”

“Oh, that’s okay, we can just change meeting up to Sunday,” Marinette said quickly, but he shook his head.

“I’m really getting tired of having to do all these stupid lessons Father wants me to do.” Adrien muttered. “I’ve been seriously thinking about telling him I want to quit.”

“You mean piano?” Alya asked.

“And Chinese, and fencing…all of it.” He looked like he had been considering this for a long time. “I know he’ll never let me quit doing the modeling and photo-shoots, but maybe I can get him to let me stop having to take all the other stuff if I say it’s starting to get in the way of my study time. Because he won’t want an Agreste to not pass with flying colors.”

“Go for it, dude!” Nino encouraged with gusto. “Stand up for yourself!”

“Yeah, you deserve to have more free time.” Alya nodded.

All Marinette could think about was that would mean there would be less things getting in Adrien’s way of meeting her for patrol, so she was absolutely all for it. “I think you should too.” Was all she allowed herself to say however, but the smile that graced his lips warmed her heart.

“Thanks guys.” Adrien felt a lot better, their words reinforcing him. “I’m going to see if I can talk to him about it as soon as I get home today. I’ll let you guys know how it goes tomorrow.”

They finished making arrangements to meet at the park they usually went to for noon on Saturday. After all the cinnamon buns were gone, the group put away their dishes and headed back downstairs. They thanked Tom and Sabine for letting them come over, then they made their way back to school.

After classes were finally done for the day, the group of four parted ways, and Marinette found herself wishing she could be a fly on the wall to observe how things would go for Adrien. Once she was home, she took the opportunity while her parents were busy to change the water on her still-hidden flowers before sitting down at her desk, drumming her fingers impatiently against the surface. Having to wait until tomorrow to hear the outcome may very well do her in.

“They sure have blossomed beautifully,” Tikki was saying when Marinette forced herself back to reality, since she hovering just above the bouquet to admire them.

“Yeah, they sure have.” Marinette pulled out her phone so she could take some pictures of them, as well as close-ups of each blooming flower. She knew that they would only last so long, and she wanted to have something to always remember them by. Turning on her computer, she connected her phone to the machine so she could move all the new photos to her hard drive for safe keeping. They would be a lot easier to hide by being moved into the recesses of her computer files then they would be left on her cell.
As she was deleting the pictures from her phone, it vibrated in her hand. She was surprised to see it was a message from Jaguar.

~I’m about to do something big, my Lady. Please wish me luck.

He must still be feeling uneasy about talking about quitting his lessons. And knowing that he had wanted to turn to her to ask for more support left her tickled pink. Marinette immediately emailed him back while doing her level best to still feign innocence.

~Whatever it is, I believe in you. You can do it.

And she prayed with every ounce of her being that everything would work out.

Seeing the words from Ladybug was the last push he need. Adrien put his phone back in his pocket, then knocked on the door to the room he knew that his father was currently in.

“Enter.” He heard him say, and Adrien slowly pushed open the door. Gabriel Agreste was working behind the screen that was standing in the middle of the room. He arched his eyebrows slightly when he saw his son enter. “Yes?”

“I need to talk to you, Father.” Adrien tried to keep his voice level.

“Must you?” Gabriel looked annoyed. “I’m busy.”

Adrien frowned. “This is important, so yes.”

Gabriel sighed and walked over to stand closer to him. “All right, get on with it.”

Trying not to let himself get irritated by the level of boredom in his tone, Adrien drew himself up to his full height and looked him straight in the eyes. “I don’t want to take Chinese or fencing or piano anymore.”

Silence. “What did you just say?” He finally demanded.

Feeling his confidence falter, Adrien thought back to the encouragement he had gotten from his friends, and from Ladybug, to push himself on. “I said, I don’t want to take-”

“If I have to keep juggling all these things I could end up not passing my exams, and who knows, maybe even not graduating on time.” Adrien told him. “I promise I’ll still keep modeling and going to photo-shoots, but please let me stop having to do all the other stuff. It’s too much.”

“Out of the question.” Gabriel snapped.

“Father, I need more time to be able to work on homework and to study.” Adrien argued as calmly as he could. “You don’t want me to run the risk of failing, do you?”

That’s when Gabriel’s eyes narrowed. “Oh?”

“You can’t be serious.” Gabriel said.

“I am.” Adrien put his hands on his hips. “Just think about it. Are all these extra lessons really worth the possible irreparable tarnishing of the Agreste reputation with such a failure?”

Another heavy silence. “So,” Gabriel looked his son over slowly. “There’s a girl.”
“What?” Adrien blushed but tried to quickly recover. “I never said that.”

“That is the only reason you would even entertain the idea to say something so bold to me.” Gabriel folded his arms across his chest. “But, very well. If you are this adamant in your claim of needing the extra time to study, then I will go ahead and cancel all your other extra-curricular activities. Therefore I expect you to ace every single one of your exams and to pass at the top of your class.”

Dumbfounded, Adrien just stood there in shock. “You…”

“And once you’ve graduated, all your lessons will resume as normal. So take this time off until the summer very seriously.” Gabriel looked down his nose at Adrien, his eyes hard. “Do not disappoint me.”

“O-Of course! Th-Thank you Father!” Adrien promised, and could still barely believe what he was hearing.

“You may leave now.” Gabriel gave a wave of his hand before turning to head back to his work.

Adrien had already scampered out of the room, barely able to contain his joy. He burst through his bedroom door and slammed it shut behind him before he allowed himself to shout victoriously, “It worked!”

Plagg floated out from his shirt pocket with a grin. “He totally saw through you, but yeah, it worked.”

“It doesn’t matter, he still said yes!” Adrien pumped his fist in the air.

Plagg just rolled his eyes, then noticed him taking out his phone, watching him curiously. “What are you doing now?”

“Go get some camembert, buddy.” Was all Adrien said as he was already busy typing up an email.

~Can you meet me at the usual spot in fifteen minutes?

“Oh come on, not again!” Plagg protested, but Adrien looked at him pointedly and he soon just sighed heavily, grumbling as he disappeared through the wall.

There was a response from her before his kwami even returned.

~I’ll be there.

Once Plagg had came back and swallowed down some of the foul-smelling cheese, Adrien didn’t waste another second. “Claws out!”
Chapter 14

Chapter Notes

Hello again, my friends! =D Are you perhaps wishing to see some adorable fluff today? Then you're in luck! =P Tomorrow's actually going to have an even fluffier chapter to upload, like I'm talking tooth-rotting sweetness. xD Anyway! Another appearance by Confident Mariette is ahead. Hope you all enjoy. ^^

Since Marinette couldn’t tell over email if the reason Adrien wanted to see her right away was for good news or bad news, she raced as quickly as she could to the apartment building, fearing the worst. When she got there, he was already waiting for her. She landed on the rooftop and he ran over to her, but before she could say anything he grabbed her by the waist and spun her through the air, light in his eyes and laughter on his lips.

“H-Hey!” Marinette squeaked, though she was very relieved to see how happy he looked as he gently set her down. “I take it whatever you were doing went well?”

“Ladybug, I did it!” Adrien hugged her close. “I talked to my Father and he actually listened to me! He never listens to me!”

“What did you two talk about?” Marinette inquired, playing dumb. “My Father…he’s very strict. He’s already had me working for years, and on top of that had me taking a whole bunch of extra-curricular stuff that I didn’t really want to do anymore.” He told her, forcing himself to be vague. “I wanted to be able spend more time with my friends…” He looked at her with a dazzling smile. “And more time with you.”

Marinette had figured as much, but her cheeks were still warm. “And he was okay with that?”

“I told him it was because I needed more time to study, because I figured that would be the best angle to work from.” Adrien replied. “And it actually worked! He said he’d call off all the extra lessons until after I graduate!”

“Just like that?” Marinette was surprised to hear that. From what she had heard from Nino over the years about Gabriel Agreste’s parenting, this sudden generosity seemed highly unlikely.

“Well, I have to pass all my exams and he wants me to get top marks, but I’m sure it’ll be fine.” Adrien waved his hand dismissively.

Now Marinette was a little worried. “What would happen if you didn’t get top marks because of spending too much time doing…other things?”

Adrien just shrugged. “He’d probably be pissed at me but it’s not a big deal. He’s always upset about something.”

“Promise me.” Mariette grabbed his shoulders, making him look right at her. “Don’t let this go to waste by not keeping up your end of the bargain. Because if you follow through with what he wants, it might mean he’ll start to be more lenient in the future. Okay?”
The passion in her words struck him. She was right of course, but the way she said it had meant so much more. It was obvious she really cared about what would happen to him, and that fact alone made his face start to heat up. “As you wish, my Lady.” He said quietly, smiling shyly.

She leaned up to give him a light kiss. “I should probably get going though, my parents don’t know I’m gone and it’s almost supper time.”

“Yeah, I should head back too.” Adrien gave her another quick, tight hug before stepping back a bit and grabbing for his staff. “See you back here in a couple hours?”

“Absolutely.” Marinette gave him a wave, then the two superheroes headed home.

When she dropped through the trapdoor into her room, Marinette tried to be as quiet as possible as she made her way down the ladder from her bed and tip-toed across the floor. “Spots off,” She whispered as she bent down to press her ear up to her bedroom door.

Not hearing anything out of the ordinary, she looked back at Tikki. “Do you think they noticed you were gone?” Her kwami asked her.

“I really hope not.” Marinette stood back up and crossed her fingers behind her back momentarily as she opened the door so she could climb downstairs, taking the steps slowly so she could survey the scene as it would unfold before her.

Sabine was setting the table and Tom was standing over a frying pan as he checked on the stir-fry they were making tonight. “Great timing honey, dinner’s almost ready to go,” Sabine said when she noticed her daughter coming down. “Could you please grab the cups?”

Sometimes it really amazed her how much luck favored her since she had taken the mantle of Ladybug. Relieved that she hadn’t been noticed to be missing, she nodded eagerly and went to the cupboard. She grabbed three glasses and brought them to the table, pouring herself some of the lemonade from the pitcher that was already sitting there. “That sure smells great Dad.”

“Thanks!” Tom walked over with the frying pan and dished some of the stir-fry out to each of their plates. After putting away the pan, he sat down next to his wife and clapped his hands. “Now tell us all about what happened at lunch.”

Marinette smiled a little. Her parents must be trying to give Alya a run for her money in the cheering section department. “We’re all going to hang out together on Saturday. A picnic for lunch and then relaxing in the park.”

“That sounds lovely!” Sabine looked happy for her. “We could make you fresh buns for sandwiches.”

“And how about some brownies for desert?” Tom added.

“You don’t have to make all that,” Marinette said after she swallowed her mouthful of food. “I can do it.”

“We want to,” Sabine insisted, and Tom nodded in agreement.

Again, she was smiling. She really wouldn’t trade her parents for the world. “In that case, I guess I’ll make croissants. Adrien loves them.”
“Excellent!” Tom held up his cup of lemonade with a grin. “I can tell you first-hand the fastest way to a man’s heart is his stomach.”

Giggling, Marinette rolled her eyes. They finished their meal together and made plans to wake up early Saturday morning to finish all the baking. Marinette then fired off a text to Alya telling her to bring sandwich fixings for the picnic as she would have the buns and dessert covered. She replied with a ‘sounds good’ and added she’d tell Nino to bring the drinks. As Alya still didn’t know if Adrien would be able to come or not, she didn’t want to assign him something to bring yet.

But Marinette knew otherwise of course, so she just sent a simple ‘okay’ back.

Once the supper dishes had been cleaned and put away, Marinette climbed back into her room to work on her homework. She was getting a little tired of the never-ending cycle of assignments, but she knew it was just going to get worse when exams rolled around before it got better. But she trudged through it, finally finishing as the time to get ready for patrol was coming up fast. Locking her bedroom door, she glanced at Tikki. “Did you get to have enough cookies?”

“I could never have enough cookies.” Tikki winked. “But yes, I’m ready.”

In a flash of light she was Ladybug again, and she made her way through the darkening sky towards the apartment building. When she got there, she didn’t see Adrien there, or even nearby. Content to wait, Marinette sat down and soon laid back to watch the clouds to pass the time. Still feeling tired from last night’s lack of sleep, she allowed herself to shut her eyes for just a moment.

Or at least she thought. At some point she must’ve dozed off because all of a sudden she was being awoken by the feeling of a light shake to her arm. “Ladybug?”

Rubbing her eyes, Marinette sat up and saw Adrien sitting next to her. “Oh, hi,” She said with a yawn.

“Sorry, I know I’m really late,” Adrien apologized, looking a little ashamed.

“What time is it?” She asked, rubbing her eyes.

“About half an hour after we were supposed to meet up.” He replied, showing her the time on the open screen of his staff.

“That’s not so bad.” Marinette stretched, and for a second she could’ve sworn she thought he was staring at her.

“It’s just I started studying, like you said, and I totally lost track of time, I would’ve emailed you but I was already so late when I realized it, I’m so sorry…” Adrien was starting to babble now, and she found it to be rather adorable.

“Don’t worry, it’s fine.” Marinette assured him. “I was just still tired from being up so late yesterday. That’s all.”

At this Adrien grinned a little. “Oh yeah, how could I forget…”

She rolled her eyes as she got onto her feet. “Come on lover boy, we should start making our rounds.” Marinette saw his cheeks flush beneath the moonlight and she was starting to enjoy this. “We should be okay to go back to taking halves of the city again, because of the akuma yesterday. So for a change of pace, how about you go east and I go west this time?”

Retracting the screen on his staff by pressing the little green paw-print button, Adrien stood as well
and tried to regain his composure again. “Whatever works, bugaboo.” He said casually.

But she knew she clearly still had the upper hand and she was *definitely* enjoying this. “And then, after we’re all finished, I’ll let you try and make it up to me for showing up so late.”

He blinked. “What?”

“I think you must be forgetting,” She said with a smirk. “About the rule that you just made yesterday. It went something along the lines of being charged a fee of one smooch for every five minutes of being late.”

Now his eyes grew wide. “Uh…”

“So that means, by my math, you owe me six.” Marinette winked as she grabbed for her yo-yo. “Better be ready to pucker up when we get back!” And with that she swung off into the distance, simply oozing pride at how she was able to flirt with him so much better now.

Adrien felt a shudder move along his back before he finally managed to pull his thoughts together to actually go on patrol. All he could think while he twisted his way through Paris was, ‘She’s so *hot* when she does that…’
Chapter 15

Chapter Notes

This. Is. My. Favorite. Chapter!! ^^ SO MUCH FLUUUUUFF! ♥ And I promise you, even though the end of this chapter might sound like a perfectly good place to end the story altogether, there is so much more still coming! Much more fluff, and much more smut, too! ;) But in all seriousness, I really had a lot of fun writing this one. And remember what I said about that conversation in chapter ten being important? Well this is way. =P So anyway, I hope you all enjoy this one as much as I do! <3

Marinette deliberately waited a few minutes a couple blocks away from the apartment building once she was done her half of patrol so that Adrien would definitely be back before her. She was still abuzz with how much easier it was to not only speak to him, but to give him a taste of his own flirtatious medicine. Seeing him blush like that around her made her feel a lot less nervous, and a lot more bold.

She had come to the conclusion she rather liked being Bold Marinette, and keeping her around seemed like it could end up being quite fun.

When she decided she had allowed him enough time to get back to the meeting place first, she made her way back with a wide grin already situated firmly on her face. Adrien was there, his back facing her. Landing as quietly as she could, she then tiptoed over to him before sliding her arms around his waist. “Miss me?”

At first she felt him jump a little, startled, but when he realized that it was her he relaxed. “Always.”

“You’re such a big sap.” She giggled.

“Guilty as charged.” He turned in her grasp and laid a kiss on the top of her head. “By the way, here’s one of the six I owe you.”

Her grin becoming a smirk now, Marinette licked her lips slowly and she knew he was watching her intently. “Do I get to pick where the rest of them go?”

“So do you just not realize you’re trying to kill me or are you actually doing it on purpose?” He asked, sounding playful to try and hide how much of an effect she was having on him.

“Wouldn’t you like to know?” Marinette stuck out her tongue at him.

“But I have to admit, I love this side of you.” Adrien let one of his hands cup the side of her face as he smiled. “And being the only one that gets to see this side of you is even better.”

“And you know what? I love this side of me too.” Marinette said happily. “Now, about those kisses…” She pointed to her cheeks. “One on each side, please.”

He chuckled and obliged. “Okay, two and three.”

Next Marinette motioned to her nose. “One here.” After he had pecked her there, she then pointed to her neck. “And one there.”
“Aww, only one?” Adrien mock-whined, but gently feathered his lips against her neck. “That’s four and five.”

“And the last one goes…” She had barely moved her finger up to point to her mouth and he was already kissing her, tender and warm. It wasn’t needy or passionate like the ones from last night, but so full of genuine love that it blew Marinette away.

When he slowly pulled back, Adrien gazed at her fondly, looking like he was the happiest man in the world. “Six.”

Sheer delight making her tingle from head to toe, Marinette crept even closer to him and laid her head against his shoulder. “Thank you. That was…wonderful.”

Adrien let his chin rest lightly on the top of her head as he shut his eyes. “You’re welcome, love bug.”

Neither of them moved for a long time. Just enjoying the sensation of being in each other’s arms and how good it felt. Marinette was listening to the sound of his heart, every beat below her ear reminding her that this was all real. Eventually she felt him shift and she looked up. He was smiling down at her, and for some reason it made her start to blush. “What is it?”

Instead of answering, Adrien stepped backward and took her hands in his, then pulled her with him as he went to the center of the rooftop. They laid down side by side to watch the stars, as was becoming their nightly routine. After a while Marinette moved so she could rest her head on his chest, snuggling up to him. He put his arm around her as she did so, and they stayed that way for about fifteen minutes before Adrien cleared his throat. “Can I ask you something?”

“Sure.” She turned her head so she could see him.

“What changed?” He kept looking upward, too nervous to see how she might look at him after such a question. “Not that I’m complaining or anything, I’m just…well, you know what they say about curiosity and cats.”

Marinette’s heart stopped for a split second. She knew exactly what he meant by that, so she knew she would have to choose her next words carefully. “To be perfectly honest, the main reason I used to try and keep things just ‘professional’ between us was because I was actually already in love with someone.”

He didn’t move his gaze. “Oh…I see…”

“I’ve been head over heels for him for years now.” She said truthfully.

“So did he…turn you down?” Adrien asked. “Because he’s an idiot if he did.”

“Actually, that’s not it,” Marinette decided embellishing the truth a little for the next part was the best course of action. “Just about a week ago I came to the…realization, that the guy I was in love with was very similar to certain someone else I knew.”

That made Adrien finally look at her. “What do you mean?”

“My crush is very kind, dedicated and selfless,” She began. “He balances work and school with ease, and despite how busy he is he never snaps at anyone. He makes me smile, he makes me laugh… he makes my day better just by being there.” She looked him straight in the eyes. “He’s also tall, about your height, with green eyes and blonde hair, exactly like yours.”
She saw said green eyes widen. “Are you saying that…”

“And apparently I’ve come to realize that he hides an awful sense of humor and love of terrible puns even from his friends, and admittedly doesn’t look half bad in full-body leather.” Marinette added, giving him a smile.

“Do you…” Adrien sat up, and she did as well. “Do you know who I am?”

“What would you say if I thought I did?” Marinette asked, wanting to test the waters.

“I would say I’m very glad,” Adrien said quietly. “I’ve really wanted to tell you for so long.” He paused. “Are you seriously sure that the guy you like is actually me?”

Marinette took a deep breath. “You are if your name is Adrien Agreste.”

He froze, and for a second she worried this had been a bad decision. But soon she saw that he had tears of relief in his eyes. “You know me!” He whispered before hugging her tight. “You actually know what my real name is!” Adrien suddenly pulled back as another thought crossed his mind. “And you said you…that you were in love with me…”

Blushing now, Marinette tried to seem like she had no idea what he was talking about. “D-Did I?”

“You definitely did! All this time you were in love with me but we just didn’t know it!” Adrien stared at her in wonder. “Please tell me I’m not dreaming.”

“No, you’re not.” Marinette assured him.

“And wait a second, you said something about hiding my sense of humor from my friends.” He looked at her closely. “I really do know you in real life, don’t I?”

At this, Marinette swallowed hard. A selfish part of her had wanted to try and put off the ‘reveal’ and ‘confess’ parts of Operations Romance & Seduce for as long as possible, but her gut instinct was telling her now was the time. “You do.”

“I knew it, I knew it!” Adrien burbled excitedly, studying her intently. “So how well do I know you?”

“We’ve been in the same class for a few years now.” She said, wanting to take her time as much as she could.

“And I already know you’re definitely not Chloe.” He laughed when she made a face.

“Hell no.” Marinette didn’t bother hiding the disgust in her voice.

“Who hates Chloe…” Adrien was thinking aloud. “Well, pretty much everyone, so that doesn’t really help.”

“I don’t necessarily hate her. I just don’t like how she thinks she’s better then everyone else, like it gives her a license to…” Marinette trailed off, realizing she was repeating words she had said just days before.

Now Adrien was staring at her. “I’ve heard that before.”

Grinning sheepishly, she knew that the time for secrets was already coming to an end. “You have.”

“The same day that I called Marinette my knight in shining armor…” He breathed, eyes wide as all
the pieces started to fall into place.

‘Here we go.’ Marinette followed her heart and she said, “Doesn’t that make you the damsel in distress?”

Adrien immediately tackled her to the rooftop, and Marinette was afraid it was because he was angry so she quickly squeezed her eyes tightly shut. “I…I can’t believe it…” She heard him whisper, and when she tentatively opened her eyes, she saw so much unbridled joy in his that she was taken aback. “Marinette…all this time…it was you…”

Hearing him say her name like that made every worry she had ever had of him discovering her identity disappear without a trace. “You’re not mad?”

Tears were welling back up in his eyes again as he vehemently shook his head. He kissed her then, pouring in every ounce of passion and sincerity that he could muster. She melted into the kiss and returned it with all she had, wrapping her arms around his shoulders. After a moment he pulled away and held his hand against her cheek tenderly. “I could never be mad at you. You’re my other half.”

Marinette felt like everything was frozen in time. “I…You…”

“Now I can finally say this properly.” Adrien kissed her forehead gently with a warm smile. “Ladybug…Marinette Dupain-Cheng…I love you.”

She felt like her heart would burst from all the emotions whirling through her. But the light of his confession was a shining beacon through the storm, and she grabbed on to it with all her might. “Cat Noir…Adrien Agreste…I love you too.” Marinette murmured, the words feeling so right on her tongue.

Their lips met again, and in that instant, everything was perfect.
“Now that I think about it, it makes so much sense,” Adrien was saying.

“What does?” Marinette inquired lazily.

The two were still laying cuddled up on the rooftop. They had been taking their time, not wanting to leave after sharing such a magical moment together. “Looking back, I’m realizing I never did see Ladybug and Marinette being in the same place at the same time. Damn, I’m such an idiot.”

“Hey, it’s not like you were the only one. I could never put two and two together with Cat Noir and Adrien either.” She reminded him.

“You still figured it out before I did.” Adrien had started affectionately running his hand up and down her arm. “How did you do that, anyway?”

Marinette bit her lip. “Promise not to hate me if I tell?”

“It’s physically impossible for me to hate you.” Adrien told her with a grin.

“Well…when I’d have to patrol by myself I started to swing by Alya’s to see how she was doing through the window.”

“Okay, but I’m not following.”

“You still figured it out before I did.” Adrien had started affectionately running his hand up and down her arm. “How did you do that, anyway?”

Marinette bit her lip. “Promise not to hate me if I tell?”

“I’m still not following.”

“Hey, I was totally freaking out!” She confessed. “Trust me, I was trying to disappear into the wall.”

“Seriously? Oh wow, I wish I could’ve seen the look on your face.” Adrien laughed.

“And then I had the bright idea last week add your house to the list.” Marinette reddened a little at the memory. “The very first time I worked up the courage to go, I thought you weren’t home. But then all of a sudden you walked in and I panicked so I just hid next to the window, and overheard you talking with your kwami.”

“Thursday, I think.” Marinette replied.

As he thought back to that night, he suddenly turned scarlet. “Does that mean you heard all the stuff
what Plagg was saying about my, um…”

“I was outside the window from when you came in all the way until after you turned out the lights.” Marinette interjected, already knowing what he was meaning.

Adrien was getting even redder now. “So you heard the reading fanfiction part?”

“Uh-huh.”

“And the merchandise collection part?”

“Yup.”

“A-And…”

“You don’t have to say it. But yes, I heard that too.”

He groaned, covering his face with his hands in embarrassment. “You must’ve thought I’m such a pervert.”

Giggling, Marinette folded her arms over his stomach and set her chin on them to prop up her head as she looked at him. “Nah, I just thought you were Human.”

“Really?” He peeked through his fingers at her.

“Of course. I didn’t think you were a pervert until we kissed on Saturday.” She teased.

“Marinette!” Adrien wailed, and she just laughed uproariously. He unceremoniously shoved her off him so he could roll away in a pretend pout, and that only made her laugh even more.

Once she finally regained her composure, she crawled back over and draped herself over his side. “I really like hearing you call me by my name,” She told him quietly with a little smile.

Adrien glanced up at her, the corners of his mouth twitching upward as well. “I like being able to call you by your name too.”

“And how does it sound when I call you Adrien?” Marinette ran her fingers through his messy hair.

“It sounds perfect.” He replied, laying back down and gently pulling her over him so they could nestle close again. “Hearing my girlfriend call me by my real name sounds absolutely perfect.”

She blushed a little at that. “Girlfriend?”

“Well yeah, what did you think you were?” He was grinning.

“I-I don’t know,” Marinette felt butterflies speeding around in her stomach. “I guess I hadn’t really thought about it…”

“Then allow me to officially dub you as my knight in shining armor-slash-girlfriend.” Adrien placed his hand against one of her shoulders and then the other, as if he was knighting her.

“What about school tomorrow?” She couldn’t deny she was beyond pleased, but as usual her brain was working overtime. “What will everyone else think?”

“I don’t honestly care.” Marinette felt him hug her tighter. “I’m finally able to be with you after all these years. I’m not going to let anything get in the way of that.”
“Don’t get me wrong, I totally agree,” She looked up at him. “But I think we should try and ease into it around everyone else so it seems more natural.”

As he met her gaze, Adrien soon gave a sigh. “I suppose you’re right. There goes my plan of taking you to the janitor’s closet tomorrow, then.”

This made Marinette’s blush deepen. “J-Just for the first little while, that’s all. I could maybe ask you to go on a date tomorrow before class, and we could go from there.”

“God, Chloe is going to be so pissed at you.” Adrien mused with a chuckle.

“Yeah well, what else is new?” Marinette wasn’t fazed.

They eased into another comfortable silence, partly watching the stars and partly just not wanting to leave the each other. But soon enough (too soon, in Marinette’s opinion), Adrien patted her back. “We should probably head home.”

She sighed as they both sat up. “I know. I was trying to procrastinate.”

Adrien smirked. “Still can’t get enough of me?”

“Way to ruin the moment, again.” Marinette stuck her tongue out at him while they got to their feet.

“You know you love me.” He said with a wink.

This made her smile as she moved to place a quick kiss on his lips. “That I do.”

It was his turn to blush, and with that giving Marinette the upper hand, she grabbed her yo-yo and waved before she swung off. She had a huge smile on her face all the way home, and once she was safely back in her room so she could call off her transformation, the reappearance of an ecstatic red kwami’s only made it grow wider. “You did it! You did it!” She squealed as hugged her bonded’s cheek tightly.

“Oh Tikki, this is the best day of my life!” Marinette practically flew down the ladder from her bed and spun her way through her room to grab her PJs.

“And there’s going to be more where that came from!” Tikki was dancing through the air. “Because now you two can officially become a couple! Things are only going to go up from here!”

“I know, I know!” Marinette was just pulling off her shirt when she felt her a familiar vibration in her pocket. Tossing her top aside as she pulled out her phone, she saw she had a new message in her ‘business email’ Inbox. As soon as it was unlocked she laughed at what she saw.

~I almost forgot! Obligatory cat picture: day three!

Below was a picture of a calico resting its head on a heart shaped pillow.

She quickly typed up a response as she shimmied out of her pants.

~You know we can actually start texting each other now. We don’t need to use these addresses anymore.

Unhooking her bra and sliding it off her arms, Marinette felt her phone vibrate again but she waited until she was changed into her PJs to view it.

~No way! These emails are always going to be special. It’s how I first got to talk with my Lady
outside of working hours. <3

“Aww, he’s so sentimental.” Tikki said as she was reading the messages over Marinette’s shoulder.

‘And he’s all mine.’ Marinette thought dreamily as she went back up to bed and pulled the covers around her before making a reply.

~If you insist. Good night Jaguar.

She got a message back from him right away.

~Good night Spots. I love being able to say this – see you at school tomorrow. Which is going to be so awesome. I can’t wait!

Marinette turned off her phone and curled up under her blankets, a smile still adorning her lips as she nodded off.
Chapter 17

Chapter Notes

Time for another upload! =D Here's some more Confident Marinette and Flustered Adrien for you all to enjoy. =P And remember how I mentioned in chapter two that their class list has basically been kept the same all these years, and everyone's gotten really close? A bit of that shows up today as well. =) I also wanted to ask everyone's opinion on something. After we move past chapter twenty, there will be a few chapters here and there with full-blown smut. There will be taking off of clothes involved (among other things), to put it mildly, so I'm sure you can get the idea. Anyway, because my fanfic is predominantly fluff with just sprinkles of smut, do you guys think I should leave the rating set at Mature, since the heavy stuff is not going to be every chapter or every other chapter? Or up it to Explicit just to be safe? Because I worry that changing the rating to Explicit might scare some readers off. I just don't know what to do. So I'd really appreciate the feedback to help me make my decision. So thanks for all the help in advance. ^^ For now, I hope you all like today's chapter! ♥

The sun shining into her room helped rouse Marinette up long before her alarm. At first she had thought about trying to go back to sleep, but when began to remember all the amazing things that happened last night, she was wide-awake.

Adrien knew she was Ladybug.

He had called her by her real name and said he loved her.

And Adrien was now her boyfriend.

Covering her mouth to keep from screaming at the thought, she took a few deep breaths to try and calm down. She looked around and soon found Tikki still out like a light at the end of her bed, so as carefully as she could, Marinette slid out from under the bedspread and went down the ladder. She tiptoed through her room and opened her room slowly so it wouldn’t creak, then headed downstairs.

Tom was in the kitchen finishing eating some pancakes when she arrived. “Well hello there,” He said with a grin. “I didn’t expect you up for a while yet.”

“Today’s the day, Dad,” Marinette announced, wanting to put on a bit of a show for his sake. “I’m going to ask him out this morning!”

“Outstanding!” Tom got up from the table and scooped her up in a big bear hug. “It’s going to go great, you’ll see!”

“I think so too.” She said as he let go of her, grinning. Marinette stole two of her Dad’s pancakes and rolled them up to nibble on them as she went to grab herself some milk to drink.

After she finished her pancakes and her milk, she quickly showered and went back into her room to get ready for school. Tikki was awake now, and Marinette was quite enjoying how her kwami was skipping through the air while she spoke. “You can go out on dates now! You can go for long walks together, you can go out to restaurants to eat, you can get married and have a family with three kids.
“Hey, slow down!” Marinette laughed while putting all her books in her backpack. “I think I’m going to let myself enjoy the long walks and going out to restaurants to eat for a while first, thank you.”

“Of course, all in due time.” Tikki’s smile was still wide as she floated over to slip into Marinette’s purse.

Rolling her eyes, Marinette gathered all her things and bounced her way downstairs, wished her parents good bye as she slipped through the bakery, then started to make her way to school.

She knew she was going to be quite early, but there was a reason for that. This way, she would definitely get to homeroom before Alya or Nino got there, and especially Adrien. Marinette wanted to make it believable to ‘work up the courage’ with her friends to ask him out. As she had expected, when she got to class, only Nathaneal and Rose were there before her. They waved to her and she waved back, then she made herself comfortable in her seat.

Other students kept trickling in but it was a good ten minutes before Alya and Nino, holding hands, walked through the door. They both looked genuinely surprised to see Marinette there already. “Marinette’s here early? Dude, I think the world must be ending.” Nino joked as he and his girlfriend took their spots by her.

Marinette grinned. “No, but it is a big day.”

“Why’s that?” Alya asked.

“I’m going to ask Adrien out as soon as he gets here.” Marinette whispered to them.

Alya’s eyes widened and Nino’s jaw dropped. “You go girl!” Her best friend gave her a very excited high five.

“Do you want us to help so you don’t get too nervous?” Nino offered. “I could totally make it more low-key for you and suggest we do a double date.”

“Yeah, tell us anything you need.” Alya added.

“That’s okay, I’ve got this.” Marinette felt blessed they were so ready and willing to help her. But she already knew what the outcome would be, so she wouldn’t need any extra assistance.

Nino grabbed his phone. “He should be here soon, he texted me he was on his way a few minutes ago.”

“Thanks Nino. I’m already ready.” Marinette straightened up in her seat.

“I’m so proud of you!” Alya beamed. “We were just talking the other night how much your confidence has grown this week and how beyond happy we were for you that you could talk to him easier now.” Nino was nodding in agreement as she kept talking. “And here you are, about to ask him out! The guy you’ve been crushing on for years! The world is your oyster!”

She was laughing at that last statement when she noticed movement by the door, and that was when Marinette saw Adrien turn the corner and stroll in. When he saw her, he stopped dead in his tracks. Marinette smiled a little at him, and she saw his cheeks turn a soft pink. He quickly cleared his throat and started walking again, taking his seat as casually as he possibly could. “Morning guys.”
“There you are!” Chloe had spotted him enter and came zipping over. “Adrien, hi!”

‘Even better, now she’ll get a front row seat,’ Marinette thought with satisfaction as she leaned over to tap Adrien’s shoulder. He turned, and she could tell he was still trying to keep from blushing more as he looked at her. “Hey, I wanted to ask you something.” She said, her voice calm and clear.

“He doesn’t have time for you, loser.” Chloe interrupted, but she fell silent when Adrien raised his hand to quiet her so he could listen.

“Do you want to go out for ice cream with me tomorrow night?” Marinette asked, and out of the corner of her eye, she could see Alya and Nino watching ecstatically.

“Like…a date?” Adrien was internally relieved he somehow managed to keep his voice from squeaking as he spoke.

“Definitely like a date.” Marinette replied, and Chloe immediately scoffed.

“Are you stupid?” The blonde girl crossed her arms. “My Adrien would never in a million years go on a date with the likes of you.”

“I know in your own way you’re trying to look out for me,” Adrien started saying as he turned to Chloe. “And I do appreciate that, but let me answer her myself.” Chloe just shrugged and waited expectantly for him to turn her down, so as he looked back at Marinette, his next words left her completely flabbergasted. “I’d love to.”

“What?!” Chloe shrieked. “Y-You can’t possibly mean that!”

“Come on, leave them alone.” Juleka suddenly piped up, surprising all of them.

“Yeah, just let Adrien do whatever he wants, Chloe.” Ivan quickly agreed.

“And that goes for Marinette, too!” Kim added with a nod.

Out of nowhere, all their other classmates joined in, defending Marinette and Adrien while telling Chloe to back off. Genuinely humbled by all the unanimous support, the new couple just watched in wonder. Eventually even Sabrina walked over and put her hand on her best friend’s arm. “I think you should just go with it for now.” She told Chloe before whispering, “We both know it’s going to blow up in Marinette’s face anyway, so this way you can rub it in her face later.”

“Oh, good idea.” Chloe then turned to give the rest of her classmates a scowl. “Fine, be that way.” She spun around and walked out of the room with her nose held high, Sabrina scampering after her.

Everyone cheered once the two girls had officially left. “You guys didn’t have to do that,” Marinette said, but she was smiling.

“You’re always helping the rest us out, Marinette. It’s only fair.” Mylene replied.

“Besides, Chloe shouldn’t act like she owns Adrien. That’s been beyond annoying, and creepy, for years now.” Max told them. “She had it coming.”

“So now if you go and screw our hard work up, we’re not going to come bail you out.” Alix warned playfully.

The bell rang shortly thereafter, with Chloe and Sabrina coming back in and looking just as haughty as ever as their teacher got class started. By lunch, Marinette was still thinking about how touched
she was over what her classmates had done for her and Adrien when she realized that Alya was talking to her. “Sorry, what was that?”

“I was saying Nino and I are going to stay here at school for lunch, we’re going to get some studying done.” Alya still had her books open, and so did Nino.

“Oh, okay.” Marinette resisted the urge to ask if they were actually going to study, though it was very tempting.

“Would I be able to…” Adrien scratched the back of his head nervously. Marinette blinked at him, confused, so he forced himself to finish his question. “Go with you, to eat lunch at your place?”

Marinette couldn’t hide her grin. Oh how she loved seeing him get as flustered as she used to get. “Sure you can.”

“Great, thank you.” Adrien looked relieved, and Marinette saw Alya give her a quick thumbs-up. Suppressing a giggle, Marinette slipped on her backpack and headed for the door, looking back over her shoulder to see if he was following. He had been staring at her, and he turned red when he realized she had caught him. “C-Coming!”
Chapter 18

Thank you very much for the feedback on the last chapter! I've decided to go with the suggestions I received to keep the rating as Mature and use very clear warnings in the chapters with smut. I really appreciate all the help. =) Anyway! I really enjoyed writing the part in Marinette's bedroom, I was cracking myself up. xD And as someone who suffers from migraine myself, I know just how nasty and debilitating headaches can be, so it was easy to write about the one Marinette starts to get realistically (and we all know how stubborn she is!). But in case you were wondering, if you happen to be a writer, it can also be used as a gateway to facilitate fluff. =P Hope you all enjoy! ^^

“How now can understand why I was such a mess when I saw you with that akuma ballerina in the park last week.” Marinette teased quietly as she and Adrien were walking toward the Dupain-Cheng bakery.

Adrien was running his hands through his hair as he groaned. “I know. I don’t know what came over me, but as soon as I saw you this morning it was just…wow.” He blushed. “I must’ve looked so stupid back there.”

“I thought it was adorable.” Marinette held out her hand, and with a little smile Adrien took it. “By the way, I am going to warn you, my parents are probably going to make things super awkward when we walk in, but they mean well.”

“Bring it on!” Adrien punched the air with his fist, and they were still chuckling over that when they walked through the front doors of the bakery.

Sabine was working the till, ringing in some customers, and Tom wasn’t around, meaning he must’ve been in the back. When her mother saw Marinette and Adrien walk in hand-in-hand, her eyes lit up but she cordially finished the transaction with the people at the till before she went over to them. “Welcome back!” She said with a smile, giving Marinette a big hug and giving Adrien what seemed to be an even bigger one. “Is there anything I can get you two? Could I take your bags for you? No, never mind, you’ll probably want to keep them with you. But let me know if you need anything, all right? Just make yourselves at home!”

Tom walked into the shop portion just then, and when he noticed them he looked as excited as a kid in a candy store. “Hello my boy!” He greeted Adrien with a firm handshake. “So nice to see you again. So very nice! Do you want something to eat? Of course you do, I mean it is lunchtime after all. What are you in the mood to have? We have so much to choose from, I’m sure there’s something you’ll like! There’s lots of tasty stuff to try in here, believe me! You can feel free to take whatever you want!”

“We’re just going to go have something upstairs, thanks though,” Marinette gave them a little wave as she dragged Adrien behind her before scurrying upstairs to escape any more questions and offers. Once the door was safely closed she groaned, although Adrien looked entertained. “I did warn you.” She said as she shrugged her backpack off her shoulders.

“That was fun!” Adrien grinned as he set down his bag too. “I think they like me!”
Marinette just rolled her eyes as she made her way into the kitchen. Opening up the fridge, she surveyed the contents. “There’s some leftover stir-fry from yesterday in here, do you want some?”

“Works for me, I’m not picky.” Adrien sat down at the table.

Closing the fridge, Marinette opened the container of leftovers and put it in the microwave. While it was heating up, she grabbed two plates and glasses. Soon the timer went off on the microwave so she went to grab the leftovers, getting some cutlery along the way. “Could you grab us something to drink?” She asked as she started to divvy up their portions.

“Sure.” Adrien went over to the fridge and grabbed the orange juice inside, shutting it behind him and grabbing the cups to bring to the table. He was pouring some into each one as Marinette came over with the plates. She set them down in each of their places and sat down, accepting her glass of juice as he passed it to her. “Thanks again for letting me come over,” He said as he put the cap back on the orange juice.

“I did say about a week ago I was never going to turn you down again, didn’t I?” She smiled as she started to eat. He blushed a little and began eating too, and the two of them ate their lunch while greatly enjoying each other’s company.

Once they were finished, Adrien remembered something as he went to put away their dishes in the sink. “Do you still have those flowers?”

“Of course!” Marinette was putting away the orange juice. “I had to hide them though so my Mom and Dad wouldn’t see. But I made sure they got some sunlight and plenty of fresh water so they’ve bloomed even more since you gave them to me.”

“Could you show me?” Adrien asked. “I want to see how they opened up.”

“They look so much bigger now, just wait until you see them.” Marinette started to lead him up to her room. She opened the door and went over to her computer, pulling the container with the bouquet out from behind the monitor. “Look, they’re blossoming really well! I took a bunch of pictures of them the other day because they turned out so amazing, and…” She stopped talking as she realized Adrien was still standing by the door to her room, his amused eyes scanning her room. And that’s when it hit her.

The posters!

When he had been over several years ago for video game practice, she had thought ahead to quickly take them down. But she had completely forgot about them this time in her excitement to show him the flowers. And she knew he was definitely looking at them now. Her face went tomato-red and she opened her mouth to try and speak but no sound came out.

“That’s a lot of…me,” Adrien observed, grinning like a Cheshire cat.

“Sh-Shut up!” Marinette put the bouquet back down in the hiding spot and hurriedly started to pull down all the posters.

Laughing, Adrien watched her dash around to grab every last one and shove them into a drawer on her vanity. “I mean, you did tell me last night you had been in love with me for years, I just didn’t realize it meant you had my face all over your walls.”

“I said shut up!” Marinette stomped over to him and gave him as venomous a look as she could conjure up. “And for your information, those particular posters were being used for design
inspiration only.”

“Yes yes, of course they were.” Adrien didn’t sound convinced at all, naturally. She then turned her back to him with a ‘humph’ and he just chuckled, stepping closer to her so he could put his arms around her shoulders. “Aww, don’t be like that.”

“Sorry but I’m ignoring you now.” Marinette said, though she allowed herself to relax at his touch.

“Oh, its that so?” He cooed, kissing softly behind her ear and feeling her shiver with a smirk. “That’s too bad, my Lady…now how could I possibly get your attention…”

“Okay, that’s it, I’m out of here!” Suddenly Plagg was flying out of Adrien’s shirt pocket with a disgusted look on his face. “I have to be stuck with you when you do this while you’re transformed but this time I’m leaving!”

“Plagg, stop it!” Tikki was scolding while whizzing out of Marinette’s purse. “You’re embarrassing them!”

It was true, both Marinette and Adrien looked rather sheepish below the two floating kwamis. “Not my problem!” Plagg huffed.

Adrien frowned and sighed as he brought his arms back from around Marinette’s shoulders. “Well, I suppose now is as good a time as any. Allow me to formally introduce my little pain in the neck.”

Plagg rolled his eyes but Marinette reached her hand up to him, holding out her pointer finger. It took a moment before he hesitantly grabbed it and she moved it up and down lightly, as if she was giving him a tiny handshake. “Nice to officially meet you Plagg.” She said with a bright smile.

“Uh, likewise, I guess.” Plagg wasn’t really sure how to react so he tried to keep looking mad but he couldn’t deny he was pleased by Marinette’s warm greeting.

“And that’s Tikki,” Marinette gestured to her as Tikki was already mimicking the tiny handshake with Adrien’s outstretched finger.

“Don’t you mind Plagg, Adrien, he’s always been skittish around public displays of affection,” Tikki was grinning. “But he’ll have to get used to you two eventually.”

“Tikki!” Plagg pouted, sending the other three into fits of giggles.

“We should go back to school now,” Adrien mentioned eventually as he pulled out his phone to check the time.

Their kwamis dutifully went back into their respective hiding places (though one went more begrudgingly then the other) as Marinette and Adrien went back downstairs to grab their things. They quickly went through the bakery, Marinette rather glad both her parents were busy with customers as they were leaving. In minutes they were back to class with some time to spare.

Throughout the afternoon, Marinette could tell she was beginning to feel the start of a headache coming on. By the end of the day it was a dull throb, and she grabbed one of the painkillers she kept in her backpack before nudging Alya. “Do you have some water?” She asked, mentally kicking herself for not bringing some herself.

“Yeah, here.” Alya took a plastic water bottle from her bag and handed it to her, watching Marinette swallow the painkiller and a swig of water. “You okay?”
“Just a headache, I’ll be fine.” Marinette gave her a reassuring smile as she passed back the plastic bottle before gathering up her things. “Thanks for the water.”

“No problem.” Alya watched her get up. “See you tomorrow.”

“See you.” Marinette waved to her, and to Nino and Adrien as she made her way out of class and headed home.

She had been hoping to spend some more time with her friends after school today, but she wanted to try and get ahead of this headache if she still could. Marinette went through the back door of the bakery when she got home to purposefully avoid bumping into her parents, as she didn’t want to inadvertently be short with them due to the gong that was now going off in her brain. After she trudged upstairs, she made a note that read ‘have a headache, will be down for supper, see you then’ and taped it to the railing of the stairs before heading up said stairs to her bedroom.

When Tikki came out of her purse, she could tell Marinette wasn’t herself. “Maybe you should lie down for a while.” She suggested, watching as her bonded was turning on her computer.

“I can’t, I still have homework to do.” Marinette sat down at her desk chair. “I’m sure it’ll go away soon, anyway.”

“If you’re sure…” Tikki floated over to the plate of peanut butter cookies Marinette had brought up to her room for her that morning. “But I want you to let me know how you start feeling any worse, though.” She insisted while she picked up a cookie and started to eat.

“Promise.” Marinette nodded her head, though she instantly wished she hadn’t when doing so sent shooting pain through her head.

It was definitely hard to focus on her homework with the headache firmly making its presence known the longer time went on. The painkiller didn’t seem to be having any real effect on it, and it was steadily getting worse. When there was a knock at her bedroom door, Marinette winced before turning in her chair to see Sabine opening it up.

“How are you feeling?” She asked, though she immediately noticed the grimace on her face. “Do you want to come down for supper?”

“I’m doing okay.” Marinette lied. “But I’m not very hungry, so you and Dad can go ahead and eat without me.”

Sabine knew better, as she was easily able to tell that Marinette was definitely still in pain, but she didn’t want to force her. “Okay, we’ll set some aside for you if you end up changing your mind.”

“Thanks Mom.” Marinette watched her leave and slowly turned her chair back around while rubbing her temples.

“I really think you should rest…” Tikki came out from where she had been hiding while Sabine had been around.

“You worry too much.” Forcing a grin, Marinette could see Tikki still looked concerned as she went back to working on her homework. “Besides, there’s still patrol tonight.”

“Just email Adrien!” Tikki moved in front of Marinette’s computer screen so she had no choice but to look at her. “I’m sure he’ll be fine with patrolling by himself if it’s because you’re not feeling well!”
“You know I don’t like letting people down.” Marinette told her quietly.

Tikki sighed. “I know you don’t, but…”

“Anyway, it’s just a headache.”

“I’m worried about you.”

“And I appreciate that Tikki, really I do, but I’m not going to miss patrol tonight.” She put up her hand when her kwami went to start protesting. “I will lay down for a little bit once I’m done my homework, though.”

Satisfied with this compromise, Tikki relented and floated behind the computer to enjoy the flowers. Marinette finished her homework soon after and as promised, she climbed up to her bed and gingerly laid down atop the covers, cringing at the shockwaves all the movement sent through her brain.

She allowed herself to stay there only until it was time to patrol, before slowly sitting up and calling Tikki over. “Spots on,” She said, but she saw Tikki frown and definitely not travel to her earrings, which made her feel guilty. “Please let me do this.” Tikki looked unhappy but soon nodded, so Marinette said it again. “Spots on!”

Even after she was transformed, Marinette’s headache did not dissipate. And when she found just climbing through the trapdoor to be a significant effort, she was already regretting her decision to not email Adrien.

Stubborn as she was though, she refused to turn back. But even she had to admit she wasn’t sure how she was going to make it all the way through patrol if this kept up.
Chapter 19

Adrien was tapping his foot against the apartment building’s rooftop as he checked the time on the screen of his staff. ‘She’s late,’ He thought with a bit of a frown.

There were no thoughts of late fee kisses in his mind tonight. Alya had told him and Nino about Marinette’s headache after she had left that afternoon, and he had been expecting her to email him and tell him about it herself. He had even been ready and quite willing to offer to patrol himself tonight, but the message never came.

Soon he spotted some movement in the distance, and moments later he could make out her polka-dotted form slowly making her way over. Very slowly, as even from this far away he could tell every movement seemed like quite a chore for her. His heart lurched as she missed her footing when she tried to land on the rooftop and tumbled onto it, crying out and grabbing her head.

“Ladybug!” Adrien rushed over to her and dropped to his knees, cradling her close to him gingerly.

“Are you all right?”

He could tell the fall hadn’t been too bad, but when she looked up at him Adrien could see that she was blinking back tears. “I’m not hurt,” She said truthfully.

“Why didn’t you email that me your headache had gotten so bad?” Adrien asked, and Marinette was momentarily surprised he knew, though she soon figured out that Alya must’ve said something once she had gone.

“I don’t like letting people down…” Marinette admitted, and the look he gave her made her feel just as guilty as the one Tikki had given her earlier. “Especially you.”

Carefully, Adrien held her up bridal-style as he got to his feet and reached back with one hand to grab his staff. “I’m taking you home, Marinette.”

She knew he was serious by his use of her real name. “But I…” Marinette tried to argue but fell silent when Adrien shook his head.

“No buts. Now hold on tight.” She obediently wrapped her arms around him and they began to make a very cautious trip back to Marinette’s house.

They arrived a short time later, and Adrien gently set her down as he went to open the trapdoor in the roof. He jumped down first, then held out his hand to help her down. Marinette blushed a little and

Chapter Notes

Another day, another chapter! =D I really enjoy this one, the fluff (and the hilarity in the middle) was very fun to write. =) Today was a pretty busy day for me, with work and visiting our neighbours and Canada Day celebrations, so I didn't get to write much...and I was totally itching to get home to do so! There still is no end to the flow of ideas for this story and I'm loving the ride it's taking me on. I love how it's unfolding, and most importantly, how much amazing feedback I've gotten from all of you. You guys are the best. <3 Enjoy the chapter everyone!
took it, letting him slowly ease her through before he laid her down on her bed. He sat down next to her expectantly, and she had a pretty good guess what he was waiting for her to do.

“Spots off,” She muttered reluctantly, and in a flash of light she was back in her regular clothes, a very concerned-looking Tikki hovering above her.

“I knew this was a bad idea!” Her kwami turned to Adrien. “Thank you for bringing her home. She wouldn’t listen to me.”

“You’re welcome. But I don’t think she wanted to listen to me either.” Adrien said.

“At least you’re big enough to carry her,” Tikki sat down on Marinette’s stomach with a stern expression. “Now you listen here Marinette! You are going to properly rest this time and I better not hear even one more argument!”

“Yes Doctor.” Marinette allowed herself to smile.

“But she can’t go to sleep in her clothes…”, Adrien started looking around the room before he spotted her PJs on the chaise lounge. He hopped down to grab them and quickly brought them up to her. “Here, get undressed.”

“U-Um…” She was blushing, and suddenly Adrien realized what he had said.

“Sorry! I didn’t mean it like that!” He turned away in embarrassment. “I’m sorry that came out so wrong! I just wanted you to feel comfortable, and I thought staying in your clothes would get in the way of that, and…oh God, that sounds even worse!”

Even though it didn’t agree with her headache, Marinette started to laugh. “It’s fine, it’s fine,” She assured him as she sat up, Tikki floating away to her cookie plate as she did so. “Just don’t look.”

Adrien had been about to turn around when her last words registered, and his cheeks flushed as he quickly covered his eyes, despite still facing the other way. He felt her moving behind him as she got changed, and with every fiber of his being he commanded his mind not to wander. “Tell me when you’re done,” He said after a while, not daring to move before he got the okay.

She had been taking her time, as every movement took so much effort with the pain in her head. When she finally had her PJs on, Marinette shoved her clothes over the edge of the bed to land in a pile on the floor. “It’s safe to turn around now.”

Waiting a couple extra seconds just to be sure, Adrien allowed himself to turn towards her again. She was laying back down so he got up to pull the covers over her. He then leaned over and gently placed a kiss on her forehead. “Is there anything else you need?”

Cheeks going pink again, Marinette snuggled into the covers. “Doctor Tikki will be probably keeping a close eye on me, don’t worry.”

“You bet I will be!” Tikki called from across the room, making them both grin.

“And if you still don’t feel any better in the morning, I want you to seriously think about staying home.” He told her, brushing some stray hairs out of her face with a clawed thumb.

“Are those your nurse’s orders?” Marinette asked jokingly.

“Boyfriend’s orders. That outranks nurse.” Adrien replied and enjoyed how her blush deepened.
“Okay.” She smiled shyly at him. “And Adrien?”

“Yes Marinette?”

“Thanks. For everything.”

He carefully crept over her so he could climb back out onto the roof. “You’re welcome, Princess.”

Adrien then closed the trapdoor behind him and went out into the night to start doing the patrol.

Marinette had let her eyes shut for a while when she felt Tikki lightly land on her pillow next to her head, having eaten the last of her cookies. “I told you so,” She said while she was getting herself nice and comfortable.

“I know you did.” Marinette opened one eye a crack to look at her kwami. “Sorry.”

“Maybe next time you’ll listen to me.” Tikki teased as she gently patted Marinette’s nose before yawning and rolling over on the pillow. “Good night Marinette.”

“Good night Tikki.” Marinette closed her eye again. Though it was a lot earlier then she would normally go to bed, she could already feel the allure of sleep pulling her in, and she soon nodded off.

She slept fitfully that night. At one point around 2 AM she got up and made her way downstairs to take some more painkiller, hoping that it would help. The headache was so far ahead of her now it managed to take the edge off, but nothing more.

By the time the sun was shining and she knew her parents would be up, Marinette went down to ask them if they could call the school for her and say she would be absent. They agreed without question, as both of them had had a feeling that she would need to stay home. She grabbed some more painkiller and went back to bed again, and dozed on and off into the early afternoon.

And finally, when she woke up after her latest snooze, the headache was growing weak. She could sit up without immediate discomfort, and her appetite was definitely back as her stomach gave a rather perturbed growl. Marinette stretched and ran her fingers through her hair. “How are you feeling?” Tikki asked as she floated over from where she had been perched looking out the window.

“The headache’s not totally gone yet but I do feel a lot better.” Marinette gave her a smile. “Thanks for watching over me.”

“Always.” Tikki smiled back, then she pointed to Marinette’s phone where her bonded had left it on her desk last night. “By the way, your phone went off a few times while you were sleeping.”

“Probably Alya,” Marinette assumed as she got out of bed and went down the ladder so she could grab her phone. True, there were a few texts from Alya, but what made her heart skip a beat were the emails from a certain Jaguar. The first one came late last night, when he must’ve come home.

~Hope you’re feeling better soon, gorgeous. <3 If you’re not, allow me to cheer you up with obligatory cat picture: day four!~

Beneath the words was a photo of a cartoon cat wearing doctor’s scrubs. Then there was a message from this morning, shortly after school would’ve started.

~I definitely miss seeing you in class, but I’m glad you took my advice and used the day to rest. Not that you need the beauty sleep, though. =*

And lastly there was one that had been sent a little while after the previous one.
~On a side note, someone from another class caused a bit of an explosion in one of the science labs and the sprinklers in the ceiling came on, so you missed how Chloe was wailing on and on about her hair. XD

The mental image was indeed hilarious, and Marinette giggled as she pictured it. She hit ‘Reply’ on the last email and started typing.

~Hey, sorry for not getting back to you sooner. I spent most of the day napping and just got up. The headache is actually almost gone now! Thanks again for all you did for me last night. And I hope you’re ready for ice cream, because our date is still on!

Sending it off, Marinette put her phone back down and went downstairs. Neither of her parents were around, as they had both already down in the bakery for hours by now. She could definitely tell she hadn’t eaten supper last night and easily devoured three decently sized muffins and the gulped down a tall glass of juice. After she was done, she went down and had a long shower, feeling the water drumming against her neck and back helping ease the headache some more.

After she had dried off and gone back to her room to get dressed, she went down to the bakery to see if her Mom or Dad needed any help. Though they were both glad she was feeling better, they both insisted she not push herself. This was especially after she told them that asking Adrien out yesterday had been a success and they were going to have ice cream that night. Upon hearing that, her parents gently but sternly told her to just relax to make sure she would be able to keep her plans. And after they led her out of the bakery, they made a point to shut the door behind her.

‘Okay, sheesh, I get it,’ She laughed to herself as she started to make the climb back up the various flights of stairs. ‘Never been told to not work so firmly before!’

Upon returning to her room again, Marinette checked her phone and saw that as she had expected, she already had already gotten a response to her email from Adrien from almost immediately after she had sent it.

~Yay, I’m so glad you’re feeling better! I can’t wait to see you. ^^

She smiled as she sat down on her chaise lounge.

~So where do you want to go for ice cream? I hadn’t really picked a place when I asked you yesterday, and then there was the whole headache thing being a rather big distraction.

Though it was still about an hour before school would be over, her phone vibrated in her hand right away with his reply.

~I don’t know. I’m fine with whatever as long as I’m with you. <3

~Cute.

~Yes you are. =D

~Really, Jaguar…

~How about we just start by going for a walk tonight and see where we end up? And go from there?

~That could work.

~I’ll meet you at your place around six?
~Okay, sounds good. And shouldn’t you be paying attention to whatever’s going on in class right now?

~I suppose I should, but I keep getting a bunch of new emails out of nowhere…super weird how that keeps happening, huh? =P

Marinette resisted the temptation to roll her eyes and put down her phone. Seeing Tikki float over with a grin, she tried to look innocent. “What?”

“Nothing. Just happy for you guys.” Tikki said.

Allowing herself to smile wider, Marinette let herself relish in how much fun that little exchange had been between the two of them, and how glad she was that there would be more where that came from. “Me too, Tikki. Me too.”
Chapter 20

Chapter Notes

Chapter 20, another milestone! ♥ The fluff is strong with this one again today. =P And I know I can't be the only one who debates outfits in her underwear so that's why I threw that in, partly for realism and partly for my own amusement. xD Are you all excited for the official first date to finally began? I know I am! ^^ Hope you enjoy, everyone!

A moment later, Marinette noticed her phone start to ring and saw it was Alya. She answered it and was immediately bombarded by both her best friend and Nino trying to talk into the phone at once. “One at a time, one at a time!” She tried to tell them but she doubted they even heard her.

“Nino, hold your damn horses!” Marinette could hear Alya try to forcibly shove him out of the way.

“Hey, be cool! Just tell Marinette I say hi! Oh wait, maybe she can hear me? Hi Marinette! Feel better!” Came Nino’s disembodied voice.

“This is my phone call you big moron, pipe down!” Alya retorted before turning her attention back to her cell. “Girl, you still there?”

“Yes Alya, I’m here.” Marinette had been doing her best not to laugh.

“I wanted to tell you I’m going to bring my notes for you tomorrow at the picnic but my wonderful boyfriend is being a wonderful nuisance.” Alya said dramatically.

“You two are made for each other, you know.” Marinette told her. “And thanks in advance for the notes. I’m definitely feeling better now.”

“Speaking of made for each other…” Alya must’ve put her hand by the phone to talk quietly into it because her voice seemed to echo. “Did you have to cancel your date with Adrien tonight or are you guys still a go?”

“We’re still a go,” Marinette confirmed.

“Awesome!” Alya definitely sounded excited for her. “I want to know how it goes when you get home tonight!”

“Will do.” She promised. “But I should get going soon though. My Mom and Dad wouldn’t let me help in the bakery earlier but now that you mentioned the picnic, I still need to help them with picnic prep so I’m going to force my way in.”

“Oh, that reminds me, Adrien told us he could come tomorrow!” Alya announced, and Marinette was glad they were on an audio call and not video so she didn’t have to hide her grin.

“Really? That’s great!” Marinette made sure she sounded like she had been totally unaware and pleasantly surprised, and vaguely thought she was getting much better at acting lately.

“I told him to bring some fruit for us to snack on tomorrow afternoon since the three of us had everything else covered for lunch,” Alya went on. “Sound good?”
“That’s a great idea! Thanks Alya. And don’t forget to tell Nino I say hi back.”

“Sure thing. If I don’t beat the boy first.”

The two girls hung up, Marinette still grinning from ear to ear. Tonight’s ice cream date and tomorrow’s picnic were making her feel abuzz with anticipation. The adrenaline was also helping stomp out the last remaining vestiges of her headache too so that was a definite plus. She put her phone in her pocket and went downstairs again, knocking on the door to the bakery.

Sabine opened the door soon afterward. “Hi dear! How’s your headache doing?”

“Mostly gone. And I really want to help make the stuff for the picnic tomorrow.” She begged. “So if you and Dad don’t want me to overdo it, can I at least just make the croissants for Adrien? I really wanted to make them myself. Please, Mom.”

“All right, all right. But only the croissants!” Sabine conceded, and Marinette instantly threw her arms around her mother in a big hug.

“Thank you!” Marinette skipped into the bakery and got to work right away.

As careful and methodical as she could, Marinette followed every step to the letter for a classic croissant recipe. She wanted them to turn out perfect, so she left no margin for error. Every ingredient was measured exactly, mixed thoroughly, and by the time she had set them in the oven to cook, she had become thoroughly covered in flour but she was very proud of herself. She eagerly awaited for the timer to go off, and once it did she immediately took them out, not letting another second go by to possibly overcook them. After setting them aside to allow them to cool, Marinette went over to the sink to wash her hands and run a cloth over her face.

“They look great,” Tom said as he walked by, taking a sniff as well. “And they smell great too.”

“You think he’ll like them?” Marinette asked as she put down the cloth.

“Of course he well, you made them from the heart.” Tom smiled at his daughter. “But your mother told me you two had a deal, so now that they’re finished, you should probably go back upstairs and get ready for your date.”

Marinette glanced over at the clock on the wall, seeing it was nearing 5 PM. “Okay, thanks Dad.” She gave him a quick hug, slipped some fresh oatmeal raisin cookies into the pocket of her apron, then left the bakery to trek back to her room.

Once she got there, she set the cookies on the plate for Tikki and undid her apron, tossing it aside. “What do you think I should wear tonight?”

“I suggest clothes,” Tikki told her with a grin.

“Very funny.” Marinette began peeling off her floury attire and before long she was pacing around her room in just her bra and panties. “Should I go casual or maybe do something more dressy?” She asked after a while of being deep in thought.

“What do you think?” Tikki had gone to sit down by her plate and nibble her cookies.

“Hmm…if we’re going to start with a walk, I should probably avoid going dressy, it wouldn’t be as comfortable.”

“Then there you go, wear something casual.”
“Oh, and I should probably check the weather forecast too! In case it’s cold or it’s going to rain!”

Tikki was smiling as she watched Marinette dash over to grab her phone from the pocket of her discarded pants. “It looks nice outside from the window, anyway.”

“It says it’s a little windy but not too bad. I think I’ll wear a sweater just to be sure.”

“Okay, good idea.”

“What color sweater should I wear?”

“Marinette.”

“Sorry, I’m just a little nervous.” Marinette blushed.

“Only a little?” Tikki laughed. “You don’t even need to be nervous, after all you two are already boyfriend and girlfriend.”

Blush darkening, Marinette checked the time on her phone. Twenty minutes had already gone by while she had been deciding on clothes. “Oh no!” She raced around her room and quickly threw an outfit together, hoping it looked all right.

“Is there anything that I can do to help you?” Tikki offered after swallowing her current mouthful.

“Keep an eye on the time for me!” Marinette then dashed downstairs to the bathroom to brush her teeth. She pulled out her pigtails and ran a comb through her hair, and after debating for some time she decided to put the elastics back in so the wind wouldn’t make a mess of her hair. Since she wasn’t a big fan of wearing heavy makeup, she only put on a little bit of lip-gloss before heading back up to her room.

“You still have half an hour before he should be here,” Tikki told her when she came back in. “What else do you need to do?”

Now she was wracking her brain, afraid she was somehow forgetting something. “I don’t know, I think I’m ready,” She said after a while.

“Then just relax!” Floating over to her bonded, Tikki sat on her shoulder. “Because you and Adrien are going to have a lovely time tonight so take some deep breaths, settle down and shoo those pesky nerves away!”

“I’m trying.” Marinette obediently took a few moments to calm her breathing and get a lid on the butterflies in her stomach. “You’re going to come with me right? In case I start to get nervous again?” She knew she wouldn’t really be able to come out in public, but even just having Tikki nearby was always a big reassurance for her.

“Of course I will.” Tikki assured her. “Just bring a purse and I’ll be there!”

She took a couple minutes to find a purse that would look okay with the outfit she was wearing, eventually settling on a small one she had made herself about a year ago. Tikki slipped inside and Marinette went to grab her phone, seeing that she still had ten minutes before they were supposed to meet.

But then her phone started to ring in her hand, and she saw it was Adrien. Her heart did a summersault and she quickly pressed the button to answer it. “H-Hi Adrien!”
“Hey, I just wanted to call and give you the head’s up, I’m almost at the bakery.” He told her. “I know I’m going to be a bit early, but I couldn’t wait to see you.”

Practically swooning, Marinette felt a big, goofy smile affix itself to her face as she started to make her way downstairs. “That’s okay, I’ll just meet you down at the side door. And I couldn’t wait to see you either.”

“Really?” Adrien asked, and she was pleased it sounded like her words had made him feel as happy as his had done to her.

“Really.” Marinette popped her head into the bakery to wave good-bye at her parents, then she went towards the side door. “I’m already downstairs behind the door, so I’ll see you soon.” Then she hung up the phone.

It was only about a minute or two later before there was a knock at the door. After taking a deep breath, Marinette opened the door wide. Adrien was standing there, looking about as shy as she felt. “Hi,” He said after a moment of them staring at each other in silence.

“Hi,” She repeated, smiling a little at him.

“I missed you.” Adrien confessed, cheeks turning pink. “How’s your headache?”

“All that’s left of it is a dull throb if I turn around too fast. And that should go away soon too.” Marinette stepped out and shut the door behind her.

“I’m glad. You really had me scared for you last night when you fell.” Adrien told her.

She had been about to reply when Marinette could’ve sworn she saw movement from around the corner of the building to their right. When she looked again she didn’t see anything there however, so she brushed it off as nothing. “Sorry about that. I didn’t mean to worry you.”

“No problem. It’s all good now.” Adrien held out his hand to her as she had done to him yesterday at noon, and she took it happily. “Shall we?”

And so they started walking together, though Marinette couldn’t seem to shake the nagging feeling that they were being watched.
Chapter 21

Chapter Notes

Oh, this chapter. How I love it so. xD The ice cream date is officially on, and spoiler alert: it goes great! Dare I say, better then great! =P Things are going so well for our favorite dorks! <3 And they're only going to get better in tomorrow's chapter, FYI. ;) But that's all I'm going to reveal for now. Enjoy today's installment guys. ^^

Marinette and Adrien had strolled across the street to the small park beside the Dupain-Cheng bakery and sat down at the benches, wanting to take their time and enjoy each moment of this date to the fullest. They spent about forty-five minutes in the park, just sitting there and talking about a little bit of everything. “I know I probably sound like a broken record at this point, but I really am happy you’re feeling better.” Adrien smiled at her.

“Me too.” Marinette agreed. “I didn’t really sleep too great last night because of the stupid headache, so that’s why I ended up napping on and off today.”

“I know you were asleep around noon…” He began, then blushed and clammed up.

Marinette looked over at him with an amused grin. “What was that?”

“Nothing.” Adrien tried to drop the subject, but the look she was giving him told him she wasn’t going to let it go that easily. “Okay, so, I may or may not have come to check in on you at lunch today.”

“But Mom and Dad never said you stopped by, so how would you…” Then it hit her, and Marinette got a wicked look in her eyes as she said quietly, so no one else but him would hear, “So Adrien didn’t check in on me, Cat Noir did.”

Adrien’s face went pink and she knew she was right. “Maybe.”

“How very naughty, spying in on a sleeping girl through her window.” Marinette was going to milk this for all it was worth!

“Come on!” Adrien looked rather embarrassed. “Plagg already gave me a hard time about it this afternoon! I had to promise him fresh camembert every day for a week just to get him to even transform me so I could go over!”

“Serves you right!” Marinette laughed, then she thought she saw the bushes a few feet away from them rustle. Narrowing her eyes, she watched it for a couple seconds more and saw light shine off what looked to be a screen behind the leaves. “Do you see that?” She whispered to him.

“See what?” Adrien followed her gaze and nothing happened for a while, so they went to turn back when they heard a sneeze.

A very Sabrina sneeze, followed by a quiet but very Chloe, “Shush!”

“I can’t believe it, they’re watching us.” Marinette felt her blood begin to boil. “And I think I saw a screen in the bushes before. I bet they’re recording us too.”
“Do you think they heard what we were saying?” Adrien looked worried.

“I doubt it, they’re kind of far away from us and the last stuff we had been talking about pretty quietly. I can’t believe she would actually stoop this low!” Marinette’s hands were clenching into fists. “This is despicable, even for her!”

“Why would they even be recording us anyway?” Adrien asked.

“They probably expect me to ruin the date somehow and they can use this video as blackmail later.” She scowled. “And then in her perfect little world, you’ll go running back to Chloe and everything will be as it should.”

Frowning, Adrien was about to call out the girls hiding in the bushes when he got an idea. “Why don’t we give them a little show, then? One they won’t be expecting?”

At this Marinette looked confused. “What do you mean?”

“I mean, this…” He stood up and pulled her to her feet, then with a mischievous smile he brought her close and kissed her.

Initially surprised by that, Marinette blushed a little but she returned the kiss with gusto. And they immediately could hear movement coming from in the bushes behind them. “What! The! Hell!” Chloe was suddenly storming over, Sabrina trailing behind her while trying to stop making the recording her phone.

“Oh hi Chloe, didn’t know you were here,” Adrien said after he pulled back, looking quite pleased with himself while she was quivering with rage.

“Why…why are you…kissing her?!”

“Because she makes me happy,” Adrien gave Chloe a pointed look. “And since you’re my friend, you want me to be happy, right?”

That shut Chloe up. Her eyes positively burned as she tried to think of what to say to that. “I do want you to be happy,” She muttered eventually, though she looked about ready to explode.

“Great, that means a lot to me.” Adrien flashed her one of his camera-worthy smiles as he slipped an arm around Marinette’s waist. “You’re such a good friend. Thank you so much, Chloe.”

Sabrina tried to grab Chloe’s hand but the other girl pulled away. “We should really go,” She tried to tell her, but Chloe ignored her and held a manicured finger close to Marinette’s face.

“The second you stop making him happy,” Chloe threatened, voice holding thinly veiled daggers. “I will destroy you. And I won’t even need Daddy’s help to do it. Do you understand me?”

Completely unfazed, Marinette just shrugged. “Whatever you say.”

“Ugh!” Chloe threw up her hands and stalked off. Sabrina stayed long enough to mouth an embarrassed ‘sorry’ before she followed after the Mayor’s daughter who was currently leaving the park in the dust.

“That could’ve gone better,” Marinette said after they had left.

“It also could’ve gone a lot worse.” Adrien breathed a sigh of relief. “But that should hold her off for
now.”

They decided to continue their walk again, so they fell into step beside one another and were silent a while before Marinette piped up, “Nice move with the ‘you want me to be happy’ part, that was genius.”

“So I’m a genius now, am I?” Adrien waggled his eyebrows at her.

“Don’t push it. You’re still the guy who was watching me while I was sleeping today.”

“Hey!”

_______________________________________________________________

After walking for almost an hour, enjoying the cool breeze and each other’s company, they found themselves closing in on a small ice cream parlor. “How about we go to this one?” Adrien asked as they drew near.

“Sure, I’ve never tried this place before.” Marinette went to open the door but he quickly zipped in front of her, opening it wide with a little bow.

“Ladies first,” He told her with a grin.

Rolling her eyes but still smiling all the same, she walked inside and Adrien came in right behind her. After studying the list of flavors available for a while, they both decided to go with simple but classic vanilla. After paying for each of their cones, Marinette and Adrien headed back outside to continue their walk as they enjoyed their ice cream.

“So where should we go next?” Marinette asked after they had been strolling for a while, their ice cream steadily disappearing into their bellies as well.

“Do you want to go back to your place?” Adrien suggested.

“My house is pretty boring. What about going to yours?”

“Probably wouldn’t be a good idea, Father doesn’t really let me have company.”

“Really?”

“You know that he banned Nino for life, right?”

She grimaced. Marinette had completely forgotten about that until he’d mentioned it just now. “So you never get to have anyone come over?”

“No, not really.” Adrien shrugged, then a thought occurred to him. “But wait a second, now that I think about it... a few years ago, while you were being Ladybug, you actually swung into my room a couple of times on totally different days, and he never noticed.”

At this, Marinette looked over at him in mid-lick of ice cream. “That’s right.”

“And I leave out my bedroom window every night and he never noticed.” Adrien’s eyes were wide with the discovery.

“Maybe there should be more times of Ladybug swinging into your room,” Marinette thought aloud and was delighted by how red Adrien turned at that statement. “For things other then hero business.”
“L-Like…tonight?” Adrien really wished his voice hadn’t squeaked when he said that.

Marinette finished chewing on the last of her ice cream cone for a while before she said, “You know what, I think I should go home to rest again soon.”

“Seriously? I hate you so much right now.” Adrien groaned, making Marinette smirk.

“I said, I think I should go home and rest again soon.” She repeated, slower. “And that means you should probably go home too.”

It took a second longer but once he realized what she had been hinting at, Adrien dropped what was left of his ice cream cone right on the sidewalk. “Oh!” Marinette giggled at him as he stared at her in complete surprise. She nodded at him to confirm his suspicions, and he immediately grabbed her hand while starting walking again, although it was more like practically running this time. “You’re so right, it’s definitely time to bring you home!”

Beyond entertained by how eager he was being, Marinette allowed him to drag her along behind him all the way back to the Dupain-Cheng bakery. They were going a lot faster this time around, and they were almost there after only half an hour. “Try not to seem like you’re in a rush to leave me when we get there,” She advised as they got closer. “I don’t want my parents to think the date didn’t go well.”

“Anything you say!” Adrien replied, to which Marinette snorted with laughter.

Once they got to the side door and she had unlocked it, Marinette stepped inside and looked around. “I’m home!” She called out, Adrien coming in after her and closing the door. Soon enough Tom and Sabine were coming downstairs to meet them.

“Hello Marinette, hello Adrien,” Sabine greeted and Tom waved excitedly behind her. “How did it go?”

“We went for a nice long walk then we tried some ice cream at a parlor I’ve never been to before, it was pretty good,” Marinette said sweetly. “And I think we’d like to go on another date again some time soon. Right Adrien?” She looked over at him with an innocent smile.

“Absolutely,” He replied immediately. “We’re absolutely dating now.” Adrien didn’t care if he sounded like an idiot, his brain was already gone in far off places.

Tom had been about to say something when Sabine spoke first. “That’s wonderful, congratulations you two. I knew everything was going to go well for you tonight, I just knew it! I told you it would, didn’t I?”

“Phew. Good thing Mom stopped Dad like that, I’m pretty sure he was about to say something embarrassing.” Marinette turned to Adrien with a grin. “So I guess I’ll see you later?”

He pulled her close to him and kissed her, running his hands down along her back before resting his hands on her waist. Marinette allowed herself to shiver, lifting her arms up and putting them around his shoulders. When they finally parted, she was now almost as breathless as he was. “See you later,” Adrien whispered against her lips. “I’ll be waiting.”

Marinette felt her face heat up as she watched him open the door and walk out, the door slowly creaking shut behind him. She locked it behind him then started to slowly head upstairs. “Marinette, we’re so happy for you!” Tom said the second she walked into the living room. “I knew everything was going to go well for you tonight, I just knew it! I told you it would, didn’t I?”
“I’m sure you did, honey,” Sabine went over to give Marinette a hug. “But we really are happy for you.”

“Thanks Mom, thanks Dad,” Marinette hugged her back, then she made herself give a big yawn on purpose. “I’m pretty tired after how long that walk was though, that headache must’ve taken more out of me then I thought. I mean, I know it’s not even nine o’clock on a Friday, but I’m exhausted.”

“Go ahead and get to bed early,” Sabine patted her shoulder. “We’re still all going to get up early tomorrow to finish getting all the food ready for your picnic, so I’m sure the extra sleep would be good for you.”

“And you can tell us more about your date in the morning!” Tom added, though he received a withering look from his wife for it.

“You bet. Good night.” Marinette waved at them before heading into her room and making sure her door was securely locked.

Tikki was flying out of her purse the second it had been closed. “Look at you, Marinette! All this confidence…you’re glowing! And did you see how much of an effect you had on him? This is fantastic!”

“I hope this means you’ve figured out I want to transform so I can go over there and you’re okay with it?” Marinette asked her.

“This kwami is a proud messenger of love, so you better believe it.” Tikki went over to Marinette’s desk to grab one of her leftover cookies to quickly munch on.

Grinning, Marinette sent off a text to Alya saying the date went great until Tikki was done was finished. Once she was, then it was time for a call of, “Spots on!”
Chapter 22

Chapter Notes

This is an official heads up! There is detailed sexual stuff happening below these notes in the chapter you see before you! If that's not your cup of tea, please feel free to look away or even flee in terror if you must!

THIS IS YOUR LAST WARNING!

I, however, will stick around to enjoy a very lovely cup of said tea with the rest of you.
=P Enjoy, fellow smut-lovers. ;)

Adrien had made it home in record time. He made sure to tell Nathalie while running by that he was heading to bed early before racing into his room and locking the door, not bothering to turn on the lights. Plagg left his shirt pocket immediately, and instead of even trying to object to the rendezvous he knew to be imminent, he simply floated off into the bathroom to hide. Adrien shut the bathroom door for him, so his kwami wouldn’t be able to complain about overhearing so much of their conversations (and hopefully more), then he went over to sit on his bed to wait.

And wait.

Every minute that went by seemed to take twenty. And it didn’t help that his wild imagination was already holding him captive, making very delightful but also very devious thoughts run through his mind. They had been since the moment he had put two and two together about what she had been implying. He didn’t even try to stop them, he knew he wouldn’t be able to anyway.

After all, Ladybug – Marinette – his girlfriend – wanted to sneak into his bedroom.

When there was finally a soft knock on his window, Adrien nearly jumped out of his skin. ‘Breathe! Don’t make a fool of yourself!’ He commanded himself as he strode across the room. He could see her hanging from her yo-yo string and she waved at him while wearing such a smirk, it made him feel weak in the knees.

Once he opened the window, she climbed right in, pulling in her yo-yo and attaching it to her waist. “Hey you,” Marinette said with a wink. “Long time no see.”

That was all he took. Adrien closed the distance between them and captured her lips, his body already smoldering. Marinette kissed him back, thoroughly enjoying the level of passion he was showing her. She let her fingers slip into his hair and felt him grab onto her hips firmly. After a few minutes of this they had to break apart for air, and his eyes travelled over every inch of her. “Your suit…”

“Oh sorry, I’ll change back,” Marinette was about to call off her transformation when Adrien shook his head.

“No, wait!” He blushed a little. “C-Could you leave it on for a bit?”

The request surprised her for a second, then Marinette laughed. “Oh right, your Ladybug kink.”
“M-Marinette!” Adrien turned every shade of red known to man.

“So tell me,” Marinette moved one hand to slowly run a finger down the center of his chest. “What exactly have you imagined doing to Ladybug?”

His body already trembled with desire and he bit his lip. “Things…”

“What kinds of things?” Marinette tilted her head to start kissing down his neck.

“Y-You’re not making it easy for me to have self control…” Adrien warned, shutting his eyes to try and focus his concentration.

“Well then,” Marinette whispered between kisses. “Don’t.”

She was unraveling him. Adrien moved his hands to grab her backside before hoisting her up. Marinette squeaked a little at the sudden movement, but quickly wrapped her legs around his waist. He kissed her again, hard, as he carefully backed up the few steps to his couch and sat down, leaving her sitting in his lap.

In this position, Marinette could feel the already-present bulge in his jeans pressing against her. She smirked into the kiss and moved somewhat to lightly brush against it, enjoying the tremor it drew from him. After a few seconds, she did it once more, moving much slower this time. Adrien stopped kissing her to let his head fall back against the sofa, his fingers clutching the cushions as he moaned. “W-Wow…”

Spurred on by his reaction, she started a rhythm of rubbing her hips against his at a languid pace. The amount of friction, the sounds he was making, and the fact of how illicit it felt that she had snuck into his room to do these things were turning her on as well. She moved her hands down to grab his, then she moved them to sit on top of her chest. Knowing exactly what she was wanting, he started to gently caress them and Marinette hummed contentedly into his ear. “Adrien…”

Hearing his name on her lips was intoxicating. As much as he loved how she was grinding against him, he went to put one hand behind her back so he could turn and lay her down against the couch. Adrien took a second to admire how she was looking up at him, eyes half-lidded and cheeks flushed, before pressing his lips to hers once more and teasing her nipples through her suit. She gasped and arched beneath him, hands grasping his shoulders desperately.

And all he could think of was how badly he wanted her, right then and now.

Despite this though, he was a gentleman by nature, and didn’t want to rush her into anything she wasn’t ready for. So as much as his body was screaming for him to do otherwise, his heart told him to rein those thoughts in. He did, however, let himself move so he could lightly nip at the material still covering her neck.

Marinette couldn’t stop herself from moaning at the sensation. She was feeling hot, so hot. The suit covering her from head to toe made her feel far too overdressed. He was still fully clothed as well, so she could only imagine that he was just as warm as she was. With that thought in mind, she moved her hands to start pulling at his over-shirt, trying to slide it down his arms.

Though he was a little surprised by this, Adrien didn’t waste a second and backed himself up enough so she could pull his over-shirt off of him completely, then she did the same with his second shirt. As he propped himself back over her, and saw her eyes raking over his chiseled torso, he gazed down at her with a shy smile, which she returned. “You look so beautiful, my Lady.”

“And you look so uncomfortable,” Marinette teased, her eyes now drifting down to his pants.
“That’s your fault,” He said with as much bravado as he could.

“Well then, I guess I should help you…” Marinette gathered up her bravery and reached over to grab his belt.

Adrien’s eyes went wide. “Y-You don’t have to…”

“I want to try,” She insisted.

“What about patrol?” He hated himself for protesting but he wanted to be sure that she was sure.

But she had already started undoing his belt. “I’m sure Paris will be fine for one night without its heroes on night watch.” Marinette gave him a reassuring smile, wanting him to know she wasn’t having any second thoughts. “That being said, I should probably get going soon, since my parents and I are getting up early to finish picnic prep tomorrow, but I’m not going to leave you like this. I’ve been giving this a lot of thought lately and even though I might have to fight my nerves for a while, I do want to try. And tonight seems like a perfect time to start. So I want to be the one to…” She faltered for a second before strengthening her resolve back up so she could complete her sentence. “Help you finish.”

Just having her hands so close to his aching need was deftly erasing the remainder of his rational thoughts. “O-Okay,” Was all he could manage.

Unbuttoning his jeans, Marinette forced every last bit of nervousness out of her mind. She slowly slid the zipper down and felt him shiver as she did so. Then she started to inch his jeans down over his hips. He moved to rest his forehead against her shoulder as he had done a few nights ago on the roof of the apartment building, his arms alone not feeling strong enough to fully support him anymore.

As much as she really wanted to, Marinette just didn’t have the courage quite yet to pull down his boxers. So instead she took a deep breath and slipped her hand down into the waistband. Adrien immediately bucked against her when her fingers ghosted over his already throbbing flesh. “Is this okay?” She questioned while she was moving her hand further in, and though he didn’t reply, she took his low moans as his seal of approval.

Gently, Marinette let her suit-covered fingers wrap around his length. He jerked at her touch, and once she felt she was ready, she let her hand begin to move up and down. “Oh, Hell…Marinette…” Adrien rasped, gripping on to the couch cushions as tightly as he could.

A proud smile was winding its way over her lips as she slowly but surely rubbed faster. “Purr for me, kitty cat,” Marinette whispered sinfully.

Her hand, her words…Adrien could feel he was nearing the edge already. After having so many cold showers lately and not getting to do this himself, the surge was approaching fast and his grasp on reality was slipping away. He wanted to be able to last longer, as he had long fantasized about Ladybug doing these kinds of things to him (and more), but he could tell there wasn’t much time left. “I…I’m going to…” He tried to speak more but the words wouldn’t form.

Marinette knew what he meant, and she was ready. She used her free hand to tilt his head up and so she could kiss him passionately. When her tongue slid into his mouth and she gave a little flick of her wrist at that same moment, the dam burst and Adrien cried out against her lips.

His whole body shook as the pleasure of his orgasm swept through him. Adrien could feel Marinette’s free hand gently rubbing his back as he rode the waves. He collapsed against her, breathing heavily as he tried to bring himself back down to Earth. And when he looked up at her
hazily, he could see that Marinette was smirking at him again. “Better?” She asked.

“Mm-hm.” That was the most coherent thing he could get himself to say.

Smirk widening, Marinette waited a little longer before she carefully slid her previously occupied hand back out. “Sorry about your boxers,” She said, though he knew she didn’t mean it at all.

And that was fine, he didn’t really care either. “I’ll just wash them.” He was rather pleased he had managed to make a full sentence that time.

After sliding out from under him, Marinette allowed herself to relish in the state he was in – the state that she had been the one to put him in. “As much as I want to stay here with you, I really need to get going home.” She knelt down so she could brush the hair out of his face.

“I know.” Adrien looked up at her from where he lay on the couch with a bit of a self-deprecating grin. “Forgive me for not getting up to see you out.”

She giggled and pressed a kiss to his forehead. “See you tomorrow, sexy.” Then she got back up and walked over to the window, opened it again as she unhooked her yo-yo, then tossed it high and swung out into the night.

It was a good few minutes before Adrien forced himself to get up off the couch with a groan. He finished getting undressed slowly, still feeling exhausted from all she had done to him. Leaving his clothes in a messy heap and dragging himself over to the bathroom, he knocked quietly on the door. “Plagg?”

“Go away.”

“You can come out now.”

“Too bad, I think I’m starting to like it in here.”

“I need to be in there more then you do. So like it or not, I’m coming in.” He started turning the handle and he could hear Plagg give a frustrated yell before falling silent, so he assumed he had flown out through one of the walls. Adrien poked his head inside and was relieved to find he was correct. So he let himself in and shut the door behind him before he started running the water for a shower that was very much needed…but at least it didn’t have to be cold this time.
Chapter 23

Chapter Notes

I'm so happy that so many of you liked the last chapter! ^^ As for poor Marinette, she's feeling just a little bit 'frustrated' right now. =P Don't worry though, she won't be left unattended for long. ;) Anyway! It's officially time for the picnic, huzzah! Very entertaining stuff happens at this picnic, and that goes for tomorrow's chapter too. Hope you all enjoy, everyone! <3

When Marinette got home, she landed onto her bed and took a moment lay down on her belly and scream into her pillow. After she felt she had sufficiently settled down, she rolled over onto her back. “Spots off.”

Tikki soon reappeared, looking somewhat amused. “I didn’t realize that you had had so much planned out for your visit.”

“I hadn’t, originally. It just, sort of…happened.”

“Figured so.” Tikki floated down to land on the cat pillow behind Marinette’s head and curled up on it, making herself nice and comfortable.

Marinette got up and climbed down the ladder so she could quickly get changed before heading back up to bed. Tikki had already fallen asleep, so she laid down carefully and pulled up the covers. Though she still felt lingering arousal from all she had done at Adrien’s house and would’ve liked to do something about it, she didn’t want to wake Tikki. So, as she was often doing lately, Marinette didn’t let her hands wander and instead tried to push all similar thoughts from her mind so she could try and get to sleep.

She was still very tired when her phone alarm went off early that morning. It had taken her quite a while to fall asleep, unsurprisingly, so buzzing of her alarm seemed to be extra loud. With a groan she got out of bed and climbed down the ladder to grab her phone and shut off the irritating noise. Rubbing her eyes, Marinette yawned and set it back down before climbing downstairs, not caring she was heading to the bakery in her PJs.

When she arrived, Tom and Sabine were already working away. “Good morning, sunshine!” Tom greeted with a smile, to which his daughter just grunted. “You feeling all right?” He asked, looking puzzled.

“Tired.” Marinette mumbled. “I’ll be fine.”

“I washed your apron for you last night, it’s by the door,” Sabine told her as she pointed to where it was hanging.

Grabbing it and putting it on over her PJs, Marinette yawned again. “Okay team, let’s do this.” She said with as much enthusiasm as she could muster.

Soon enough though, Marinette started to feel more awake and enjoyed herself while baking with
her parents. And the thought of being able to go on a picnic that afternoon with her friends with what they were making made her grumpiness ease into excitement. She was icing some of the brownies when she noticed her Mom and Dad seemed to be watching her expectantly. “Let me guess,” She allowed herself to start to smile. “You want date details.”

“Only if you want to share,” Sabine tried to say but Tom was already nodding his head vigorously.

Laughing, Marinette just shrugged her shoulders. “It was nice.”

“How so?” Tom looked excited to hear more.

“We got to talk for a while, and I didn’t even panic once. I can finally talk to him like a normal person.” Marinette put her spatula back into the bowl of icing. “Then we went on more of a walk, and it was a little windy but it was still a beautiful night. We got to try some ice cream at a place I’ve never been to before, too.”

“What did you have?” Sabine took a spatula for herself and so she could start icing the other tray of brownies.

“We both had vanilla ice cream cones. You could really tell that the ice cream was homemade. It was delicious, I’d definitely go there again.” Marinette grabbed her own spatula again, realizing she had gotten distracted, and went back to icing her tray. “And then we came home.”

“Sounds like it was a perfectly lovely date.” Sabine smiled at her.

“It was. I can’t wait to go on another one with him.” Marinette sighed dreamily. “I can still hardly believe he feels the same way that I do about him.”

“You deserve it.” Tom came over to pat her shoulder. “And you let him know that he’s welcome over here anytime he wants, okay?”

“I will.” Marinette gave her Dad a quick, warm hug before going over to give her Mom one as well. “Would it be all right if I went up to have a shower?”

“By all means, feel free to start getting ready. The brownies are almost all iced and the buns just need to finish cooling.” Tom said as he and Sabine waved at her as she went out the door and back upstairs.

After a fast shower, Marinette wound her way up into her room, hair still damp and a towel around her body. Again, she had found her imagination starting to run off with her and it had taken a lot of determination to focus only on getting herself clean. She picked herself out an outfit and got dressed, and when she picked up her phone she saw she had an email.

~Because of certain spectacular and magnificent things that happened last night, I realized this morning I never sent you your obligatory cat picture yesterday. So now you get two!

Underneath was an image of a kitten wearing a crocheted bow tie as well as a drawing of a cat driving a convertible.

And though the pictures were cute, it was what he had typed that was the cause of Marinette’s smile. She knew he had obviously enjoyed what she had done last night, but reading that meant a lot. Beyond the physical reaction, knowing that when he thought was she did had been ‘spectacular’ and ‘magnificent’ was quite the feather in her metaphorical hat. Beaming with satisfaction, she typed up a short reply.
See you at noon, goofball.

Marinette went back down to the bakery to start packing up the croissants she had made yesterday. Her parents had left the back area to open the shop portion, but the brownies and buns had been specially set aside for her. Glad for all they had done for her, she packed them up as well before she grabbed her phone so she could check on the time.

It was still a few hours before she would have to go to the park. So after she had brought all the packages of baking up to her room and slipped them into a large duffel bag she had dug out for the occasion, Marinette allowed herself to work on her sewing and portfolio for a while since she wouldn’t be able to get yesterday’s notes until she saw Alya at the picnic.

The time flew by, and soon she realized it was only forty minutes before they were supposed to meet up. “Let’s go Tikki!” Marinette opened up her purse for her kwami to fly into as she quickly grabbed the duffel bag and tramped downstairs. She told her parents she was leaving, thanked them again for all their help, and then she was off, walking quickly along the sidewalk.

Because before she went to the park, she wanted to make a stop at the nearest grocery store to get a particular item from the cheese department for someone she was fairly certain would be livid with her.

After she had made her purchase and stashed it in a separate pouch on the outside of the duffel bag (because damn, did it smell!), Marinette made her way over to where she and the others had decided to spend their afternoon together. She could see Alya, Nino and Adrien were already there waiting for her, sprawled out on a large blue blanket under the shade of some tall trees. It was Nino who spotted her first. “There she is!”

“Hey girl!” Alya called, waving her over.

“Hi!” Marinette sauntered over and sat down on the blanket as she heaved the duffel bag off her shoulder.

“We’re super glad you could come, and that your brain stopped trying to explode on you,” Nino grinned.

“Me too.” Marinette giggled, then allowed herself to crawl over to sit next to Adrien, who smiled at her with a soft blush.

Alya’s eyes lit up and she pulled out her phone. “Picture time!” She announced, snapping a photo of them.

“You’re enjoying this,” Marinette observed, glad she wasn’t feeling shy.

“I have been waiting for years for this to happen, so you’re damn right I’m enjoying this!” Alya grabbed Nino by the shoulder so the four of them could all squeeze together for another photo.

“So like, are you two officially…official?” Nino asked once it had been taken.

“We are.” Adrien said before Marinette even opened her mouth, and it was her turn to have her cheeks go pink.

“Awesome, bro!” Nino was just as pleased as Alya was. “I say that that calls for a toast!” He dug into the cooler he had brought and presented each of them with a can of iced tea.
“I agree!” Alya opened the tab on her can and held it out, and they each followed suit. “To the new couple! It sure took long enough!”

They laughed and clinked their cans together before taking a sip. After setting down their drinks, Alya went to start pulling the sandwich fixings from her backpack and Nino was grabbing them some paper plates. So while they were sufficiently distracted, Marinette took the opportunity to lean over to Adrien so she could whisper, “Is Plagg with you?”

“Unfortunately.” Came the reply from within Adrien’s shirt.

“I brought you something.” She opened the small pocket of her duffel bag.

The scent alone sent the kwami poking his head out. “I know that smell…”

“It’s a peace offering. So you don’t hate me for going over yesterday.” Marinette pulled out the package of camembert to open it for him, then put it back into the pouch of the duffel bag for him to eat.

Plagg floated out and went straight into the pocket. “I accept. You’re off the hook, for now.” He said before starting to devour his stinky gift.

“Have I told you lately how smart you are?” Adrien asked as Marinette began taking out the buns and brownies.

Grinning, Marinette set them down on the blanket before taking out the package of croissants last. “And I made these special for you.”

“My favorite!” Adrien looked ecstatic as he took them from her, opening the package and inhaling their scent. “You are way too good for me.”

“That I am.” Marinette winked, then the four friends got started on their lunch.
Chapter 24

Chapter Notes

This is another chapter I really enjoy, because I just love Alya so much. xD I want her to be my best friend too. =P The picnic comes to a close, a reappearance of my head-cannon of Nino the food-vacuum is made, and something gets promised. A very important something. So I hope you’re all ready for another tea party tomorrow. ;) For now, please enjoy today’s installment!

Once their sandwiches had been finished, drinks were downed, and the brownies had made a fast disappearance, Nino and Adrien went off a ways to play with the Frisbee Nino had brought which left Marinette and Alya relaxing together on the blanket. Marinette had told her all the details of the ice cream date she had shared with her parents, and her best friend was just as happy for her as they had been. She had even told her about how Chloe and Sabrina had tried to spy on them and how Adrien had completely shut her down, much to Alya’s immense delight.

“Seriously, marry him,” She said with a grin.

Marinette blushed but allowed herself to smile. “I’m going to let myself enjoy dating him first, if you don’t mind.”

“Oh, that reminds me!” Alya reached into her backpack and grabbed a small box, presenting it to Marinette. “I made this up for you to congratulate your achievement of becoming Adrien’s girlfriend.”

“What is it?” Marinette picked it up and glanced it over.

“Open it, you’ll see,” Alya watched excitedly as Marinette pulled off the lid and took out the tissue paper on top.

Beneath the paper sat a bright pink infinity scarf with white stars. “Is this…?” She looked at her best friend with a grin.

“Yup! It’s your very own Hickey Hiding Scarf!” Alya’s grin widened now. “And that’s not the only thing that’s in there.”

Confused, Marinette reached into the box and pulled out the scarf. What had been laying perfectly hidden beneath it before was now revealed: a box of condoms. “You didn’t!” She squeaked, face turning crimson.

“Sure did. I knew you’d be too embarrassed to get your own and I didn’t want you to be left unprepared because of that, so I bought them for you myself.” Alya looked quite proud of herself. “Look, I even got you the latex-free kind, so you don’t have to worry about getting any nasty allergic reactions. Trust me, I know from personal experience that those totally suck.”

“I don’t know whether to thank you or hit you.” Marinette shoved the scarf back in the box and put the lid on again. “And please don’t talk more about your sex life.”

Alya just laughed. “Whatever you say, girl. The time will come when you do feel comfortable
enough to kiss and tell, and when it does, let me know. I have a lot of experience to go on and I’m more then happy to share my knowledge of pleasurable dos and don’ts with my BFF.”

Before she could say anything, Nino was shouting over to them, “Guys, Adrien’s not playing fair! Does someone else want to play with me?”

“Sure babe, I’ll play.” Alya stood up and jogged over to them, giving Adrien a high-five as they crossed paths.

When he got back to the blanket, Adrien laid down on it next to Marinette. “So how exactly were you not playing fair?” She asked.

“One could say I do something a lot like baton twirling in my spare time, so I happen to have a lot of wrist strength and therefore an advantage in Frisbee.” Adrien said with a smile.

“I happen to have superior wrist strength as well, almost like I do lots of yo-yo tricks,” Marinette smiled back at him. “And I bet I’d kick your ass.”

“Want to play a round when they’re done to prove it?” Adrien asked.

“Maybe. For now I’m just enjoying doing absolutely nothing.” Marinette leaned back against one of the trees to watch Alya and Nino.

After a while, Adrien rolled over to grab his bag and pull out a big, lavish-looking tray of various sliced fruit. “Want some?”

“Holy shit, you brought enough to feed an army!” Marinette was staring at it as he pulled off the lid.

“Blame the kitchen chefs. I just told them I wanted a bit of fruit sliced up to take with me today and that’s what they gave me.” Adrien grabbed a handful of seedless grapes to start munching on.

“Don’t worry, I’m sure Nino will help us finish it off.” Marinette joked as she took some strawberries for herself.

“Hey, what’s this?” Adrien had picked up the box Alya had given her.

Eyes wide, Marinette quickly snatched it away. “It’s mine!”

“Okay, sorry, my bad,” Adrien studied her rapidly reddening face. “What’s gotten in to you?”

“N-Nothing,” Marinette stammered, shoving the box into her duffel bag, but still taking care not to wake the snoozing Plagg still in the other pocket. “It’s just a silly gift from Alya.”

“An amazing gift from Alya,” Came the aforementioned girl’s voice as she and her boyfriend came walking over to them.

Nino sat right down next to the tray of fruit. “Sweet spread, man!” He praised, rubbing his hands with glee before starting to snack on a little bit of everything.

“What did she get you?” Adrien was very curious now.

“It’s best she show you in private.” Alya said with a wink.

“Oh, okay then,” Adrien definitely didn’t get it, but just shrugged and went back to eating his grapes.

“Trust me, you’ll thank me later.” Alya stuck her tongue out at Marinette, who was currently wishing
the ground would suck her up into a hole.

It wasn’t long before even the large fruit tray had been devoured. Nino and Alya went back to play some more Frisbee and Adrien was packing up the tray. Marinette found herself yawning a little and rubbing her eyes. “Oh right, you had to get up early today to finish baking.” Adrien moved to sit next to her so she could lean against him if she wanted.

“And I didn’t really sleep well either,” Marinette rested her head on his shoulder.

“But your headache was better though…” Adrien thought for a moment, then he stared at her. “Did you have trouble sleeping because…you didn’t get a turn?”

She tried her best not to blush. “Uh…”

“So I’m right!” Adrien put his forehead in his hands with a groan. “I’m so sorry! I can’t believe I was so selfish!”

“That’s not true, I helped you because I wanted to,” Marinette protested.

“But I didn’t return the favor!” He moved to look directly into her eyes. “I swear to you, I’m going to repay you for what you did for me last night, and it’ll be soon!”

Marinette could no longer stop the heat creeping up over her cheeks. “Th-That’s not really necessary…”

“It is too. I’ve made up my mind.” Adrien looked up at the sky, noting the greying clouds that had been starting to steadily roll in. “We should probably get going soon, it looks like it might rain.”

Heart still skipping a beat at his promise, Marinette gave a nod and started putting things away as Adrien went to go get Alya and Nino. Once they had returned and all their possessions had been put away (with Marinette making sure she had roused Plagg so he could go with Adrien), Alya gave Marinette the thumb drive she had brought with her notes on it, then the four went their separate ways. Shortly after she had arrived home, rain began to sprinkle over the sidewalk, so Marinette was glad she had made it back in time.

Marinette put away the containers from the picnic then decided it was time for laundry, so she gathered her clothes needing a wash and got to work. She even threw in the new scarf Alya had gotten her, after taking the utmost care to hide the box of condoms it had been covering behind the cat pillow on her bed. While her various loads were alternating between the washer and dryer, she helped her parents in the bakery as well. The weather was bringing in people from the streets to get out of the rain, and most of them ended up leaving with fresh pastries and other treats too.

The clouds still hadn’t parted by supper. Once all her clothes had been washed, dried, and brought back to her room, Marinette met up with her Mom and Dad in the kitchen for meatloaf. They were in the middle of eating while Tom was telling them the story of how he nearly dumped an entire bowl of cake batter that afternoon on himself, when they could hear thunder start to roll. That put Marinette on alert; if it was going to start storming, it wouldn’t be safe for her and Adrien to go out on patrol tonight. Getting hit by lightning on a random Parisian building certainly wasn’t something she had on her agenda for the day.

After their dinner was finished, Marinette retreated into her room to start on her homework. She kept checking the weather out her window while she worked, and eventually the rain did start to ease up, before stopping completely. Feeling relieved, Marinette finished up her homework and looked over at Tikki, who was enjoying her favorite chocolate chip cookies that Marinette had smuggled up to
her in between loads of laundry. “Do you think we lucked out on missing the storm?”

“Paris is a big city, so it might still be stormy in some parts even though it’s cleared up over here. So I would take the patrol slow just to be sure and you guys should be fine.” Tikki advised between nibbles.

Grabbing her phone, Marinette made up a message for her Jaguar.

~Has the weather cleared up by your place?

This time it took a while before she got an email back.

~Sorry about the late reply, I had some headphones on while I was studying, so I didn’t notice my phone go off. But yeah, it’s been dry for about an hour here already.

So he was taking her advise seriously. Smiling at the thought, Marinette typed out a response right away.

~Tikki says we should be fine to patrol if we go slowly to avoid any areas that might still be stormy, so we don’t accidentally get fried.

~Sounds good. Plagg doesn’t want to be barbequed either so he agrees too.

~Meet you in a few.

~BTW, obligatory cat picture: day seven!

Which was followed by a picture of looking out a rain-covered window.

Setting her phone back down on her desk, Marinette saw Tikki had finished her cookies so she transformed and crept up through the trapdoor. Once she was outside on the terrace, she took a deep breath of the crisp air. She loved the fresh, clean smell after a good rain. She made sure no one was around to see her leaving, then she swung her yo-yo high and was off.

When she got to the apartment building’s rooftop, it was still covered in lots of puddles under a thick blanket of cloud. ‘Guess there’s going to be no stargazing tonight,’ She thought as she walked across it, the water splashing under her feet.

Adrien arrived a shot time later. “It started raining again at my house as I was leaving,” He told her. “So I think we should go to another end of the city first.”

“We?” Marinette found herself grinning. “I suppose we’re not going to be taking halves then?”

“No akumas have showed up in a couple of days, remember? That means we need to patrol together.” He winked at her.

“I guess that’s true,” She conceded, though her grin didn’t change. “Are you sure it’s not because you’re such a smitten kitten?”

“Funny.” Adrien didn’t look fazed. “But actually, for your information…” He strolled over to her so he could whisper directly in her ear as he went by, “I’m going to be taking my responsibilities very serious tonight.”

His words sent a tantalizing shudder through her body. Trying not to let herself get distracted, Marinette quickly followed behind him and the two superheroes got started on doing their rounds.
Chapter 25

Chapter Notes

Another official warning going out: more sexual things happen in this chapter! It's pretty long too!

So if you feel the need to, GET OUT WHILE YOU STILL CAN!

Anyway! I know this scene is a bit longer then the last one, and the reasoning behind that is Adrien was quite fired up and ready to go by the time Marinette decided to get her 'hands dirty', so to speak. Since there's more warm up involved here, that's part of it. Also, I firmly believe Adrien would be the utmost of caring lovers and would want to take things slow just to be safe. Well, for the first few times anyway. Then he could possibly become an animal... ;D So I hope you all enjoy, and welcome back, friends, to the smut-tea party! =P

Though there were a few areas where it was still drizzling, most of the heavy, angry clouds had moved off. Without the worry of lightning striking them down any time soon, they eased their way across the city. Because of the rain however, the amount of troublemakers had been few and far between. It even seemed like Hawk Moth had closed up shop for the night due to the weather, because even though Marinette and Adrien went on a second run through the city just to be sure, there wasn’t any hint of akuma activity either.

Due to going on that extra loop, by the time they headed back to the apartment building, it was much later then they usually would’ve finished patrol. Because of this, and how she hadn’t slept well the night before, Marinette was exhausted when they finally arrived. “I don’t know about you, but I’m ready for a well-earned eight hours of sleep,” She told him as she took a moment to stretch.

“Heading home?” Adrien asked innocently.

“Yeah. See you tomorrow.” Marinette gave him a gentle hug and a wave, then she started to make her trek back home.

After waiting a few minutes once she had disappeared into the distance, Adrien grabbed his staff and extended it as he usually would. But instead of heading towards the Agreste Mansion, he began to follow the same path she had taken.

He did have a promise to keep, after all.

Arriving home a short time later, Marinette called off her transformation as soon as she was safely inside her room and flopped onto her bed with a heavy sigh. “I don’t even want to move.” She muttered into the mattress.

“Your clothes will wrinkle if you don’t change,” Tikki warned while flying over to the chaise lounge to relax.

“I know, I know.” Marinette forced herself down the ladder from her bed and started getting
undressed. She had already pulled on her PJ shorts and was in the process of finishing buttoning up her PJ top when there was a very quiet knock against the glass of the trapdoor in the roof. “Don’t tell me…” She groaned as she looked up, seeing bright green eyes and a mischievous smile looking down at her.

She stomped her way back up the ladder and threw open the trapdoor, feeling irritated. “What do you think you’re doing here?” Marinette demanded as he hopped in to land on her bed before both of them knelt down. “I told you I was going to bed!”

“But I didn’t get to give you your good night kiss…” Adrien said before slipping a clawed thumb under her chin to tilt up her head as he brought his lips to hers.

Her annoyance melted away almost immediately and she shut her eyes, letting her arms wrap around him. The hand Adrien had used to tilt her head moved to cup the side of her face, and the other rested on the small of her back as he pressed closer to her. After all that had gone on between them lately, this may have only been one kiss but it had quite the effect on her. Marinette pulled back slowly, her body already starting to tingle. “You’re evil, you know that?” She stuck her tongue out at him.

“And what seems to be the problem?” Adrien was smirking. “Are you, purr-haps, in need of assistance?”

“Sometimes, I really hate you.” Marinette repeated her words from Sunday night.

“I doubt that.” Adrien replied, echoing his own as he leaned in to kiss her again.

Adrien slowly started to move forward so she had to lean back as they kissed, and it wasn’t long before Marinette was laying down on top of her bed with him perched over her. He let his clawed fingers slowly trail down her sides and could feel her tremble at his touch. When he broke away, he could see the passion building in her eyes and it was a sight to behold.

“T-Tikki,” Marinette breathed, looking for her kwami. “I think…you should head downstairs now…”

“Already going.” Tikki replied with a little giggle as she passed through the floor.

“Now where were we…” Adrien started peppering kisses over her cheeks and down her neck. Her PJ top still had the top two buttons left undone, and he took the opportunity to trail his lips down over the exposed skin.

Marinette’s breath caught in her throat. She saw his hands move toward the rest of the buttons, but before he did anything he looked up at her, silently asking for permission. Swallowing hard, she gave a shaky nod, and her eyes were glued to his fingers as they slowly, diligently began to unbutton her PJ top. Once it was fully undone, he returned his gaze to her. “G-Go ahead,” Marinette whispered, the words alone adding more fuel to the blaze scorching through her.

He hooked his thumbs under each side of the fabric and gently pulled them apart, revealing her bare chest and stomach. She could see he was eyeing her breasts and she flushed with embarrassment, hastily covering them with her hands. “Don’t…” He placed his hands over hers, though he didn’t make a move to change their position right away.

“They’re so small,” Marinette muttered, feeling ashamed.

“I’ve told you before, I think they’re perfect.” Adrien told her earnestly, making her relax her a bit. He tried to inch her hands back, and she let him, though her face was still scarlet.
Wanting to take her mind off of it, he moved to start kissing her neck again and when he heard her soft sigh, Adrien set his hands on her belly. As he kissed, he let them travel upwards at a crawl, not wanting to rush a single moment of this. When he touched the underside of her exposed breasts, she gasped and he froze. “It’s okay,” She said quietly, and he took that to be his cue to place his hands over top of them. Marinette shivered at the touch but didn’t stop him, so he let his fingers move down to give her nipples a soft squeeze, and the way she moaned delighted him.

Truly, he was loving every second. Being able to make the love of his life feel this way was pure perfection. Adrien slid himself down to position his head over her chest, and he gave her a quick glance. “May I?” Marinette nodded again, so he closed his mouth around one hardening nipple and ran his tongue over it.

Squealing, her fingers dug into her bed sheets. Adrien smirked and did it again as he let one hand play with her other breast. Then he switched sides, and before long Marinette arched her back beneath him. “Please…” She begged. “I…I need…more…”

He had been waiting for her to say that. He let his unoccupied hand grab onto the waistband of her PJ shorts and slipped them over her thighs, past her knees and off her ankles. Adrien brought his head up from her chest as he took hold of the waistband of her panties next. Gliding the rather wet garment down her legs, he pressed kisses over her belly to soothe her, as he could tell she was beginning to feel nervous again. He trailed them down to her hips but stopped as he neared her core.

A thought had occurred to him. How was he supposed to please her as she had done for him, when each of his fingers currently ended in a claw? The last thing he wanted to do was to hurt her. But he didn’t think it would be a good idea to change back, as he was fairly certain Plagg would refuse to transform again once he needed to go home. Plus, if he was stuck here overnight due to an uncooperative kwami, he could end up being discovered by Marinette’s parents. And they seemed to like him, so he really didn’t want to jeopardize that fact by being caught having snuck into her room to do such things. So he definitely needed to stay as Cat Noir for this to work.

Which left him one option.

One that he certainly didn’t object to, either.

Licking his lips, Adrien lightly grasped her thighs and eased them apart. Their eyes locked as he was doing so and he gave her an encouraging smile as he bent closer to her. “Ready, Princess?”

Marinette’s eyes widened when she realized what he was planning on doing. She was about to say something but he had already started to run his tongue between her slick folds. “A-Adrien!” She moaned loudly, her hands quickly flew up to cover her mouth to try and quiet herself as shockwaves of pleasure assaulted her senses.

Adrien enjoyed the taste as he licked his way from top to bottom, letting his tongue momentarily dip into her chasm before working his way back up again. When he reached the bundle of nerves waiting for him there, he closed his lips over it and sucked. Marinette gave a strangled scream and thrashed around him, and that was all the encouragement he needed to continue.

The pressure was rapidly building within her. His name tumbled from her lips over and over, only ceasing when Marinette was at last pushed over the edge into orgasm and a shriek of ecstasy tore from her throat. Keeping his gentle grip on her legs to help ground her as the bliss was sweeping her away, Adrien licked up the juices that spilled forth. Once she had mentally returned to the present and he felt that she had been ‘cleaned’ sufficiently, he moved back so he could crawl up to look over her with a grin. “You’re welcome.”
Too tired to gather the energy needed to hit him, Marinette instead reached up to wrap her arms around him and hug him close. “That was…” She didn’t finish, feeling at a loss for words on how to properly describe it.

Adrien chuckled. “Glad you liked it.” He could tell she was already fighting the pull of sleep so he buttoned her PJ top back up for her and pulled her panties and PJ shorts back up for her as well.

She lifted her hips to allow him to do so, but when he went to stand to get ready to leave, Marinette grabbed one of his hands to stop him. “Thank you.”

The gesture warmed his heart. “Any time.” Adrien ducked down again so he could kiss her nose. “Sleep well, beautiful. I love you.”

“I love you too.” Marinette murmured with a sleepy smile. She yawned as he pulled the covers over her, and was already drifting off as he stood to climb up through the trapdoor onto the roof.

Feeling quite happy with all he had been able to do for her, Adrien grabbed his staff and began the slow trip back home. He did have some of his own business that needed taking care of once he had returned to his bedroom. And the memories of being the one to bring Marinette to her release would be the perfect accompaniment for his own.

“Time to get up, sleepy head!” She could hear Tikki calling.

Rolling over, Marinette opened her eyes slowly. Sunlight was streaming into her room and she could hear birds chirping overhead from the terrace. She pushed back the covers and sat up, rubbing her eyes. “Morning…”

“A good morning to you too.” Tikki teased as she floated over to her bonded.

“Oh hush.” Marinette stuck her tongue out at her as she climbed out of bed, sliding down the ladder with ease and grabbing her phone. The time on the screen showed it to be late morning, and she wasn’t surprised to see an email awaiting her from a couple of hours ago.

~I hope no akumas show up today. Plagg has declared that I owe him Paris’s entire supply of camembert for yesterday so apparently I’m going to be very busy heading to every single grocery story in the city. =P

And she could absolutely picture him saying that, too. Chuckling to herself, Marinette’s thumbs started tapping across the letters on the virtual keyboard.

~Well, I thought it was worth it.

~So worth it. Wouldn’t change the thing. ^^

After a second of debating and deciding to be bold, Marinette added more to the originally short reply she had planned up.

~Me either. It was beyond amazing. Trust me, I really needed that.

~Have I been making you frustrated lately, bugaboo? ;3

Though she obviously couldn’t see him, she was positive he was smirking at his phone. ‘But two can play at this game now,’ She thought wickedly.
~Wouldn’t you like to know. I’m off to have a shower, since someone made me very sweaty last night. I’ll leave you with this thought, though: if this is what Plagg does after just the small stuff, I think you’re going to have to get him the camembert supply from the whole **country** when we go all the way.

How she wished she could see his face when he would read that email! Satisfied, Marinette set her phone back down on the desk and though she could hear it was vibrating already as she walked away, she just let it sit there as she grabbed some clean clothes and triumphantly skipped downstairs to the bathroom.
Chapter 26

Chapter Notes

Can I just say I love Adrien's desperate emails? xD Literally one of my favorite hilarity moments in this whole fic so far! Speaking of so far, I just finished up chapter thirty-two in the Word document of the story. I'm not quite as far ahead as I used to be, because I worked a lot this week. But I have the weekend off (I usually get one weekend off a month) so I plan on doing a lot more writing in the next two days. ^^ Enjoy today's chapter everybody!

Though it was creeping ever closer to noon, Marinette took as long as she could in the shower, just to vex him. She knew the longer she didn’t reply, the more it would drive Adrien crazy. And the thought left her grinning as she slowly washed every finger, toe, and everything in between. Her hair came last, and she kept up her leisurely pace as she shampooed and conditioned. After she had rinsed it all away, stepped out of the shower and took her time with drying off. She then got dressed and strolled back up into her room. Tikki was waiting for her with a big grin. “How many?” Marinette asked her kwami.

“Five-” A sound of a vibration from the desk. “Make that six emails.”

The feeling of victory was wonderful. Marinette sat down at her desk chair as she grabbed her phone and unlocked it to the steadily filling Inbox.

~When? =O You said when, not if!
~When is when?!
~Don’t you dare leave!
~SPOTS!!!
~Get back here you crafty temptress!
~Sometimes I really, really, really hate you. X_x

Laughing uproariously, Marinette had to wipe tears of mirth from her eyes. Deciding she hadn’t quite tortured him enough, she wrote out the response that had become the matching half to his last phrase.

~I doubt that!

She slid her phone in her pocket as she made her way down to the bakery to help her Mom and Dad. It was already vibrating by the time she got there, and Marinette took her phone out to read as she put on her apron.

~There you are! OMG are you trying to kill me?! Do you want a dead boyfriend?!

Tom could hear her snort of laughter as he walked into the back. “Here she is!” He called over his shoulder to his wife before looking back at his daughter. “Your mother and I were about to send a search party upstairs for you.”
“Sorry I’m late Dad, I slept in.” Marinette put her phone in her apron as she grabbed herself a bowl and some measuring cups.

“Don’t worry about it. I remember I was dog tired too with all the school work I was getting when I was your age.” Tom noticed her pull out her phone again. “So what was so funny?”

“Just talking to Adrien.” She enjoyed how his eyes lit up.

“Oh, gotcha! Not stuff for the mortal eyes of nosy Dads, I assume?” He asked.

“Nope, sorry.” Marinette grinned while gathering more utensils. “Is it okay if I keep chatting with him while I work?”

“As long as you don’t set the kitchen on fire, I don’t see why not.” Tom said playfully while handing her a recipe. “Here, start with this one. Say hello to Adrien for me.”

“Sure.” Marinette brought out some of the ingredients as her father went back out to the shop portion of the bakery, then she brought her phone back out of her apron.

~Not used to being on the receiving end of the flirting, hmm? And my Dad says hi.

~You just wait, I’m totally going to get you back for that one. =P Oh cool, hi back!

~I’d like to see you try.

They continued their emails of playful banter back and forth all throughout the afternoon, in between her baking and his studying. Marinette was still typing as she sat down at the dinner table with her parents. “Still going?” Sabine asked as she dished out everyone’s serving of beef stew.

“Yes.” Marinette smiled shyly. “I told him we’re having supper though, so I promise I won’t have my phone out while I’m eating.”

“Ah, young love.” Tom sighed wistfully. “Remember when we used to do that?”

“Fondly.” Sabine kissed her husband’s cheek before she sat down.

The family of three ate quickly, as Tom and Sabine were heading off to meet up with some friends to see a play, and Marinette wanted to take some time to study for herself that evening. And being able to continue emailing Adrien more while she did so was on the to-do list, as well.

Once her parents had left, Marinette grabbed some frosted cookies for Tikki went upstairs to get started. Phone in one hand and textbook in the other, she got herself nice and comfy on the chaise lounge. She got in a good few hours of studying before it was time to get ready to go out on patrol. As Marinette went over to the desk to Tikki’s cookie plate to sneak one for herself, she noticed the bouquet still sitting behind the computer screen were starting to show their age, looking droopy.

As much as she wished she could keep them forever, she knew they needed to go out before they started attracting bugs. So with a bit of a heavy heart, Marinette took the container out and brought it with her downstairs. She dumped the water and wrapped the flowers in paper towel so they wouldn’t be noticed before tossing them into the garbage. With a sigh, she put the container in the sink and went back to her room where Tikki was waiting for her. “At least you got all those beautiful pictures of them, those aren’t going to be going anywhere!” Her kwami said encouragingly.

“I know.” Marinette’s smile was sad though. “Time to head out, I guess. You ready?”
Tikki nodded. "Ready."

"Spots on!" When the magic faded away and the famous polka-dotted suit was on her once again, Marinette’s yo-yo started beeping almost immediately. Surprised, she grabbed it and tapped the surface, seeing Adrien’s masked face appear in the little screen that emerged. "What’s going on?"

"We’ve got trouble, LB!" He looked like he was running as he spoke to her. "There’s an akuma out here and this one’s really pissed!"

"I’m on my way!" Marinette tapped the screen again to get a map of Paris with his co-ordinates on it, then quickly went through the trapdoor in the roof to swing off in the direction his signal was coming from.

When she got there, the streets were littered with playing cards stuck into walls and sliced through cars and benches. There was a middle-aged woman standing not too far off, decked out in a white blouse covered in card suits, a deep purple knee-length skirt and black heeled boots. She was also holding a deck of cards in one hand as she scored the area. "Where’d you go, Super-Zero? Come out, come out, wherever you are!" She was calling. "I promise I won’t hurt you…much!"

"Over here!" Marinette heard a whisper, and she turned to see Adrien waving from around the corner of a nearby building. She hurried over to him before the woman could notice her. "She’s been calling herself Ace and going on about how she’s going to get back at all the people who cheated her in a poker game," He explained. "Those cards of hers are crazy sharp, and she has a mean streak a mile wide."

The deep gashes along the brick walls around them were more than enough evidence of that claim. "Do we have any idea where the akuma is?" Marinette asked.

"All the cards she’s been throwing have been coming out of the deck she’s holding on to," Adrien told her. "But I saw an Ace of Spades peeking out of the pocket of her shirt earlier. I think that’s where it must be hiding."

Marinette peered out from around the corner. Ace had turned sideways, though she thankfully wasn’t looking their way. From this angle, Marinette could see the top of Ace of Spades in the pocket of her blouse. While the cards Ace had been throwing were silver, this one was purple, which was a dead giveaway. "I agree," She turned back to Adrien. "But she’s not going to let us get close to her with those razor cards."

"She doesn’t know you’re here yet, I could go grab her attention," Adrien offered.

"I love your plans." Adrien grinned, making Marinette groan.

She waited another moment, then she leapt out from behind the building. "You really need to work on your aim," Marinette taunted, making Ace whirl around to face her. "If you were really trying to hit someone, you missed pretty spectacularly."

"I’ll hit you easy!" Ace started grabbing cards to throw her way. They whistled through the air towards her but Marinette was ready, easily dodging this way and that. Out of the corner of her eye, she saw Adrien creeping his way over from behind Ace, the telltale black bubbles of light already surrounding his hand.

"Missed me! Oops, missed me again!" Marinette taunted, keeping herself the center of attention. She
could see Ace getting angrier with every toss, which meant she was completely oblivious to Adrien’s steady approach.

When he was close enough, he snatched the deck of cards from her with ease. She stared at Adrien in shock as he closed his fist around the deck and the magic around his fingers disintegrated them into dust. “Surprise!” He spun on his heel and dashed away to escape the reach of her flailing fist, and screeching with rage, she tore after him. “Nah nah, can’t catch me!” He used his staff to propel himself onto a streetlight where she couldn’t reach him, leaving her angrily swiping at him from below.

“Lucky Charm!” Marinette soon was catching a red and black clear plastic jug filled with water and some ice cubes. “Uh, okay then…” After eventually figuring out what to do, she started to run towards where Adrien and Ace were. “Cat Noir, catch!” She shouted, throwing the jug in his direction.

For a moment she was worried he wouldn’t be able to grab it but thankfully he managed to at the last second. Pulling off the lid, Adrien deftly tipped it over so all the water and ice cubes came pouring down over Ace. She screamed as it soaked her, and while she was trying to wipe her eyes, Marinette tossed her yo-yo to wrap around her ankle. Then she jumped over a streetlight herself and pulled it taught behind her, sending Ace whizzing through the air to hang upside down.

“You little brats! Put me down!” Ace demanded as she struggled. However, because of all the movements she was making, the Ace of Spaces in her blouse pocket soon became dislodged and fluttered to the ground.

Jumping off his perch to rip the possessed card in half, Adrien then held out his arms to catch the now-falling Ace as Marinette let her yo-yo go slack. Rolling it back to her hand, Marinette captured the akuma that was trying to fly away, purifying in a flash and sending it off into the sky. “Miraculous Ladybug!” Throwing the empty jug up, the cleansing magic spread out from where it vanished and quickly fixed all the things Ace’s cards had damaged, while the dark purple glow faded away from the woman herself and she reverted back to normal.

“What’s going on?” She muttered as Adrien set her down. “Wait, Cat Noir? And Ladybug?” She bit her lip. “Oh no…am I in trouble?”

“Don’t worry, everything’s okay.” Marinette assured, picking up the Ace of Spades from the sidewalk, now whole again, and handing it to her. “This is yours, right?”

“My lucky card!” She grasped it tightly. “Thank you both. I’m really sorry for whatever I did back there. Please don’t be mad.” The mean streak she had had before was clearly a result of the akumatization, in reality she seemed to be quite friendly and kind.

“Hey, no problem. All in a day’s work.” Adrien said with a wave of his hand and a grin. The woman thanked them again before heading off.

“Pound it!” Marinette held out her fist expectantly and Adrien knocked his against it, though both of them could hear familiar warning beeps already sounding from his finger and her ears.

“I wish I could kiss you right now,” Adrien said in a soft voice, although they could both see excited civilians rushing towards them to praise their heroes.

“I know, so do I.”

“But we have appearances to keep, right?”
“Right.” Marinette gave the growing crowd a warm smile before swinging off with her yo-yo, and Adrien following suit with his staff.

She was able to make it home before the last dot on her earring flashed and disappeared. Slumping into her desk chair, Marinette ran the back of her hand across her forehead as Tikki came back into view. “That was a workout. Damn, she was fast! And I thought she was really going to hurt one of us with those cards.”

“No super-villain is a match for my Ladybug!” Tikki exclaimed proudly, making Marinette laugh.

“Your faith in me is astounding.” Marinette stood to press a kiss to Tikki’s large forehead. “You make me really want to believe in myself.”

Tikki hugged Marinette’s cheek with a smile. “That’s my job.”
Chapter Notes

Got called into work today so I didn't really get any of the writing done I wanted to. However! I should have most of tomorrow to myself at least, so I’ll be able to write more then. I’m still ahead by a few of course, I just want to be MORE ahead. =P
Anyway! I hope you all enjoy. ^^

“Well you should be happy,” Adrien said to his kwami. He was getting undressed now that he had safely gotten home again and transformed back. “I didn’t get to spend much time with her tonight.”

“I actually don’t care how much time you spend with her, just as long as it’s not all that gross stuff.” Plagg corrected from where he was lounging on Adrien’s pillow.

“My mistake.” Adrien rolled his eyes as he took out his phone to send Marinette her obligatory cat picture for day eight (a photo of two baby leopards).

“And I’m still waiting on receiving all of Paris’s camembert.”

“I’ll get right on that.”

“If I had bigger arms, I’d hit you.”

“Lucky me, then!”

Plagg moved off as Adrien turned off the lights and sat down on his bed. “I don’t hate her, you know.” He said quietly as he looked down at his bonded. “And you two really are made for each other.”

Adrien smiled as he laid down. “Thanks, buddy. I know.”

“But you’re still a moron, in case you forgot.”

“Good night, Plagg.”

Morning came around once again, some particularly loud birds on the terrace chiming in with Marinette’s alarm to make quite the cacophony. She turned off her alarm and hoped the birds would settle down on their own as she made her way to the kitchen to have some breakfast.

After she eaten and taken a shower, she went back into her room and was relived to hear no more angry twittering from above. Marinette put Alya’s thumb drive into her backpack to return to her, and after a moment’s hesitation she also put in the scarf she had gotten from her as well, now that it was fully washed and dried. Tikki was already relaxing comfortably in her purse as she slid it on, then she travelled downstairs to say good-bye to her parents and head off to school.

It had become a lot easier lately to get out the door on time now that she was so excited each day to spend more time with Adrien. Dare she say, she may even be becoming a morning person! ‘I guess I
needed the right motivation,’ She thought with a giggle. ‘Although I’m sure there’s going to be
mornings I end up sleeping in if things keep going like they were this weekend…’

“Hey, morning Marinette!” Nino was waving at her as he and Alya caught up with her, breaking her
out of her reverie.

“Good morning!” Marinette looked over at Alya. “I have your thumb drive with me, thanks again for
letting use your notes.”

“No prob.” Alya brushed her hair behind her ear as the wind was tossing it too and fro. “Maybe I
should’ve worn a hat today…”

The three chatted amongst themselves as they made their way into the school, only stopping when
they noticed Adrien was waiting outside the classroom door for them. “Sup!” Nino greeted with a
grin.

“Hey Nino, hey Alya,” Adrien reached out to take Marinette’s hand in his, sharing a smile with her.
“Hey you.”

“Hey yourself.” Marinette pecked him on the cheek, turning them red.

“Oh, that reminds me!” Alya set down her backpack and fished out her flowery infinity scarf. “I
washed it this weekend. Could you hold on to it again for me?”

“On one condition.” Marinette dug into her own bag and pulled out Alya’s thumb drive, as well as
her own new star-covered scarf. “If you look after mine.”

Alya grinned. “Deal!” She grabbed the thumb drive in one hand as she and Marinette traded scarves
with the other.

“Girls.” Nino chuckled with a roll of his eyes.

“When did you get that?” Adrien asked, then his eyes widened a bit. “Wait, is that what she gave
you Saturday?”

“Part of it, yeah.” Alya winked, and Marinette willed herself not to blush.

“Well if it’s supposed to be for what yours is for, I certainly like this part,” Adrien tightened his grip
on Marinette’s hand, and she did blush now.

“Dude, class starts in like, five minutes.” Nino warned while he and Alya began to walk into
homeroom.

“I know, I know. But there’s always tomorrow.” Adrien said casually while he pulled Marinette
along behind them, who let him since she was busy being distracted by hanging onto every word he
had just said.

As they entered, Chloe noticed Adrien and Marinette holding hands and immediately started talking
loudly to Sabrina. “So as I was saying, Pierre is this super rich and super attractive and super talented
actor…”

“Your new boyfriend sounds amazing, Chloe,” Sabrina’s reply sounded rehearsed, with heavy
emphasis put onto the word ‘boyfriend’.

“I think she’s trying to make you jealous, man,” Nino observed while trying not to laugh as the four
of them went to their seats.

“Let her try.” Adrien kissed Marinette’s forehead before sitting down, and that definitely didn’t go unnoticed by the Mayor’s daughter.

Before she could say more, however, the bell rang and their teacher started to get class underway. As soon as it was time for lunch, Chloe was right back to babbling on to Sabrina more about her possibly-imaginary boyfriend, but no one was really listening. Adrien had to get ready to leave to go to a photo-shoot as well, much to Marinette’s chagrin, but at least she could look forward to seeing him for patrol.

She went home to quickly eat her lunch before heading back for afternoon classes, which went by uneventfully. Alya and Nino asked if she wanted to join them as they were heading to Alya’s to watch movies, but Marinette politely declined. To make sure she could go on said patrol, she had her homework to finish, and besides, she didn’t want to end up being a third wheel. So they said their good-byes and went their own directions, wherein Marinette took her stroll back to the bakery at a leisurely pace, enjoying the warm weather and light breeze.

“I’m so glad your back!” Sabine greeted when she came through the door, as the shop area was teeming with people. “I could really use your help!”

Marinette rolled up her sleeves and got to work, assisting customers while her mother rang them in. It was a good twenty minutes before they waved the last pair out the door. “Wow, that was a rush!” Marinette leaned against the register counter.

“They all came in at once,” Sabine said. “Maybe they were part of a tour group, or a class, I’m not sure. But thanks again for helping, it would’ve been a mess out here with just me by myself.”

“Where’s Dad?” Marinette asked as she picked up her backpack from where she’d left it behind the counter.

“Napping upstairs. He’s not feeling well.” Sabine sighed. “He’s gotten a fever and a cough, so I told him to lay down. And until he’s better I didn’t want to bother him.”

“No wonder I didn’t see him at lunch. Don’t worry Mom, I’ll check in on him when I go upstairs.” Marinette assured as she headed for the stairs.

“Thanks sweetheart.” Sabine gave her a smile, then turned back to the new trio of customers who had just walked in as Marinette went upstairs.

Knocking lightly on her parents’ door, Marinette poked her head inside to see her Dad was fast asleep. She smiled at the sight, then tiptoed inside to grab the empty glass of water by the bed. As quietly as she could, she filled it up in the bathroom for him before bringing it back, then closed the door behind her and headed up to her own room.

Placing the oatmeal chocolate chip cookies she’d stashed in her pocket onto Tikki’s plate, Marinette then dropped her backpack to the floor and took off her purse. Tikki flew out to begin her snack as Marinette sat at the desk chair. There wasn’t that much for her to work on tonight, thankfully enough, so she was able to finish all of it within an hour, which left her right in time for supper. Tom had gotten up and made himself some soup, which he ate together with Sabine and Marinette, while the women of the family had opted to heat up some of the leftover meatloaf. “Is there anything we can grab for you?” Marinette asked as she watched him eat slowly.

“This is fine, thank you.” He assured her with a tired smile. “The stupid thing is this cold came out of
no where, I felt fine yesterday.”

“But we work with customers all day, any one of them could have passed it on to you.” Sabine reminded him. “Just take all the time you need to feel better, okay?”

“I promise. I don’t think anybody wants me coughing on their bread.” Tom joked.

They finished their respective meals and Marinette was helping Sabine with the dishes when her phone vibrated in her pocket. Since her hands were still wet and covered in soap, she let it sit until they were all finished, and when she finally took it out she saw it was a text from Alya. It was a picture of Nino, sound asleep on Alya’s couch with the caption ‘God he’s such a lightweight, we’re barely two chick-flicks in’.

Giggling, Marinette sent a reply containing a thumbs-up emoticon, then double checked if there was anything else her Mom needed help with before heading back upstairs to her room. Finally having a bit of time to herself before patrol, she sprawled out on her chaise lounge and laid there for a while, doing nothing and relishing it. Her phone vibrated in her pocket again, and this time when she pulled it out it was an email from a certain someone.

~Finally finished the photo-shoot. I’m so done with wearing uncomfortable sandals and overly flashy swim trunks. X(

That caught Marinette’s attention.

~You were modeling swimwear today?

~For the record, spaghetti becomes extra delicious when you haven’t eaten since noon. *o* And yeah, why?

~Do you happen to have any of the pictures?

~Not with me, no. And once they get them all edited together they’ll all be going in a magazine eventually anyway.

~Aww, damn. Okay.

~Don’t be sad! I’d be more then happy to get you one of the magazines when they come out! ^^

He wasn’t getting it, at all. Oh well, it was probably for the best anyway. She doubted she’d hear the end of it if she realized she had been wanting pictures of him wearing next to nothing to keep for later. Especially if he knew what ‘for later’ meant. So she decided to just play it cool as she typed out a response.

~Thanks. So I’ll see you at the usual spot in about two hours?

~You know it! <3

Relieved she had dodged a bullet there, Marinette got up to grab her book she still hadn’t had the time to finish to occupy herself until patrol. And hopefully it would also keep her imagination away from the thoughts that had started to arise at the mention of her super-model boyfriend posing in sandals and swim trunks.
Is everyone ready for more fluff, on the level of tooth-rotting sweetness? =П Good! Because there's lots of it today! xD I'm off to bed, so just a short note tonight. Enjoy everybody!

Adrien made it to the apartment building’s rooftop early on purpose. He had missed seeing Marinette all afternoon so he really couldn’t wait to be able to see her again tonight. The weather was still a little windy like it had been this morning, and it was getting cooler as the temperature continued to drop from the pleasantly warm high it had held this afternoon, but he didn’t mind.

It could be snowing for all he’d care, he would always take every opportunity to see his Lady. Especially now that she was actually his girlfriend, a thought that still made him swoon!

He could already see her starting to approach soon enough, anyway. Eagerly awaiting her arrival, he was almost counting down the seconds until she would be there with him. Marinette had been right the other day, he definitely was a smitten kitten. Totally and completely. So when she did touch down on the rooftop, he practically skipped over to meet her and threw his arms around her. “Missed you, love bug! Missed you so much!” He exclaimed happily while squeezing her tight.

Marinette chuckled as she hugged him back. “Missed you too.”

“So did I miss anything exciting this afternoon while I was gone?” Adrien asked as he moved back.

“Not a damn thing. Boring as usual.” Marinette looked out over the horizon. “So do you want to take north or south tonight?”

“Aww, but I wanted to talk with you more.” Adrien pouted.

“We have work to do.”

“I know, but…”

“Cat Noir.”

“Ladybug?”

“You’re procrastinating.”

“I’m sure the city can wait just five more minutes…”

“The faster we get patrol done, the faster we can relax together.”

“South! I pick south!” He was already grabbing his staff and running to the other end of the apartment building.

Grinning, Marinette grabbed her yo-yo and went off in the opposite direction. She went through her portion and was able to make her way through Paris for her half of patrol without any major
incidents. Well, unless she counted a rather irritable German Shepard barking incessantly at her as she had gone overhead, or nearly getting spotted by a large group of women having some sort of meeting at one of the city’s many parks. She was currently perched on a rooftop a couple blocks away from their usual meeting place on the way back to it and was about to throw her yo-yo again when it started to beep at her. A little surprised, she quickly tapped open the screen. “What’s up?”

“I need some help,” She could see Adrien grimacing, as if he was in pain.

“Are you okay?” Marinette’s eyes widened as he shook his head.

“This is going to sound stupid, but I misjudged the distance on a jump and ended up kicking the shit out of someone’s chimney,” Adrien explained, looking a little embarrassed. “I don’t think I broke anything but it really hurts right now.”

“I’ll be right there,” Marinette was already getting ready to go.

“No, it’s okay, I’ll be fine,” He cut in quickly. “I just need to sit for a while so it settles down. Do you mind taking the last few blocks of my patrol for me?”

“All right.” Marinette relented. “But just wait for me there. I’ll come to you once I’m finished, okay?”

“I’m not going anywhere.” Adrien promised with a bit of a grin. Marinette tapped the screen of her yo-yo to pull up the map again, and saw he was very close by. She swung off to loop through the streets he wouldn’t have gotten to yet, and other then having to shout at some shady-looking teens to startle them away from lurking around a closed electronics store, it went by very quickly.

She made her way to the rooftop Adrien was still on, and hurried over to his sitting form once she landed. “How are you feeling?” She asked, kneeling beside him.

“A bit better. Thanks for finishing up my rounds for me.” He went to stand up but stopped, hissing at the amount of discomfort it caused him. “Nope, I was wrong. Still hurts like a bitch.”

“Don’t put pressure on it yet, you haven’t rested it enough.” Marinette grabbed at his hand and he sat back down obediently. “If it doesn’t get better soon though, I can help take you home.”

Smiling a little, Adrien let his fingers intertwine with hers. “The knight in shining armor coming to the damsel’s rescue.”

He could see her blush a little under the moonlight. “We can watch the stars together to pass the time while we wait for your foot to feel better.” She suggested, laying back herself.

“Sounds like a plan.” He quickly followed suit, still holding her hand.

There were a few clouds dotting the sky, but there was still a wonderful view of the stars before them. Marinette was certain she could never get used to how beautiful the sky looked from the vantage point only rooftops could provide. She let go of Adrien’s hand to snuggle up next to him, and he put his now free arm around her to bring her closer. It was moments like this that both of them would be perfectly content to have last forever.

“Look, a shooting star!” Marinette pointed to the one streaking by. “Make a wish!”

“I wish for a pony!” He joked, earning a weirded-out look from the girl beside him.

“You’re wasting your wish on a pony?” She arched an eyebrow.
“Sure.” Adrien met her gaze with love brimming in his emerald orbs. “Thanks to you, I already have everything I’ve ever wished for right here. So I don’t really need anything else.”

His words took her breath away. “So do I.” Marinette said quietly with a small smile, moving to rest her head on his shoulder.

Neither of them moved nor spoke for quite a while after that. Adrien eventually took a hesitant wiggle of his toes within his boot and found it to not be nearly as painful as it was before. “I think I’m ready to try standing again,” He told her, and the two superheroes moved to sit up.

Marinette got up first, then took his hand and helped him up. Adrien set his weight on his foot gingerly, and though it was still tender to do so, it was a lot better then it had been the first time he had tried doing it. “Do you think you’ll be able to make it home?” She asked as he took a couple careful steps around the rooftop to further test his foot.

“Yeah, it’s not too bad anymore.” Adrien walked back to her and to give her a tight hug. “You’re the best. Thanks again.”

“But I didn’t really do anything…” Marinette was trying not to blush again.

“You did too. You finished my patrol for me, not to mention you also gave me healing cuddles.” Adrien grinned.

“Right…I’ll have to ask Tikki if I need to officially add that to my repertoire of superhero abilities.” Marinette giggled.

“One could even say that your cuddles are…miraculous.” Adrien teased as she groaned, and ducked as she tried to smack him.

“I’m going home now.” Marinette stuck her tongue out at him, but as he went to turn to walk away, she decided to be the first to say it this time and ducked in front of him to look him directly in the eye. “But not before I get to say…” She smiled brightly at him. “I love you.”

It was his turn to blush. It certainly didn’t go unnoticed by him either that this was the first time she had said those three words before he did, and that made him practically melt with joy. “I love you too.” Adrien leaned in to kiss her softly, tenderly, which she happily returned. And though this kiss meant a lot, due to the powerful nature of what she had said to him, they didn’t let it last too long before they forced themselves to separate so they could each make their way back to their respective homes.

Once she had returned to her bedroom, Marinette called off her transformation and got changed for bed wordlessly, though she knew that Tikki was watching over her with a big grin. “I’m glad you did that,” She said as she floated over to her bed and sprawled out on the cat pillow.

“I’m glad I did that too.” Marinette was about to head up to bed as well to join her kwami when her phone vibrated from where she had put it down on the desk. She didn’t even need to see the alert flashing on the screen to know who it was from at this hour.

~I bet you thought I was going to forget about sending you your obligatory cat picture: day nine. Nope, here it is! XD

Underneath was a picture of two cats curling their tails together to form a heart.

Grinning, Marinette brought her phone up with her as she climbed up the ladder to her bed and got herself nice and comfortable under the blankets before going back to open her Inbox again.
~You’re going to run out of cat pictures one of these days.

~Ye of little faith! This is the Internet, honey. There are cats everywhere here. =3

~Honey’s a new one.

~I guess it is!

~To be honest, I like you calling me honey.

~Then I shall call you that everyday! ^^

~Everyday? Variety is the spice of life, you know.

~Okay, I’ll add it to the list of your other pet names, then. =P

~Good night, Jaguar.

~Good night, honey. <3
Chapter 29

Chapter Notes

Behold, the beginning of the never-ending Tuesday! =P Seriously, I keep track of the days of the week I'm on in the Word document, and because Marinette and Adrien end up spending a lot of time together, this is a Tuesday that lasts for five full chapters and a bit into the sixth. xD But there's good reason for it: lots of fluff and even more smut coming up in this never-ending Tuesday. ;)

And I just wanted to take a moment to thank you all again for the continued amazing response to this story. I haven't said it in a while, but thank you all so so much for all the love and feedback! As of when I'm uploading this tonight, my story has over 320 comments, over 420 kudos, over 50 bookmarks and over 7200 hits! I'm beyond blown away by those numbers. I never could've imagined it would grow this way! I remember getting so excited for the first dozen views when I first started. Now I get tend to get around 300 hits a day and I couldn't be happier! Ever since I was a kid I've always to become an author, since as far back as second grade. And although I know I have a long way to go to become a published writer someday, this really feels like I'm living part of my dream. =')

Anyway! I've babbled long enough, LOL. Hope you all enjoy!

There was rain pelting against the roof and the windows when Marinette opened her eyes the next morning. “Aww, I had twenty more minutes…” She muttered when she noticed the time. Okay, so she definitely wasn’t completely a morning person yet. Grumbling under her breath, she climbed down the ladder and made her way downstairs, getting herself some cereal and juice to eat in silence as she allowed herself to wake up fully.

She poked at her cereal but eventually finished it, and took her still mostly-full cup of juice back upstairs with her to grab some clothes to take to the bathroom with her for her shower. After she was cleaned and dressed, she came back to her room to find Tikki hovering by her glass and licking juice from her face. “I was thirsty,” Her kwami said with a shrug.

Laughing, Marinette popped back downstairs momentarily before returning with a straw to place in the cup. “Here, it’ll be easier this way.”

“Yay, thank you!” Tikki smiled before starting to happily slurp away, the noises making her bonded laugh again while gathering her things for school. After every last drop was all gone, she took her usual spot in Marinette’s purse, and as she closed it, Marinette could’ve sworn she heard a tiny burp.

The rain was still falling heavily once she was ready to head out, so she slipped on some old shoes she wouldn’t mind getting wet and grabbed her umbrella. She popped it open under the awning of the bakery and started her walk, enjoying the pitter-patter the raindrops made against the umbrella above her. There was just something so nostalgic about that sound.

Every time she was out in the rain with an umbrella, Marinette was brought back to that fateful day so long ago. The day she had found herself head over heels for the new guy in her class. She had pined for Adrien for so long; there were times where she had begun to wonder if it would ever
amount to anything. To think, after all this time, the love of her life was not only within her reach, but head over heels for her as well! They could finally be together now, despite the odds that had been stacked against them, and…

Life.
Was.

Good.

Upon arriving to school and getting herself under the overhangs where it was dry, Marinette closed her umbrella and shook some of the excess water out on the ground before wrapping the strap around it and walking inside. She hadn’t made it very far down the hall when she felt a hand grasping hers and turned to see the face of her smiling boyfriend. “There you are!” Adrien quickly started pulling her along with him. “I’m so glad I found you. I made sure I got here early today so we could have as much time as possible…”

“Time for what?” Marinette didn’t clue in until she realized the direction they were heading, and the memory of his words from yesterday came back vividly.

The janitor’s closet.

There was a rule known by students as well as staff. The janitor’s closet was to be left unlocked for easy access to stuff like mops, brooms, and the like. But there was a secondary, unwritten rule known only to students: lock the door behind you if you were in need of some privacy, and always knock before entering, just in case. So while Adrien was already knocking on the door, Marinette’s heart was practically beating out of her chest. There was no answer, so Adrien opened the door slightly and poked his head inside before flicking on the light and bringing her in with him.

He shut the door behind them and twisted the knob sideways to lock it. Turning around, Adrien pulled her close to him and wrapped his arms around her, sighing contentedly against her hair. Marinette let her umbrella fall to the floor as she returned the hug, her heartbeat starting to slow down as she allowed herself to take a second to relax. A gentle kiss was placed on the top of her head, and she looked up at him to meet his warm gaze. “I guess I forgot to say good morning when I first saw you, so…good morning.” He chuckled.

Marinette couldn’t help but grin. “Good morning.” She stood on her tiptoes and so she could give him a kiss on the nose. “Mr. Smitten Kitten.”

“Hey, I certainly didn’t hear any objections to coming in here with me.” Adrien winked, moving his arms down from their original hug position to rest his hands at the small of her back. “But I guess we could always leave if it turns out you’re not interested in being here.” He tried to look forlorn at the thought but they both knew he was teasing.

“Well why bother to leave…” Marinette leaned into him so he would press his back against the locked door while moving her arms up to thread around his shoulders. “When we could just stay?” Then she let her eyes fall shut as she pressed her lips to his.

It was soft and gentle, warm and tender. Or at least, it was at first. The longer it went on, it gradually started to change. Her fingers ended up slipping into his hair and his hands grasped onto her hips. When they pulled back for air, it was only long enough to take a quick breath before they were joined at the mouth again. Marinette was the one to brush her tongue over his lips and he wasted no time in parting them so he could let his begin to dance with hers. Though both were vaguely aware it couldn’t go much further then this, the world around them was slowly melting away.
They separated again, quite breathless this time. Adrien moved to kiss down her neck, earning a pleased hum from her. He closed his lips over one area and gave a light suck, feeling her shiver against him. Emboldened, he let his teeth nip at the skin gently before continuing to travel and make a similar path along her throat. None of his bites were hard, as he couldn’t bare the thought of leaving bruises on his Lady’s skin, but there would definitely be soft red marks when he was done.

Because there was a small selfish part of him that did want to show the world the woman of his dreams was now undeniably his.

She knew what he was doing but didn’t care at this point. The man she had loved for so long, holding her so close and ravishing her neck in such a way, wasn’t something Marinette was about to stop. There was no real pain anyway, as he wasn’t biting overly hard, so instead all she felt was a dizzying rush of passion. There was heat already starting to burn in her veins and she had no real sense of time anymore.

So when Adrien’s phone loudly started to chime, she nearly jumped out of her skin.

“Shit,” He swore, sighing heavily as he forced himself to move his head up and grab his phone out of his pocket.

“What’s that for?” Marinette asked while taking a small step back, partly to give him space to maneuver and partly so she could collect herself.

“I set an alarm to go off when the bell’s about to ring,” Adrien turned off the buzzing noise, blushing as he finished explaining, “In case I got too distracted to keep track of the time myself.”

Cheeks pink as well, Marinette crouched to grab her discarded umbrella from the puddle it had made on the floor. “Guess it was a good plan.”

Adrien watched her stand and studied her a moment, noting the spots already forming on her neck with a bit of pride. “Guess so.” He took her hand and turned to unlock the door. “We should still be able to make it to class on time. Let’s go.”

The young couple crept out of the janitor’s closet and shut the door behind them before making a dash to homeroom. They managed to slip through the door before the bell had officially gone off, quickly taking their seats and trying to be as inconspicuous as possible.

But Alya and Nino had been watching and waiting for them. Alya was wearing quite the grin as she held out Marinette’s new scarf expectantly to her, which the bluenette immediately took and put on as she tried not to blush more then she already was. Nino gave his best friend a playful punch to the shoulder with a knowing smile, and Adrien was trying not to go any redder in the face himself.

There was a long wail of the bell shortly after, and class began. Marinette was still feeling like she was on cloud nine all morning, and was doodling dreamily in the margins of her notes right up until lunch. “Girl! Yoo-hoo! Come in, Marinette! Do you read me?” Alya had begun poking her in the arm to finally grab her attention.

“Huh?” Marinette blinked and realized all the other students had left to go for lunch break already. The room was empty except for her, Alya, Nino and Adrien. “Oops…”

“No worries, we just got him back to reality a second ago.” Nino motioned to Adrien, who was looking about as sheepish as she was feeling.

“Perfectly matched space cases!” Alya laughed as she stood. “Let’s go, slow pokes.”
“Man, it’s still pouring cats and dogs outside,” Nino was looking out the window.

“Good thing I brought a lunch today!” Alya saw him turn and look at her, making her roll her eyes. “Yes, I packed enough for you to share.”

“I brought one too.” Adrien surprised them with this news. “I told Nathalie this morning I’m going to start bringing a lunch everyday so I can study at school during noon hour instead of wasting time going home.”

“Guess I’m leaving by myself then,” Marinette felt a twinge of sadness. If she had known ahead of time, she could have easily thrown a lunch together so she could stay and eat with her friends.

“Actually, maybe not. Do you remember how much fruit the kitchen chefs gave me to bring on Saturday for the picnic?” Adrien was smiling a little at her. “So I think I’m going to need some help finishing all the food they sent me today. Only if you don’t mind, that is.”

Her eyes lit up. “Sure, I’d love to! Thank you!”

“God they’re cute,” Nino said with a grin, making Alya snort with laughter beside him and making Marinette and Adrien blush the same shade.

So with that, the group of four went to fetch the aforementioned lunches from their lockers before heading to the library to eat so they could avoid the chaos that was the cafeteria. Especially on a day like today when extra people would’ve been staying at school to eat, it would’ve been even more noisy and impossible to find a seat then usual. The library was obviously much quieter, even with several students voting to eat there so they could work on assignments at the same time. The librarian only asked that everyone take extra care with their food and drinks, and to clean up any mess they made, thankfully being a kind soul.

After giving her parents a call to let them know she wasn’t going to be coming home for lunch, Marinette joined her friends at the table they were sitting at. Alya and Nino were already munching away at Alya’s food as Adrien offered Marinette half of his egg salad sandwich. He hadn’t been kidding about needing help finishing his lunch – beside the sandwich, there was also a large blueberry muffin, a container of chopped carrots, chocolate-covered pretzels for dessert and a plastic bottle of fruit punch to wash it all down. “You might want to start packing your own, this definitely is a bit much,” Marinette suggested after she handed Alya back her scarf to look after. She didn’t need it anymore as the light spots from this morning had long since faded from her neck.

“Oh I plan on it,” Adrien agreed while opening the carrots. “I only decided at the last minute today so I just let the kitchen chefs make it for me while I finished getting ready. Tomorrow I’ll start doing it myself. And I don’t care if Father likes it or not.”

“You’re using this time to study more, which is what he wants, so I think he’ll say it’s a good idea.” Marinette took a few carrots for herself before casually adding, “And maybe I could start packing a lunch everyday too.”

Adrien arched his eyebrows a little. “Yeah?”

“To help you study, of course.” Marinette was trying to keep a serious expression and failing.

“Ah, yes, of course.” Adrien’s poker face was just as bad as hers.

Nino and Alya (to their credit) were watching this exchange in silence, though they did share a triumphant fist-bump under the table.
Chapter 30

Chapter Notes

Booyah, the next milestone is reached with chapter thirty! <3

I'm just going to say this right now: I have NOT A SINGLE CLUE how the baccalauréat system in France really works in reality. I did some research for authenticity as best I could, and though I did find info on how things are weighted and how long some of the exams last which is why it takes a week, I had no real reference to go on for the presentation of diplomas, and whether or not they have a banquet and dance afterward like we do here in Canada. I'm sure they must have some sort of celebration for their graduates once they're officially done school, but I'm not exactly sure how. So in my story, it's going to be like my own personal graduation was, so that means it'll be all on one day with a diploma ceremony, a banquet and a dance, dammit! xD Therefore I apologize in advance for my inevitable inaccuracies to how the French school system actually works! Please forgive me. ^^;

Anyway, I hope you all enjoy part two of the never-ending Tuesday. It's a bit longer and I really love this one! Especially Adrien's amazing poem - just wait til you read it, LOL! There's also some of my head-canon on Marinette's amazing, easy-going parents in here. Lastly, there's some spice ahead, ladies and gentleman. ;) So turn around now if you need to, because THIS IS YOUR OFFICIAL WARNING! For the rest of you, how would you like your tea? =P

The afternoon breezed by. There was still steady rain drizzling down at the end of the day, and by now there were rather large puddles accumulating on the sidewalks and in the streets. Marinette had just been standing outside the main doors, enjoying watching the rain fall when felt familiar arms wrap around her waist from behind her. “Boo.”

“I thought you were about to say meow.” Marinette smiled as she tilted her head back to look up at him.

“Aww man, I totally should have!” Adrien looked devastated by the missed opportunity, which just made Marinette laugh.

They stood together for a while, watching other students heading out to make their way home. “Want to know a secret?” Marinette saw him nodding as she glanced back at him again. “Do you remember how it was pouring rain like this right after you had started coming to school with us?”

“Yeah, I lent you my umbrella and prayed you didn’t hate me anymore.” Adrien remembered with a grin.

“I didn’t.” Marinette could feel her face growing warm despite the cool weather. “It was actually that exact moment that I…” She took a breath. “Fell in love with you.”

His eyes widened. “Are you serious?” Marinette nodded shyly, and Adrien stared at her in incredulous wonder. “That’s the same day I fell in love with you.”
Marinette couldn’t believe her ears. “You’re making that up!”

“I am not.” Adrien leaned his head next to hers so he could whisper in her ear. “It was when I watched you stand up to Hawk Moth and tell all of Paris they’d be safe as long as you and I were around.”

If she had been red before, then by now she was positively burgundy. “So you’re both idiots.” Came a mutter from Adrien’s shirt pocket. “Congratulations.”

Adrien moved a hand behind Marinette to discreetly swat at his shirt pocket, earning a little yelp and numerous quiet complaints from the grumpy kwami hiding there. “I say that a wonderful discovery such as this requires an impromptu date to celebrate the occasion.” He stepped out from behind her to hold out a hand to her, loving how she was starting to smile.

Opening her umbrella and holding it high enough to accommodate both of them under it, Marinette took his hand with her free one. “My parents did want me to tell you that you’re welcome to come over any time you want.”

“And it would be so rude of me to not graciously accept such a kind offer!” Adrien fell into step next to her as they began to walk.

Giggling, Marinette laced their fingers together and enjoyed every second of the trip back to the bakery. They decided to come in through the side door so they wouldn’t track any extra water into the shop area. After hanging her umbrella on a peg to dry and slipping off her wet shoes, Marinette ducked into the shop area to see Sabine finishing up with a couple of customers. “I’m home Mom,” She told her once the transaction had been finished. “How’s Dad feeling?”

“About the same. He did try to come down earlier to help but I kicked him out. I want him to worry about getting better first. Plus he shouldn’t be around the food with his cold.” Sabine had been about to say more when she saw Adrien come to stand by the door. “Oh, hello!” She smiled brightly at him and he waved. She then started gently pushing her daughter away from the till. “Go on sweetie, I can handle the store! We’ve been quiet today anyway. You two go have fun!”

“If you’re sure…” Marinette allowed herself to be pushed into the hallway.

“I am.” Sabine assured her. “By the way, I tried out a new recipe for butterscotch chip cookies, there’s a tray of them in the cooling rack by the oven. Take some and tell me what you think. Because don’t think I don’t know about your sticky fingers and your incurable cookie habit, young lady.” She said with a wink.

The bluenette froze for a second but relaxed when it was clear Sabine only thought the cookies Marinette would take were for herself. “You caught me.”

“A mother always knows.” Sabine heard the shop door open behind her. “Now if you’ll excuse me…”

Sabine left the two in the hallway as she went to go greet the guests. Marinette slipped into the bakery kitchen to grab two handfuls of butterscotch chip cookies before heading upstairs with Adrien. Her parent’s bedroom door was thankfully closed so they were able to sneak by without bothering Tom as they made their way up. Once the young couple had made it into Marinette’s bedroom safely, she locked the door behind them before setting the cookies down on Tikki’s plate on the desk.

“Yay, new cookies!” Her kwami was out of her purse in an instant, taking a sniff of the sweet scent
wafting up from them.

“I grabbed enough for everyone to try one if they want to,” Marinette handed one to Adrien, who happily accepted. “Do you want to have one, Plagg?”

“No thank you. I’m a cheese man.” Plagg floated out of Adrien’s shirt with a yawn before making his way to Marinette’s chaise lounge. “Besides, I’m ready for a nap.”

“You are such a house cat.” Adrien just rolled his eyes before taking a bite of his cookie. “These are really good.”

“I agree!” Tikki’s face was already covered in crumbs.

“But you like every cookie,” Marinette teased while nibbling on her own. They did taste delicious; she would have to let her mother know they were definitely a hit.

“That’s not true. I don’t like burnt ones.” Tikki protested playfully.

“So what do you want to do, love bug?” Adrien asked after chewing his mouthful.

“Not sure.” Marinette shrugged. “I mean, we should probably get our homework out of the way first…”

“You’re such a drill sergeant!” Adrien pouted, but he knew she was right. He sighed before sliding his bag off his shoulder. “At least it’s just reading chapters today.”

Taking off her own backpack as well, Marinette pulled out her textbook as he did the same. Their workload was finally starting to wind down as there was just under a week left of classes, the baccalauréat being the grand finale next week. Lasting Monday through Friday, both oral and written exams would be held for each subject to last the solid five days. Unless they were contacted to say they hadn’t passed something by Friday evening, the qualifying students would attend the graduation ceremonies that would be held next Saturday.

The Mayor himself had booked their school to have the fanciest hall in the city for their proceedings, as there was to be nothing but the best for his baby girl’s graduation. After the diplomas were given out in the morning, there would be a several hour break for students to prepare with hairdos, makeup and fancy suits and dresses for the formal banquet. It was to be catered by the Mayor’s staff from Le Grand Paris’s restaurant, and it would then be followed by a big dance to finish off the festivities. It was even rumored there would be a special guest appearance by none other then Jagged Stone!

But at least the level of homework had at last started to officially dwindle, as their teachers knew that their students would need extra time for studying. She sat down on the floor and opened up her textbook, and noticed Adrien sit too before he moved so they were now back-to-back. Smiling, she stretched her legs out comfortably and began to read.

For half an hour, the only sounds in the room were pages turning, Tikki munching away and Plagg snoring every so often. After she had finished, Marinette closed her textbook and crawled around to look at Adrien, who was still reading. “You’re not finished?” She was surprised, as it seemed like he was only a couple pages in.

“Actually, I’m reading it over again,” Adrien confessed. “To make sure I memorize it.”

“You really are taking my advice seriously, aren’t you?” Marinette was pleased.

“I take everything my Lady says very seriously.” Adrien winked at her.
“What if I said I think you should go bald?”

“Father probably wouldn’t like it but I would dutifully shave my entire head.”

“What if I said I wanted you to make me a love poem?”

“Hardly a challenge. As you should know, I’m quite the master of words.”

“Fine then, make one for me right now.” Marinette dared him.

He paused for a moment, thinking, then began. “The sun in my sky, she brings light to my life; with her around, I feel no strife. The polka-dotted angel meant just for me; to be with her is my destiny. She is small but strong, as well as fast and smart; she’s the one who’s captured my heart.”

Marinette was blushing. “Cute.”

“I’m not done.” Adrien grinned. “Silken hair and alabaster skin; beautiful outwardly but also from within. A fierce spirit through and through; a caring soul that always shines true. Her hands in mine are a perfect fit; for her I’m weak in the knees, that I’ll admit.” He then got a mischievous look in his eyes. “The curves of her hips takes my breath away; when she walks, I live for their sway. Her perfect chest I also adore; one touch leaves me wanting more. And of course, there’s her last secret treat; if this is her flower, then the nectar on her petals is honey-sweet.”

“Adrien!” Marinette threw her textbook at him, to which he just laughed while dodging the flying tome.

“What? You never said it couldn’t be a dirty love poem.” Adrien teased, beyond entertained with how crimson her face was. “And it’s not like I’m making any of that stuff up, as I happen to know for a fact that you definitively taste…”

“We are not having this conversation right now!” Marinette started smacking at him, trying to quell her feelings of mortification with small attempts at feeble violence.

Though he let her for a moment or two, Adrien then shifted to grab her hands and in a flash of movement she was now pinned to the floor beneath him. He smirked down at her and Marinette looked away in embarrassment, cheeks still a perfect match for her usual superhero garb. “You don’t need to feel shy around me, you know,” He pressed a gentle kiss to the side of her forehead.

“Sometimes I can’t help it,” Marinette looked back up at him. “The confidence only goes so far right now. My nerves are less frequent but they’re still there. And it’s not like the stuff you were talking about earlier isn’t the least bit embarrassing…”

“Of course it is.” Adrien let go of one of her hands so he could use his to brush his thumb over her cheek. “We should both get more used to it as time goes on.”

“We?” Marinette arched her eyebrows at this.

“Well yeah, I’m not impervious.” Adrien chuckled. “You may not have noticed but I was a wreck just from waiting for you to come over on Friday. And even more so by the other stuff you did.”

She grinned. “I did notice.”

“See?” Adrien tried not to let his mind drift back to the sinful memories of that night for too long.

Noticing he was distracted, Marinette took the opportunity to roll their bodies so she was now above
him. “I guess your right.” It was her turn to smirk.

And it was his turn to blush. “Always am.” He said quietly, the thought of reclaiming dominance of this situation not even once crossing his mind. Seeing her over him like this was quite good at getting rid of most of his coherent thoughts, actually.

“You’re always right? I beg to differ,” Marinette cooed before starting to trail kisses along his neck. Adrien turned his head, though it wasn’t out of embarrassment like she had; it was so she had more room to cover. Her smirk widened as she realized this and continued. “But I don’t mind correcting you.”

“If this is correcting me,” Adrien moved his arms to slip around her waist. “Then I don’t mind either.”

He could feel the buzz of her laughter against his throat. Absently he looked over at the other side of the room – Plagg was still sound asleep (thank God his kwami was a heavy sleeper) and Tikki had respectfully made herself scarce already. Turning back to the beautiful girl over him, she adjusted her position so she could start to nibble on his ear. Adrien’s breathing hitched at this change. “Oh? Does my kitty cat have sensitive ears?” Marinette whispered as she let her teeth graze over the shell down to the lobe.

“Marinette…” He breathed, shutting his eyes. She loved hearing him say her name this way. Running her hands along his sides slowly, she felt Adrien move his to grasp onto her hips tightly. “What about your parents…”

“One’s two floors down, the other’s three floors down,” Marinette pulled her head back to look down at him. His eyes were darkening already, and he was watching intently as she licked her drying lips slowly. “They always knock first anyway. And they know not to bother me if I don’t answer them. That’s how I manage to get away with leaving at night.”

“What do they think you do up here all the time?” Adrien was very glad he didn’t have to worry about them being interrupted, but he was admittedly curious.

“I can get really zoned out when I’m designing and sewing,” Marinette slid down his body slightly, enjoying how his green orbs were raptly following each of her movements. “Not to mention the fact that I’m a normal adult Human being with certain natural needs.”

“You…” Adrien’s brain was going into overdrive with that last statement. The thoughts of what she was getting at were giving him mental images that were getting exceptionally dirtier by the second. “You’re saying that you…um…”

“Yes Adrien, I do.” She was smirking again. “I’m pretty lucky. Back when they gave me ‘the talk’, they said they never wanted me to be ashamed of eventually needing to have ‘alone time’ because it was perfectly normal. And that they promised they would never barge in on me if I had my bedroom door locked. I was mortified at the time of course, but it’s been a big lifesaver since then.”

“Damn, I love your parents.” Adrien went to slide his fingers up to pull at her jacket when his phone started to ring. Groaning, he forced himself to pull it from his pocket and saw it was Nathalie. Though he had sent her a text from Marinette’s front doorway that he wouldn’t be coming home right away, she probably wanted more specifics on his whereabouts. “I have to take this,” He said with a heavy sigh.

For a moment Marinette was disappointed, but soon a wicked idea crossed her mind and she gave him an innocent nod. “Sure.”
He pressed the button to answer the call. “Hi Nathalie.” And as he started talking she began to untuck his shirt. Adrien looked down at her with wide eyes and Marinette just winked up at him, making him swallow hard over the lump that was forming in his throat.

She was absolutely, positively, 100% going to be the death of him.
Chapter 31

Chapter Notes

Part three of the never-ending Tuesday! =P More spiciness ahead again below this author's note! Same old drill: run away, those of you who are still virgin-minded! The rest of you may relish in the tea party with me, LOL. xD A heads up to my fellow smut-lovers: a fully steeped pot of very delectable tea awaits us in tomorrow's chapter, if you catch my drift. ;) Anyway! Hope you all enjoy today's installment! =D

“You know I fully support you spreading your wings, but I need to be able to give your Father more exact details. He’s on my case about it.” Nathalie was saying. “So when will be coming home, exactly? And where are you right now?”

“I-I, uh…” Adrien was trying to focus on the conversation, he really was. But Marinette was slowly sliding his shirt up over his stomach inch by inch and it was taking most of his will power just to speak.

“Adrien? Can you hear me?” Nathalie asked, thinking the phone connection wasn’t very strong. “I said, when are you coming home? And where are you?”

“My girlfriend’s house,” Adrien managed to say, knowing he could trust Nathalie with the truth. “We’re studying…” Which had been the truth, anyway. Marinette giggled quietly at this while starting to kiss over his toned abs, making him bite his lip. “A-And I don’t know what time I’ll be home…”

“So your Father was right, there is a girl,” Nathalie sounded quite happy for him, unlike Gabriel had. “Don’t worry, I’ll definitely tell him you’re studying but I’ll say you’re doing it at the library.”

“That would be great,” Adrien was doing everything in his power to keep his voice from squeaking like a twelve-year-old.

“And I’ll tell him you’re going to be there until the library closes and that you’ll eat on the way home, so that should give you a couple hours.” Nathalie went on.

He gasped when Marinette was undoing his belt, but quickly coughed to try and cover it up. “You’re the best, Nathalie, thank you.”

“I was young once too, you know.” Nathalie chuckled. “So I’m on your side. Just keep me posted on when you’re coming home.”

“Okay. Talk to you later. Bye.” Adrien forcibly pushed the button to end the call before letting his arms flop outward onto the floor and drop his phone like a very unwanted brick. “Jesus, Marinette!”

“Is something the matter?” She asked sweetly between kisses to his abs.

Adrien moved his arms to grab at her jacket properly this time, which made her sit back to allow him to eagerly whip it off her and toss it aside. “Sometimes I really hate you…”

“I doubt that.” Marinette smirked before taking the initiative to pull off her shirt. But she did it
slowly, deliberately, wanting to make him stare.

And boy, was he staring. The hem of her shirt slipped over her milky skin to reveal her cotton bra, then finally slid up over her head and off her arms. When Adrien had come to fulfill his promise to give her a turn several nights ago, the room had been dark. But this time, the lights were all on, so he hungrily drank in the image of her before him. Every swell and valley of her curves, the way her stomach was a washboard from years of akuma fighting…he wanted to memorize all of it. “I’m not dreaming, am I?” He asked with a bit of a grin while setting his hands on the exposed skin at the tops of her hips.

She grinned back while shaking her head, then leaned back over him so she could catch his lips with hers. Adrien let his hands wander over her bared torso, and she trembled at his touch. When he found the clasp of her bra at the middle of her back, she could feel him try and undo it. The hook soon released and her heart skipped a beat as the garment was coaxed down her arms…

Then there was a knock at the door.

Marinette huffed in irritation before pulling away to sit back. “Yes?”

“Is Adrien staying for supper?” Sabine’s voice called through the door.

“He is, Mom.” Marinette said without hesitation.

“Sounds good, we’ll make up a spot at the table for him. Supper should be ready in about fifteen minutes.” Sabine told them, then the young couple could hear her walking away down the stairs.

“I’m getting really tired of all these interruptions…” Marinette tossed aside her bra and turned back to Adrien, noticing he was watching her naked chest move as she did so. “My eyes are up here.” She said playfully while crossing her arms purposefully beneath her breasts.

“But I get to see your eyes all the time, so this is a treat!” Adrien replied before sitting up just enough to take off his over-shirt and finally pull his second shirt off the rest of the way. “One that I plan on enjoying to the fullest, I might add.”

It was Marinette’s turn to look over at the other side of the room. The first thing she noticed was the distinct lack of kwamis at the desk and chaise lounge. “Hey, where’d they go?” She asked, a little surprised.

“Tikki was gone a while ago,” Adrien said as he followed her gaze. “My guess is she came back for Plagg so he wouldn’t end up waking up to this and try to ruin our fun.”

“Extra butterscotch chip cookies for her, then.” Marinette made a mental note to profusely thank Tikki later tonight. Then she turned her attention back to her boyfriend who was laying down flat against the floor again.

“My eyes are up here,” Adrien teased when her eyes were wandering along over his body. Marinette rolled her eyes before running a finger along the waistband of his jeans, making circles around the button. “We only have fifteen minutes…”

“I know. And now they’re both probably right beneath us to cook.” She said with a bit of a sigh. “How long after supper can you stay?”

“Nathalie was going to tell Father that I’m going to be at the library until it closed to study.” Adrien noticed she hadn’t stopped the motions of her finger.
“That gives us lots of time, perfect.” Marinette’s smirk returned. “So we’ll be able to pick up where we leave off.”

“Don’t you mean ‘left’ off?” Adrien saw her hand move to unbutton his jeans and his eyes widened a little.

“No. I’m not finished with you yet.” She murmured, noticing with delight how his face flushed. Marinette lifted the flap of fabric up over the zipper of his jeans to grab the zipper with her teeth and pull it down slowly.

So if he wasn’t hard enough before, he certainly was now. Adrien could only watch in amazement until she brought her head up again. But instead of moving to continue taking off his jeans, Marinette crawled back to kiss him deeply. He both loved her and hated her for being such a tease. Returning the level of passion in her kiss, he lifted his hands to brush against her breasts, enjoying how she gasped against his lips. Grasping them gently, he played with each one until Marinette had to pull back so she could draw a shaky breath.

Seizing his chance, Adrien rolled them before she could have had the chance to stop him. Not that she really would have, anyway. The look of surprise on her face was very satisfying though. “I’m not finished with you either,” He whispered. “So you might want to cover your mouth.”

At first she didn’t understand what he meant until she saw him begin to move down her body. Adrien lowered his head over her chest and Marinette quickly covered her mouth with her hand, now knowing what he was about to do. Even so, when his tongue slipped over one of her nipples, the moan she made was still audible. And so was the second one, from when he took it between his lips and sucked.

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He had been about to switch sides when someone was knocking at the door again.

“Supper’s ready!” Tom shouted up to them.

“B-Be down in a second!” Marinette managed to reply after she uncovered her mouth. She squeaked when Adrien gave her nipple one last lick, smacking him as he sat back. “He might be able to hear!” She hissed.

“You started it.” Adrien grinned. “So consider that some payback for my phone call.”

All right, so maybe she deserved that. Marinette still stuck her tongue out at him defiantly before starting to grab for her previously discarded clothes. In a flash, on went her bra, shirt and jacket. She had stood up and was smoothing down her hair while Adrien was pulling on his own shirts. And she noticed him have a bit of difficulty zipping his jeans and doing his belt back up with a grin. “I’m waiting.”

“The more you taunt me, the more I have to get you back for,” Adrien warned as he got to his feet at last.

“That’s not much of a deterrent.” Marinette laughed while going over to her bedroom door, unlocking it. “Actually, it’s more like an encouragement.”

“Just you wait and see. There’s still more payback coming your way already, bugaboo.” He lightly swatted at her ass as she was bending over to open the door.

She refused to yelp in surprise so she just silently pulled up the door and started walking downstairs, Adrien right behind her. The mouthwatering aroma of lasagna filled the air below them, with hints of fresh garlic bread as well. Tom was sitting at the table, helping himself to the plate of already-sliced
garlic bread while Sabine was divvying up equal portions of lasagna to each of the four plates that had been laid out. “Hello Adrien!” Tom greeted with a wide smile as he and Marinette approached their seats.

Adrien sat down next to Marinette. “Hi Mr. Du-”

“Please, call me Tom.” The taller man insisted.

“Hi Tom.” Adrien corrected himself, then glanced at Marinette’s mother. “And…”

“Sabine is perfectly fine.” She responded as she poured herself a glass of milk, then handed the jug to her husband.

“So how’s your cold doing, Dad?” Marinette asked while grabbing herself a slice of garlic bread.

“Still being a royal pain.” Tom filled his cup with milk and passed the jug to Adrien, who followed suit. “After your mother and I finish grocery shopping tonight, we’re going to stop at the pharmacy to pick up some cold medicine.”

“Is there anything specific you want us to buy for you?” Sabine didn’t notice the look of joy that had sparked in her daughter’s eyes at hearing that her parents were going to be going out tonight. Or at least, if she had noticed, then she was doing a very good job of hiding it.

“Actually, since we’re down to the last week of school, I’ve been thinking of packing lunches to take so I can study in the library while I eat.” Marinette said as causally as she could while pouring her milk. “So could you guys pick me up some stuff that’s easy to pack?”

“Sure, no problem.” Sabine assured while starting to eat. “That’s a great idea.”

“I’m going to do the same thing.” Adrien piped up between bites. “And I think our friends Alya and Nino probably will be too, so we’ll all be helping each other out.”

“The more the merrier!” Tom then grabbed his napkin to catch a big sneeze in the nick of time.

While Sabine was passing him an extra napkin, Adrien let one of his hands drift under the table to rest on Marinette’s thigh just above her knee. Her eyes widened and she shot him a look, to which he just innocently kept eating his lasagna, though she could tell that there was a smirk tugging at his lips.

So this is what he had meant by more payback.

Things could be about to become very interesting.
Chapter 32

Chapter Notes

Never-ending Tuesday part four! ;P So it's come to may attention that my plan for giving Marinette and co. a grad similar to mine isn't accurate to true customs in France. So when in doubt, blame Chloe. xD I'll be explaining in a later chapter that the reason their school is doing it this way is because Chloe demanded all the extravagance of a North American graduation, because she deserves the best, of course. =P Anyway! THERE IS SMUT IN THIS CHAPTER! TURN AND LEAVE IF YOU MUST! For the rest of us, time for some much-anticipated tea! <3 Enjoy guys!

“So what do you plan on doing once classes are done, Adrien?” Sabine asked.

Adrien swallowed his mouthful of garlic bread. “More of the same stuff I usually do, so modeling and photo-shoots, stuff like that.”

His hand had been climbing ever so slowly up Marinette’s thigh throughout this conversation as their meals were being eaten. Adrien looked cool as a cucumber but it was taking a lot more concentration on her part to appear the same. “You know, Marinette loves your Father’s work.” Tom mentioned. “She’s often told us how she’d love to be a fashion designer at his company someday.”

“Father holds a competition to win an internship every year,” Adrien looked over at his girlfriend, who was doing her best not to glare daggers at him for his dreadfully delightful torment. “You should enter if they’re still taking submissions!”

“I already have,” She said quietly, clearing her throat as Adrien’s hand was now resting right where her thigh met hip.

“You have?” All three of the others at the table said in unison, looking at each other in surprise before returning their gaze to Marinette.

“Yes, I have.” Marinette swallowed a gulp of milk to try and keep her composure since Adrien’s grip had started to tighten. “I entered in part of my portfolio last month. I’ve passed the preliminaries already, so if I don’t get eliminated between now and the end, I’ll be the last one standing so I’d get the internship.”

“Why didn’t you tell us? That’s great!” Tom cheered.

“I kept it a secret on purpose.” Marinette explained. “In case I didn’t make it.”

“This is wonderful!” Sabine looked very proud. “You’re definitely going to win!”

“There’s still lots of other hopefuls who want this just as bad as I do,” Marinette gave a shrug. “So I don’t want to count my chickens before they hatch.”

“Show me your entry!” Adrien said. “I can try and make sure yours is picked!”

“Thanks, but if I do win, I want it to be because I earned it myself.” Marinette saw him smile at her, so she was glad he understood. Then he started to let his fingers slide between her thighs, and ‘glad’
wasn’t quite the emotion she felt anymore.

“Well please keep us updated, we’re cheering for you!” Tom sneezed into what was his fourth napkin, blowing his nose loudly.

“We better get going, Tom. The sooner we leave the sooner we get you to the pharmacy.” Sabine grabbed her now-empty glass and plate to carry to the sink. Tom quickly scarfed down one last slice of garlic toast before doing the same. Adrien and Marinette still had food on their plates (and were otherwise occupied), so neither of them got up. “Just put your dishes here when you’re done you two, I’ll wash them when I come home.”

“Thanks Mom.” Marinette was focusing the majority of her attention on finishing her meal and to not let her legs inch apart for the hand trying to entice her into doing so.

“I’ll probably be heading home before you get back, so it was really nice chatting with you,” Adrien offered them a warm smile.

“You two Adrien. Please come over again soon.” Sabine replied as she and Tom waved, then they left out the living room door, letting it click shut behind them.

“Such a lovely visit.” Adrien chuckled while eating another mouthful of lasagna.

“You’re absolutely terrible.” Marinette made no move to push him away, however.

His plate now empty like hers was, Adrien pushed his chair back so he could stand up with his dishes. “We should probably try and figure out where our kwamis went off to,” He mused while heading to the sink.

“Tikki likes to hang out in the bakery kitchen when my parents aren’t around because of how good it smells in there, so my bet is that’s where they are.” Marinette forced herself to get up and bring her own plate and glass as well. “They’ll be fine.”

“Good. We have more important stuff to worry about right now anyway.” Adrien slipped his arms around her from behind once she was standing at the sink.

Marinette placed her dishes within the basin and leaned her head back to rest against his shoulder. “Head back up to my room?” He nodded against her. “Then you’re going to have to let go of me.” Marinette felt him step back so she turned, seeing him bowing towards the stairs. Rolling her eyes, she walked over and headed up, with Adrien following close behind her.

Once the door was closed and locked once more, she went to climb the ladder to her bed and sat on top of the covers, waiting for him to follow. “I think you’re forgetting something,” Adrien said in between taking off his two shirts.

“I suppose I am.” Marinette dug into her reservoir of confidence as she shrugged her jacket down her arms and purposefully took her time in pulling it off. She knew he was watching as she dropped it to the floor, then moved to take the hem of her shirt in her hands. Bringing it up over her body even slower then she had earlier, she added it to the clothing pile forming below her. Arching her back as she reached behind to unhook her bra, she looked at him and could see the desire growing in his eyes. That alone was sending even more warmth through her already heated body.

When the clasp was undone, he started walking over. Adrien almost flew up the ladder as she let one strap slip off her shoulder, then the other. She pulled her left arm out and let it dangle off her right to join its brethren on the floor. “Perfect.” He whispered, crawling over and running his hands along her bare sides.
“You seem to have forgot something yourself,” Marinette reached out to undo his belt, noticing him blush a little at this. She finished undoing it quickly and popped the button on his jeans, sliding down the zipper with a smirk. “There, that’s better.”

“Come here, you vixen…” Adrien bent down to kiss her, which Marinette eagerly returned while resting her hands on his shoulders. His tongue was licking against her mouth almost immediately, a silent request to which she willingly obliged. The air in the room was becoming more and more charged with every passing second.

She felt his hands move to the waistband of her pants, fingers finding the button and undoing it just as fast as she had with his. Marinette felt nervousness bubbling up but tried to shove those thoughts away. After all, she reminded herself, it wasn’t like he hadn’t seen her without pants (or less) before. But she still had to take a moment to pull back from the kiss to grab a breath. He hovered over her and didn’t continue, seeming to sense her hesitation. “Sorry,” She murmured, feeling embarrassed.

“We can stop if you want to,” Adrien told her, relaxing his grip on her waistband.

“No, I want to keep going.” Marinette let herself smile a little. “I’m ready if you are.”

Now Adrien paused, and Marinette began to worry she had ruined the moment. “Can I say something weird?” He asked eventually.

“Okay.” Marinette studied him, now feeling a bit confused as well.

“I definitely do want to continue, but I…um…” He looked like he was trying to find the right words. “I-I want to save the first time for an extra special occasion, to make it be really memorable, so… could we save that, for another time?”

He was such a hopeless romantic. Marinette nodded before she leaned up to kiss his nose. “We absolutely can. That’s really sweet.”

“Thank you.” Adrien was visibly relieved. “Hands okay then?”

“It should be, considering you’ve already used your mouth on me once.” Marinette reminded him with a smirk.

Even he grinned. “True.” Adrien unzipped her pants while she rose up from the bed slightly, which was his signal to pull them down off her. Mariette tugged at his jeans once her pants had joined the others in the growing discard heap so Adrien quickly rid himself of them, leaving both of them down to just their respective underwear.

Well, and socks, but neither one of them really cared about socks at this point.

They stared at each other a moment, their eyes wandering silently. It was Marinette who moved first, winding her arms to fold comfortably behind his neck. Their eyes met, and the distance closed between them again to ignite another fiery kiss. Eyelids falling shut, she slowly brought up one leg to press her thigh between his, as she had done so many nights ago. His moan was louder then it had been then, as things were so much further along this time; not just in this moment, but their relationship too.

His hand slid into her panties, and she hoped he wouldn’t notice how soaked they were already. But he did, of course, and couldn’t help but smirk into the kiss at this discovery. Not wanting to be outdone, Marinette reached into his boxers, pleased by his gasp and the way he bucked against her hand. She closed her fingers around him as he let one of his run between her slit. Their shivers and breathy moans were in near unison at the equally delectable sensations.
Letting her hand move down his length, Marinette opened her eyes as he broke the kiss to breathe. His head was bowed as she watched him grab the bars next to the bed for support. Last time she had done something like this to him, she hadn’t had the courage to see him totally undressed, which was why she hadn’t taken off his boxers. But as she brought her hand back up again and saw how he trembled, she decided she was ready to see. So she used her free hand to push them down while her other kept up its current pace, and the sight before her made her eyes widen.

Sure, she had seen pictures in health class. Sure, she had wandered certain sites on the Internet that made her face and ears burn. But something about seeing him, hard and thick within her small hand, made it so much different.

Because this was real.

She was snapped back to reality when Adrien found her bud and the subsequent jolts it sent spreading through her. Marinette bit her lip as he passed over it again, but that didn’t stop her whimper when one of his fingers slid agonizingly slowly around her opening. “Off,” She managed to say, making him look up at her, eyes dark and the haze in his brain leaving him clearly puzzled at her request. “Off,” She said again, lifting her hips in the air.

Finally understanding, Adrien let go of bars with his spare hand to drag her panties down to her ankles. Pressing his palm down against the mattress instead now, he did so just in time as she gave a particularly long stroke down his member, leaving him breathless. In response, he slipped one finger within her, and the sound she made was an urgent request for more. He repeated the motion and as she let her hand pick up speed, he did as well.

The two were entering in their own world as pleasure was building within them both. There was a powerful crest approaching Adrien, but he didn’t want to leave Marinette behind. So he managed to locate her button again and rubbed circles over it with his thumb in addition to his current ministrations. The response was immediate; her legs started to shake and she threw her head back against her pillow with a high-pitched whine. She didn’t last much longer after that and neither did he, each calling out for the other as they came.

Her walls clamped down hard around his finger, and she was faintly aware of something warm on her belly. Marinette’s hand lost its grip on him and flopped down onto the mattress as she hungrily gasped in air, body still shuddering with aftershocks. She was still trying to regain her senses when the weight on the bed abruptly shifted as the man above her suddenly sat back.

“Oh no…” She could hear Adrien mutter, making her open her eyes to try and focus her gaze on him. “I’m… I’m sorry…” He was looking at her stomach and when she followed his line of sight she saw what the warmth she had felt earlier had been, white and sticky splashed over her abs.

She blinked as she stared down at herself a moment, but soon started to giggle. That was all he was worried about? Marinette smiled at him to try and soothe the deep embarrassment clearly etched onto his face. “Don’t be sorry.” She reached back behind her to grab for the box of tissues she had started to keep in the alcove above her bed. Grabbing a tissue from the box, she ran it over her stomach to clean herself with ease. “It means I did a good job.”

Adrien blushed. “You certainly did.” He admitted while she balled up the used tissue, wrapped it in another, then twisted slightly to toss it over into the sink of her vanity.

“So did you.” Marinette turned back to lay flat against her mattress with a contented sigh. “A very, very good job.”

That made him smirk. “Why thank you.” He crawled over her to give her one more soft kiss. “Can I
“Use your shower?”

“Go ahead. You can borrow my bathrobe too, it’s down in the trunk by the chaise lounge.” Marinette waved her hand in its direction.

“I should probably head home after I’m done.” Adrien added as he started climbing down the stairs.

“Yeah, I know. At least I’ll get to see you for patrol again in a couple hours.” She rolled on her side to watch him walk across the room and open the trunk.

He fished out her bathrobe, which was soft, fluffy…and magenta. After he had slid it on and tied the sash, Adrien looked up at her with a grin. “It’s so my color!” She laughed as he gathered his clothes and tucked them under his arm so he could unlock her door. “I’ll be right back.” Then he headed downstairs and out of sight.

Marinette propped her head up on her arm to wait. She would have to shower as well once he was finished with it, so she had zero intentions of getting dressed. So why bother getting up yet, either? That decided, she just snuggled comfortably against her bed as another smile found its way onto her lips.

Yes, life was good, indeed.
The last full chapter of the never-ending Tuesday is now here! xD I really like this chapter, especially the last part of it. =P I’ve officially started chapter forty on the Word document, by the way, which is on page 190! Feeling pretty happy about that, not gonna lie. ^^ Anyway, hope you all enjoy! ♥

Thoroughly washed off now, his hair even smelling like Marinette’s peach-scented shampoo, Adrien left the shower and quickly dried off before throwing his clothes on. They had become somewhat wrinkled from being tossed so unceremoniously to the floor earlier, but he didn’t care. In fact, he downright loved the wrinkles. He took his phone from where it had been left in his jean pocket to send Nathalie a text saying he was about to leave, then wandered back upstairs with Marinette’s bathrobe draped over his shoulder. Upon returning, he saw her still perched on her bed as she had been when he had left.

And not to mention, still very naked.

Color rose to his face as he couldn’t keep from staring at her, and the smile she had been wearing quickly became a smirk. “Hi.”

“Shower’s free,” He said as he watched her sit up and stretch. The way her chest lifted as she did so made his fingers twitch with want.

“Thanks.” She took her time going down the ladder so he could get a good view, then sauntered over to properly throw out the tissue in her vanity sink before she went over to take her bathrobe from his shoulder. “Let me know if you can’t find Tikki and Plagg in the bakery kitchen.”

He nodded as she put on the bathrobe, feeling slightly annoyed at it as its fabric covered her form. “See you at the usual spot?” Adrien gave her a hug, holding her close and not really wanting to let go.

“You bet.” Marinette hugged back, before eventually pulling away to peck him on the cheek. “See you then.” She mimicked his descent down the stairs from earlier, and Adrien was left standing alone in her bedroom with a sigh.

Packing up his textbook and putting on his bag, he headed downstairs and had to force himself to put one foot in front of the other when he neared the bathroom door. He could hear the water running from behind it, and it took all his will power not to try and go in after her. Adrien made his way into the bakery kitchen and looked around after flicking on the lights. “Plagg?” He called quietly. “Tikki?”

“Hi Adrien!” Tikki soon floated over to him with a big smile. “So, how were things?”

“U-Uh…” Even her kwami was making him blush now.

“Do not answer that!” Plagg zipped over with his arms folded sternly, making Tikki giggle. “I don’t want to hear even one single word!”
“Spoilsport.” Tikki rolled her eyes.

“Let’s get going, Plagg.” Adrien started walking and when he glanced over his shoulder to see if he was following, he saw Tikki blow Plagg a kiss and the shy smile that crossed his kwami’s face. Grinning himself, he turned back to keep walking and Plagg soon flew around him to take his usual hiding spot in his shirt pocket. With that, he went out to the hallway to put on his shoes, unlock the front door, and head out into the still cloudy, though now dry, night.

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Once her own shower was done, Marinette blow-dried her hair so hopefully her parents wouldn’t notice she had had one. She really didn’t want to talk about what had gone on this evening with her Mom and Dad, of all people. After going back into her room to change into her PJs, she could hear them come into the living room below her, so she headed down to greet them. “Hey guys.”

“Sorry that took so long,” Sabine was starting to pull food from their bags to put into the fridge. “Apparently everyone thought tonight was a good night to shop for groceries so the lines were really long.”

“That’s okay. Adrien left about half an hour ago.” Marinette leaned against the railing of the stairs and tried not to let herself think back to the memories of earlier.

“When is he coming over again?” Tom asked while unboxing a bottle of cold medicine. Sabine shot him a look and he hastily added, “Not that it’s my business…”

Marinette smiled. “It’s fine, Dad. But I don’t know. We honestly hadn’t even really planned for him to come over today, it just happened.”

“I was only wondering because I really like seeing you two together, that’s all.” Tom grinned sheepishly.

“We both do.” Sabine assured after closing the fridge. “But we also respect that you deserve to have some space, right dear?” She eyed her husband, who quickly nodded in agreement.

Laughing, Marinette walked over to envelop both her parents in a tight hug. “Thanks you, both of you. You’re the best parents in the whole world.” She pulled back and kissed them both on the cheek. “I love you both so much!”

“Love you too.” Tom and Sabine replied together.

“So I’m going to head upstairs to work on some sewing, maybe study some more, then I’m off to bed.” Marinette started to head back to the stairs. “Good night!”

They waved to her as she disappeared into her room and closed the door, the telltale sound of it being locked behind her immediately following. “She’s already changed into her PJs.” Sabine said with a bit of a grin while watching Tom open up the bottle of cold medicine. “And I checked the bathroom earlier, the shower’s still wet.”

“Fine, you win, I owe you five euro.” Tom started running cold water from the tap and grabbed himself a glass from the cupboard. “I didn’t think she’d be ready yet.”

“I know my daughter. She’s waited a long time for that boy.” Sabine reminded him.

“That is true.” Tom filled his glass, then took the pill and swallowed it down with a swig of water, grimacing a little at the chalky taste of the coating on the outside of it.
“And if she’s anything like me, well…” Sabine gave her husband a particular look.

Tom just chuckled. “No need to explain, I remember.”

“Come to think of it, we haven’t really had much time to lately…”

“You know I have a cold, right?”

“Oh, fine. Have it your way, stick-in-the-mud.” Sabine went off to turn on the TV and relax on the couch.

Tom rolled his eyes and got started on putting away the non-fridge groceries that were still left, but did wear a faint smile as he did so.

“There you are.” Marinette noticed Tikki finally appear through the floor a while later. “I was wondering when you’d come up.”

“How did it go, how did it go?” Tikki asked eagerly.

“Good.” Marinette told her simply, but even that short answer made her kwami squeal with excitement. “By the way, thanks a lot for taking Plagg with you earlier.”

“Don’t worry, it’s easy to keep him busy.” Tikki sat down next to Marinette, who was currently stitching some buttons onto a new cardigan. “He does most of the work for me, really. Since he likes to talk a lot, usually about himself, I just let him and listen.”

“Doesn’t that get boring?” Marinette arched an eyebrow.

Tikki shook her head. “Not at all. I don’t get to see him much so I really enjoy it.” She smiled now. “We were made for each other, after all.”

“Aww, that’s adorable!” Marinette touched the button on her phone from where it sat next to her sewing machine, turning on the screen to check the time. “Are you ready to go soon?”

“Sure am. I helped myself to some cookies downstairs.” Tikki told her. “Not enough to raise suspicion, don’t worry.”

“Apparently my Mom thinks I have, as she put it, an ‘incurable cookie habit’, so even if you did she’d probably just think it was me.” Marinette grinned.

“Well that’s good to know, I’ll take more next time.” Tikki said with a giggle.

She finished the last button she was working on before setting it aside and standing up. Marinette had been about to call to Tikki when her phone vibrated. Surprised, she picked it up and unlocked it to the email awaiting her.

~Can’t wait to see you again. ;3 And obligatory cat picture: day ten!

Underneath was a close-up picture of a cat that appeared to be winking.

“He’s really not going to give up on the cat picture thing, is he?” Marinette mused aloud, although she did look entertained.

“Probably not.” Tikki agreed.
“Maybe I should do something to distract him…” Marinette’s expression drew devious. “Like start sending him my own pictures…” She had a plan forming already, and she rather liked it. “But for now we should get going, though. Spots on!”

It didn’t take her long to reach the usual meeting spot. Though the clouds had cleared up, the city was still pretty wet from all the hours of steady rain. Puddles were regularly underfoot as she walked across the rooftop, as she could see Adrien was on his way over too. “I haven’t seen you in forever!” He joked as he landed.

“Was Nathalie able to cover for you?” Marinette was relieved to see him nod.

“Father believed her. And though he wasn’t impressed about the lunches thing, Nathalie said she talked him into it for me.” Adrien slipped an arm around her waist and brought her close to him.

“That’s good. I’m glad I’ll get to see you more.” She rested her head comfortably against his shoulder.

“Me too.” Adrien kissed the top of her head. “Now which halves should we take?”

“You pick this time.” Marinette said with a shrug.

“I’ll take west and you go east?” Adrien suggested, to which she nodded. “Okay, see you back here soon!” He extended his staff and took off.

Marinette followed suit and began her own route. Tonight she had several instances the required some attention, such as a few break-and-enter attempts, a stray dog wandering aimlessly through the streets she persuaded to follow her to the animal shelter, and even the beginnings of an abandoned house fire she alerted the closest fire hall to. But at least they were all minor incidents. By the time she got back to the apartment building’s rooftop, Adrien looked to have been waiting for a while. “Sorry I’m late,” She apologized when she landed. “Lots of little things going on.”

“That’s okay. At least there was no akumas.” Adrien laced his fingers together to stretch his arms out in front of him. “Because for some strange reason, I happen to be feeling rather tired tonight.”

“What a coincidence, so am I.” Marinette shared the grin he had started to wear.

He leaned in to kiss her tenderly. “Good night, gorgeous. I love you.”

“I love you too.” She let him get a head start on making his way home before she turned to head back herself. Once she arrived back to her room and had called off her transformation, Marinette grabbed her phone.

~Hey, sorry to bother you, I know it’s getting late, but I have a quick question I was wondering you could help answer for me?

There was a response fairly soon after her message had been sent.

~Anything for my love bug. ^^

Starting to feel butterflies in her stomach, these ones were actually from excitement and not from nervousness. Marinette unbuttoned her PJ top all the way down and looked around for Tikki, who she spied already snoozing on her cat pillow at the head of her bed. She then spread her PJ top open enough to be rather revealing but not as far to completely unveil her breasts. Setting her forearm against her exposed belly, she positioned her phone so it looked down her body (making sure to get lots of cleavage for good measure) before switching to camera mode, turning on the flash to account
for the dark room and snapping a picture. Her cheeks were growing warm as she attached the image to her reply and started typing.

~Do you think I'm getting a tan yet? I can never tell.

Pressing ‘Send’, Marinette put her phone down and buttoned her PJ top back up while wearing a satisfied smirk. It hadn’t vibrated yet by the time she was done, and it still hadn’t after she had picked it back up and climbed up the ladder to lay down in bed. Oh, how she wished she could see the look on his face!
The never ending Tuesday comes to an end! =P I'm off to bed because I have to get up early tomorrow for work, so this is just a short note tonight. Enjoy! ^^

Over at the Agreste Mansion, Adrien’s phone had slipped from his fingers to land on his mattress, with the image in question on the screen sending his hormones into a frenzy. His eyes were as big as saucers as he stared down at it, heart starting to thunder in his chest. All the fatigue he had felt before was long gone now.

He certainly had not been expecting that.

“Why did you drop your phone?” Plagg was asking while munching on his nightly batch of camembert a ways off. “I thought those things were supposed to be expensive. Your lucky it landed on your bed.”

Adrien didn’t even really hear him. He had finally picked it back up when it vibrated again in his hand.

~You there, Jaguar?

And he could almost hear her sing-song voice asking that so innocently. Adrien managed to make up a reply.

~Can’t really say, maybe you should send me another picture?

Waiting on baited breath, it seemed to take an excruciatingly long time before his phone finally vibrated.

~Sorry, off to bed. Guess I’ll just have to have you take a look for me tomorrow!

Damn. In two short sentences, she had made him very disappointed and hopelessly turned on one after another. Before he could start typing to protest leaving for bed, there was already another message from her.

~Good night. ;)

Damn, damn, damn. She never used text-smilies. So it was clear that she knew she had him. Sighing heavily, Adrien forced himself to put his phone aside and hunkered down under his covers, to try and focus only on getting to sleep.

But one could say that him getting to sleep now was going to be rather…hard.

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Morning came by and Marinette woke with a grin on her face. She was still feeling quite proud of herself, and she practically skipped downstairs to have a quick breakfast of toast and jam before taking her usual shower. When she had gotten dressed and returned to her bedroom, she noticed
Tikki was looking out her window intently. “Anything exciting out there?” She asked after shutting the door.

“Somebody’s outside.” Tikki replied vaguely, making Marinette come over to look out the window herself.

And there he was, looking up at her from the sidewalk. Adrien gave her a wave and Marinette waved back with a smile. Despite how early it was, he looked fully ready for school, albeit a bit tired. Knowing that was probably her doing made her almost giddy as she quickly threw her things together and dashed downstairs. She packed a fast lunch before she bid her parents good-bye, then she was hurrying out the door to come around and meet up with her boyfriend who was still awaiting her.

“Good morning,” She said with as much sweetness as she could. “You’re up rather early today, aren’t you?”

“Sometimes, Marinette…” Adrien let his words trail off as he took her hand in his.

“Did you maybe not sleep well?” She teased as they started walking, and felt his grip on her hand tighten which made her smirk. “Actually, I had a proposition for you.”

Adrien looked intrigued. “Like what?”

“I was thinking, so you don’t have to keep sending new cat pictures everyday, maybe instead I could send you some pictures myself.” She loved the way his eyes lit up at her words. “It wouldn’t necessarily be a daily occurrence, but…”

“Yes! Sure! Absolutely!” Adrien quickly responded with palpable enthusiasm. “You can consider yesterday to be your last cat picture!”

“And I’m sure you figured it out already, but don’t expect pictures of pets from me.”

“If you did send me pictures of pets, after last night, I think I’d cry.”

Their laughter was interrupted when all of a sudden what looked to be giant toy soldiers started to march down the street. Startled passersby began to flee and scream in terror, but Marinette and Adrien turned to run for a different reason. They ducked down an alley and made sure it was deserted before calling to their kwamis.

“Plagg, claws out!”

“Tikki, spots on!”

After the magic faded away, the superhero duo launched themselves into the sky via yo-yo and staff to find the source of the commotion. Soon enough they located a small boy riding a life-sized toy airplane. It flew in circles above a chaotic menagerie of fully mobile, gigantic toys beneath him. He was wearing regal-looking robes and a dark purple crown atop his head. “I don’t care what Mama and Papa say, Teddy! I’m going to play all day long if I want to!” He seemed to be talking to the old stuffed bear under his arm. “I’m the Toy King now, nobody can stop me!”

“Mason! Please come down!” A concerned-looking man had climbed on top of his car to shout up to the boy, an equally distressed woman standing next to the vehicle.

Marinette and Adrien navigated through the rampaging toys so they could reach the couple. “Is that your son?” Adrien asked the woman, who gave a tearful nod.
“Please, please save him!” She begged.

“You have our word.” Marinette promised, then looked up at the Toy King still talking to his bear while flying around in his airplane. “We need to get his attention.”

“He loves you two,” The father crouched on the hood of the car to speak to them. “I don’t know if that would’ve stayed when…that change happened to him, but maybe you can get through to him that way.”

“Usually akuma victims hate us…” Adrien pursed his lips. “But it’s worth a shot.”

Grabbing on to Adrien as he took out his staff, Marinette held on tight as he extended it high so the two of them were level with the route the airplane was taking. “Hello!” Marinette called, trying to get him to notice them. “Hey there!”

The little boy finally spotted them and when he did, he looked ecstatic. “Oh my gosh, it’s Cat Noir! And Ladybug!” He steered his airplane over to where they were perched on Adrien’s staff. “This is so awesome! Do you guys want to play with me?”

“Um, sure.” Marinette hoped this was a good idea. “What do you want to play?”

“Let’s play Tag! I’ll be it…” The expression that crossed the Toy King’s face no longer looked friendly. “So you’d better run!”

Adrien immediately lowered them with his staff so they could dodge his dive-bombing plane, then both superheroes jumped to the ground with a roll before getting to their feet. All the toys now seemed intent on catching them, so they took off running. “What do we do now?” Adrien shouted to her.

“We need to get that crown!” Marinette looked back over her shoulder at the boy flying a ways behind them. She and Adrien had to separate before she could say anything further as a volley of toys catapulted between them. Marinette ducked behind a bench so that the Toy King would lose track of her, so when she was out of sight, she drew her yo-yo. “Lucky Charm!” Seconds later she was holding a pair of polka dotted gripper gloves. This time it didn’t take long to understand what they were for. She pulled them on over her suited hands and took a deep breath to prepare herself for what she was about to do.

Because she needed to catch a plane.

Once he flew past her, Marinette threw her yo-yo and latched it onto one of the wings of the airplane and tried to pull it down, but being a magically animated toy it was awfully powerful. It shuddered once with the extra weight but then pressed forward, easily pulling her feet from the ground and taking her on a ride.

“Ladybug!” Marinette heard Adrien call up to her. “Look out!”

She had to dodge giant toy soldiers trying to grab for her as she dangled. Managing to elude their grasp, she started to pull herself up the string to get closer to the plane. The Toy King drove his airplane in circles to try and dislodge her, so she had to hold on with all her might. “Get off!” He ordered, flying in tight loops.

Trying not to focus on how thoroughly seasick she was starting to feel, Marinette continued her climb. The closer she got the more anxious the Toy King seemed to get, his attempts to throw her off becoming desperate. She got under the plane at last and swung up onto it, sitting on the back right behind him. “If you set us down, I promise it’ll be more fun then being up here.” She offered her
brightest smile.

He stared back at her skeptically. “How could it be more fun then this?”

“It’s a surprise,” Marinette tried not to falter under his scrutinizing gaze. “A good surprise. Would Ladybug ever lie?”

For a moment the boy was silent as a butterfly insignia appeared over his face. She knew Hawk Moth was talking to him, and she was worried things were about to get ugly. “Grown-ups lie all the time,” The Toy King said eventually, not looking convinced. “And the nice man says I shouldn’t trust you.”

“How do you know he’s not the one lying?” Marinette saw his eyes widen at that revelation. “Come on, your parents are worried about you. So let’s go down and we can go see them together. Okay?”

“They are? Really?” The insignia appeared over his face again, but he frowned this time. “I’m not listening!” He took the handles of the toy plane (it appeared to have been on auto-pilot since she had landed behind him) and veered hard. “I do what I want!” Marinette’s heart stopped momentarily until she realized he was turning around to head back to where his family was. “And I want Mama and Papa!”

The plane shook as the magic making it mobile started draining away fast as a result of the Toy King’s defiance. Thinking fast, Marinette scooped the boy and his bear up with one arm and threw her yo-yo with the other, hooking it around the spire of a nearby building. Pulling hard, she sent them careening through the air as the plane dropped like a stone to the ground below, shattering to pieces from the impact. She swung them around and landed roughly on the sidewalk. The parents were already running over, and before the Toy King could leave her grasp, Marinette took the crown from his head as he went to run off.

“Mason! Mason!” The mother was sobbing tears of joy as she swept her son up into her arms, the father enveloping them both in his right after, his eyes damp as well.

Smiling at the reunion, Marinette broke the crown in half and captured the akuma that sprang forth. She let the purified white butterfly flutter off as she peeled the gloves from her hands and threw them over her head. “Miraculous Ladybug!” Waves of light spread through the air, the army of toys disappearing without a trace and the dark magic fading from the little boy.

He opened his eyes once it had vanished and blinked up at parents. “Sorry,” He told them quietly, but they just shook their heads and held him closer, making him smile and snuggle into their embrace.

“Don’t you ever scare me like that again!” At first Marinette had thought the father had been saying that to his son, but then she realized it was directed at her and coming from Adrien who was now standing at her side. He had been chasing after the plane’s every movement so he was out-of-breath, and his face was pale from the thoughts of what might have happened to her that had been gripped him. “You could’ve gotten really hurt! Or worse!”

And before she realized what was going on, he had pulled her close to kiss her.

Surprised, Marinette soon relaxed and kissed back. But then the reality of the current situation hit her and she abruptly stepped backward. “Not here!” She hissed, looking around for possible awaiting cameras.

But the street was deserted except the family behind them. The father had started carrying Mason the
other direction, but the mother had been approaching them after picking up her son’s forgotten crown to thank the superheroes, so she had seen it all. Marinette blushed and even Adrien looked sheepish at his error in judgment, but the woman just smiled. “You two saved my baby. I’m in your debt.” She said, then made the motion of locking her lips and throwing away the invisible key. With a wink, she turned around to follow after her husband and son.

“Debt paid in full,” Adrien murmured, breathing a sigh of relief.

“We need to be more careful.” Marinette warned.

“I know, I’m sorry.” He rubbed the back of his neck in embarrassment. “I just…I don’t know what I’d do without you.”

Touched, Marinette wanted to say more but her Miraculous was beeping impatiently from her ears. It was actually down a few spots already, as it had started beeping without her really noticing while she had occupied on the plane talking to the Toy King. “We better get going.” She told him, grabbing his arm and dragging him after her behind the nearest building.

It was his turn to be surprised as she pulled him along. Once they were officially out of view, her transformation timed out soon after and she reappeared after a short flash of light. Tikki slumped onto her shoulder, looking exhausted. “I think this is the first time I’ve seen you transform,” He thought aloud as she carefully lifted the tired Tikki to slip her into her purse.

“Technically the first time you saw me was earlier, be we were a little preoccupied with finding the akuma then.” Marinette closed her purse and looked up at him expectantly. “Well?”

“Oh, right. Claws in.” He was enveloped in lights for a second as well and once it had faded away Plagg was hovering next to him and rubbing his eyes. Adrien held open his shirt for him to fly tiredly into the pocket awaiting him.

“We need to head to school. We were going to be early before but now we’re going to be pretty late.” Marinette said. “But first…” She stood on her tiptoes so she could kiss him deeply.

Adrien wrapped his arms around her and wouldn’t have cared if they never left for school. But eventually she pulled back and took his hand, a gesture he returned as they started walking again. “I’ll head in first, and blame it on a last minute morning photo-shoot.” He offered.

“Good idea. I’ll just say I slept in.” Marinette found herself smiling. Despite the fact there had just been a pretty dangerous akuma fight, she was getting to have a real walk to school with Adrien, arm-in-arm. And in her books, that was an okay trade.
More fluff today, ladies and gentleman! =) And welcome to the beginning of the two-chapter Marinette and Alya shopping adventure! xD It gets pretty awesome, trust me! ;P And I've officially started typing into page 200 on the Word document! And I still have a lot of ideas so there's more to come as well. <3 Anyway, hope you all enjoy! =D

Their teacher had been annoyed when Adrien had come in late but accepted his supposedly work-related explanation. With Marinette’s interruption a few minutes later, and her lackluster excuse, she was far less understanding. Sentencing her to stay after school to clean the classroom, she got back to her lesson with a huff.

But Marinette couldn’t care less. She was still riding the bubble of happiness from this morning. There was a smile on her face even when lunch came by, and Alya was quick to comment. “Girl, you’re sure in a good mood for someone who has to do manual labor after school,” She said while gathering her books.

“Just happy in general.” Marinette closed up her backpack and put it on. “Are you and Nino going to stay for lunch again today?”

“Yeah, did you bring one?” Alya slipped on her backpack as well.

“I did. My parents went grocery shopping last night and they picked me up a few things to pack.” Marinette started walking with Alya out to the lockers, where Nino and Adrien had already gone off to.

“That’s great!” Alya was grinning now. “More study time, right?”

Marinette rolled her eyes. “Yes Alya, more study time. As in, with actual books.”

“There they are!” Nino spotted them walking over and he and Adrien waited for them while they opened their lockers to pick up their lunches, as the guys were already holding on to theirs. “Let’s go get a good table!”

The four friends headed off to the library, and though they didn’t get the same table they were at yesterday, this time they managed to snag one by a window. Opening up their lunches and their books, they got started on eating and skimming over their study material. Noon hour passed by slowly and by the time they needed to pack things up to get ready for class again, everyone’s bellies and brains felt thoroughly full. They dropped off their empty lunch bags in their lockers and meandered by to class as the bell was ringing, and the afternoon got underway.

At the end of the day, Marinette waved to Alya and Nino as they left with the other students but was surprised to see Adrien staying behind. “You don’t have to clean up, only I do,” She reminded him while rolling up her sleeves.

“I was late too. So it’s only fair.” Adrien smiled at her. “Besides, I want to help you.”

She got to her feet as the corners of her mouth were turning upwards as well. “We should get started,
then.”

“We’ll need to get the supplies first,” Adrien noted while standing too, getting a mischievous look in his eye. “So I guess we should head to the janitor’s closet.”

“For a supply run only,” Marinette said seriously, trying not to think back to all that had gone on the last time they had been in there.

They headed off to pick up the miscellaneous cleaning supplies, though they both lingered there a while as the memories tried to capture their attention. Diligently they made their way back to class however, and got to work. Together they swept and mopped the floor, washed down the blackboard, emptied the garbage and shined the windows. The room was sparkling clean when they were done, and they surveyed their work with satisfaction. “We make a good team.” Adrien noted, making Marinette laugh.

“You say that like it’s the first time we’ve ever had great teamwork before.” She started picking up all their supplies again.

“Well forgive me for enjoying the moment.” He stuck his tongue out at her, which only made her giggle more as they brought back all their equipment to the janitor’s closet. They returned everything to its rightful spot and Marinette had been about to head back out when Adrien grabbed for her hand.

“We can’t leave here without at least one kiss…”

“Oh, fine, one kiss.” Marinette relented with a smile as she turned around to face him, and he eagerly captured her lips in his. His hands wandered along her back and she really had to concentrate on not letting this go too far. They pulled back for air a short while later, cheeks equally flushed.

“We should really head home,” She insisted quietly, though she would’ve rather stayed there and continued. “And your Father will want to know where you are soon.”

“I know.” Adrien agreed with a sigh. So they separated and left the janitor’s closet, grabbed their belongings from the classroom and headed out of school.

“See you later?” Marinette knew he would understand that her ‘later’ didn’t technically meaning ‘tomorrow’ as he was walking over to the silver car that pulled up shortly after he had sent off a text to Nathalie.

“See you later.” He confirmed with a wave before he got into the car and it drove off.

After all that had happened in the last twenty-four hours, walking home alone made Marinette feel rather lonely. Upon arriving home, she greeted her mother with tight hug. “How’s Dad?” She asked, noting he still wasn’t around.

“Better today, actually. The cold medicine plus all the resting I’ve been making him do seem to be making a difference.” Sabine said. “Hopefully by tomorrow he’ll be good to go again. Which will be good for him, I know he’s been getting antsy not being able to help me out down here.”

“He’ll be glad to hear that!” Marinette could just picture how bored her Dad must be by now, on day three of wife-imposed bed rest.

“We’ll see, anyway. It’s only if he keeps improving. I don’t want him to overdo it too soon.” Sabine glanced at her daughter. “Sound familiar?”

That’s exactly what they had told her when she was getting over her headache, so it was, in fact, quite familiar. She just smiled at her Mom with a nod. “Excuse me!” A customer had just walked in. “Sorry to interrupt, but could you tell me what kind of pies you sell here?”
Sabine quickly went over to help the customer and Marinette took her leave, making a stop in the bakery kitchen to take a few cookies before heading upstairs. She saw Tom sitting in the living room flipping between channels on the TV, looking rather bored. “Anything good on?” Marinette quickly slipped the cookies behind her back and out of sight.

“I’m sure there is somewhere, but I haven’t found it yet.” Tom motioned to the spot next to him on the couch. “Want to join me?”

“In a second. I’m going to drop my stuff off in my room.” Marinette promised before heading up to her room. She opened up her purse to let Tikki fly out while setting her backpack down. “I’ll be up later,” She told her kwami while setting the cookies on her plate. Tikki nodded and started chowing down as Marinette left, shutting the door behind her before she went back downstairs.

Eventually Tom settled on watching the news, and Marinette watched with amusement at the various pieces involving the heroic endeavors of Ladybug and Cat Noir. She was eternally grateful the various news crews hadn’t caught much of the goings-on from this morning, as the rampaging toys had thankfully kept them all occupied and away from the epicenter of the action. She was fairly certain that it would eventually come out that he and she were now partners in more ways then one, but she wanted to keep it on the down-low as long as possible. After all, the thought of rabid fans chasing them down for awkward questions and photographic evidence of their romance did not sound enjoyable in any way.

Plus, she really didn’t like the idea of Hawk Moth discovering their relationship and possibly using that to his advantage. She did completely understood how Adrien had felt this morning, because if anything ever happened to him, she wouldn’t know what to do with herself either. She was broken out of her thoughts when her phone started to ring from her pocket, and upon pulling it out she saw it was Alya. “Hello?”

“Hey girl! I’m going shopping, do you want to come with?” She asked. “I haven’t had anything to eat yet so I was figuring we could stop somewhere between stores.”

Marinette put her hand over the bottom half of her phone and looked over at her Dad. “Can I go out with Alya?”

“We were only planning on having leftovers for supper tonight, so I think that should be fine.” Tom said with a shrug.

“Thank you!” Marinette uncovered her phone again. “Alya? I can come. When do you want to meet up?”

“Already on the way to your house.” Alya replied with a chuckle.

“Okay, I’ll be ready.” Marinette ended the call and dashed upstairs.

Tikki had eaten half her cookies already when she arrived. “Going out?”

“Shopping with Alya.” Marinette picked up her purse and Tikki dutifully went into her usual hiding spot. The bluenette went back down and headed to the main floor as Alya was knocking on the door. She opened it wide to see her best friend waiting expectantly. “That was fast.” Marinette observed while stepping outside and shutting the door behind her, locking it as well.

“I knew you’d be able to come, so I figured I’d save some time.” Alya was already starting to walk again so Marinette had to catch up with her.

“What are you so on the hunt for?” Marinette could tell she was clearly on the mission for something.
“There’s a new shop that opened up where you can get custom shirts made,” Alya explained. “And I want to get one made up with the Ladyblog logo to promote it.”

“Suave business-woman, I see.” Marinette joked.

“You know it!” Alya grinned.

The two friends walked for a while until they came up to the shop in question. It had lots of shirts with amazing designs and catchy phrases in the front window, but what caught Marinette’s attention was the gift shop next to it. There was a display of small stuffed animals that could be seen through the glass door, and that gave her an idea. “I’ll be next door, okay Alya?” She told her friend who nodded distractedly before heading into her original destination. Marinette went into the gift shop and looked through the various stuffed animals with a careful eye until she found it.

A pony.

Its fur was a light caramel color and the yarn used for its mane and tail was chestnut brown. It had black button eyes and a smile stitched on at the end of its muzzle. It was exactly what she needed! She brought it up to the till and made her purchase, then headed back over to the custom shirt shop Alya was still in.

Now the question was, would she try and bring it with her on patrol tonight? Or wait until school tomorrow? Either way, she was pretty sure Adrien was going to be very surprised to find his wish upon a star from Monday had managed to come true.
Chapter 36

Chapter Notes

Oh how I thoroughly enjoy this chapter. xD Alya is honestly one of my favorite characters to write. But anyway! Some exciting stuff happens in this chapter. Stuff is purchased that will become very important down the road. And I think you'll all like what's bought. =P Enjoy everybody! ♥

Marinette was browsing for a while at the various options for shirts and even sweaters before Alya finally came over. “They only use images from their database, so the logo idea isn’t going to work.” She didn’t look dejected, however. “So I went with just text instead. It’ll still be good advertisement.”

“When will it be ready?” Marinette had realized Alya wasn’t carrying a bag.

“Because they just opened they have a lot of orders, but they promised they’ll phone me when it’s done.” Alya and Marinette started heading for the door. “So where do you want to head to next?”

“I’m getting hungry,” Marinette’s stomach growled in agreement, making them both laugh. “Make that very hungry.”

“There’s a great Italian bistro a block away, want to try it out?”

“We just had lasagna at my house last night, so I’m not really wanting pasta.”

“Hmm…what about that little Greek place at the corner up there?”

“Sure, sounds good.”

They made their way over to the restaurant and were greeted by a very pleasant host at the front podium. He told them it would be a few minutes for a table to be ready, so they sat down on the chairs by the door to wait. Once they were directed over to a small booth, they opened their menus wide and tried to decide on what to have. Eventually Marinette decided on simple roasted chicken breast and mashed potatoes, while Alya was more adventurous in trying a fully loaded gyro. They made their order once their server returned with their drinks, then eased into light conversation while they waited.

“I can’t believe school is almost over!” Alya was saying.

“Me either. It’s gone by so fast.” Marinette took a sip of her iced tea. “Do you think you’re ready for the baccalauréat?”

“Not yet, I definitely want to study some more.” Alya admitted. “Maybe the four of us should meet up somewhere on the weekend to bounce questions off each other and help each other out.”

“You sure you want my help? Or Nino’s?” Marinette teased.

“I’m no fool, I’ll take all the help I can get for the biggest tests of my life.” Alya told her truthfully. “It’s pretty terrifying, to be honest. Everything we’ve ever done up to this point all comes down to
this. If we pass, great, we're free. But if we fail…”

Shuddering at the thought, Marinette decided to change the subject. “So do you have anything planned out for next year?”

“Not sure. I haven’t decided what I want to do yet, so I’m going to take the summer to try and decide.” Alya said. “Maybe journalism, but I don’t know. I just want to focus on relaxing for a little while. Because we’ve so earned it.”

Their server arrived with their meals, setting down the steaming plates before them carefully. “Is there anything else I can get for you two?” He asked, but the girls shook their heads. “All right, just keep me posted.” He left them with some extra napkins before heading off to his next table.

“Wow, this looks amazing!” Alya gushed between blowing on the very hot gyro before her. Tentatively picking it up, she took a small bite and her face lit up. “You should try this, it’s super good!”

“I’ll take your word for it, thanks though.” Marinette was cutting her chicken into bite-sized pieces, enjoying the savory aroma swirling up from it and her potatoes.

Their meals were scrumptious, and they made short work of all the food on their plates. Neither had room left for dessert, so when their server returned to take their dishes away they just asked for their separate bills. “Here you go, I’m glad you enjoyed everything.” He handed them their receipts individually, so they paid their totals and thanked him for his help before finishing up the last of their drinks and grabbing their things.

“Do you want to go anywhere else?” Marinette checked the time on her phone. “I should probably head back soon so I can finish up my homework.”

“Oh! I did have one other place I wanted to take you!” Alya grabbed her hand and started pulling her along behind her. Marinette allowed herself to be dragged along for two blocks until they started slowing down. “Close your eyes!” Alya ordered, and Marinette obediently covered hers with her free palm. She could hear them walking a little further and then going through a shop door, the bell chiming above them as they entered. “You can look now!” And when she dropped her hand, Marinette’s jaw dropped as well.

They were in a lingerie store.

“Alya!” Marinette glanced sharply over at her beaming friend.

“Come on, girl! You need to get something fun to wear now that you have someone to show it off to! Especially since it’s the guy of your dreams!” Alya had kept her grip on Marinette’s wrist so she could tug her along as she began walking through the store. “The customer service is amazing here, they’re super friendly. The prices are great too, all considering. And you should feel lucky, since I brought you here first instead of one of those actual ‘adult’ boutiques. I knew you’d need baby steps.”

She couldn’t deny that her eyes were roving over the various lingerie displays with interest. To be honest, she had just never been to one of these places before. Usually she bought her bras and underwear from the department store, since it was easiest place to get them from. But now that she was here, and the initial embarrassment was wearing off, she was starting to feel excited at the possibilities before her. What would Adrien think if he saw her wearing that? Oh wow, or maybe that one?
Now she was starting to smile. “Okay.” Alya turned slightly to look at her over her shoulder. “Let’s shop.”

“That’s the spirit! This is going to be fun, you’ll see!” Alya let go of her wrist to start browsing for herself, confident now that Marinette wouldn’t go dashing out of the store if left unattended.

“And even more fun later…” Marinette said under her breath with a smirk. She took her time looking through the various styles, wanting to find something she that loved. There were so many designs to choose from, she didn’t know how she was going to be able to pick just one ensemble. So far she had grabbed a soft white set with pink lace roses over the bands of the bra and along the sides of the panties, and was looking over a set that was a midnight blue with rhinestones, when she saw it.

A set that was ruby red with large black polka-dots.

The spots were placed here and there over the bra’s silken cups as well as the front and back of the panties’ similar fabric. The hips of the panties were a cutout of red lace instead of fabric, and the bands of the bra were the same lace as well. And there was a small gem heart dangling from where the cups of the bra met in the middle.

It was perfect.

One of the sales associates noticed her eyeing it up. “We sell a lot of that set,” She told her. “Ladybug fans and their boyfriends love this one.”

Marinette’s face heated up at that last sentence. “C-Can I try it on?” She managed to squeak out.

“First time here?” Marinette nodded. “I could tell. There’s no need to feel shy. This is a no judgment zone.” The sales associate said soothingly. “I’ll go get you a fitting room, you can go ahead and find your size.”

Though she was almost as red as the set in question, Marinette quickly looked through the drawers below its display to find the size she needed for the bra and panties. Taking them and the set she had found earlier in her arms, she followed the path the sales associate had taken to the fitting room area. She was pointed in the direction of her room that had her name written on the whiteboard over the door, and she quickly slipped inside, shutting the door and making extra sure it was locked behind her. Taking a deep breath to steel her resolve, she started to undress.

It was a bit awkward having to try them on over her current bra and panties, of course, but she knew it was necessary for hygiene purposes. So both sets fit a little snugly over top of them, but she knew that would mean that they would be a good fit once she was actually wearing them against her bare skin.

Not letting her mind wander past that last thought, Marinette put the two sets next to each other to study after she had put her clothes back on. She still really liked the first white and pink roses set she had picked out, it felt very ‘her’. It was something she could definitely see herself wearing. But she had to admit she thought the red and black polka-dot set looked pretty good on her too, if she did say so herself. And she could just imagine how Adrien would salivate at the sight of her in it.

So which should she pick?

There was a sudden knock at her fitting room door. “Hey girl, it’s just me,” Came Alya’s voice. “I’m all finished, are you almost ready to go to the till?”

“I found two I like and I can’t decide,” Marinette groaned. “Do you think I should just buy both?”
“Why don’t I buy you one?” Alya suggested. “Call it an early birthday present.”

“You don’t have to…”

“I want to. And you know I don’t take no for an answer.”

She knew how true that last statement was. So she turned the knob on the fitting room door to poke her head out so she could look at her. “Fine, only if I can buy something of yours for you.”

“Deal!” Alya handed her a set that was a warm orange with gold hearts decorating the satiny material. Marinette ducked back into her fitting room and specifically chose the white and pink roses set to hand to her. “Oh, this is so cute, it’s very you!”

“Yours too. I’ll be right out.” Marinette grabbed the red and black polka-dots set and carefully hid it under Alya’s before coming back out. She knew she’d never hear the end of it if Alya saw her buying a Ladybug-like lingerie set.

To her credit, Alya didn’t try to peek at what other set Marinette had chosen. The two girls went up to the till and had their sets rung in, taking out each other’s items from their bags to switch once they exited the store. “Happy early birthday.” Alya said with a grin.

“Happy early birthday.” Marinette echoed, grinning as well.

“Time to head home?” Alya assumed, to which Marinette nodded. “Okay, I’ll see you tomorrow, then. Thanks for coming shopping with me.”

“I’m the one who needs to be thanking you.” Marinette gave her best friend a hug that was happily returned. “So thanks again. See you tomorrow.”

The two girls headed off on their merry ways to make the trek back to their respective homes. As she neared the Dupain-Cheng bakery, Marinette stashed the lingerie bag into the bag from the gift shop. She really didn’t want to have to show off those purchases to curious-eyed parents.

After letting herself in, Marinette started heading upstairs. Tom and Sabine had a checkers board laid out over the kitchen table and were in the middle of a game when she came through the door. “Successful trip?” Sabine asked.

“Yup.” Marinette answered simply as she went up the last flight of stairs to her bedroom. Once the door was safely closed and locked, Marinette dropped the bag to the floor and flopped onto her chaise lounge. She opened up her purse to peer in at Tikki, who was just waking up from the nap she had been taking since sometime during the time at the Greek restaurant.

“What did I miss?” Tikki gave a bit of a yawn.

“Alya took me to a lingerie store.” Marinette confessed, and she had been about to explain to her kwami what one of those was when she realized Tikki’s eyes had widened already.

“Show me! Show me!” Tikki zipped out of her purse with an excited twirl.

Not sure she wanted to know how Tikki knew what a lingerie store was already, Marinette grabbed the bags from the floor and dug out the one in question from it’s hiding place beneath the pony. “This is the first one,” She pulled out the one she had had Alya buy for her.

“It’s gorgeous! This is going to look beautiful on you, Marinette!” Tikki flew around the set to inspect it closer. “I love the roses!”
After Tikki had finished her close-up overview of the set and had floated back, Marinette put it down to bring out the second set she had purchased herself. “And then there’s this one…”

“Wow!” Tikki looked just as pleased by this selection. “That one is going to totally knock Adrien’s socks off!”

“You think so?” Marinette certainly hoped it would.

Tikki gave an enthusiastic nod. “I know so. I think you should keep it a secret for now though, so you can surprise him.”

“That was my plan.” Marinette put both sets back in the bag. “I’m going to work on my homework for a bit, then we should head out.”

“Roger that!” Tikki went over to her cookie plate to grab one to nibble.

Marinette took out her books from her backpack and got to work, easily finishing up the bit of reading and questions she needed to answer. When she finished, it was about time for patrol, so after she had made sure Tikki was good to go, it was time for, “Spots on!”
Chapter 37

The superhero duo made it to the apartment building’s rooftop at almost the same time. “I win!” Adrien teased since he touched down a few seconds before she did.

“Let me guess, the winner wants a victory kiss?” Marinette giggled as he leaned in expectantly, so she gave him a light peck on the cheek.

“How about I go south and you go north?” Adrien was grabbing for his staff already.

“Someone’s eager to get started.” Marinette grinned.

“You were the one who said the sooner we get started the sooner we can relax together.” Adrien reminded her with a wink.

“That I did. Sure, I’ll go north.” She unhooked her yo-yo and then the two were off.

Patrol was quiet and easy. After this morning’s akuma, there wasn’t a whiff of activity from Hawk Moth, and even average troublemakers seemed to be taking a holiday tonight. So they made it back to the meeting spot in good time. Marinette managed to arrive a moment or two before he did, so she silently pointed to her cheek with a coy smile, and he chuckled before planting a kiss there.

“Stars?” Adrien asked, setting his staff at its spot on his back.

“Stars.” Marinette confirmed, already sitting down.

They laid back and snuggled in to one another, contentedly enjoying the view of the sky before them and each other’s warmth. “You know,” Adrien said eventually between playing with her hair. “I’m really looking forward to school being over so our days are more freed up.”

“You’re going to have to go back to all your lessons,” Marinette reminded him. “And the photo-shoots and modeling gigs will probably get more frequent, I imagine.”

“Even so, I think we’ll have lots more time to do whatever we want then having to be at school for so many hours of the day.”

“Does that mean I should expect more impromptu visits to my house this summer?”

“And the fall, and the winter…”
She laughed. “Maybe I should start making up a regular supply of croissants too.”

“Yes! More of your flaky pastry gift from the gods!” Adrien licked his lips while rubbing his hands together with glee, and Marinette snorted.

“You do realize I just use a regular, classic croissant recipe, right?”

“Doesn’t matter. You could make me toast and I would think it was a five-star meal.”

“You’re hopeless.”

“Hopeless for you, love bug.”

Marinette rolled her eyes, but it didn’t hide how happy that statement had made her look. “By the way, I have a little present for you, and I figured it would be pretty difficult to bring along on patrol, so do you think you could head back to my house with me to pick it up?”

“Hmm, my Lady wants me to head home with her, should I follow…?” Adrien pretended to be weighing the options, balancing invisible weights in his hands.

She gave him a playful smack. “Just to pick up your present.”

“Oh, of course. I know how to be a gentleman.” Adrien wasn’t able to keep a straight face through that sentence, though.

“Oh huh.” Marinette sat up. “Come on, we should start heading over there now so it doesn’t get too late by the time you get home.”

Adrien quickly got to his feet almost as fast as she did. She grabbed her yo-yo and he, his staff, and she lead the way as they took the straightest route to the Dupain-Cheng bakery. When they reached the terrace, Adrien immediately covered his eyes with his hands while she went to open the trapdoor. Which was something Marinette was glad for, because she hadn’t thought ahead before she had left so her lingerie sets were still out in the open if he had come in. She slipped into her room and grabbed the pony from the gift shop bag, then made her way back out onto the roof. He hadn’t moved while waiting for her, so she nudged the pony’s nose against his arm to get him to uncover his eyes.

He burst out laughing at the sight before him and eagerly took the stuffed animal from her outstretched palms. “You actually got me a pony!”

“It would’ve been a shame for your wish to go to waste,” Marinette had a grin a mile wide as Adrien was happily nuzzling the pony against his cheek. “So now we can consider ourselves even for that beautiful bouquet you bought me.”

“I will cherish this forever!” Adrien declared, unzipping one of his pockets to stuff most of the pony inside, zipping it up to its shoulders to hold it in place before moving to hug her close. “Thanks, bugaboo. It’s perfect.”

Hugging him back, Marinette then leaned up to kiss him gently. “Good night,” She whispered. “I love you, Adrien.”

Going visibly pink beneath the moonlight, he smiled at her. “I love you too, Marinette. Good night.”

After separating, Marinette watched him take out his staff and extend it to head off into the night. She was still abuzz with delight as she went back into her room and closed the trapdoor behind her.
“Spots off.”

“That was so cute!” Tikki squealed once she had reappeared.

“I’m glad my cheering section approves.” Marinette was entertained by how her kwami was practically dancing through the air as she went down the ladder from her bed so she could get changed.

“I don’t just approve, I completely endorse and encourage!” Tikki was making little excited loops and twirls.

Marinette couldn’t help but giggle. “My bad.” She put on her PJs and set her alarm on her phone for tomorrow morning before climbing up to bed. Tikki had gone off to finish her last few cookies as Marinette curled up under the covers. She had already drifted off by the time her kwami came up to lightly give her forehead an affectionate pat, before getting comfy on the cat pillow and going to sleep herself.

When the alarm started going off many hours later, Marinette sleepily got out of bed to turn it off. Though she wasn’t quite awake, at least she didn’t feel grumpy. The level of morning person-ness seemed still seemed to change everyday. She went down to have her shower first before breakfast to try and help wake herself up, and after she was dried off and dressed, she did feel more alert.

Getting herself a muffin to munch on and a glass of apple juice, she packed herself a lunch and once she was done eating, she brought the lunch with her as she came back upstairs. She was gathering her things for school when Tikki floated over. “I had a dream about you two last night!” She said, looking pleased by the memory.

“You did?” Marinette put on her backpack and slipped on her purse as well.

“It was wonderful! You and Adrien were getting married, and even though I know I couldn’t be in it real life, I got to be your flower girl!” Tikki sighed dreamily. “And Plagg was the ring bearer. He actually looked like he was enjoying himself, too!”

“Aww, I like that dream.” Marinette held open her purse while Tikki got comfortable inside. “If we do get married-

“When you get married,” Tikki corrected, making Marinette roll her eyes but smile just the same.

“Maybe we could have a little separate ceremony just with us so you and Plagg can be involved.”

“Oh, I’d love that!”

“We’d have to talk Plagg into it, though.”

“You’d only need to leave that to me. I can talk him into anything.”

And Marinette believed her, too. She shut her purse and headed downstairs, the idea of a mini wedding with Adrien and their kwamis attending making her feel happier with every step. When she arrived in the bakery kitchen, she saw her Dad working away. “Off to school?” He asked as she came over to give him a hug.

“Yeah. Mom let you off of quarantine?” Marinette teased.
“Finally! It’s a good thing too, I was going stir-crazy.” Tom definitely looked relieved to be back in the kitchen. “I’ll give her a hug good-bye for you, she’s dealing with a group of very excited tourists who want to try everything French.”

The mental image was rather entertaining. “Sure Dad. Thanks. See you after school.”

She was halfway to school when her phone started to ring. Upon pulling it out and seeing it was Adrien, she quickly pressed the ‘answer’ button. “Can’t wait another few minutes to see me?”

“You’re hilarious.” Adrien replied. “Actually, I’m already at school and wanted to warn you, I’ve heard Chloe is trying to show off pictures of her with her fabulous new boyfriend Pierre to everyone who goes by her in the hallway. I haven’t gone to homeroom yet just in case so I’ll be waiting for you by the front doors.”

“Oh Lord.” Marinette groaned. “Well then, I think we should make a point to be extra affectionate when we walk by her.”

Adrien laughed. “Have I told you recently how much I love your plans?”

“Be there in a few minutes.” Marinette ended the call and put away her phone, already eagerly anticipating arriving to school. She had a bounce in her step as she finished the walk there, spying Adrien close by once she went through the main doors. “Ready?” She took his hand, but was initially surprised he pulled it away.

“I was born ready.” He put his arm around her waist and now the reason for his earlier action was clear. She grinned as she copied this gesture, and the young couple began to make their way down the halls.

Sure enough, right outside homeroom was Chloe, holding out her phone to anyone who crossed her path. “Isn’t he gorgeous?” She was saying to a clearly bored Sabrina, who quickly nodded to show she was (at least somewhat) paying attention.

“Good morning Sabrina,” Adrien greeted brightly as he and Marinette drew near to where they stood. “Good morning Chloe.”

Sabrina simply waved while Chloe narrowed her eyes at the place were Marinette’s hand was resting on Adrien’s hip. “Good morning Adrien,” She said purposefully, not vocally acknowledging Marinette’s existence.

“Is that your boyfriend?” He asked, pointing to the smiling, dark-haired young man with his arms around Chloe in the picture displayed on her phone’s screen.

“He sure is!” Chloe looked smug. “And he makes me very happy. So how does that make you feel?”

“I’m really glad for you.” Adrien smiled at her.

The Mayor’s daughter faltered under his genuine, warm gaze. “Th-Thanks,” She managed to say. “I am too,” Marinette added. Chloe looked about ready to retort something spiteful so Marinette kept talking. “Honestly, I am. I’m glad you found someone that treats you right, because you deserve it.”

Chloe didn’t know how to react to that. Despite the fact she had started dating Pierre out of spite for Adrien’s affections toward Marinette, she really did enjoy the time she spent with him. He may not be as wealthy as she had led on to everyone, and more of a local actor then a famous one, but she really did think he was attractive, and he was also funny and kind. So if she was honest, she was
actually touched by Marinette’s words. But she would never admit to that out loud. “I do deserve the best,” She said eventually, trying to still appear superior and to have the upper hand of this conversation.

But the three people around her knew otherwise. “See you inside,” Adrien told her simply as he and Marinette headed in to class.

“That was so sweet of them to say,” Sabrina looked happy for her best friend.

Although secretly agreeing with her, all Chloe said was, “I guess.”
Chapter 38

Chapter Notes

Oh, Nino. So presumptuous and entertaining as Hell! xD Here are the details for why their graduation is going to be like it is. As I mentioned in an earlier chapter's notes, I've gone with blaming Chloe. =P And I'm going to give you all a head's up now, there's going to be time for some sinful tea in tomorrow's chapter. ;) Hope you all enjoy!

Morning classes consisted of study periods. Teachers knew their terminale students needed extra time to brush up on all their subjects, so their time was their own to reread over their textbooks in preparation for next week’s baccalauréat.

Lunch came around as a welcome break from their books. Because the weather was nice and they had spent so much of the last few hours studying already, Marinette, Adrien, Alya and Nino decided to give themselves the noon hour off and went to eat their lunch outside. They found themselves a spot at the bottom of the front steps of the school and were making short work of their food when Alya remembered something. “Guys, Marinette and I were talking last night and thinking we should all get together to study this weekend.”

“Sounds good,” Adrien agreed. “Where would we be going?”

“We hadn’t planned that far yet.” Alya turned to Marinette. “What do you think? We could go to the park again.”

“It’s supposed to be pretty windy Saturday and Sunday,” Nino was already looking at the weather forecast on his phone. “I don’t know how well that would work with trying to read over our textbooks and notes. Probably be a big pain in the ass.”

“I could ask my parents if we could study at my house, there’s lots of space for us in the living room.” Marinette offered and Nino lit up like a Christmas tree.

“Studying at a bakery? I’m so in!” He whooped, making the others laugh.

“She hasn’t even asked them yet, you dork,” Alya nudged him with a grin.

“Her parents are awesome, they’ll say yes.” Nino said with a wave of his hand.

“They certainly are awesome,” Adrien looked at Marinette and she knew he was referring to the conversation they had had on Tuesday, and she did everything in her power not to blush.

“I’ll call them right now and just make sure it’s okay.” She grabbed her phone and started to dial.

Their phone number rang into the shop area of the bakery, so Sabine answered with a formal greeting. “Good afternoon, thank you for call-”

“Hi Mom, it’s me,” Marinette interrupted so Sabine wouldn’t have to go through her whole speech.

“Oh, hi dear!” Sabine greeted warmly.
“I was wondering if it we be okay if Alya, Nino and Adrien came over Saturday so we could have a study session in the living room?” Marinette asked.

“I don’t see why not, it sounds fine to me.” Sabine’s voice became muffled, as she must’ve put her hand over the phone to talk it over with Tom. Soon enough she was back on the line. “Do you want to have them come just for Saturday, or for Saturday and Sunday? Your father and I are fine with both if you want.”

“Oh…” She glanced at her friends. “Are we just wanting Saturday, or do we want Saturday and Sunday?”

“Both!” Nino replied enthusiastically.

“If they don’t mind,” Alya wanted to try and add a serious voice to the situation. “The extra study time certainly couldn’t hurt.”

Marinette turned her attention back to her phone. “Are you guys sure it’s okay if we go with both?”

“Sure!” Sabine didn’t sound anything but certain it was fine. “This next week is going to be very important for you and your friends. You have all our support.”

“Thanks a lot, Mom. Thank Dad for me too.”

“So course, sweetie. See you after school. We love you.”

“Love you too. Bye.” Marinette could faintly hear Sabine hanging up as she pressed the end button herself. “We’re good to go.”

“See? What did I tell you?” Nino grinned. “Marinette’s folks are the best ever.”

“I think we should get them a little something as a thank you,” Alya proposed.

“Yeah, we totally should!” Nino thought for a moment. “What about those awesome date night gift card deals that gives you money for dinner at a nice restaurant on one and some for movie tickets for two on the other?”

Adrien liked that idea, because if Tom and Sabine were out on a date night, it meant the house would be alone for he and Marinette to use how they wished. “I second that motion.” Was all he said, however.

“What do you think, would your Mom and Dad like something like that?” Alya noticed her best friend had been silent.

That was because Marinette’s thoughts were exactly the same as Adrien’s. “I bet they’ll love it.” Was her simple reply, though.

“It’s settled, then. Nino and I were planning on going out tonight anyway, we’ll pick one up while we’re out.” Alya was starting to pack up her empty containers into her lunch bag since all her food was gone now. “We’ll buy a card too, then we can all sign it tomorrow in class so I can get it ready to give to them on Saturday. Okay?”

The other three voiced their agreement while packing up their things as well, as lunch break was drawing to a close. They headed back into school and dropped their empty lunches in their lockers before returning to class as the bell was ringing, and the afternoon got into full swing.
More of the same from this morning, the next few hours were spent predominantly reading and memorizing and rereading. The school day drew to a close at last, and Marinette and Adrien made sure to give Alya some euro to contribute to the gift card she’d be picking up with Nino later that evening.

When Marinette got home, she went straight up to her room to collapse tiredly into her chaise lounge. She felt mentally exhausted. Tikki came out of her purse and sat down on top of her stomach, looking a little worried. “Will you be all right?”

“Honestly, I’d really like a nap.” Marinette brushed her bangs out of her face.

“I could watch the time for you to make sure you don’t oversleep,” Tikki suggested.

Thinking for a moment, Marinette decided to take her up on her offer. “All right. Just for a half an hour though.”

“You got it!” Tikki flew up as her bonded got to her feet and headed up the ladder to her bed.

“Thanks.” She set a timer on her phone to go off in half an hour, just in case, then she laid down on her stomach over top of the covers. Not caring she was still in her clothes, Marinette shut her eyes and let herself relax. She didn’t fall asleep right away, as her brain was still so full of facts and dates and historical figures. But after about ten minutes, she did doze off until the loud clanging of her timer and Tikki tugging on the sleeve of her jacket abruptly roused her.

“Wake up, wake up!” Her kwami was calling in her ear. “You wanted me to wake you up, so I’m waking you up!”

“Okay, I get it,” Marinette muttered as she propped herself up on her elbows so she could reach for her phone and turn off the timer.

“You’re welcome.” Tikki smiled sweetly as Marinette gave her a grouchy frown. “I know you’ll thank me later when you’re more awake.”

She floated off to give Marinette some space as the bluenette flopped back down on her bed. With a sigh, she eventually rolled over and sat up. In between rubbing her eyes, she straightened her clothes as best she could before making the trip down the ladder. Marinette sat down at her desk chair and opened up her backpack, bringing out her books. She read them over a few times before moving to her notes, and had gone through them a few times as well when she heard her Dad calling up through the door to come down for supper.

The dish being served tonight was pork chops with rice and broccoli. “So what time will your friends be coming over Saturday and Sunday?” Tom asked once they had been eating for a while.

“I guess we forgot to decide that,” Marinette admitted, realizing no time had really been set. “I’ll double check with them tomorrow. Around two sound good?”

“Whatever works for them. We’ll be down in the bakery anyway, so they can really come over whenever they like.” Sabine told her.

Marinette smiled. “I don’t tell you guys this enough, but I really couldn’t ask for better parents. I’m so lucky to have you.”

“Aww, thank you sweetheart.” Sabine looked very touched, and Tom was about ready to cry happy tears.
The family of three finished their meal amongst light conversation, and once they were finished Marinette made a trip downstairs claiming to want to double check she had locked the door when she had come in, when in reality she was wanting to snitch something for Tikki from the bakery. She was more thankful for her wake-up call earlier that the cobwebs were out of her head, and for everything her kwami had been doing for her lately, so she wanted to get her a special treat. So she took a few different flavors of macarons, stowed them in her pockets, and casually returned upstairs to retire to her bedroom.

“I have something for you.” Marinette told Tikki once the door was fully shut and locked. She floated over curiously, so her bonded pulled out her selection of macarons with a little flourish. “Tada!”

Tikki gasped. “They look so yummy!” She waited eagerly while Marinette set them on the plate on the desk, then dove right in to start eating. “Thank you so much!”

“You’re welcome.” Marinette was glad they had been so well received. She went towards her chaise lounge, but stopped. Though she knew she should probably do some more studying, she really, really didn’t want to. Her head felt so overstuffed with information she didn’t think she could absorb anything more right now anyway. So it was time for a break.

At least all of this would be done in a little over a week. Then it would be time for celebrations. She couldn’t wait to receive her diploma and finally have school behind her – not to mention how amazing the banquet and dance sounded like they were going to be. The only reason they were having these ceremonies anyway was because of Chloe. When she had discovered that North American graduations had so much extravagance involved, she demanded she get to have one just like it. So the Mayor, true to form, set their school up with a hall and a schedule of proceedings like that of a North American graduation. So his princess could dress the part and be belle of the ball for a day.

To be honest, at first it had felt weird to have such a big deal made about just their school, but they had all gotten used to the idea and were all quite looking forward to it. Alya had already made plans with her to come over that day after getting their hair done to do each other’s makeup. And to pose for numerous selfies, of course. It wasn’t everyday a girl got to get dressed to kill like that, let alone here in France where graduations were usually low-key.

The thought of dresses made Marinette smile. Unlike most girls in their school who were going to go out and buy their gowns, she had wanted to make hers herself. So after picking the design and fabrics, she had started it as soon as she had found out about the formal nature of the banquet and dance. She had finished it after a month of working on and off, having to fit in in between school, helping in the bakery and being Ladybug. Since then, it had been hanging in a protective bag on a detachable peg she had stuck to the back of her full-length mirror, to keep it pristine and ready for the big day.

Taking a stroll behind her mirror now, she looked over her dress slowly. The majority of the material was satin-like and a vivid shade of fuchsia. It was a sweetheart neckline, and in case it was cool, she had also made a shrug out of white fabric that would go to her elbows. She had gone with a shorter design, so when she wore it, her dress would end just below her knees. Across the middle was a thick sash that was silvery and sheer, which be a nice compliment to the strappy silver heels she was going to wear with it. To some it may look simple, but she had made it with her own two hands, so she loved it.

So far her parents had seen her in her dress when she proudly paraded around the house in it once she had finally finished, and Alya had seen it on the hanger a while ago during one of their many
hangouts. Marinette was glad that despite Adrien coming over a few times now, it seemed that he hadn’t noticed it in its convenient hiding place. Which was good, because she didn’t want him to see it until she was wearing it on the day of the banquet and dance.

A thought occurred to her. Adrien had said he wanted to save their first time together for a special occasion, right? Well, graduation could easily be considered to be a special occasion, could it not? Especially since theirs was going to be so unique to what the rest of Parisians usually had. Marinette went over to her vanity, opening the one drawer where she had stashed the lingerie sets. The set that was white with pink roses would be perfect to wear under her dress! Or at least, it would be if it was strapless. For a moment she was disappointed, then she had another thought. If she kept her shrug on the whole night, no one would be able to see the straps.

There was a wicked grin crossing her lips at this discovery. Now she just had to figure out a way to get herself alone with Adrien after the dance, and definitely somewhere private.
Chapter 39

Now that that's out of the way, it's time for another tea party, ladies and gentleman! =P I wanted to write a desperate Marinette, so you all get to take advantage of the resulting smut that ensues. ;) So please enjoy everyone!

Soon enough it was time for patrol once again. Marinette passed over the streets of Paris on her way to the meeting spot, while her thoughts were still mostly focused on details for what she was going to do next Saturday night. Having to wait over a week for this plan was going to be rather difficult, she could already tell.

She could just picture it – the way his eyes would widen as she would unzip her dress, letting it pool at her feet to reveal what she wore for him underneath. The way his hands would wander over her form, igniting fires in her from mere touch alone. The way she would guide his eager fingers to the clasp of her bra, then to the waistband of the matching panties…

By now, the vivid mental images were making her cheeks heat up and her pulse quicken. ‘Focus, Marinette!’ She ordered herself, landing on the apartment building’s rooftop and absentmindedly tugging at the neckline of her suit. It didn’t move of course, as it was magically affixed to her skin, but she really wished it would have. She was feeling very warm by now.

“Hey LB!” Adrien seemed to appear out of nowhere behind her. In truth, he had approached as any other day, but Marinette was so preoccupied by now she hadn’t even noticed. She jumped at his greeting, startled out of her thoughts back to reality, and he cocked his head. “Sorry, did I scare you?”

“No. I mean, yes. Sort of.” Marinette sighed and ran a hand through her bangs. “Just a bit distracted. No big deal.”

Arching an eyebrow, Adrien studied her and she tried her best to appear normal. “If you’re sure…”

“I am. So, I’ll go east today?” She was already grabbing for her yo-yo.

“Sounds good.” Adrien watched her scamper off, still confused by her unusual behavior. He eventually just shrugged and got started on his own route.

Several small incidents today for both superheroes to take care of, though it was a lot easier for Adrien to deal with his then Marinette’s. The reason wasn’t because they were any more labor-intensive; it was because her attention was still being diverted from the tasks at hand. No matter how hard she tried, she just couldn’t keep her thoughts from wandering back to the gutter. Something within her just wasn’t allowing her. When at last she made her way back to the apartment building, she was feeling thoroughly frustrated in more ways then one.

Thankfully Adrien had already returned, and she was glad for that. Now that patrol was over,
Marinette couldn’t fight it anymore. “Finally…” She muttered as soon as she made it onto the rooftop. Hooking her yo-yo around her waist, she strode toward him purposefully and caught the look of slight surprise on his face as she hungrily captured his lips in hers. One hand was already winding her fingers into his hair within seconds, and the other was dragging slowly down his back.

Amazed by this display, Adrien did kiss back for a moment or two before he pulled back to stare at her. Her eyes were smoldering already as she gazed up at him. “Not that I mind.” He began, cracking a smile. “But I have to ask, what’s gotten into my love bug tonight?”

“Horny,” Marinette replied simply. Brain addled and verbal filter long gone, she barely even noticed how shocked he looked by her choice of words while standing onto her tiptoes to pepper kisses along his neck. “Need this. Need you.”

Well then, they needed to get off this rooftop, and fast. He was trying to keep his brain clear enough to form a plan but the trail she was leaving over his throat was not helping matters. “Back to my place?” Adrien asked, and as fast as the words had left his mouth she was nodding and grabbing for her yo-yo. He had barely grabbed for his staff when she was running to the other end of the rooftop and swinging off into the direction of the Agreste Mansion.

Keeping up with her proved to be a challenge. He made a mental note to not get in her way until they reached the panel of windows outside his bedroom. She dangled on her yo-yo string impatiently for him as he slid the one he had left ajar open enough for them to slide through, and he barely made it through before she was squeezing in after him.

“Spots off.” He heard her say behind him, and he had only begun to turn back to face her when she tackled him to his couch. Adrien could see Tikki come into view and blushed, partly because of the kwami’s knowing smile and the way Marinette’s cleavage was in his perfect line of sight as she adjusted her position over top of him.

“Claws in.” Adrien said, and thankfully before Plagg could say anything upon his reappearance, Tikki was dragging him off to pass through the floor.

Tikki seriously deserved a medal, he decided.

He couldn’t really dwell on that thought too long as her teeth startled to nibble over his ear. “This is your fault,” She accused after a while, moving back to practically tear off her jacket and shirt. “I hope you know that.”

“Somehow I’m okay with it.” He was ridding himself of his own shirts while she unhooked and tossed aside her bra. She was already working on undoing his belt when he finished, and now that his hands were free she started undoing the button on her capris. As he copied her motions, he watched her intently. A thin sheen of sweat already lining her skin, her fingers were trembling as she fumbled to rid herself of her pants.

It was like she was parched of thirst, as he was her well.

Adrien had never seen her like this before, and God, was it ever arousing.

Despite her struggles, she managed to push off her pants and kick them off to the floor. He seemed to be moving too slowly for her, as she moved back to unzip his jeans and start to tug them down. Not wanting to stop her, Adrien instead hooked his fingers into the waistband of her panties to slide them down her thighs. She moved onto his boxers once his jeans were discarded and at last, both of them were equally undressed.
Marinette kissed him again, licking against his lips immediately as she let her fingers pass lightly along his growing problem. His gasp at the sensation allowed her entry, her tongue sliding within right away and coaxing his to join in a passionate war for supremacy. Adrien slid his hand down to her core, and if there had been any question about her state of arousal before, there certainly wasn’t anymore. The clear fluids coated his fingers on their first pass between her folds, and her moan was low and husky against the kiss.

It was getting easier each time he was with her to locate that certain tiny sensitive nub, and though he had barely touched it this time, it still sent her into a shuddering mess. Marinette broke the kiss as he let his thumb rub over it in earnest, making her squeal and bite her lip. She really was trying to focus on pleasuring him as well, but her body was so tightly wound already that it was next to impossible to focus on much of anything.

Not that he really minded. Seeing her like this was a turn on in itself. Adrien easily slipped a finger inside her channel, and all the air seemed to leave her lungs. She squeezed her eyes tightly shut as he started to slide it in and out, over and over, and soon began picking up speed. All the while still attending to her bundle of nerves as well, this was bringing her ever closer to the brink. “Wh-What…about…you…” Her voice was raspy and breathless, further fueling the heat spreading through his veins.

He smiled at this; she was so far gone and yet she was still thinking of him. It definitely wouldn’t be long now, as he saw her moved her free hand to cover her mouth as the pressure tightly coiling within her belly was about to erupt. “You first, Princess,” Adrien whispered, and her response to his words was a muffled cry as she tipped over the precipice into a whirlwind of euphoria.

The waves rolled through her hard and he held her close to him as her body was rocked by the strength of her orgasm. Eventually her spasms eased off and at last she stilled, chest still heaving as she gulped in air. He pulled back his hand and she was quiet for a while, and Adrien started to wonder if she had nodded off when her fingers unexpectedly found their way back to his still-present hardness. Marinette looked up at him with a grin as her touch made him shiver. She did look tired, yes, but she clearly wasn’t finished yet.

“Didn’t think I had forgotten about your turn, did you?” Before he could reply she had already started moving her hand up and down, so no words could form. An exquisite idea came to her all of a sudden, and since her hormones still had some control over her, she decided to go for it. “And you know what, for being so willing to help me…” Marinette propped herself up and started to inch her way down his body, not ceasing the pace of her rubbing hand. “I think I should show you my thanks with something new…”

This slow journey downward continued until her face was level with his tip. Adrien could not believe his eyes as she licked her lips.

Was she really going to do…that?

Her tongue snaked out to lick at the beads of moisture already leaking out and dripping down his length, so that was a big yes.

Adrien’s fingers dug into the couch cushions. Her smirk set him aflame and she stopped rubbing only to drag her tongue slowly over his throbbing need. When she reached the head once more, her mouth closed over it, and her hand began to move up and down him again while she lightly started sucking.

“Marinette!” He moaned, the overload to his senses already threatening to take him away. Though he wanted to let it last longer, once again she was leaving him unable to hold on, and before he could
even warn her, his orgasm had taken him over.

So she was left a little surprised when streams of liquid started to shoot into the back of her throat, but she didn’t move away. Marinette did her best to swallow it all until he was spent, and only then did she bring her head back. He was still quivering beneath her as she let go of him, so she ran her tongue through her mouth while he wasn’t looking. The taste was odd; very salty, but it wasn’t totally unpleasant.

And anyway, she thought with a smirk, she’d probably just end up getting used to the taste sooner or later.

When he opened his eyes, she was still grinning. “Could I borrow your shower?” She asked, and Adrien just nodded. Marinette got off the couch and gathered her clothes, then went over to the bathroom and closed the door.

Despite fighting fatigue, Adrien followed after her. When he opened the door and walked in behind her, she arched an eyebrow at him. “Never said you could use it by yourself,” He stated matter-of-factly, making her laugh and roll her eyes.

She was pulling out her pigtails while he started the water. They stepped into the large shower one after the other, and Marinette got the soap right away to start washing while Adrien was mostly just staring at her. She was in the middle of rubbing suds over her arms when she noticed that he hadn’t even moved since getting in. “See something you like?” She teased.

“Something? I like everything.” Adrien closed the distance between them and took the soap from her. He pecked her cheek before starting to lather up, and when he returned the soap to her to turn away to wash, it was her turn to stare for a moment or two. She didn’t want to get caught however, so with some effort, she turned her attention back to getting herself clean.

Soon enough both of them were scrubbed from head to toe, even having their hair shampooed and conditioned, though neither made a serious move to leave the shower just yet. Marinette took his hand in hers and their eyes met, then somehow they were kissing again. It was soft this time, and when they separated they shared a smile. “I really should get going home,” She said quietly.

“Do you have to?” Adrien pouted. “Can’t you stay over and leave in the morning?”

“You know I can’t, it’s too risky.”

“But-”

“If we got caught…”

He sighed heavily. Why did she always have to be so right? “Okay.” He turned off the shower and went over to the towels to grab one for himself and to toss one to her.

They dried off in silence, and Adrien watched while she started getting dressed, a little forlorn. “It’s not like I’m leaving for a week.” She reminded him, trying to cheer him up while she split her hair into rather soggy pigtails.

“I know.” Adrien tied his towel around his waist, having left his clothes out on the floor by the couch. “I just miss you when you’re gone.”

Her cheeks went pink. “I miss you too. But at least we’ll get see each other again tomorrow.” Marinette headed for the door, giving him a bit of a smirk. “And if you do start to miss me, just think about how much fun we could really have in this shower when there isn’t a time crunch.”
“Don’t you dare put that thought in my head! I’ll never be able to get to sleep!” She was giggling as she slipped through the door out of reach, and Adrien went out after her. He caught up to her and wrapped his arms around her waist from behind, holding her close.

She turned in his grasp to look up at him, blue meeting green with an equal amount of love. “Good night.” Marinette gave him a gentle kiss.

“Good night.” He repeated while brushing her bangs back from her face, noticing Tikki was phasing through the floor to their left as he did so. “Perfect timing.”

“I came up earlier after Plagg and I had a snack, and I heard the shower on,” Tikki explained. “So I went back to try and get him but he just won’t leave the kitchen.”

“Didn’t you say he’d get used to us eventually?” Adrien asked.

“The key word is eventually.” Tikki grinned. “Ready to go home Marinette?”

The bluenette nodded. “Spots on.”

In a flash of light, Ladybug was within his arms, and begrudgingly he released his grip around her waist so she could walk to the window. “I love you,” He called, making her stop mid-step.

She smiled at him and blew a kiss. “I love you too.” Then she slipped out the open window and was gone.

Adrien stood there a while before he took off his towel and strode back to the bathroom to toss it inside. He got changed for bed before crawling in, pulling up the covers and closing his eyes. But he knew he wouldn’t fall asleep for a while yet.

Because damn it all, he was already thinking about how there really were a lot of fun things they could do in that big shower.
Chapter 40

ChapterNotes

Chapter forty, woohoo! Milestone number four! =D

I'm looking forward to Sunday, because I have the day off, and I plan on doing lots more writing. I have a really big plan coming up that I'm super close to getting to, and I'm dying to be able to write it! So hopefully I'll be able to get there soon, or I may very well go crazy. xD As if I'm not already, LOL. Anyway, hope you all enjoy!

Marinette arrived home and transformed back as soon as the trapdoor was closed, then wordlessly went down and got undressed. Even Tikki just silently went off to sleep, letting her have her moment. Going right to bed after she was in her PJs, Marinette was soon out like a light, and slept soundly.

Or at least, until early the next morning. Then she was awoken by a sharp pain in her gut, strong enough to make her wince. She knew exactly what it was – after all, it had been over three and a half weeks since her last one. That sure explained the way her hormones were all over the place last night, too. So she headed downstairs to get herself some painkiller, and then went off to the bathroom to take the proper precautionary measures to what would inevitably be coming in a few hours. Then she went back to her room to go back to bed and see if she could get back to sleep for another hour or so.

But she couldn’t. Because when she had thought back about her hormones being so out of whack last night, it made her vividly remember all that had gone on. And now that her faculties were all there, she was reeling from the memories of what she had done to finish Adrien off. But he had obviously enjoyed it, and though she had felt embarrassed by how bold she had been, she reminded herself of her earlier mantra that confidence was sexy. So even though she hadn’t planned on doing that, this had been a step in the right direction.

Right?

Right.

But that didn’t change the fact her entire face had gone quite crimson by now, and it still was as she made her way down to the kitchen to get herself some breakfast. She had started to make headway and return to a normal skin color when she went to have her shower, but that reminded her of last night, so she was back to square one scarlet as she washed and dried. Once she was dressed and packed her lunch (which was actually her last lunch, she remembered), her cheeks were about the same shade as she gathered her things from her room.

Tikki was kind enough to not point out how she looked, and after she had gotten everything she needed ready to go, she took a few calming deep breaths. Checking herself in the mirror and seeing with relief that she didn’t resemble a cranberry anymore, Marinette made her way down to say goodbye to her parents and start the walk to school.

“Good morning!” Alya caught up with her and offered her a bright smile. “Can you believe it? It’s finally here! It’s the last real day of school!” Marinette nodded and Alya looked surprised by this
lackluster response. “You feeling okay?”

How was she feeling? What was the best way to describe it? “I need chocolate.” She said with a sigh.

No other words needed to be said. “Always have some in my locker. I’ll hit you up when we get to school.” Alya hooked elbows with her best friend.

“Thank you.”

“No thanks needed. I’ve got you, girl.”

They got to school soon enough and headed straight to Alya’s locker. While she was opening it up, Nino walked by. “Hey, there you are!” He smiled at his girlfriend, and noticed her grabbing for her chocolate stash. “Dipping in to the reserve to celebrate the last day?”

“Not right now, this is an emergency.” She passed the bar to Marinette.

“Gotcha.” Nino knew what was meant and so he respectfully focused his attention to Alya. “I could totally be talked in to helping you clean your locker out later.”

“The regular stuff or just the chocolate?” Alya laughed.

Marinette had unwrapped the bar and was taking her first bite when Adrien came around the corner. And just seeing him made her face heat up again, so she tried to focus all her attention solely on eating. “Morning!” He greeted them cheerily.

Alya and Nino returned his greeting and Marinette did as well, albeit quietly and through a mouthful of chocolate. Adrien looked a little confused but didn’t say anything, just taking her free hand in his. “Are you ready to be done with this place, dude?” Nino asked his best friend. “I am so ready.”

“I think it’s a bit bittersweet.” Adrien admitted. “It’ll be great to be done school but it means we won’t get to see each other everyday anymore.”

“That’s what technology’s for, man!” Nino said. “We’re all going to keep in touch, don’t worry.” He enveloped them all in a big hug. “Nothing’s going to break up us four musketeers!”

“But weren’t there three musketeers?” Alya teased.

“Don’t ruin the moment.” Nino stuck his tongue out at her, making them all laugh.

This easy conversation was helping Marinette relax. She felt silly for still feeling so embarrassed about last night, but she was chalking that up to hormones too. Her chocolate properly devoured now, she tossed the wrapper into the nearest garbage can and let herself enjoy the company of her friends. It wasn’t long until the bell was about to go so the four of them made their way to their last homeroom ever.

Like yesterday, classes consisted of study periods. By noon, they ate their lunches quickly and confirmed their meet-up time for tomorrow and Sunday’s study sessions to be two, then each signed the card Alya had gotten for Marinette’s parents. Once that had all been done, they headed back long before the bell would ring so they could join the many other students cleaning out their lockers. As Marinette stuffed the few things she had kept in her locker into her backpack, she definitely felt the bittersweet feeling Adrien had been talking about this morning. It felt so strange to think that other then coming here for the few hours a day required of the baccalauréat, their time at school was done.
The afternoon mirrored the morning and Marinette was positive by the end of the day if she was asked, she could practically recite her notes word for word by now. It certainly felt that way, anyway. And they were still going to study more over the weekend – she was honestly wondering how her brain could possibly retain any more information then what was already forcibly crammed in there.

At last the day came to an end, and Rose was sobbing as the other students got up to leave around her. Juleka was trying to comfort her best friend, but as sensitive as Rose was, the thought of being separated from all the people she had grown so close to over the years was devastating for her. But upon realizing how upset their classmate was, everyone went over to her to try and cheer her up. Leaving numbers and emails, they all promised to keep in contact, which was a visible relief to Rose. It was a touching scene that brought the true reality of this situation home.

It even seemed to move Chloe, because when Rose started going around hugging everyone, the Mayor’s daughter hesitated but accepted. Awkwardly patting her back at Rose’s ecstatic and very tight hug, Chloe eventually stepped back and gave a bit of a smile as Rose went skipping off to hug more of their classmates. “I think she’s actually starting to wear down,” Alya observed quietly, making Marinette grin.

“Not bad, it only took the entirety of our school career.” She joked, making Alya snort with laughter.

After the tight-knit class began to disperse, Marinette and Alya met up with Adrien and Nino out in the hallway. “See you later?” Adrien repeated her double-meaning question from a few days prior.

“See you later.” Marinette kissed his cheek and waved as he went over to the car awaiting him, then waved to Nino and Alya as well before starting the trip back to the Dupain-Cheng bakery.

She went through the main shop entrance, and her parents looked like they had been waiting for her. “Congrats on your last regular day of school!” Tom swept her up in a bear hug.

“Thanks.” Marinette smiled at her parents, then noticed a small box wrapped in golden paper in her Mom’s hand. “What’s that?”

“We got you a little something.” Sabine handed her daughter the gift.

“I haven’t even taken the tests yet…” Marinette’s eyes were wide as she took it.

“You’ve put in so much hard work already, we can tell. Those tests are just like a formality at this point, you’ll pass with flying colors!” Tom beamed.

“Open it.” Sabine urged, looking excited to see her reaction.

Marinette pulled of the paper and opened the box to see a circular silver pendant on a chain of matching color, the sphere itself outlined with shimmering small white crystals. “We wanted to get you something that you could wear with lots of your different designs,” Tom was saying as she pulled it out of the box with an awed expression. “So we got this one because it’s, as the sales lady put it, ‘simple but classy’. Do you like it?”

“I love it.” Tears were welling up in her eyes as she held the necklace close. “It’s perfect. Thank you so much.”

“Anything for our little girl.” Sabine smiled as she hugged her tight, and as soon as she let go of her, Tom followed suit.

When they separated, Marinette put the necklace back in the box. “I’m going to wear this with my
dress next Saturday.” She closed it inside and went to go upstairs before turning back to her parents once more. “Thank you again!” With that, she headed off to her room.

When she arrived, Tikki immediately flew out of her purse. “I want to see what they gave you!” Marinette opened the box and Tikki moved close to the necklace, oohing and awing at how pretty it was.

Carefully lifting it out again, Marinette went over to her mirror to hang the necklace over the peg her dress was hanging on to see how they would look together. The silver and white of the necklace went very well with the sash of the dress and the shrug, so it would be a perfect accompaniment for her to wear when she went to the banquet and dance. Satisfied, she went to her desk and sat down so she could put away the box when she realized she hadn’t grabbed any cookies for Tikki. “I didn’t bring you your snack!” She turned in her chair to look at her kwami.

“No worries, I can sneak down to the bakery when you and your parents have supper.” Tikki didn’t seem at all concerned.

“You sure?”

“Positive.”

Though she still felt a little bad for forgetting, Marinette was distracted by her phone vibrating in her pocket. Taking it out, she saw she had an email awaiting her.

~Just wanted to check in on you and see if you were feeling okay. You didn’t seem like yourself this morning. So what’s got my bugaboo down?

His concern for her made her heart flutter, but she tried to leave her response vague.

~I’m all right. Just needed a pick-me-up and Alya’s chocolate really helped.

Right away her phone was vibrating again.

~So how much chocolate should I stock up on? Enough for week?

He really was very perceptive. And the manner in which he was going about asking about it made it feel a lot less hard to talk about, to her relief.

~Usually mine lasts only three or four days. Which trust me, is long enough as it is.

~Okay. I’ll bring some with me when I come over tomorrow.

~If you’re trying to earn brownie points by appealing to my above-average emotional state, it’s working.

~I’m always looking out for my Lady’s best interest. ^^

She felt genuinely touched. Sometimes it really amazed her how deep his love for her truly ran. But then again, she assumed it to be equal to his for him, so when she thought about it that way it wasn’t as surprising.

~Meet you at the usual spot in a few hours. Love you.

~Aww, love you too Spots. <3
Chapter 41

Chapter Notes

Time for more fluff! ♥ I'm going to be working a lot in the next two weeks as two of my co-workers are going to be taking holidays one after another, so I'm going to be working on my writing as much as I can whenever I have the chance so I can stay ahead. So never fear, there will still be chapters coming. ^^ Enjoy guys!

Supper tonight was pot roast and mashed potatoes. Marinette was enjoying the comfort food more then usual today, as she had needed to take some more painkiller before she had started eating due to the aches in her belly demanding attention again. Thankfully her cramps weren’t usually too bad, definitely not as debilitating as she had heard that some women could get, and that was something she was eternally grateful for.

She offered to help her Dad with the dishes, so she washed and he dried. Once they were all finished and put away, Marinette told her parents she confirmed the time her friends would be coming over tomorrow and Saturday, then told them she’d be taking the rest of the night to study, which they understood. So with that, she trudged back upstairs to her room and locked the door behind her.

In between rereading her textbooks and notes, Marinette allowed herself to take a few breaks to draw up some new designs. The necklace her Mom and Dad had gotten her had inspired her, so she wanted to flesh out the new ideas that had arisen on paper before she forgot them. Once it was time for patrol, she had to hunt around for Tikki. When she discovered her playing with fabric swatches under the desk, she was thoroughly entertained.

After transforming, she took her time getting to the apartment building’s rooftop. It was a nice night, not a cloud in the sky, so the view was gorgeous. And it would be perfect for stargazing later. She saw Adrien standing there already as she drew near, and he went right over to where she was landing. “How are you feeling?” He asked, pulling her close to kiss her forehead.

“I’m fine.” Marinette replied, blushing a little.

“Do you need me to take a bigger route?”

“No, I can manage.”

“Because I can if you need me to.”

“Really, it’s okay.” Marinette grinned. “It’s not like this is the first time I’ve had this happen while needing to go out on patrol.”

Adrien blinked, as if this thought hadn’t occurred to him before. “I guess you’re right.” He looked a little sheepish. “It’s just the first time I really knew about it.”

“Well yeah, I don’t exactly go around advertising it.” Marinette laughed, and even Adrien chuckled. “Let’s get to work. I’ll go south and you go north?”

“Aye aye, captain!” Adrien gave her a two-finger salute, then the two were off.
At first Marinette’s rounds were uneventful. But as she neared the end, she was noticed by some apparent die-hard Ladybug fans, who erupted with delight at seeing their idol and chased her for several blocks until she finally was able to shake them. When she got back to the rooftop, Adrien was waiting for her again. “Sorry, got spotted.” She said with a sigh, running her fingers through her hair. “Finally lost them, so they shouldn’t have seen me come over here.” When she realized Adrien was trying not to laugh, she arched an eyebrow in confusion. “What?”

“You said you were spotted!” He howled, holding his sides because he was laughing so hard. “Ladybug, Paris’s polka-dotted superhero, was spotted!”

She just groaned. “You and your horrible puns…”

“Okay, maybe a little.”

Adrien was still smiling as he grabbed her hand and led her over to the middle of the rooftop where they usually watched the stars. They sat down and laid back in unison, snuggling up to each other comfortably. “Oh, I almost forgot!” Adrien moved slightly so he could unzip one of his pockets and pulled out a miniature chocolate bar. “I swiped this from the kitchen for you. Hopefully it’s not too melted.”

“Probably very melted.” Marinette giggled while taking it from his hand. “But thank you.” She ripped the top of the wrapper and opened it up, inching the chocolate out of the top to start eating. It was warm and softened, but thankfully it had not totally gone to goo.

As she ate, Adrien was rubbing one hand along her arm affectionately, as he often did when they were cuddling. Marinette shut her eyes and relished in the feeling of being with him. Her chocolate made a steady disappearance and once it was gone, she balled up the empty wrapper to hand to him, which he put back into his pocket, as neither of them wanted to just discard it on the rooftop. “Hit the spot?” Adrien looked over at her as she nodded, grinning when he noticed her face. “You have chocolate all over the place.”

“Who’s the one who gave me a basically molten chocolate bar?” She retorted, trying to lick around her mouth to get at the smudges.

“Here, let me.” Adrien turned enough so he could carefully rub the bits of chocolate off her face with the side of a clawed thumb. When he was finished he paused, just enjoying looking down at her. “I still can’t believe I finally get to be with you.” He said quietly, brushing her bangs away from her face.

A blush warmed her cheeks for the second time that night. “The feeling’s mutual.”

The distance between them closed and their kiss was tender and genuine. Marinette wished every moment could be like this, so when the kiss ended she was a little disappointed. “We should probably head home.” Adrien murmured, which she hated because he was right.

“I know.” She got up as he moved back, and the two got to their feet. She wrapped her arms around him in a tight hug, and lingered there a moment or two until she forced herself to step backward. “Good night.”

“Good night, beautiful.” Adrien extended his staff as she grabbed her yo-yo, and they took off to go their separate routes home.

Upon arriving in her bedroom, Marinette could feel the fatigue from outrunning rabid fans coming
on. “Spots off.” As her transformation evaporated, she was already going down the ladder to change into her PJs. She had to stifle a yawn while she was getting changed, and was rubbing her eyes as she went back up into bed.

“At least you can sleep in tomorrow,” Tikki reminded her cheerily while she got comfortable on the cat pillow after gobbling a quick cookie.

“Thank goodness for that.” Marinette yawned again as she grabbed the covers to pull up around her. “Night Tikki.”

“Night Marinette.”

_______________________________________________________________

Sleeping in did feel very good. When Marinette got up it was mid-morning, and she leisurely went downstairs to have her shower first. Her belly wasn’t in too much discomfort so far, so she didn’t feel the need to take any painkiller. Once she was out of the shower, dried and dressed, she meandered upstairs to have some breakfast. A muffin and some milk later, she returned to her room to grab her phone before going to the bakery to help her parents.

The three of them worked together for a few hours, but when it was getting close to 1:30, Tom and Sabine told her to go get ready for her friends upstairs. They also offered her a tray of cupcakes that had been just iced to take up for them, which Marinette did, after snitching a few shortbread from a nearby pan to take up to Tikki. After giving her kwami the cookies, she set the cupcakes on a large plate and was in the middle of bringing down her textbooks and notes when her phone vibrated. When she took it out, she saw an email from Jaguar.

~Ding dong! <3

She was grinning as she went downstairs to the front door. When she unlocked it and opened it wide, Marinette folded her arms across her chest while giving Adrien an amused look. “You couldn’t actually ring the doorbell?”

“Sending emails is more fun.” Adrien walked inside, giving her a kiss on the cheek as he went by. He was slipping off his shoes as she went to stand by the stairs. “Are we going to study in the living room or your bedroom?”

“There’s more room in the living room,” Marinette started going up as he was following behind. “So that’s where I set up the cupcakes.”

“Aww, but I like your room…wait, there’s cupcakes?” Adrien stopped mid-stair, making her laugh.

“Mom and Dad wouldn’t let me leave the bakery without them.” Marinette was quite entertained how he eagerly sped over the remaining stairs. “Hey, wait for me!”

Adrien beat her to the living room and made sure to grab himself the cupcake that had the most frosting. “And Nino will never know the difference.” He said gleefully while peeling off the liner and starting to chow down.

Her smile became a bit of a grimace as a stronger spasm twitched its way through her abdomen. “I’m all right,” She assured him when she noticed the visible concern on his face. Marinette leaned against the nearby wall and soon enough it had passed as quickly as it had came. “It’s gone already. See? Nothing to worry about.”

“That reminds me…” Adrien murmured through a mouthful of cupcake. He set his treat down and
slid off his bag, opening up and pulling out a grocery bag filled with about half a dozen chocolate bars. “I know you said only three or four days but I bought extra just in case.”

“Wow.” Marinette peered into the bag, corners of her mouth turning upwards again as she looked back up at him. “I’m a lucky girl.” He blushed and silently shoved the rest of the cupcake in his mouth. Marinette felt her phone vibrate again and upon reading the screen, saw a text from Alya saying she and Nino were almost there. No one seemed to be in a regular doorbell mood today, it seemed. “Be right back, Alya says they should be here right away so I’m going to go open up the door for them.”

“Roger that.” Adrien was wiping the icing off his chin to conceal the fact he had already had one of the cupcakes as she got up to go downstairs again.

When Marinette opened the front door, she could see Alya and Nino rounding the corner. “Awesome timing!” Nino praised while he and his girlfriend went through the open doorway.

“I brought the card,” Alya said while kicking off her shoes, Nino doing the same. “Do you want us to give it to your parents now or later?”

“They’ll probably come up eventually, so we can give it to them then.” Marinette led them upstairs to the living room, where Adrien had sat down on the couch and brought out his study material. The bag of chocolate bars had conveniently disappeared as well, which Marinette assumed meant they had gone back in his bag to keep out of view of certain hungry eyes.

“Hey bro!” Nino gave Adrien a high-five as he went by, and he gasped when he saw the plate of cupcakes. “No way! I love cupcakes!” He grabbed two, handing one to Alya with a big grin.

“You love everything edible.” Alya teased while taking it, sprawling out comfortably on the opposite end of the couch, and Nino sat down next to her.

That left the spot next to Adrien free, which Marinette happily took. She grabbed her notes and sat back, leaning against him and resting her head on his shoulder as she began to read. He put his arm around her lightly in response while getting started on one of his textbooks. Alya and Nino watched this with big grins on their faces and shared a pleased glance at each other before beginning their own studying.
Chapter 42

Chapter Notes

Another akuma appears! I have to say, this one has a soft spot in my heart. It's honestly my most favorite akuma that I've written so far. ^^ On a side note, this afternoon I officially crested 100,000 words in the Word document, and am currently writing on the bottom of page 250! =D I'm very proud of how far this story has come, and how much amazing feedback I've been getting from you all. So thank you once again. <3 Please enjoy!

Because they were all together, the hours didn’t take long at all to go by as the cupcakes made a steady disappearance. They took turns asking each other questions to see how much they knew, and what they needed to brush up on. By the time Tom and Sabine came up for supper, the four friends were in the middle of a group-style test. “Are we interrupting?” Sabine asked from the door.

“No, come on in.” Marinette called over to her parents. “We’re probably going to be packing up soon anyway. I know my head is way overstuffed right now.”

“Mine too.” Alya groaned, massaging her forehead.

“I could kiss it and make it better?” Nino offered with a waggle of his eyebrows, to which Alya just calmly bonked him over the head with a throw cushion. “Ow!”

“You’ll survive.” Alya got up and took the envelope from her backpack, going over and presenting it to Tom and Sabine with a bright smile. “This is a thank you for all you guys do to help us out all the time. It’s something from all of us.”

Both of them looked very touched. Tom took the envelope and opened it so he and Sabine could read it, smiling at the passage that came with the card and even more so at each little message they had written in for them. He tipped the envelope on its side and the gift card set slid into his outstretched palm. “You didn’t have to get this for us…” Sabine breathed, eyes wide.

“We wanted to! You guys are totally the best!” Nino gave them an enthusiastic thumbs-up from the couch.

“Thank you. All of you.” Tom smiled as he handed the gift card set to Sabine before going to set the card proudly on the TV stand.

“No problem!” Alya went back to the couch to start gathering her things. “Same time tomorrow still okay?”

“Of course.” Sabine said with a nod.

“Cool. Come on, Nino.” Her boyfriend was trying to shove his stuff back into his bag quickly while she put on her backpack and was walking toward the door. “Don’t worry Marinette, we can see ourselves out.” She told her best friend when she saw her getting up before turning to Tom and Sabine. “Thanks again for everything. See you tomorrow.” Then she and Nino slipped out the door.

“I should get going to.” Adrien mused, checking the time on his phone.
“You’re more then welcome to stay and eat with us if you like,” Tom quickly offered.

“I’d love to, but I said I’d be back before supper and my Father doesn’t like short-notice plan changes.” He stood while putting on his bag. “So I’ll have to take a rain cheque on that.”

Marinette got up and took Adrien’s hand, so the two of them walked across the room. “I’ll be up in a second,” Marinette told her parents as they went by, who nodded in understanding before she and Adrien went out into the hallway.

“I’m glad they liked their present.” Adrien said as they went downstairs.

“Me too.” Marinette allowed herself to grin. “And I don’t know if you were thinking the same thing I was when Nino suggested the gift card set, but…”

“Them going out on a date means your house available to use as needed?” Adrien shared the mischievous twinkle she had gained in her eyes. “Yeah, that’s exactly what I had been thinking too.”

“You know what they say about great minds.” Marinette waited with her back against the front door while he put on his shoes.

“Hopefully they don’t decide to use it in the next few days, hmm?” Adrien walked back over to her and slipped his arms around her waist.

“Oh, I’ll hide the damn thing if I have to.” Marinette folded hers around his shoulders, and though this kiss was a gentle one, there were thinly veiled notes of eventual future rendezvous present.

“Meet you tonight at the usual spot, Princess.” He told her once they parted, giving her one last peck on the lips before turning the door handle. She stepped aside so he could open it, and waved to him as he headed outside and let it close behind him.

She made the trip back upstairs with a smile still on her face. Marinette sat down at the table while Sabine was laying out their place settings, since Tom was busy warming up some leftover pork chops. “Hope leftovers are okay.” He said as he came to sit down with the dish of reheated pork chops.

“I’m easy to please.” Marinette held out her plate for him to place a few slices while Sabine went to the microwave to warm up some of last night's mashed potatoes to go along with their meal.

Once the potatoes were heated through and divvied up like the pork chops, the family of three dug in. Marinette was enjoying listening to Sabine tell her about some of the interesting customers who had come in today. “There was this really cute little girl who came in with her Mom today, and she reminded me of you when you were young.” Sabine recalled while looking Marinette over fondly. “It seems like it was just yesterday you had only started school. And now you’re finished.”

“Almost finished,” Marinette corrected. “I can’t wait to be done the baccalauréat.”

“Have you heard anything more about your entry into the internship contest?” Tom asked, but Marinette shook her head.

“I don’t think they’ll be contacting people until the final winner is chosen.” Marinette was scooping the last bit of her potatoes onto her spoon. “Which I understand, since it would make them a lot more work. It makes waiting to find out harder though.”

“Hopefully it doesn’t take too long.” Sabine got up to take her empty plate to the sink. “Let us know as soon as you find out, okay?”
“I promise.” Marinette followed after her to do the same. “I was wanting to take a break from studying tonight, do you think we could do something together?”

“Sure!” Tom put away his dishes as well. “We could play checkers?”

“And I could play the winner.” Sabine added.

“Which will be me.” Marinette said with a confident grin.

“Do I sense a challenge?” Tom joked while fishing out the checkers board and pieces.

Marinette just cracked her knuckles in response, making her parents laugh. She sat down across from her Dad at the table and they started their match. Though it was a hard-fought battle, Marinette did manage to win by a hair. So Sabine switched seats with Tom, and the second round began. This wasn’t nearly as close; Sabine was quite a pro at checkers and Marinette lost handily. “I am going to beat you one of these days.” Marinette warned her mother playfully as they cleaned off the table.

“I’m on your side kiddo, she needs to be dethroned as Checkers Queen.” Tom’s comment made Sabine roll her eyes.

“You both know I’ve said before I have no problem letting either of you win,” Sabine began. “But you always tell me…”

“That it wouldn’t count as a real victory!” Marinette and Tom said together, as they had said this to her countless times.

“Exactly.” Sabine was getting herself a refill of orange juice. “So therefore I can’t be blamed for continuing to be the – undefeated I might add – Checkers Queen.”

“Okay, that’s it, bring the board back out!” Tom took it from Marinette’s hands and extended it in his wife’s direction. “I challenge thee to a battle for thine crown!”

Sabine smiled while putting the orange juice away. “Very well, good sir.” She gave Marinette a wink as she walked by to go back to the table.

Giggling, Marinette wandered back up to her room and locked the door behind her for the night. “How quickly do you think he’s going to lose?” Tikki asked, clearly having overheard the conversation from where she had been lounging on the desk.

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“As patrol drew near, she found herself on a website with interesting new recipes. A few of them caught her eye, like a recipe for chocolate-filled croissants. Marinette copied them onto her computer for later use, and made sure Tikki hadn’t been watching while she also saved the one for apple pie cookies. Turning her computer back off once they had been officially saved, she got up and stretched her arms high over her head. “Ready?” Tikki came floating over.

“Yup.” Marinette brought her arms back down and rolled her shoulders. “Spots on!”

She went out through the trapdoor and had to stop in a crouch while some passersby walked in front of the bakery. Once they were gone, Marinette tossed her yo-yo and took off toward the apartment building. She got there first tonight, but only had to wait a few minutes for Adrien to show up. “There hasn’t been an akuma in a few days…” He started saying as he walked over to where she
stood.

“Which means we patrol together.” Marinette finished cheerfully. “I was about to say the same thing.”

“You know what they say about great minds.” Adrien repeated her words from this afternoon as he took her hand and kissed the back of it.

Marinette’s heart was a flutter at the gesture and how he smiled at her. “Then we better get going.” She managed eventually, unhooking her yo-yo while he was grabbing for his staff.

They only made it halfway through their patrol when the commotion started. An eruption of fireworks was going off by the Eiffel Tower, and as they drew near they saw why. A teenage girl dressed in a sparkly pink top and black leggings with gold heels, wearing a similarly colored tiara and a big purple sticker over one shoulder that read ‘Birthday Princess’. She was firing what looked like a bazooka of fireworks this way and that, sending bystanders running for cover. “They’ll regret forgetting my birthday!” Her shrill voice rang out. “If my name isn’t Sparkler!”

“Hey, watch where you’re shooting that thing!” Adrien shouted after one narrowly missed him and Marinette as they were approaching. “You could hurt someone, and that would be a cat-tastrophe!”

“I don’t care!” Now that they were closer, they could see the angry tears streaming down the teen’s face. “No one cares about me since we moved to here so why should I? My whole family doesn’t even know I exist anymore!”

Something about her palpable pain struck a chord in Marinette. The way she had just enjoyed spending time with her parents earlier, which sounded like something that eluded this girl’s grasp, made it hit her hard. “Cat Noir.” She turned to him. “You take care of her bazooka. I’ll take care of her.”

“On it!” Adrien ducked out of sight while Marinette faced the teen again.

“I can’t even talk to them!” Sparkler was preoccupied firing a particularly angry shot of fireworks in the direction the Eiffel Tower, which left a sizable dent in the thick metal. “Everyone’s too busy! I hate this place! I hate everything!”

“Lucky Charm!” Within her hands dropped a piece of thick Bristol board. At first Marinette was thoroughly confused, then an idea came to her. She rolled it into a cone shape and held it up to her mouth. “Listen to me!” The makeshift megaphone was projecting her voice well, making Sparkler look at her. “It’s going to be all right!”

“You don’t know anything!” Sparkler took a step forward, and Marinette mimicked her action, wanting to get closer to her. “You’re a superhero so everyone just loves you! But if I take your Miraculous, I’ll be famous for taking down Ladybug! Then my family will finally pay attention to me!”

“That isn’t the answer!” Marinette took another step as she spoke. “Believe me, things would get a whole lot worse!”

“You’re wrong…” Sparkler looked about ready to shot her bazooka again, which was aimed right for Marinette. “I have to defeat you!”

Before she could fire, Adrien sprang up and slammed his glowing hand onto the side of the bazooka. It disintegrated at his touch, and before Sparkler could do anything more, Marinette dropped the Bristol board and ran over to her, enveloping the teen in a tight hug. At first Sparkler stiffened,
caught off-guard, but within seconds she started crying again, throwing her arms around Marinette and burying her face against the taller girl’s shoulder.

“I promise you, things are going to be okay.” Marinette whispered as Sparkler’s body shook with her sobs. She looked up at Adrien, who appeared to be still stunned by what she had done. Tilting her head slightly toward Sparkler, he quickly got the message she was trying to convey and gave the teen a soft pat on the back.

“There, there…” At his words, Sparkler let go of Marinette to turn and hug him instead, and as she did Marinette managed to grab the corner of the sticker off Sparkler’s shirt and peel it off. Adrien hid his surprise at the sudden hug well, thankfully, and kept patting the teen’s back soothingly as Marinette ripped the sticker in half to reveal the akuma.

After she had captured the blackened butterfly and sent it off into the sky after its purification, she went over to where the Bristol board still laid and threw it up overhead. “Miraculous Ladybug!” The magic flew outward to fix what had been damaged by Sparkler’s fireworks show while the purple light faded from her, leaving her a little disoriented as she stepped back from Adrien to look around in confusion. “You should tell your family how you’ve been feeling.” Marinette told her as she went back to stand by them. “They’ll understand if you’re honest with them.”

The teen nodded with a sniffle. “I will. Thank you.”

As she walked off, Adrien glanced at Marinette. “You were amazing.”

Marinette blushed and just shrugged nonchalantly. “All in a day’s work.”

“I’m serious.” He sounded proud. “I think you made a big difference for that girl.”

She watched the teen growing ever smaller in the distance with a bit of a smile. “I hope so.”
Welcome to fluff: kwami edition! =P Today was day one of my two weeks of heavy hours, and so far I'm not too tired, but we'll see how long that lasts. xD I have to get up early again tomorrow so I'm going to leave this note short. Hope everyone enjoys! ^^

His ring and her earrings were beeping out their warnings, so Marinette and Adrien went their separate ways. She got home before the last spot vanished, and was able to make her way to the chaise lounge before it fully timed out. “You really were amazing tonight.” Tikki said as soon as she had come back into view.

Again, she was blushing. “Thanks.” Marinette got into her PJs and headed up to bed, but didn’t fall asleep for a while since she was busy thinking about what had transpired tonight. Above all, she just hoped the girl would be able to sort things out with her family.

It made her feel so blessed again to have the understanding parents she did. And it made her even more glad that she and her friends had gotten her Mom and Dad the thank you card and gift-card set. At that thought, she rolled over on her side with a grin. There was more then one reason to be glad they had given them that present, after all.

At last she fell asleep, and when morning rolled around, she could feel a dull ache in her belly again. ‘Hopefully today will be the last day,’ She thought while heading downstairs to shower. The discomfort wasn’t enough to warrant a painkiller, and had actually eased again off by the time she was having breakfast.

Since it was earlier then when she had gotten up the previous morning, Marinette went down to help Tom and Sabine in the bakery for longer then she had been able to yesterday. She even took some time between recipes for the store to make up a banana cream pie to bring up for her friends. It had been a while since she had made one so her technique for piping the whipped cream over top was a little rusty, but she knew they wouldn’t mind if it didn’t look picture-perfect.

She brought it upstairs to leave in the fridge until they arrived while getting herself a sandwich to munch on for a small lunch. Marinette was mid-bite when her phone vibrated from within her pocket. There was an email awaiting her.

~OMG I still have your chocolate in my bag! I’m a terrible boyfriend! T_T

Practically spewing her mouthful of sandwich from her laughter, Marinette had to take a moment to swallow it down before she let herself make up a reply.

~Don’t worry, I’m surviving just fine without it. Save it for next month.

~Speaking of which, how are you feeling?

~Pretty good. Should be done by tonight, but if not, definitely by tomorrow night.

~I’m glad. I’ll keep your chocolate safe in my room, and thankfully Plagg only eats cheese so you don’t have to worry about it being eaten up on you. xD There’s a pretty cool street fair type thing
going on a few blocks from your place BTW.

~Are you on your way over?

~Maybe. =P

Marinette finished her sandwich in a flash and brushed the crumbs of bread from her shirt as she headed down to the front door. She unlocked it and opened in a crack to peer out, waiting until Adrien came into view to push it wide. “You’re early, you know.” She didn’t look upset by this however, instead taking his hands in hers to stop his approach and kiss him.

He smiled against her lips and returned her kiss happily. “I’ll always try and take all the time with you I can get.” Adrien said once they separated, making her smile.

“Smitten kitten.”

“I resemble that remark.”

The young couple went inside and closed the door behind them. After Adrien had taken off his shoes they went up to the living room, sitting down on the couch beside one another. Marinette laced their fingers together while leaning against him and shutting her eyes contentedly. “Psst!” She opened her eyes when she heard Tikki calling to her.

Her kwami had floated through the floor above to hover in front of them. “Is something wrong?” Marinette asked, looking worried.

“No, nothing like that.” Tikki was wearing a bit of a shy smile. “I was just wondering, did Plagg come with you, Adrien? I didn’t get to see him yesterday, so I was a little curious and wanted to ask…”

“Tikki!” Plagg came barreling out of Adrien’s shirt pocket to tackle-hug his sweetheart in midair before she could say more.

“Yesterday he fell asleep on the way and slept the whole time I was here.” Adrien explained with a grin at the cute display. “He was pretty mad when he woke up only after I had went home, so he slept in today to make sure he’d be up this afternoon.”

“I missed you!” Plagg was spinning her through the air.

Giggling, Tikki hugged him close. “I missed you too. Come on, let’s go upstairs before the others get here.”

The two kwamis flew up through the ceiling into Marinette’s room. “They’re so adorable.” Adrien chuckled once they left.

Before she could voice her agreement, her phone start to ring. When she grabbed it she saw it was Nino. “Hello?”

“Hi Marinette! Alya’s hands are full so she wanted me to call and tell you we’re almost at your house.” Nino told her.

“I left the front door unlocked, you guys can come right in.” Marinette was confused though. “But why are her hands full?”

“You’ll see.” Was all Nino said before hanging up.
It was a few minutes before they arrived and came into the living room, and when they did, it was easy to see what Nino had meant. Alya was carrying several bags from the shop that made custom shirts she proudly dropped to the coffee table in front of the couch. “They’re here, girl! They’re here!” She squealed while digging open one of the bags and showing off a shirt that read ‘Ladyblogger’ in a bold font.

“Why do you have so many?” Adrien was peering in the bags and noticed there were several different colors and styles of shirts with the same text over it.

“I couldn’t pick just one kind!” Alya was already throwing one on over her current shirt. “Besides, doing it this way I’ll always have one to wear even if some of them are in the laundry!”

“Did you know about this craziness?” Nino glanced in amusement at Marinette who held up her hands innocently.

“I thought she ordered one shirt!” Marinette defended herself with a grin. “I didn’t know she ordered the whole store!”

Alya rolled her eyes as she sat down. “I’m ignoring that.”

Nino plopped down beside her and gave her a kiss on the cheek. “At least you’re my kind of crazy.”

“Sure am.” Alya was smiling now as she opened her backpack.

The other three brought out their own study materials and set them out. They had been studying for about an hour and a half when Marinette remembered her surprise in the fridge. “Anyone hungry?” Nino perked up and she laughed. “Wait, why am I even asking that?” So she went over to the fridge and pulled out the banana cream pie.

“Oh wow!” Nino was running over to help in any way he could. Marinette was grinning as she let him hold the pie for her while she grabbed a knife and some plates. She had to nudge him to get him to put it down on the counter, then she got to work cutting it into slices. Taking out a spatula, Marinette set one piece on each plate, and Nino was already scampering off with one as soon as she dished it out.

“You don’t even have a fork.” Adrien gave his best friend a look and shook his head as he got up to help Marinette with the other pieces and the cutlery she had gotten.

“Thanks dude!” Nino graciously accepted the fork from Adrien when he brought one over to him one the way back from getting his own slice, excitedly digging in.

Very entertained by this, Marinette came over with a plate for Alya and one for herself. She handed Alya hers, which she graciously accepted, then sat down with hers next to Adrien. The four friends chatted together while they ate, and it was nice to just relax for a bit after all the hard work they had been putting in lately. Once their dessert was gone however, it was time to get back to notes and textbooks.

When Tom came into the living room another hour later, they were doing another group-style test. “Don’t mind me, I’m just starting the spaghetti.” He said with a smile while going over to the kitchen. Tom worked as quietly as he could to get supper going, and a while later Sabine came up as well.

“Let’s head out, guys.” Nino was putting away his books already, with Alya and Adrien quickly following suit. “Time for food.”
“Good luck on your tests this week!” Sabine told them.

They thanked her while heading for the door, and Marinette got up to follow behind them. Once they got downstairs and they were putting on their shoes, she held Adrien’s hand to hold him back when Nino and Alya waved good-bye and went out the front door. “Kwamis are still upstairs.” She whispered even though they were alone in the hallway.

“Oh, right.” Adrien had completely forgotten that. “How are we going to get them without going back upstairs?”

“Ohmm…” Marinette devised a quick plan. “You head outside and I’ll go back to my room, then I’ll tell Plagg you’re waiting for him so he’ll come out to meet with you.”

“Okay, sounds good.” Adrien pulled her close for a hug and kissed the top of her head. “See you tonight.”

“See you tonight.” Marinette echoed, and after they separated she blew him a kiss as he went for the door, which he ‘caught’ with a grin before slipping outside.

Marinette dashed upstairs and grabbed her textbooks and notes to give the illusion she was only putting them away as she headed up to her room. Upon arriving, she saw Plagg and Tikki laying next to each other on the chaise lounge, fast asleep. It almost broke her heart to have to wake them, but she knew she had to. She went over and lightly shook the cushion of the chaise lounge, rousing Tikki first. Tikki rubbed her eyes and yawned, then realized Marinette was standing over them so she quickly gave Plagg’s stomach a couple firm pats. “S’going on?” Plagg muttered sleepily, sitting up.

“Time to go home.” Marinette went over to the window to make sure Adrien was right below, which he was. “Adrien’s waiting for you outside.”

“Aww, already?” Plagg looked disappointed as he floated off the chaise lounge. “You two should just move in together already so I can have more Tikki time.”

Trying not to blush and failing, Marinette opened the window. Plagg looked around to be sure he wouldn’t be seen then zipped down to Adrien, flying right into his awaiting shirt pocket. Marinette waved at Adrien with a smile, which he returned before turning to start the walk home. “Does that mean he’s starting to get used to us?” She asked Tikki while closing the window.

“Possibly.” Tikki was hovering by her bonded’s shoulder. “But probably not.”

“I thought so.” Marinette went back downstairs with a small grin, as the thought of moving in together with Adrien wasn’t something she had really thought about before, but now that it was presented to her, sounded like a very good idea. Though she was fairly certain Adrien’s Father wouldn’t be for it, especially right away, it was something that was bound to happen eventually.

And hey, a girl could dream, right?
Chapter 44

Chapter Notes

The week of the baccalauréat begins! You'll notice I specifically don't mention any subjects because I have no idea what they would be taking, so I left it vague on purpose. =P I'm ten chapters ahead right now, and I have tomorrow off so there will be even more writing done! Hooray! xD Anyway, please enjoy!

After supper was finished and Marinette had come back to her room, she sprawled out on the chaise lounge to relax. Her belly hadn’t hurt since this morning, and she was very glad. Keeping her thoughts from wandering to certain places had proved difficult this go around, because of all that had gone on between her and Adrien in the last few weeks. So being able to be free to do what she wanted with him again would be a welcomed relief.

Though she expected they wouldn’t have much time to do much in the way of those kinds of things until the baccalauréat was over. Between the hours of the tests themselves, needing to keep studying for the remaining ones, and her having to help in the bakery, they wouldn’t probably be able to do anything until possibly Friday evening when it was all officially over. And by Saturday night, the night of the festivities, there would definitely be something happen, as she had already planned to wear her lingerie set and find alone time with him.

She didn’t want her brain to drift any further then that so she decided to focus instead on taking out her phone to check the time. It was still early, so she took the opportunity to head downstairs to the bakery and grab a few peanut butter cookies for Tikki. Hiding them behind her back while she went through the living room, even though her Mom and Dad were busy watching a movie, she snuck back into her room and locked the door behind her. “Brought your snack.” She told her kwami as she set them down on her plate.

“You’re a cookie vacuum.” Marinette teased.

“So?”

“Plagg’s favorite food is camembert, remember?”

“Good point. Spots on!”

Though she was heading out before she usually would, Marinette took the quickest route to get to the meeting spot. The weather was slightly breezy and it felt wonderful after being inside all day. So when she got to the apartment building’s rooftop she sat down around the center, enjoying the way the soft wind was playing with her hair. It was a while before Adrien got there, and she entertained
the idea of charging late fee kisses, but decided against it since technically he was on time. She had only been waiting because she had been quite early. So that would have to wait for another day.

As he landed behind her, Adrien took a few strides so he could lean over above her and look at her upside down. “Meow.”

“See? So much better then ‘boo’.” Marinette laughed.

“Why thank you.” Adrien stepped around so he was in front of her before taking a deep bow. “It was your idea, after all. So it was bound to be purr-fect.”

Marinette got up and ruffled his hair before he straightened. “East or west?”

“I’m feeling like east today.” Adrien twirled his staff with a flourish and had to quickly recover when he nearly dropped it.

Grinning, Marinette set out on her western route. Things were quiet, though she did have to stop for a while to avoid detection by some tourists with large, expensive-looking cameras that probably had very good zoom. Waiting until they were long gone, she finished her patrol easily and headed back to the apartment building’s rooftop soon after.

Adrien was touching down around the same time she was. “I want to make sure we both get a good night sleep for tomorrow’s test so it okay if we keep the stars short tonight?” He asked, though he didn’t look pleased with how that meant their time together would be lessened as well.

But Marinette understood, so she gave him a reassuring smile as she nodded. “No problem. And we’ll be able to stay up here for as long as we want starting next week to make up for it, anyway.”

“Then let’s get started.” Adrien was already moving to sit down and lay back, and she did the same to cuddle close against him.

They allowed themselves to watch the stars and relax together for about fifteen minutes. It was Marinette who sat up first, and as she did she could see the disappointed frown on Adrien’s face. “You know we have to.” She said while taking his hand to lightly pull him up into a sitting position.

“Doesn’t mean I have to like it.” Adrien kept holding her hand while they stood.

“Just think, only five more days and then we’re free.” Marinette encouraged, giving him a soft kiss that immediately brought a smile back to his face.

“You always know how to make me feel better.” He enfolded her in a hug and held her close. “I love you, Marinette.”

“I love you too, Adrien.” Marinette felt warm and happy in his arms, and lingered there a moment or two before gently moving her way out of his grasp. “I know it sucks, but this week is going to by fast, so stay positive for me, okay?” She asked, and he nodded. “Good night!”

“Good night…” Adrien watched her take off with a sigh. Eventually forcing himself to make his own trek home, he really hoped the next five days would go by fast so he could spend all the time he wanted to with his beloved Lady.

Marinette had set herself multiple alarms on her phone to ensure she wouldn’t oversleep, but she didn’t end up needing them because she was wide awake long before they went off. Her stomach
was doing nervous summersaults throughout her shower and as she got dressed, so she only had an apple for breakfast because it was leaving her not very hungry. When she was getting her backpack ready with the supplies she would need for today’s exams, she could feel Tikki sit on her shoulder and give her a reassuring pat. “You’ve got this.” Her kwami assured her.

“I’m so damn nervous.” Marinette rung her hands. “I mean, I know how hard we studied for this but I’m still freaking out.”

“You’re going to do great.” Tikki said confidently. “I believe in you. And I’m not the only one. Your parents, your friends, Adrien…all of us are rooting for you. Even Plagg is, but don’t tell him I told you!”

She took some deep breaths to try and relax. “I’ll be fine.” Marinette told herself quietly. “I’ll be fine.” Starting to repeat it like a mantra in her mind, she put on her backpack as Tikki quickly flew into her purse so Marinette could put that on as well.

Heading downstairs, Marinette stopped in the bakery to give each of her parents a tight hug, both of them wishing her good luck and reassuring her she was going to pass with flying colors. She went outside and took her time on walking to school, partly because she was early and partly because she wanted to get a better handle on her nerves. By the time she arrived, she felt a little less stressed, but it was definitely only a little.

Soon enough the exams for today began, and it was several hours before she and the rest of the students were finished. Marinette felt exhausted as she left the school, but at least when she had gone through the exams she hadn’t had any moments where she felt like she didn’t at least know part of the answer, so that helped her feel more at ease. Thankfully the first day was officially over now.

Getting home again felt great. After heading upstairs to drop her backpack (and Tikki) off in her room, she made herself a quick lunch so she could get right to work helping in the bakery. “How did it go?” Sabine asked when her daughter arrived in the shop area.

“It was all right. I didn’t get too stuck on anything, anyway.” Marinette told her.

“See?” Sabine gave her a comforting shoulder squeeze. “I knew you’d have no problems. You and your friends did a lot of studying and it’s going to pay off.”

“Thanks Mom.” Marinette smiled, then made her way to the bakery kitchen.

Tom hugged her as soon as she walked inside. “There’s my girl! Did your exams go okay?” When she nodded, he patted her back with a big grin. “I knew they would.”

The two of them quickly got to work on their baking, and the hours slipped by. It seemed like only a short while later when it was already time for supper, and the family of three headed upstairs together. The menu tonight consisted of a honey-glazed ham that had been simmering in the oven for a few hours, with rice and cooked carrots. Because of eating so little so far today, Marinette was ravenous, so not only did she clean off her plate, she got herself the last slice of yesterday’s banana cream pie to take up with her to her room.

In between eating her dessert, Marinette did a bit of skimming over her textbooks and notes again to refresh for tomorrow’s exams. When she took down her empty plate, she noticed her parents weren’t in the living room, so she scurried down to the bakery. Tom and Sabine were inside the bakery kitchen doing some cleaning, so Marinette crept into the shop portion to grab a few oatmeal raisin cookies, then dashed back up to her room and thankfully managed to not be seen.
Depositing the cookies onto Tikki’s cookie plate, Marinette pulled out her phone while her kwami was chowing down. Since everyone had been so focused on heading straight to their classrooms to start their exams and most people headed straight home afterward, to study more and other miscellaneous commitments, she didn’t get to talk to her friends today. So she really missed not having been able to talk to Alya or Nino, and especially Adrien. She knew she’d get to see him soon for patrol, but they were probably going to have to keep it short like last night, so she opened up her Spots email to make him up a message.

~Glad day one is over?

Her phone was vibrating almost immediately.

~Hell yes! I don’t want to jinx it but I think I did okay today. You?

~Crossing my fingers I pass.

~You don’t give yourself enough credit, love bug. I know for a fact my Lady’s a genius, so you’ll do awesome. =D

~Exams are a lot different then coming up with akuma-catching plans on the fly. But thank you. And anyway, if anyone’s going to do awesome it’ll be you. You studied the most out of all of us.

~Aww, you’re making me blush. <3 It was all because you told me to, after all!

~Bet you look cute all red in the face like that.

~Spots! ^^-;

~Look who’s the shy one now. =P

~Very funny. But as much as I want to continue (you have no idea how much I missed you today), we should probably start patrol soon.

~I know. See you in a bit, Jaguar.

~And spoiler alert: I’m kissing you as soon as I see you. ;3

~Down, kitty.
Chapter 45

Chapter Notes

Another chapter I really love! ^^ It's heart-warming, it's funny, AND it lays the foundation to the big plan I have for our favorite couple. ;P I'm actually already writing into said plan, and I'm pretty happy with it so far! And there's still more of my plan to be written yet, so trust me, I'm going to have fun with this. Bwahahahaha! xD Enjoy guys!

He hadn’t been kidding; Adrien was already waiting for her when she arrived at the apartment building’s rooftop, and as soon as she landed he was embracing her and capturing her lips in a kiss filled with longing. Marinette let her body mold against his and shut her eyes, relishing every second of this. When they had to break apart for air, neither of them moved from each other right away.

Finally Adrien reached behind him to grab for his staff, and she followed suit with her yo-yo. “I’ll go north, you go south?” Marinette asked.

“Gotcha.” The superhero duo lingered in each other’s arms a moment more, then forced themselves apart and headed off on their patrols.

Luckily, because it was baccalauréat week for every terminale student in Paris, the city was thankfully left very quiet. So Marinette and Adrien were done their routes faster then either of them had in a long time. They were both pleasantly surprised and rather relieved to be finished patrol so quickly, and they wasted no time in heading to the middle of the rooftop to lay down. Because they were definitely going to capitalize on the precious extra few minutes of stargazing and cuddling time it had given them.

“Bugaboo?” Adrien said after a while, making Marinette look up at him. “I know this is kind of short notice, but would it be okay if I sat with you at the banquet and dance on Saturday?”

“Of course you can.” Marinette looked confused by this question. “Why do you ask?”

“My Father had said he would try to come, but apparently he needs to go supervise the opening of a line debuting overseas all of a sudden.” He sighed, sounding clearly disappointed. “He’s leaving early Friday night and won’t be coming back until some time Monday afternoon. Nathalie is going too, and he’s even taking the Gorilla along to be their chauffer.”

Marinette gave him a smile. “They said the tables at the hall will seat four, so with me and my parents, there would still be a spot open. So I say it’s yours.” Internally, her brain was already abuzz with this news.

This meant the Agreste Mansion would not only be empty for her to utilize for her plan for Saturday night, but for the entire weekend.

“Thanks.” Adrien snuggled closer to her. “Usually when he bails on me like this I end up being by myself. So it’ll be really nice to spend it with you and your family.”

“Well we are dating, so you didn’t even really have to ask.” Marinette teased in between planning all the marvelous things that could be done now that Adrien’s house would be available for them to use
whenever (and however) they wanted.

“I didn’t know if you would have an empty seat at your table still available so close to Saturday.” Adrien shrugged.

“My parents are going to be ecstatic you’re going to be sitting with us, especially my Dad. So honestly, if there hadn’t been one open, he would’ve made one.” Marinette told him with a giggle.

“You know, I can picture him doing that.” Adrien grinned at the mental image.

“He’d stack two chairs together and sit on both at the same time if he had to to save one for you.”

“I was thinking more along the lines of him hiding the extra chair under the table.”

“And poor Mom would be just be sitting there and shaking her head.”

“You think so? I think your Mom would be enjoying watching the show go on with a big bag of popcorn.”

Their laughter was carried off into the night by the wind. They sat up soon after, albeit rather reluctantly. “Only four more days to go.” She said encouragingly, giving him a soft kiss on the cheek.

“Thank goodness for that.” He held her hand until she was moving out of reach and he had to let go. “Night, Princess.”

“Good night.” Marinette smiled at him. “I love you.”

“I love you too.” Adrien moved over to give her one last kiss, then started making the trip home.

It was Marinette’s turn to stand behind on the rooftop after he had left. Her reason was different then his had been last night, though. She was busy thinking about how she was going to talk this over with her Mom and Dad. Telling them Adrien would be sitting with them for the banquet and dance would be no problem, but she also wanted to figure out a way to get permission to be able to spend the weekend with him as well. That was going to be the most important part of the conversation they would be having.

She was sure she could talk to Alya about coming up with a cover story of the two of them having a sleepover for Saturday and Sunday. They had done sleepovers like that in the past, alternating between which houses they had it at. But she didn’t want it to possibly backfire on her if it was discovered she wasn’t truly with Alya. And she really didn’t want to lie to her parents, anyway. So she was probably going to bite the bullet and be straightforward with asking if she could take the weekend to be with Adrien, as much as it was going to take all her courage to do so.

So she really hoped it wouldn’t be as awkward as she was assuming it would be.

_______________________________________________________________

Tuesday morning came by with Marinette needing two of her alarms to go off this time before she dragged herself out of bed. She hadn’t gotten to sleep right away because of all the possible scenarios she was bouncing around in her head about talking with her parents, so it was a lot rougher getting up today. But since she had purposefully set her alarms early, though she was feeling rather drowsy, she at least didn’t have to worry about being late.

After a shower, getting herself dressed and a breakfast of cereal, she came back to her room to gather
her things. She didn’t feel as nervous as she had yesterday morning, although she accounted this to probably being due to how she was feeling more tired today. Tikki was already waiting for her within her purse, giving her a reassuring smile before getting comfortable inside so Marinette could shut it and slip it on over her shoulder. She put on her backpack as she went downstairs, and the good-bye hugs she gave Tom and Sabine were met with as much encouragement for her exams as they had yesterday. Then she left the bakery behind her and made the trip to school.

Her exams today actually felt a little easier, though Marinette didn’t want to say that out loud and ruin it. When she went outside hours later, she was feeling happy with the work she had turned in. She managed to see Nino and Alya as they were heading out and gave them a wave that they happily returned, but before she could see if Adrien was around, she knew she needed to get back to the bakery. So with a disappointed sigh, Marinette headed home.

The bakery was busy when she arrived, so she just dropped her backpack off behind the till and started helping the first customer who came up to her. Once the shop area had quieted down, Marinette went into the kitchen to do some baking with Sabine, munching on a blueberry muffin in between tasks since she hadn’t had time for a proper lunch. When it was time to go upstairs, she was feeling exhausted, but she still had something important left to do.

She sat down at the dinner table as Tom was laying out everyone’s share of the hearty chicken vegetable soup that had been cooking throughout the afternoon. Her heart was beating a mile a minute at the prospect of how terribly embarrassing this could end up being, but she wanted to spend time with Adrien more then she didn’t want to have this conversation. So she allowed herself one last deep breath before taking the plunge. “Adrien asked if he could sit at our table with us at the banquet and dance on Saturday.”

“Well I hope you told him he’s more then welcome,” Sabine said with a smile.

“I did. His Father was going to try and come but now he’s going to be going on a trip overseas and can’t make it.” Marinette explained.

“That’s so sad.” Tom was frowning. “There was no way his Father could’ve been able to be here to attend it? The style of graduation your school is getting is a pretty once-in-a-lifetime thing around here.”

“I don’t know, I guess not.” Marinette had started playing with her napkin. “The worst part is, he’s going to be gone from Friday to Monday, so Adrien’s going to be by himself all weekend.”

“Really?” Sabine arched her eyebrows. “Poor Adrien.”

“I know, I feel bad for him.” Marinette could already see the wheels turning behind her mother’s eyes.

“Maybe we could do something to make his weekend not so lonely. Do you think he would want to spend the weekend here with us?” Sabine asked, beginning to slowly stir her soup.

“I don’t know…” Marinette trailed off, as she had been hoping for more.

“Or if it works better for him, you could go over there instead.” Sabine went on. “You could go with him after the banquet and dance Saturday night and as long as your home around noon on Monday, that should be fine.”

Now that’s exactly what Marinette had wanted to hear. “Oh, that’s a great idea! But are you guys sure you’d be okay with me being gone the whole weekend, though? I know I had promised that I
would help out in the bakery more once I was finally all done with school.”

“The kitchen is still going to be there when you come back home on Monday.” Tom assured her, not looking fazed. “So don’t worry about it for a few days. You and Adrien just enjoy relaxing this weekend. You’ve both earned it.”

“Okay.” Marinette was doing everything in her power not to jump up from the table squealing with delight. “Only if you’re sure.”

Sabine could see through the veil of calmness in her daughter, of course. She had known that going over there for the weekend had been Marinette’s ultimate goal from the beginning. Which is why she had suggested it, so it would seem like it was her idea and therefore prove she was okay with it. Alone time with Adrien would probably result in a certain something going on in that big empty house, she knew, and she was totally fine with that. She had been young once too, after all. Not only that, Marinette and Adrien were adults now, and they could make their own decisions. Sabine also knew her daughter was responsible enough to play it safe when the time came. And Adrien did seem to love her very much, so she also trusted the fact that Marinette would be safe with him.

“We’re sure.” Was all she said however, though she did share a knowing glance with her husband across the table when Marinette wasn’t looking.
Time could not pass quickly enough to be time for patrol. Marinette was itching to tell Adrien the great news, but she wanted to tell him in person so she could see his reaction. This was too good to send by email.

Currently she was watching Tikki eat her ginger snaps and drumming her fingers on her desk. She didn’t want to rush her kwami, but at the same time, waiting for her to be finished was proving to be very hard to do tonight. “Want one?” Tikki offered her one of her cookies.

But Marinette just shook her head. “No, those are for you. And besides, I’m not really hungry. I just can’t wait to see Adrien, that’s all.”

“I never would’ve guessed.” Tikki giggled when Marinette stuck her tongue out at her. “I’m almost done, then we can go.”

“Take your time.” Marinette said, though if she had to wait much longer she was afraid she would burst.

Tikki obviously sensed this however, because in a flash she had already finished off the rest of her cookie and left the rest on her plate to eat after they would get home later. “All set!”

“Spots on!” A flurry of lights later, she was out onto the terrace and on her way to the usual meeting place. She got there in record time, but unfortunately Adrien wasn’t there yet. So it was time to wait some more, much to her dismay.

At last she could see him coming, and she hurried to the edge of the rooftop he was heading towards to await his arrival. “Happy to see me?” Adrien had a smug grin as he landed, but she didn’t care.

“I have a surprise for you!” Marinette grabbed his wrist and moved away from the edge of the rooftop, pulling him along with her.

“Okay, what is it?” Adrien was certainly intrigued by what had her so excited.

“So your Father is going to be gone the whole weekend, right?” She began.

“Yeah, so?” He didn’t see where she was going with this. Yet.

“And Nathalie and the Gorilla are going with him?”

“Yes.”

“That means you’re going to be all by yourself, right?”

“I guess.”

“No you’re not.” Marinette was smiling from ear to ear. “Because I’m going to spend the weekend
It took a second for what she had just said to fully register, but when it did, green eyes went wide. “Y-You are?” She responded with an enthusiastic nod. “But what will your parents think?”

“They think it was their idea, that’s the best part.” Marinette took his hands in hers and laced their fingers together. She was looking quite proud of herself for the plan she had managed to execute so flawlessly (to her knowledge, anyway). “I told them you were going to be by yourself this weekend and they suggested I should come over so you’re not lonely.”

“I love your parents!” Adrien picked her up and twirled her through the air. “For the whole weekend?”

Marinette allowed herself the squeal of delight she had been holding in since supper as he spun her around. “Yup! I’ll go home with you on Saturday night after the banquet and dance is over, and then I’ll go home Monday morning before your Father comes home.”

“This is perfect!” Adrien set her down and hugged her close. “This is incredible! This is amazing! This is… I’m running out of words!”


“All those things! And more!” Adrien pulled back enough so he could look into her eyes, and the sheer joy plastered over his face sent her heart aflutter and a blush rising to her cheeks. “This is the best surprise ever. I can’t tell you how much this means to me. I just…I love you so much, Marinette.”

Now she was about the same color as her suit. “I love you too.” Marinette closed the distance between them so she could press her lips to his. It started out soft, but soon fires were beginning to burn. The excitement of what awaited them this weekend was quite potent, and it took a lot of will power for them to pull apart breathlessly several moments later.

“We still have to go on patrol,” Adrien murmured, licking his drying lips.

“I know.” Marinette didn’t allow herself to watch so she turned her attention instead of unhooking her yo-yo and looking out over the horizon. “We, uh, should be fine to keep taking halves.”

“Sounds good.”

“I’ll go south this time.”

He nodded in agreement, so Marinette threw her yo-yo out and set off. It was another fairly boring night in Paris, and the only thing of the required her attention was someone who had started trying to break into a parked car. She scared them off as soon as she landed, and thankfully the car’s locks were still intact. After that, the rest of her route went by without incident.

Returning to the rooftop later then yesterday meant they wouldn’t have as much time together, but it couldn’t be helped. At least they had had more time before going out on patrol, and for such a good reason, too. She arrived a few minutes before he did, and as he approached, she let herself follow his every movement. It sometimes still blew her away how this strong, handsome, compassionate man was really her boyfriend.

…Did she mention handsome?

“Earth to Ladybug.” Adrien tapped her on the shoulder, grinning when she looked over at him in
surprise. He had already landed while she had been spaced out, and she hadn’t even noticed.

“Sorry,” Marinette tried to hide her embarrassment by walking over to the middle of the rooftop. “We should still be able to have a few minutes.”

“I’d even take one minute if it was all I could get.” Adrien followed her path and laid back with her, bringing his arm around her and cuddling her up against his side.

Listening to his heartbeat beneath her ear and feeling his breath against her hair was something she could never get enough of. Marinette didn’t want to leave, but after how hard it had been to get up this morning and how tired she had been after all the work in the bakery, she wanted to get a decent night’s rest. With a sigh, she sat up long before she really wanted to, and could see him reluctantly do the same. “I hate having so little time with you.” She crawled onto his lap to hug him and rest her head on his shoulder.

Smiling at the gesture, Adrien held her close. “Only three more days.”

“It feels like a very long three days.”

“We fight super-villains on a regular basis. We’ll survive.”

“Stop being rational.”

“Never thought I’d hear that from you!”

Marinette grinned as she wove her way out from his embrace and stood up. Adrien got to his feet right after her and the two bid each other good night, and with a lot of effort from both sides, they set into the black sky in opposite directions. The trip home took as long as it usually did, but to them it felt far too long.

She released her transformation as soon as the trapdoor in the roof was closed, and could feel the exhaustion creeping back as she got undressed. Tikki was working on finishing up the last of her cookies when Marinette climbed into bed, and was already asleep before her kwami took her last bite.

Thankfully she found it much easier to get up after a solid night of sleep. Marinette allowed herself to take a leisurely shower, slowly drying off and getting herself dressed. Not having to rush was helping her mood, and she found herself humming cheerfully throughout eating her breakfast. Today was the halfway point of the baccalauréat, so she was feeling a lot more sure of herself then she had been Monday or even yesterday.

Plus, now she had something really important to look forward to once this was all over and done with.

After a quick stop to grab her things and pick up Tikki from her room, she went down to the bakery to give her parents a quick hug and say good-bye before heading out. The weather was hot and sticky today, so she had thought ahead and picked herself something light to wear. Even so, the air was muggy and she was glad the school would be much cooler then it was out here. She wasn’t overly fond of when it got this hot, as her fair skin went from light tan to painful burn very quickly.

Plus, with temperatures like this, she knew there was often a storm on its way.

Getting inside the school was a welcome relief from the wall of heat. The exams on today’s schedule
were tricky, but all the studying they had done was paying off. Dare she say, she felt like she actually knew what all the questions were talking about! As she turned in her papers and left the classroom, she spied Adrien going down the hallway. She had planned to email him this afternoon, but being able to talk to him live would always be far superior. So she made a dash to catch up with him before he could turn the corner and possibly leave altogether.

“Wait!” She managed to grab his hand, and the look on his face when he turned to her was that of pleasant surprise.

“Hey Princess.” Adrien peered around the corner to look through the front doors of the school. “The car’s waiting for me outside, but…” He looked back at her with a bit of a twinkle in his eye. “It can stay there.”

“I won’t keep you long, I swear.” Marinette promised. “I just wanted to plan a little bit of the details for Saturday with you.”

“I’m all ears.” He told her with a smile.

“Alya and I are have already planned to do each other’s makeup on Saturday afternoon, and her Mom is going to be picking her up at my house as soon as we’re done.” Marinette explained. “After she’s gone and my parents are ready, if you want you can meet up with us around then and we can all go together.”

“Great. Actually, I think my Father had booked a limo to take us to the banquet and dance, so after it picks me up I’ll tell the driver to head to your place.” Adrien chuckled at how her eyes widened. “What?”

“A-A limo?!” She couldn’t believe her ears.

“If my Father goes out somewhere, he wants to make an impression and an entrance.” Adrien was rather entertained by the amount of shock and awe that was roving over her face. “And even though he’s not going to be going anymore, I don’t think he bothered to cancel it.”

“A limo…” Marinette said quieter, almost reverently. She had giddy tingles fluttering through her body.

“You’re adorable.” Adrien kissed her cheek. “See you later.” He winked as he waved to her and turned the corner to head out to the car still awaiting him.

Marinette was still waving after he left, in a happy fog. She had never been in a limo before! And just wait until she told her parents!

Could this graduation get any better?
Chapter 47

Chapter Notes

Time for another chapter, woohoo! =P I'm definitely starting to feel the effects of working a lot this week so far, and I'm only halfway through. ^^; However! I'm going to keep writing when I can to keep the gap I have between what I post and what I'm currently writing into. Even if I didn't, I'm still about eight chapters ahead as it is, so there's still lots more coming. =) Anyway, hope you all enjoy!

“Mom! Dad!” Marinette came bursting through the front door of the (thankfully empty) bakery. After the walk home from school, she was unable to contain her excitement any longer.

“Yes?” Tom and Sabine both looked up from the small display they were making on the till counter.

“I told Adrien to meet us here to go to the banquet and dance with us,” Marinette was practically jumping up and down. “And since his Father booked him a limo, we get to ride in it with him!”

“How fancy.” Sabine smiled.

“Well isn’t this going to be fun!” Tom looked thrilled by this news, although not nearly as excited as Marinette was, of course.

“Exactly! Can it be Saturday right now?” Marinette did a happy twirl through the shop, making her parents laugh. “I’ll be back down in a second!”

She brought her stuff upstairs and set them in her room. When Tikki floated out of her purse, Marinette was dancing across the floor. “Somebody’s happy!” Tikki teased, although she looped through the air to join in the fun with her bonded.

“I probably look like a moron and I don’t care!” Marinette squealed, cupping Tikki in her hands to hug her to her cheek. “Saturday is going to be the best day ever!”

Tikki hugged back happily. “I’m so excited for you, Marinette! You’re going to have a wonderful time! And don’t worry, I won’t let Plagg out of my sight!”

“All the cookies in the world for you!” Marinette giggled, then she let Tikki fly off as she made the trip back downstairs, grabbing herself an orange on the way.

The rest of the afternoon went by in a flash. Though the bakery wasn’t nearly as busy as it had been yesterday, Marinette was still riding on Cloud Nine so the time seemed to pass even faster then normal. Though she did remember to slip a few peanut butter cookies into her pocket for Tikki to have later. When they went up for supper, she still had a big goofy smile on her face. It was leftovers night again, so she helped herself to some slices of the honey-glazed ham from a few days ago and put them on a fresh bun from the bakery to make herself a very filling sandwich. She was in the middle of eating when she noticed all the dark, angry looking clouds through the window.

‘Uh oh,’ She thought, noticing how they completely filled the sky. ‘Hopefully they’ll end up just being there for show…’
But they weren’t. By the time she was finishing her sandwich, the winds were picking up and she could hear thunder in the distance. She helped Tom with the dishes and when she went up to her room, there was rain starting to fall and pelt against the side of the house. “It might ease up by patrol,” Tikki said, noting the frown on Marinette’s face as she was setting down the cookies.

“I hope so.” Marinette sat down at her chaise lounge to do her rereading to get ready for tomorrow, and kept looking over her shoulder at the window every few minutes.

The storm would come and go in waves. It would start to calm down for a while, then another thunderhead would go by and bring with it new sheets of rain and a show of wild lighting. This continued on and off all evening, and even as the time to head out was coming ever closer, it didn’t look like the weather was going to truly ease up. And as much as she wanted to be able to see Adrien, staying safe and out of the way of that lightning was more important. So it looked like they would have to forgo patrol tonight.

Sighing heavily, Marinette took out her phone and was about to open her email when it was already vibrating with a new message.

~You seeing what I’m seeing?
~Unfortunately.
~Normally missing patrol for one night wouldn’t be a big deal. But it means missing out on being with you, so therefore it’s a very big deal. >=(
~I know, I’m not happy about it either.
~Stupid weather!!
~I’d rather not be electrocuted though.
~LOL, fair enough.
~After all, I have a pretty important date on Saturday.
~Yes you do. ^^ And as it just so happens, I do to! xD
She was smiling now. Talking with Adrien always made her feel better.

~And I have big plans for this date.
~Are you going to tell me? =O
~Nope.
~But I hate waiting! ;-;
~Which makes it even better!
~Sometimes, Spots…

Giggling, Marinette could feel her smile becoming a smirk.

~I’ve also come to realize I have only sent you one picture so far. Which is really unfair of me, considering how many lovely cat pictures you sent my way.
~And I feel so woefully depressed by lack of pictures!

~But if I send them all the time, they wouldn’t be special.

~Each and every one you end up sending would be treasured, trust me. I wouldn’t take such a precious gift from my Lady for granted!

Did she dare?

~Where are you right now?

~Home.

~I figured that, I meant where.

~My room. Why?

She dared.

Marinette got up from the chaise lounge and looked around for Tikki. She was sitting facing the window, watching the storm. Which meant she was preoccupied and wouldn’t notice what Marinette was going to be doing. Good. As quietly as she could, she undid the button of her capris and let them slide a little down her hips, exposing the waistband of her panties. Switching to camera mode on her phone, she took a picture before hurriedly straightening her capris and buttoning them back up. Going back to her email, she attached the image and let her thumbs dance over the keys.

~Because we’re not going anywhere anyway, so now is as good a time as any for picture number two. ;)

Sitting back down as she sent if off, Marinette was feeling quite proud of herself. Just look at how far her confidence had come. She had come leaps and bounds in a few short weeks – she used to be unable to even speak coherent sentences around Adrien. Now she was sending him provocative photos, among all the other things she had achieved, and she was loving every minute of it.

Her phone vibrated and she immediately opened up her Inbox.

~Damn…! *o*

~You like it?

~Jaguar.exe has stopped functioning. Please restart and try again.

Her hoots of laughter made Tikki look over at her in confusion, so Marinette tried to keep quiet as she made up her response.

~I wish it was Saturday already.

~So do I. Exponentially more now than I had before.

~Smitten kitten.

~You say that like it’s a bad thing. =P

~I just like to tease you.

~Tease me whenever you want, love bug. ;3
Though she very much wanted to continue this, the time on her phone told her it was now well past the
time for patrol, and about when they would be heading home to turn in early for exams.

~That’s a promise for the weekend, then. Good night, Jaguar. I love you.

~I can’t wait! Night Spots, love you too. =*

Marinette set her phone onto her desk before slipping out of her clothes to pull on her PJs. Tikki was
still watching the storm as she climbed up the ladder to bed, so she didn’t disturb her as she climbed
up the ladder to bed. The occasional flash of lightning shining through the trapdoor was proving to
be distracting, so she rolled onto her side to try and avoid it. But that wasn’t the real reason she didn’t
get to sleep for a while.

It was because her brain was elsewhere.

Though she did her best to keep her thoughts from drifting too far, her body was feeling warm and
not just because she was under the covers. By this time, though, Tikki had left the window to come
to bed and was fast asleep on the cat pillow, which left her unable to truly do anything about it. On
the one hand, not being able to fix the problem was obviously frustrating, to put it mildly. But on the
other hand, it just made the prospect of all she would be able to do with Adrien this weekend even
more tantalizing.

‘Only two more days left,’ She reminded herself. ‘Then the wait will have been worth it.’ With that
thought in mind, Marinette eventually got to sleep, with some very interesting dreams awaiting her.
Once again, the fluff parade comes marching through! =P I’ve got early shifts for the next four mornings in a row, so these Notes will all probably be short for those days.

Good night all!

Getting up was a little tough again this morning, but it wasn’t as bad as it had been on Tuesday. Marinette turned off the alarm on her phone sleepily, then went downstairs and noticed the clock in the hallway outside the bathroom to be blinking with the incorrect time. The storm must’ve knocked out the power some time last night. Glad she used her phone for an alarm, she took a moment to reset the clock on the wall back to normal before going off to have her shower.

When she came back upstairs to have breakfast, she was feeling more awake. After eating and going up to her room, she got herself ready for her second last day of the baccalauréat fairly quickly. Marinette wanted to get there a little early so she’d have time to skim her notes again, as the exams on the schedule for today were ones she was a little worried about. She went down to the bakery to wave to Tom and Sabine through the hallway, as there were a couple customers in the shop already, then went out to head to school.

She was able to do some rereading for about ten minutes before having to put her materials away as the exams got started. And she was very glad for it too, because there were a couple times were she would’ve been stumped if she hadn’t given herself the refresh. The hours melted away as the exams progressed, and she was relieved to be done when she finally was heading outside again much later.

“Hold up!” Marinette turned when she heard Alya calling to her. Her best friend came running over, giving Marinette a hug as soon as she was within reach. “I’ve been so busy the last few days and I haven’t really been able to talk to you and it’s killing me!”

Laughing, Marinette hugged her back. “Watching the little angels at home a lot this week, I assume?”

“Mom’s been pulling long shifts at the restaurant preparing for all the catering for Saturday. And you’d think since my sisters are older now they’d be able to take care of themselves, but honestly, if I left them by themselves I swear the house would be on fire.” Alya gave a tired sigh. “I can’t wait for these exams to be over. So then nothing can get in the way of us hanging out more.”

“I can’t wait either.” Marinette noticed Nino coming over to meet up with them and waved. “How do you think you did?”

“Should be pretty decent.” Nino took Alya’s hand, making his girlfriend smile. “I mean, I’m no Max, but I think it went okay.”

“I’m so glad we did all that studying,” Alya said. “I haven’t gotten really stuck on much so far.”

“And there’s only one day left to go now! Then freedom!” Nino cheered.

Grinning, Marinette took out her phone out of her pocket to check the time. “I should get going
“Sure. We’re still on for Saturday afternoon, right?” Alya asked.

“You bet.” Marinette nodded. “See you guys tomorrow.” The three friends separated and went their various paths to head home.

But she had only made it halfway back to the Dupain-Cheng bakery when screens started to appear mid-air to float at different heights every few feet, showing a momentary blip of static before clearing to reveal a shadowy silhouette. “Hello, Paris!” Came a deep voice. “This is a warning to all the punks who thought that it was funny to belittle me for being shy and my ‘weird’ passion for technology. I couldn’t do anything to stop you before, but that’s all changed.” His foreboding chuckle drifted through the speakers. “You can call me Gadget now, and I’m coming for each and every one of you.” Then the screens popped out of existence.

Marinette scurried behind the nearest building to safely open her purse. “Tikki, spots on!” She emerged as Ladybug seconds later, using her yo-yo to propel herself onto the nearest rooftop. Hoping to use this vantage point to see if she could find Gadget nearby, she scanned the area around her but find nothing. Taking her yo-yo in her again, she tapped it open to the screen to see if she could get a hold of Adrien.

“Do you see him?” She asked, still peering around to see if she could spot something out of the ordinary.

“No. And since it looks like he has technology-based powers, he wouldn’t have had to use the TV station to send out that broadcast, so going there would probably be a dead end.” Adrien was deep in thought. “So I don’t know where to start looking.”

When Marinette focused her attention to her yo-yo screen, her eyes widened when she could see someone coming closer over his shoulder. “Cat Noir, behind you!”

“Wha-”Adrien whirled and there was a ‘thud’ as his staff fell, and when it landed it must’ve hit the paw-print button because her yo-yo screen went black.

Her heart lurched as panic and fear gripped her hard. She hastily brought up his co-ordinates and reset her yo-yo back to normal as quick as she could, then threw it high to race of to his location. The same thought was repeating over and over in her mind, ‘Please be okay, please be okay!’

She could hear the pandemonium before she saw it. Loud crashing and banging was coming from the next block, so Marinette braced herself as she swung around. The scene that unfolded before her was an absolute mess. A man stood on of a towering pile of vehicles, cackling like a mad scientist, and there was no question he was Gadget. He was decked out head to toe in what looked like robotic body armor, with a deep purple visor over his eyes. It seemed he could make whatever technological device he wanted to materialize at will, as numerous objects were appearing around him and he hurtled them through the air every which way. “Where is he?” Marinette shouted up to him, trying to keep the worried tears pricking at her eyes at bay.

“Why don’t you come over here and find out?” Gadget taunted, the objects around him heading for her now.

Taking her yo-yo and spinning it to create a shield to deflect the barrage, Marinette ran forward as fast as she could. She easily bounded up over the cars to reach Gadget and tackle him down onto the roof of the van below his feet. “What did you do to him?” She demanded, pinning him to the metal as anger took over.
“Whatever you think I did and worse.” Gadget looked smug. “So much worse.”

“No!” Something within her shattered at his words. In her pain, Marinette’s grip tightened on his shoulders to the point where Gadget was visibly wincing beneath her. “Where…is…he?!”

“If you give me your Miraculous, I’ll tell you, and you can go save him.” Gadget sneered. “While he still has time.”

This made her falter. She wanted – no, needed – to know where Adrien was and see if he was all right. Especially if he was as hurt as Gadget was implying, time was of the essence. As her concentration wavered, Gadget gave her a mighty shove and she went tumbling down the pile of cars to the bed of a truck a few feet below. He landed over her and held out his hand expectantly, looking triumphant. Feeling like she had no other choice, Marinette started to reach for her earrings with a heavy heart.

“Get away from my Ladybug!” Suddenly Adrien vaulted onto the car beside them, jumping over and giving Gadget a kick that sent him flying. Adrien crouched in the truck bed to carefully pull her up. “Are you hurt?”

At first Marinette couldn’t even speak. The relief that washed over her was so profound, this time the tears that welled up did spill over. “You’re okay,” She breathed at last.

“Of course!” Adrien flashed her an easy grin. “He came out of no where and tried to lock me up in this big box-thing, I think it was supposed to be a deep freeze, but I just Cataclysmed my way out. So I’m a little late, and on a bit of a time frame now, but I’m okay.” He looked down over the side of the truck at Gadget, who was rubbing his head as he sat up. “I’ll go keep him busy for you.” Then he leapt down toward the villain below.

Quickly wiping the tears from her eyes, Marinette reached for her yo-yo. “Lucky Charm!” Into her hands dropped a polka-dotted antique camera. Initially baffled, Marinette got an idea and hopped down to where Gadget was back on his feet and looked about ready to attack again. She managed to catch him off-guard by appearing so suddenly, and before he could try and use his powers to take control of the camera within her hand, she brought it right up into his face. “Say cheese!”

With a press of the button, off went the flash. “Ow!” Gadget started cursing under his breath as he was momentarily blinded. As he turned away, Marinette yanked the visor from his face and broke it in half over her knee.

The akuma tried to fly away but was quickly captured and purified before it was released on its way. Gadget was returning to normal as Marinette threw up the camera. “Miraculous Ladybug!” The lights expanding outward through the sky easily took care of the chaos around them, and Marinette picked up the visor from the sidewalk where it had been magically repaired. “Here, this is yours.”

Still seeming a little confused, the timid-looking man took it and held it tightly in his grasp. “Thank you,” He murmured. “I designed this myself.” This was another akuma victim whose nastiness was only a result of their dark transformation.

“And I bet you have lots of other cool gizmos too,” Adrien could tell Marinette didn’t really want to talk to him for some reason so he decided to step in. “So don’t let anyone tell you otherwise. Cat Noir and Ladybug say so.”

“Really?” He looked at Marinette, who forced a smile and a short nod. “Wow…that means a lot to me. I’ll never forget this. Thank you again!” Then he turned around and started walking off down the empty road.
As soon as he had his back turned, Marinette grabbed Adrien’s wrist and tore into the nearest alley. She knew his ring was down two spots already, and could hear her earrings beeping out their first warning too, but she needed this. As soon as they were out of sight, Marinette gave Adrien a fierce hug and buried her face in his shoulder. “I was so scared…” She whispered, feeling a lump forming in her throat.

“Why? Because he got the jump on me?” Adrien was still astonished by how she had dragged him back here, and even more at this display.

“It’s not just that.” Marinette looked up at him, feeling beyond glad once again that he was safe and sound. “He was making out like he had really hurt you. I-I thought…”

“Aww, bugaboo…” Adrien cupped her face in his hands. “Nothing’s ever going to be able to keep us apart. I promise you that.” He leaned in to kiss her tenderly, wanting to add weight to his words, and felt her relax against him.

This kiss held so much emotion for Marinette. Relief, joy, comfort…all of these and more. When they finally parted, she was smiling again. “Thank you.” She noticed his ring was now down to the last two spots as he brought back his hands out of the corner of her eye. “Your ring…” He looked down at it in mild surprise, as if noticing its state for the first time. “I should let you go.”

“Until tonight, then.” Adrien grabbed his staff and extended it, gave her one last kiss on the cheek, then hurdled over the buildings around them and into the skyline.

Marinette followed suit soon after. She wanted to get as close to the bakery as she could before her own Miraculous would time out. That would at least shorten the distance she would have to walk, because she was already rather late in getting home. Her parents were probably starting to worry by now. But at least being late wasn’t that bad on the grand scheme of things – she hadn’t gotten hurt, and neither had Adrien. She silently thanked every powers that be that were out there for that.

Everything was all right. And truly, that meant more to Marinette then anything in the world.
Chapter 49

Chapter Notes

More fluff! Because I can't get enough of it! xD Off to bed now, for day two of the four-day stretch of opening shifts. Hopefully I won't be too much of a zombie by the time this is over, LOL. =P Enjoy everyone!

“What happened?” Tom asked, hugging his daughter tight as soon as she had walked in. “Where were you?”

“There was a big battle going outside a couple blocks away,” Marinette explained vaguely, returning her mother’s hug. “Ladybug and Cat Noir took care of it, but when the fighting started I hid in a store by the school to wait until the coast was clear.”

As soon as Tom let go of Marinette, Sabine moved in to hold her daughter close as well. “We’re so glad you’re all right.”

“Believe me, I am too.” Marinette said, meaning every word. “I’m just going to drop my stuff off upstairs and I’ll be right back.” Both her parents nodded, so she slipped out into the hallway to make a quick stop in the bakery kitchen to grab two big handfuls of oatmeal raisin cookies, then bolted up to her room.

Dropping her backpack to the floor, she carefully took the very tired Tikki out of her purse. Marinette gently set her down on the desk next to her cookie plate after piling it high with her bounty. Tikki gave her an appreciative smile as she took the nearest cookie to nibble on, and Marinette shut the door behind her when she went back downstairs. She spent most of the next few hours baking with Sabine, snacking here and there in between recipes to tide herself over until supper. The family of three at last went up to their personal kitchen to eat, and Marinette eagerly dug into the shepherd’s pie that was set before her.

When she returned to her bedroom, half the large pile of cookies had disappeared, and Tikki was snoozing on the chaise lounge. Quietly tiptoeing over to her desk, Marinette emptied her backpack and started to scan over her textbooks and notes for, what she could hardly believe to be, the last time. She would be turning in her textbooks at the end of tomorrow’s exam, and then it would all officially be over.

That reminded her. Pulling out her phone to check the time, Marinette saw that in about twenty-four hours, Adrien would officially have the huge Agreste Mansion all to himself. The thought sent a delicious shiver down her spine. Tomorrow night she would do some laundry so that among her regular clothes, her white and pink roses lingerie set would be clean and ready to wear for Saturday. Another shiver rolled through her at that thought, too.

She opened her Inbox and started typing away.

~So are you counting down the hours yet?

Putting her phone on the desk, Marinette started packing up her textbooks while she waited for her reply. When it came a few minutes later, she brought it up right away.
~You’re not? =P
~My lips are sealed!
~Uh huh, okay then. xD BTW, I told the kitchen staff they can have the weekend off too as long as they never breathe a word of this to my Father. So there will literally be no one in this whole place except you and me. ;3
~And Plagg, and Tikki.
~Oh right!
~You’re welcome.
~Guess you can tell I have a one-track mind already, LOL.
~Speaking of which, Tikki told me she’s going to keep Plagg occupied for us.
~What’s her favorite food?
~Cookies, preferably chocolate chip. Why?
~I’m going to buy her as many as she wants for this!!

That made Marinette grin. Glancing over at Tikki, she saw she was now sitting up on the chaise lounge, looking like she had recently woken up from her nap. “Adrien says he’s going to buy you as many chocolate chip cookies as you want for helping us out this weekend.”

“It’s going to be nice for Plagg and I to have all this time together, too.” Tikki told her with a smile. “So I’d be perfectly fine doing it anyway, but I’m also not going to say no to perfectly good cookies.”

Laughing, Marinette turned her attention back to her phone.
~Tikki appreciates it. Should I pick up camembert for Plagg too?
~Nah, you won’t need to.
~Are you sure? I don’t mind getting him some.
~Trust me, I’m going to be going out tomorrow and hitting up as many grocery stores as I can to get as much as possible.

She resisted the urge to bring up how he really should get all of France’s camembert, in reference to the email she had teased him in a while ago. Marinette didn’t want to say too much on the extent of what she was planning to do with him this weekend, after all. The more of a surprise it would be, the better.
~Good plan!
~I have those every once and a while, you know.
~Apparently so.
~You weren’t actually supposed to agree with that, you were supposed tell me how wrong I am and that I’m, in fact, extraordinarily full of good ideas.
Too late!

=’(

Didn’t you know? I’m immune to fake pouting.

Gasp! How ever did you see through my charade?! =O

I’m going to get ready to head out. See you soon.

You bet. ^^

Marinette turned off her phone and stood up from her chair to stretch. Tikki floated over and after reciting the usual call, the burst of magic faded away to reveal the suit over her skin once more. She made her way up through the trapdoor and swung her yo-yo high, heading out and easily winding her way through the streets towards the apartment building.

As she arrived, she was again feeling glad that nothing bad had happened this afternoon while watching Adrien approach in the distance. When he landed on the rooftop moments later, she enveloped him in another embrace, the beat of his heart beneath her ear filling her with comfort. “Let’s just stay here a second,” She said quietly, shutting her eyes as she held him close.

“Of course.” Adrien pressed a kiss to the top of her head while letting his arms sit comfortably around the middle of her back. He could sense that she was probably still feeling somewhat shaken up from the akuma fight earlier now that they were back in person again, and was more then happy to give her all the affection she needed to reassure her everything was okay.

Not that that was a chore anyway, as he loved showering his Lady with affection.

Though she knew they should get going since this was the last night they should be turning in early, she didn’t move away for a good few minutes. Letting go of him eventually did take a lot of effort, and she found herself sighing a little as she reached for her yo-yo. “You pick tonight.”

“Sure. You okay with going north?” Adrien suggested, and Marinette nodded, so the two superheroes headed to opposite ends of the rooftop and took off.

Partly because the baccalauréat still had one day left, and partly because of the akuma this afternoon, the city was calm. Which was good, because Marinette really wanted to be able to have as much cuddle time as possible tonight. Adrien was even already back when she returned, and met her at the middle of the rooftop so they could lay back and watch the stars as they snuggled into each other’s arms.

Adrien was rubbing her back this time, and Marinette was feeling so relaxed that she honestly had to fight dozing off. It felt so good to be with him. She looked up at him to see him staring up into the sky. “What are you thinking about right now?” She asked, folding her arms over his stomach to set her chin on her hands.

“Lots of things.” He tilted his head slightly as he met her gaze. “Like how being finished tomorrow’s exams is going to be such a relief.”

“I totally agree.”

“Like how it’s going to feel so good to have it behind us.”

“Absolutely.”
“Like how much I love the stars now in the last few weeks.”

She smiled at that last one. “Me too.”

“What about you, what you thinking about?” Adrien noticed her start to move slightly after his question.

This was because Marinette was getting up to crawl over him so they were looking each other in the eye. “Just how much I love you.” She whispered, and closed the distance between them to press her lips to his.

Her words made him blush deeply. Adrien brought his arms up to lightly encircle her waist as he kissed her back, feeling her fingers find their familiar hold within his hair. It was gentle, a pure expression of their mutual emotions. Their world right now consisted only of the two of them, and how much they meant to each other. As they finally parted so they could catch their breath, Adrien allowed himself to stare up at Marinette in adoration. “I love you too.”

They shared a smile, and after only a moment or two more, Marinette sat back and got to her feet. Though he didn’t want to leave, he knew she wouldn’t be wanting to either, so he dutifully stood up as well. “Only one more day left.” She murmured, almost as if to reassure herself more than him.

“Good night Marinette.” He hugged her close once more.

Allowing herself to relish in his embrace, Marinette thanked all the powers that be for the probably hundredth time that day that both of them were all right. “Good night Adrien.” They parted soon after, then left the apartment building’s rooftop behind them via yo-yo and staff to return to their respective homes.

Marinette’s heart still felt pleasantly warm as she transformed back once she entered her room, and even as she got changed for bed. She went up the ladder and slipped under the covers, and while Tikki ate up the rest of her cookies, she was mentally starting to count down the hours until Saturday night.
Chapter 50

Chapter Notes

Chapter 50 is here! Milestone number five!! <3 There's a little bit of spice in store for you below. ;P In other news, I'm really looking forward to having two days off (in a row!) after these last two morning shifts are done. xD Hope you all enjoy! ♥

Morning came and Marinette got up at the buzzing of her first alarm. As much nervousness as she had felt on Monday, she felt excitement today. This was the last day of exams. This was the last time she had to go to school. It was so close, she could almost taste it.

After a quick shower and oatmeal for breakfast, Marinette practically skipped up to her room to grab her backpack and purse. “It’s finally here, Tikki,” She said as her kwami was getting comfy in her usual hiding spot. “I can hardly believe it.”

“And it’s only going to get better from here!” Tikki cheered, making Marinette grin.

Heading downstairs and giving her parents a quick wave, she set out on her final walk to school. She had a bounce to her step the whole way there, not even the prospect of the exams she still had to face today dampening her mood. Being the last day however, these exams didn’t take as long as the previous had, so the teachers would have more time to mark and post the results of who passed and who didn’t on the school website tonight. And though some of the questions were challenging despite the overall shorter length, she was prepared for them. When she turned in her exams as well as her textbooks once she was finished around noon, it felt like a huge weight was lifted from her shoulders.

Hurrying through the halls, she stepped outside and took a deep breath, filling her lungs with the warm air. Her exhale became laughter, as she was feeling giddy with the broad sense of freedom before her. Hugging her arms over her chest, by now she was smiling from ear to ear.

The baccalauréat was done.

School was done.

She was finally done!

The trip home seemed to take no time at all. Tom and Sabine greeted her with excited congratulations, and when Marinette got up to her room she allowed herself to spin happily across the floor. “I’m free! I’m free!” She squealed, dropping her mostly empty backpack and kicking it under the desk. That was to be its new home, because now she didn’t have to worry about filling it every night anymore.

Tikki was laughing as she passed through Marinette’s purse to watch her bonded dance around the room. “I told you you could do it!”

“I still have to wait to see the final results tonight on the school website,” Marinette said, trying to calm herself down. “But considering I think I did okay on the exams, I think it’s safe to say I passed.”
“Of course you did!” Tikki hugged her shoulder. “And now you get to enjoy a very well deserved summer break!”

‘Among other things…’ Marinette thought deviously, smirking a little as she headed back downstairs. She made herself a lunch of some leftover chicken vegetable soup, before going down to the bakery for the afternoon.

They were kept busy today. As all other terminale students were celebrating the end of the baccalauréat, they went through a lot of cakes, cupcakes, and the like as people were buying them in droves. Small parties were the norm for graduation celebrations here, though, so they had been prepared and had been making large batches of everything they sold in preparation, especially since they would be closed all day tomorrow for the diploma ceremony, banquet and dance. Even so, some items were sold out and others had not much left by the time they closed for supper.

Thankfully there were still some cookies left, so Marinette grabbed a few of each kind to get enough to bring for Tikki. She stashed them in her apron as she brought it upstairs with her, claiming to want to throw it in her laundry. Which she was going to, but she had to take out her contraband first. After bringing Tikki her cookies, Marinette brought down all her clothes needing to be cleaned and made sure to wrap both her lingerie sets inside her apron out of sight as she went through the hallways. She double checked the door to the laundry room was securely closed until they had been officially put into the washing machine, then went up to join her parents as they were serving up tonight’s oven-baked salmon, rice and green beans.

As soon as she had finished eating, she went back down to move most of her load of laundry into the dryer, and stashed her lingerie sets behind her back as she scampered up to her room. She took out a couple hangers and hung them to dry, hooking the hangers on the backs of the rungs of the ladder leading to her bed. To be sure no one outside could possibly see them, as she wanted to leave nothing to chance, Marinette made sure to drape a blanket over each of her windows. She even taped some leftover fabric to the trapdoor, on the off-beat chance certain kitties were inclined to swing by.

She spent the rest of her night working through her various loads of laundry, relaxing on her computer in between shifting each from the washer to the dryer. It was such a refreshing change to not have to do homework, or study, or anything of the sort. Her time was completely her own, and it still blew her away every time she thought about it.

The last of her clothes were finishing up in the dryer as patrol was closing in. She waited for the dryer’s timer to click off and gathered her clothes, carrying them upstairs and folding them neatly. Tikki had already eaten a few of her cookies and was ready to go as soon as she was finished, so Marinette transformed and went out onto the terrace, taking care not to dislodge the fabric from the trapdoor even an inch, then she was off.

Because of waiting for the dryer and folding her clothes, she was about ten minutes late when she got to the meeting place. Adrien was grinning when she landed, and she knew right away what for.

“All right, fine, so I owe you two late-fee kisses.”

“It really should be three, because I was here early,” Adrien said matter-of-factly, waggling his eyebrows at her.

Giggling, Marinette rolled her eyes. “Okay, three. Do you want them now or later?”

“Later.” Adrien reached for his staff as he walked by her. “So I can take all the time with you I want.” He whispered, winking at her before he extended his staff and set out over the western half of the horizon.
That last sentence making her heart beat double-time, Marinette took out her yo-yo and went east. There was much more going on today then there had been yesterday, as several people were hosting parties to celebrate the end of the baccalauréat. Most of them were tame and needed no superhero involvement, but there were a few that were getting rather rowdy. Only a few required intervention on her part, but thankfully all she needed to do was show up and remind the attendees that Ladybug would be more then happy to attend to escort them down to the police station, and the volume immediately went down.

It felt pretty good to have that kind of authority!

She came back to the apartment building’s rooftop once she was finished her patrol shortly after Adrien, as she could see him landing while making her approach. Their eyes met as she drew near and he wordlessly went to lay down in the middle of the rooftop, and as soon as she touched down she walked over to his spot. “Where do you want the first kiss?” She asked, kneeling down and crawling over him.

“You know, I could take that question and make it really dirty, but I’m going to be nice and let you off the hook this time.” Adrien chuckled as she rolled her eyes at him for the second time that night. “But as for my answer, I want all three of them right here, please.” He pointed to his smirking mouth.

“Your wish is my command.” Marinette joked before leaning in for kiss number one.

By kiss number two, his tongue met hers. By kiss number three, one of her thighs was pressed between his while his hands were roving over her chest. They pulled apart from each other breathlessly, eyes similarly going dark as they looked at each other. “The house is officially empty now,” He murmured, letting his knuckles drift over her nipples through her suit and enjoying how it made her tremble. “And I know it couldn’t be helped, but with Mother Nature making you otherwise unavailable over the weekend and then the baccalauréat, I’ve missed you a lot, if you know what I mean…”

“I know, I have too, but-” Marinette didn’t continue right away as he suddenly rolled their bodies so he was over top of her. “The diploma ceremony is going to be first thing tomorrow morning…”

“And if we’re up late doing this and don’t get enough sleep, we’ll be too tired to enjoy it? Or the other important things we have planned for later?” Adrien guessed how she was going to finish her sentence, and when she nodded, he sighed. “I hate how you’re always being right about things.”

“Besides, we’ll be able to make up for all the lost time we want starting tomorrow night,” She reminded him, letting her hands run along his sides.

“Damn straight.” Adrien gave her a sly look. “Honestly, I wouldn’t even pack clothes for this weekend if I were you.”

Marinette just laughed. “Well I’m going to anyway.”

“Fine, all the more for me to take off you.” Adrien kissed her again before she could try and argue. Not that she really would have. He broke the kiss shortly after it began, and using quite a bit of will power, he moved aside so they could both sit up and then get to their feet.

“Good night,” Marinette said softly as she took his hands in hers.

“Good night, my Lady.” Adrien gave her hands a soft squeeze, then stepped back to reach for his staff. She did the same with her yo-yo and he let her leave first, watching her head home for a while and disappear into the dark night sky before doing the same.
Because even with waiting those few minutes after she left, the trip was still a little difficult for him to make.

Upon getting back into the safety of her bedroom, Marinette sat on her bed for a moment as she tried to settle herself down. “Spots off,” She said eventually, flopping back onto the mattress as Tikki was coming back into view.

“I know waiting isn’t any fun,” Her kwami began.

“But it’ll be worth it.” Marinette knew exactly what was coming next so she finished the sentence for her while going down the ladder, taking care not to knock off the hangers of her lingerie sets. “I know.”

Tikki went over to her cookie plate to eat the last few that awaited her while her bonded got undressed and put on her PJs. Marinette took her phone from the pocket of her capris and unlocked it to bring up to the school’s website once she had climbed into bed. The results of the baccalauréat had been posted, and she quickly skipped down to her class to find her name. She found her name and saw with delight that she had indeed passed, and her eyes scanned over the screen to find Adrien, Alya and Nino. They had all passed as well, and she couldn’t be happier.

The time for celebrations was officially on.
And now, ladies and gentleman, the start of Saturday is finally here! ^^ I've also officially posted over 100,000 words, something I'm very proud of! <3 I did a bit of research into the grading system so that's why their marks are in French. Other than that I made all of it up, LOL. =P Tomorrow's my last morning shift, and thank goodness, because I really need to have more time to write! I'm only six chapters ahead right now and it's stressing me out! xD Anyway! Enjoy guys!

Though she hadn’t gotten to sleep as early as she had wanted to, Marinette was still up bright and early as the excitement for today was easily overpowering any lingering tiredness. She quickly showered and got dressed in a comfy knee-length white skirt and a gossamer pink blouse, as she wanted to wear something a little fancier then just casual clothes for the diploma ceremony. After a light breakfast and stopping in her room to grab her purse (and Tikki), she went downstairs to meet her parents by the front door.

“I’m here too!” Tom asked jokingly as Marinette brought out a pair of classy white sandals to wear for this morning.

“Oh, not at all.” Marinette teased as she did up her sandals.

“Let’s go, you two.” Sabine was grinning as she headed out the door.

There were several families waiting outside the main entrance to the hall when they arrived. Marinette saw Nino nearby and went over to him. “Alya here yet?” She asked him, and he shrugged.

“Haven’t seen her.” He was still looking around to see if he could spy the girl in question. “She might have to bring all her sisters here with her, since her Mom is in charge of the finishing touches for our grub tonight.”

“This could be interesting.” Marinette was more then slightly amused by the thought of Alya chasing after her sisters through the hall.

Shortly after Alya spotted them and came over, looking out-of-breath but distinctly sister-less.

“Manage to outrun the circus?” Nino put an arm around her as she tried to catch her breath.

“I promised each of them all the ice cream they can eat if they stayed home and didn’t destroy everything.” Alya cracked a smile. “Trust me, those girls have an intense ice cream addiction, so I think they’ll listen. I don’t know why I didn’t think of that sooner.”

“Hey, there’s Adrien. Dude, over here!” Nino called, waving him down.

Adrien turned and started making his way over, although he stopped for a second when he saw Marinette. His eyes widened slightly, but he quickly began walking again. “Here you guys are.” He said as normally as he could, taking Marinette’s hand when he came over with a bit of a blush.

Marinette had to fight smirking. If this was his reaction when she was in a simple skirt and blouse, she couldn’t wait to see what he thought of her in her dress.

Chapter 51

Chapter Notes
Or when he saw what would be waiting for him underneath it.

“So how soon until this thing starts?” Alya was asking. “I made my hair appointment for noon, and I really don’t want to be late.”

As if in response, someone came out from within the hall to unlock the main doors and prop them open to allow everyone to head in. The worker directed them to the first room on their right, which was filled with two groupings of chairs and a podium at the far end. The Mayor was already there, and so was Chloe, looking haughty as ever sitting by the podium in a chair next to her father. The former students were told to sit in the smaller grouping of chairs a few feet from the podium, while friends and family were to sit in the larger grouping a little further back.

The room slowly started to fill, with some of their teachers arriving to present the diplomas and taking spots by the podium. Marinette had wanted to sit with Adrien, Alya and Nino, but they were told shortly after they had begun seating themselves that they were to sit in alphabetical order to make going up to get their diplomas easier. Feeling frustrated but understanding the reasoning behind it, they took the seats they were told to use to wait for the ceremony to begin.

Soon enough it was time to start the proceedings. The Mayor spoke first, giving a long-winded speech on how important education was, how the youth of today were the future, and on and on. It was clear he had been writing this for months. And of course, whenever he mentioned something that needed an embodiment, he would gesture to Chloe, who smugly sat up a little higher in her chair each time. By the end of the speech, she look like she was about to fall off the edge at any moment, and the rest of the hall looked thoroughly bored.

When one of the teachers was able to take the stand at last, everyone perked up. Her speech was exponentially shorter, and the first names started to get called. When it was Marinette’s turn, she willed every muscle in her body to work as one and keep herself from tripping at such an important event. Thankfully they listened, and she made it up to the podium without issue. She took the folder containing her diploma from her teacher with a shy smile, shook her hand, then made her way back to her seat so the next student could do the same.

After sitting back down, she opened up her folder with baited breath. First she took out her diploma, feeling a sense of awe just at its appearance. This was the physical proof she had completed school, after all. Next she pulled out the page that showed her final grades, and was pleased to see she had earned herself a ‘mention bien’, which was a pass with merit. The dedication to her homework the last few months and all the studying really had paid off! She couldn’t wait to see what Adrien had gotten, as she was hoping upon hoping he had been able to get the marks his Father had wanted. It would be such a victory for him, and hopefully it would put the stuffy Gabriel Agreste in his place.

All the other students made their way to and from the podium in short work, and then it was time for a speech given by one of their peers. Of course there had been no choice by them in the matter, as their representative right from the inception of this special ceremony was obviously to be Chloe. Her speech was nearly as long as the Mayor’s had been, and even more boring. She hadn’t made much of an attempt to make it more then a speech of affirming how great she was, only throwing in how great they were as a class were on very infrequent occasion. When she was done several minutes later, it was definitely a welcome relief to all involved.

The Mayor came back up to remind everyone that the diploma ceremony was about to wrap up, they needed to be back by four that afternoon for the banquet and dance. They wouldn’t be starting to eat until closer to five, but a professional photographer would be on sight by four to take pictures for anyone to partake in. He bid them adieu until then, and the room erupted in applause to finally be done.
Marinette first went to give her parents an excited hug. Then she went off to join up with her friends, who were standing in the circle that had formed of their classmates. The students were enthusiastically sharing their relief to be done and a few were exchanging final marks, and when she made her way to Adrien’s side, she saw him talking with Max. “I have to say, I’m impressed and rather glad to have someone I consider a good friend on the same intellectual playing field as I am,” Max was saying with a pleased grin. “Perhaps you and I should partake in some chess matches this summer.”

“You’d beat me every time, trust me. I just studied my ass off.” Adrien told him with a wave of his hand.

“Well, if you ever decide to change your mind, I’m always ready and willing to play a round or two.” Max said. “Now if you’ll excuse me, I’m going to go find my family.”

“Does this mean what I think it means?” Marinette asked Adrien quietly once Max had started to walk away.

“Look Marinette!” He fumbled through his diploma folder to find his final marks to present them to her with a beaming look of pride. The words before her eyes filled her with unbridled joy: ‘mention très bien’, a pass with distinction.

“You did it!” She squealed, giving him a bear hug.

Adrien managed to resist the urge to pick her up and twirl her through the air so instead he returned her bear hug. “The same level as Max,” He confirmed, smiling as he looked down at her. “Not the same exact marks, his were higher of course, but we did both get into the highest grade level category. And that’s all thanks to you.”

She blushed at this. “All I did was encourage you to study seriously…”

“Which I wouldn’t have done if you hadn’t said that.” Adrien kissed her forehead. “I can show this to my Father and he won’t have anything to say. He probably thought I couldn’t do it. So trust me, it’s going to feel really good to tell him how I did when he gets back on Monday.”

“Speaking of your Father being away,” Marinette allowed herself to smirk as she lowered her voice. “Only a few more hours now.”

Now he was the one blushing. “I was thinking I would come by your place an hour before we need to leave so we can double back to my house to drop off whatever you pack with you, and still make it back here with time to spare.”

“Sounds good, I’ll let my parents know.” Marinette gave him a kiss on the cheek. “See you then.” Then she went to meet up with her Mom and Dad who were already waiting for her by the main entrance of the hall.

The family of three went directly home after she told them the plan, and had a light lunch so they would have lots of room for tonight’s feast. After she was finished, Marinette went to her room to get changed. Tikki went through the floor to get herself some cookies from the bakery, and while she was gone Marinette quickly took off all of her clothes, and felt heat blooming over her body as she grabbed her white and pink lingerie set. Slipping it on made her heartbeat start to race already, so she tried her best to keep her mind from the gutter as she went to pull her dress from it’s protective bag. After shimmying into it and pulling her shrug on, she took a moment to gaze at herself in the mirror. The straps of her bra were completely unnoticeable through the fabric of her shrug just as she had hoped.
No one, especially Adrien, would suspect a thing.

She put on the necklace her parents had given her but left her heels by the mirror, trudging barefoot downstairs. The destination of her journey was the bathroom to pull out the curling iron she had bought a few months ago just for this occasion to get to work on her hair.

It was a bit of slow process, as she was not overly accustomed to using one of these things. She had done some practice with it shortly after she had bought it, but it still felt like such a new concept for her to use one. She took her time, not wanting to rush and possibly ruin her hair or burn herself, methodically going through each small section of her hair. More then once she was cursing under her breath at the difficulty of it all, but by the time she was finished she was feeling satisfied with how it turned out. Her blue locks fanned out around her head in tight ringlets, framing her face beautifully. So with a quick spritz of hairspray to help seal them in, she was done. And she thought she had done pretty well for being such a novice.

When she stepped out of the bathroom and checked the time on the wall clock, she saw Alya would be coming over shortly. Her parents were going to take some time that afternoon to do some inventory in the bakery, so the living room was empty when she headed back up to her room. Tikki had long returned and was enjoying chowing down on some frosted cookies, and her eyes lit up when Marinette came through the door. “You look so pretty!” She gushed, floating over to spin around her bonded to get a full view of her in her dress.

“Thanks Tikki.” Marinette went to grab her phone from the desk as it vibrated, seeing it was a text from Alya saying she was on her way. Marinette went down to the front door to unlock it and await her best friend’s arrival. Within minutes there was a knock from behind it, and Marinette immediately opened it wide.

Alya stood in the doorway, looking stunning in her ankle-length garnet dress. It had a collar around her neck but was sleeveless, with a ribbed waist and the hem ending in a small flower. Her curly hair was piled high above her head in an up-do, and she wore low-heeled black pumps that had little gems swirled over the toes. “You look gorgeous!” Marinette said as she came inside and pulled off her shoes to leave sitting by the door.

“Why thank you! I do clean up pretty decently every once and a while, if I do say so myself.” Alya grinned. “And don’t sell yourself short – not only do you look pretty damn amazing in your dress too, you actually made it entirely by yourself, so that’s way cooler then most of us.”

“Well a lot of blood, sweat and tears went into this thing,” Marinette admitted while they walked upstairs. “So I’m glad it came out like I had planned it to. It might not be fancy, but I’m proud of it.”

“As you should be!” Alya nodded to add emphasis to her words.

Marinette just smiled. “So how was the house when you came home?”

“Get this – my sisters wanted nothing to get in the way of their ice cream so they were actually cleaning when I got back!”

“Seriously?”

“I know, I was blown away! So they totally earned it. I just hope I won’t end up regretting buying it for them once they eat all that sugar.”

The two girls stopped for a moment to allow Marinette to grab her collection of makeup from the bathroom to add to what Alya had brought in her small purse, then set themselves up in Marinette’s
room to get started. Though they had planned this get-together to do each other’s makeup, they ended up mostly doing their own looks and instead bouncing ideas off each other for color and style choices. While Marinette preferred going with a more subtle look, Alya felt like going bold today, but took Marinette’s advice when she warned her there was getting to be a little too much eye shadow. When they were done they felt quite happy with what they had done, and their phones came out soon after as it was time to reward themselves with several pictures together.

“So has Adrien seen your dress yet?” Alya asked her while they sat on Marinette’s chaise lounge, going through their assortment of selfies and deleting any that were blurry or they were blinking in. She also sent off a text to her mother she was ready to go whenever she could swing by.

“I don’t think he has. He’s been over a couple times now but since I had it hanging behind my mirror, I think it’s still going to be a surprise.” Marinette fought to resist the urge to smirk at the word ‘surprise’.

But Alya picked up on this. “Other surprises planned for tonight, I’m guessing?”

“Maybe.” Marinette was trying to keep a straight face but was failing. “It might even have something to do with our last shopping trip.”

“Girl, you’re going to kill the poor boy.” Alya laughed. “But at least he’ll die happy!”

And all Marinette could think was, ‘Very happy, if I have anything to say about it.’
Chapter 52

Chapter Notes

Another fluff train chapter! =P And I finally get two days off in a row now! I survived!! xD So I'm going to be doing lots of catching up on my sleep and hopefully lots of writing too. As I mentioned earlier I'm not nearly as ahead as I used to be, and I like having a cushion, LOL. But for now, please enjoy!

After they chatted for a while, the doorbell rang as Alya's mother was there to pick her up. Marlena Césaire looked a little tired from all the extra work she had been putting in lately, but greeted them cheerfully when they opened the door. She told Marinette how lovely she looked while Alya put on her shoes, and Marinette thanked her with a smile. After mother and daughter had made their exit, the bluenette popped her head into the bakery to find it empty, so her parents must have gone to get themselves ready. So she returned to her bedroom to grab her backpack from where she had left it yesterday under her desk, so she could pack a few things for this weekend.

There were some standard things that went in there, of course, like her toothbrush and toothpaste, her hair brush, and even her PJs and some change of clothes despite Adrien’s salacious insistence she didn’t need any. But she also went up to her bed to grab the box of condoms that had been stashed behind the cat pillow. Her face was heating up just from holding them before she put them carefully at the top of the pile of clothes in backpack. Tikki had come out of hiding when Alya had left so she was watching as Marinette was packing, respectfully keeping to herself but grinning just the same.

Once she was done, she shut her backpack and set it on the chaise lounge while fishing out a purse that would go with her dress to slip her phone into and for Tikki hide out in. “Are you nervous?” Her kwami asked as she came floating over.

“If I’m honest? A little.” Marinette admitted. “But I think that’s probably normal.”

“It is.” Tikki patted her bonded’s hand. “After being partnered with so many Ladybugs over the years, I’ve seen this a lot before, believe me. And I can promise you that the nerves will go away soon enough.”

Marinette took second to steady her breathing and try to settle the butterflies that were trying to take over her stomach. She closed her purse after Tikki had gone inside, hoisted on her backpack and grabbed her heels, then headed downstairs. “Oh sweetheart, look at you!” Sabine exclaimed as soon as she saw her making her way down the stairs.

“My baby girl…” Tom smiled proudly at her, eyes growing watery at the sight of his daughter looking so grown up like this.

“Thanks!” Marinette hugged both of them happily. “You look great too.”

Sabine wore a pale yellow Chinese-style dress covered in white flowers and some cream-colored flats, while Tom had donned a pale blue long-sleeved collared shirt, charcoal grey slacks and black dress-shoes. Marinette put her own heels on when they went down to the front door, and while her parents were making sure that all the lights in the bakery had been turned off, the chiming sound of the doorbell rang through the air for the second time that afternoon.
Her heart skipped a beat as Marinette walked over to the door. She smoothed down the front of her dress and allowed herself to take one last deep breath, then she unlocked and opened the door. Adrien stood before her on the step, and Marinette allowed herself to stare for a moment. He certainly looked good in a suit, the one he was wearing being black over an emerald green shirt and a white tie. And when her eyes drifted back up to his face, she noticed he was not only staring at her too, but with such a look of awe that it made her smile. “Hi,” She murmured eventually, seeming to snap him out of his daze.

Adrien coughed to clear his throat. “Hi.” He repeated, finally walking inside though his eyes never left her. “You look…wow…”

She giggled. “I’m glad it looks ‘wow’, especially since I made it myself.”

“You made this?” Adrien’s hands drifted toward her but he stopped himself, until Marinette nodded and he let his fingers slide over the material covering her sides.

“Sure did.” Marinette let her arms encircle his shoulders. “I know it’s a simple design but I’m pretty happy with how it turned out.”

“Well I think it’s perfect. And I can’t wait to take…” Adrien noticed movement behind them out of the corner of his eye and when he looked up, he saw Tom and Sabine grinning from the hallway, and he hastily stepped back from Marinette as his face blushed a deep shade of burgundy. “H-Hi Sabine, Hi Tom.”

“Hello Adrien!” Tom said as he and his wife walked over.

“You can’t wait to take what?” Sabine asked him innocently, deciding to have a little fun at his expense as both she and Tom obviously had a fairly decent idea what the end of Adrien’s sentence was going to have been.

“C-Can’t wait to take you guys to the hall!” Adrien managed, which was far different from the original ‘can’t wait to take it off of you’ that he had been about to say.

“So then let’s get going…” Marinette took his hand and dragged him out the door after her, wanting to get out of this exceedingly embarrassing situation as fast as they possibly could.

Tom and Sabine laughed amongst themselves as they followed behind them after closing and locking the front door. The white limo was awaiting them, and Marinette felt a rush of excitement just at seeing it. A friendly looking man was standing by the door and opened it for them as they neared the limo, and Adrien let Marinette climb in first, then let her parents go in as well, before bringing up the rear. As soon as he was in though, he took a seat next to his girlfriend who was taking in every inch of the interior with eager eyes. “Where to?” The driver called back once he had gotten into the front seat and buckled up.

“Back to my house, we need to drop something off,” Adrien told him, glancing at the backpack Marinette had set on the floor between her feet.

“No problem.” The driver started the limo and soon they were off.

Marinette sat back in her seat, enjoying the cool breeze from the air conditioner and the soft classical music playing from the speakers. Adrien was watching her with a small smile, still struck by how beautiful she looked right now. He always thought his Lady was beautiful, that went without saying, but this was even more so then normal. This was simply breath-taking.

When they stopped a short while later, he had to break himself out of his thoughts to take her
backpack and clambered out of the back seat even before the limo driver had gotten out. Once he bounded up the stairway and opened the front door he set it just inside, then quickly shut and locked it again to dash back to limo. The driver had opened the door for him and Adrien ducked back inside, told the driver to head to the hall now, and then they were off again.

The trip to the hall went by quickly, and when they arrived, Marinette could see people staring at the limo through the window. She could feel butterflies coming back, but as Adrien took her hand and laced their fingers together, she felt less nervous. When the driver opened the door next to her, she stepped outside with Adrien following close behind her, trying not to flush when she felt dozens of gazes following their movements.

“Damn!” Alya was suddenly at her side as Tom and Sabine were now getting out of the back seat. “You didn’t tell me you guys were coming in a limo!”

“My Father had one booked and paid for, so even though he’s not coming, I figured it would be such a shame to let it go to waste.” Adrien told her with a grin.

“If I had known that I would’ve stayed at your place!” Alya joked as the group of them made their way towards the front doors of the hall.

Nino was waiting for them there. He wore a maroon collared shirt and black slacks, and looked a little forlorn to be with the state of his cap-less head. “Are you sure I can’t go back and get my hat?” He asked Alya once she was close enough.

“Yes Nino, I’m really sure.” Alya looked like she had said this before already while she patted Nino’s shoulder affectionately. “You look fine.”

“But my head feels naked…” He muttered as they walked inside.

They were directed into a larger room then they had been in this morning, as the photographer was using the room from earlier now. This one had been transformed to hold dozens of tables encircled with four chairs each, a long table at the back covered in plates and food-warmers awaiting to be laid with the upcoming meal, and a decent-sized dance floor in the corner.

Alya’s mother was sitting at one table with her sisters, so Alya would be sitting with Nino. The tables were already filling up, so the closest one Marinette could get to them was still several away. She sat down and unrolled her napkin to take out her cutlery, while Adrien took the seat at her right, Sabine went on her left and Tom was across from her. It was near the middle of the room, so they had a good view of everything around them.

Including the sight of Chloe parading around from table to table, looking every inch like she was the royalty she made out to be tonight. Her big, puffy ball gown was a shimmering gold color, strapless with a white lace section from the chest to neck and over her back. There was a white silk ribbon tied in a bow around her waist and she had matching elbow-length gloves. Her hair was set in flowing waves around her face, and to top it all off there was even a sparkling crystalline tiara sitting on top of her head. “I don’t even want to imagine how much that dress cost.” Marinette whispered to Adrien, who chuckled.

After a while of chatting amongst themselves, Alya and Nino came over to suggest Marinette and Adrien come with them to get a group photo taken together by the photographer, so the four of them headed off to the other room. They didn’t have to wait in line too long, as the photographer was a cheerful young woman who was good at keeping an eye on the time. When it was their turn, she took a normal picture for them and suggested they take another, more fun one. So Alya pretended to pull on Marinette’s hair while Adrien held Nino in a loose headlock, and the photographer was
trying not to laugh while she snapped the second photo.

They each left their email addresses with her so they could all receive digital copies of the pictures, then went back to the room holding their banquet and dance. Almost all the tables were filled now, as it was closing in on five, so they headed off to their respective seats. Marinette peered around and noticed Chloe was sitting down next to the same dark-haired man she had seen on her phone earlier, so that must’ve been Pierre. He was listening to her talk with a small smile, looking genuinely happy to be there with her.

Which made Marinette smile too. Because not only did it mean Chloe would be off her back, she really was honestly glad she had found someone who liked her. Who knows, maybe even loved her. She did hope that was the case, because everyone, even Chloe, deserved to find their soul mate.

And Marinette should know, as she was enjoying every second of even just sitting next to hers.
I'm terrible! I'm making you all wait for the smut for one more day! xD There's a logical reason for it, though. I knew that once I got to the scene we've all been waiting for, it would be long enough to be a chapter on its own. And I didn't want to cut it short to fit it in here. So that's why it's not debuting until tomorrow. But I promise, I've made it worth the wait! This upcoming smut chapter is longer then usual for a very, very good reason! ;) Anyway, please enjoy, and prepare yourself for the grandest of tea parties tomorrow!

The Mayor found himself a microphone to announce the banquet was about to begin as staff members were bringing out large trays of food to set on the long table. Once everything had been laid out, they were letting three tables go up at a time to fill their plates, so it was a little while before it was time for Marinette’s table. When it was their turn, they made their way over, and even before they were next to the feast, the aromas were making Marinette’s mouth water. Everything looked very delicious, and she tried to take a little bit of everything while at the same time not making her plate too top-heavy and impossible to walk back with.

She dug in as soon as she was back at their table, and the food was just as tasty as it looked and smelled. Which wasn’t much of a surprise, considering the caliber of chefs the restaurant in Le Grand Paris employed that had made it. The room was filled with contented chatter amongst the tables, and the food made a steady disappearance. Though Marinette wanted to go up for seconds (the food was that good), she wanted to save room for dessert more. Tom had more then enough room to fit both, however, so he joined the several other attendees heading back to the long table for round two.

There was about a ten minute break after the last person had gone up for seconds before the remaining food was pulled away. After half an hour more went by to allow for some digestion, dessert was set out. The same system was used to get fill dessert plates, and once it was time for Marinette’s table to go, Tom was the first one in line from their group. Marinette had an amused smile as she fell into step right behind her father.

When she felt a tap on her shoulder, she looked back to see Adrien there. “How much of the dance do you want to stick around for?” He asked.

“Is someone getting impatient?” Marinette teased quietly.

“Very funny.” Adrien refused to admit to that truthfully being the majority of the reason for his question. “I want to know so I knew when to phone the limo driver.”

“I would like to be able to have a slow dance with you,” She told him honestly.

A slow dance with the woman of his dreams? That could certainly be arranged. “Fair enough.” Adrien conceded with a smile.

“But other then that, as soon as I get to have my one slow dance, I’m fine with leaving.” Marinette said.
Adrien made a mental note to talk with the DJ to play a slow song as soon as the dance began. “Deal.”

They got their desserts and headed back to their table, joining up with Sabine, who hadn’t had room for dessert, and Tom, who had his plate piled high. Shortly after he was finished, Adrien excused himself to go to the washroom. But Marinette noticed him head straight for the man setting up equipment by the dance floor, and talked with him for a moment or two before heading out of the room in the direction of the washrooms. She knew exactly what he had been doing and was highly entertained, and even though she was very tempted to say something about it when he came back and sat down, she decided against it.

Because she certainly didn’t have a problem with ducking out of the dance early.

After everyone’s desserts had been devoured and the remaining selections had been pulled from the long table, there was a short break as they set up for the music was being finished. The DJ announced the dance had officially begun as soon as the last of his equipment was good to go, and that corner of the room was immediately filled with eager graduates as a fast song came on. Adrien looked slightly perturbed by the song of choice, and Marinette just grinned to herself as they both elected to stay seated for the time being.

It was another three songs before a slow one was played. As soon as the notes started to drift from the speakers, Adrien immediately turned to her and somehow managed to get up casually from his chair (and not jump out of it). “May I have this dance?” He queried as he held out his hand to her.

Marinette’s grin widened as she took his hand. “Why, I’d be honored.”

He started pulling her along behind him as soon as she had gotten to her feet. She knew her parents were watching them in amusement, but she didn’t mind. As soon as they reached the dance floor Adrien slid his arms around her waist, and she let hers rest comfortably behind his neck. Several other couples were there already, and more continued to join them as they swayed to the beat.

Resting her head against his shoulder, Marinette closed her eyes. This felt just as perfect as she had always imagined a slow dance with Adrien would be. When it ended just a few minutes later, she felt a little sad it was over already, but when she opened her eyes and looked up at him, the look of barely-concealed excitement on his face helped erase her slight disappointment.

They left the dance floor behind them as the next song came on and returned to their table. “I’m going to call the limo driver and see when it works best for him to come pick us all up,” Adrien announced once they arrived.

“Okay, let us know when we need to get ready for.” Sabine told him and Adrien nodded, then headed out of the room so it would be quieter to make the phone call that Marinette knew to actually be telling the driver to drive over now.

When Adrien came back, he told them the driver just so happened to be in the area and therefore would be stopping by shortly, so they gathered their things and made their leave. Marinette managed to spot Alya on the way and waved, her best friend giving her a wave back as well as a discreet wink and a thumbs-up. They waited by the front entrance to the hall for not long at all before the limo driver arrived, who greeted them cheerfully as he opened up the back door for them. The four of them climbed inside and Adrien told him to head for the Dupain-Cheng bakery once the driver had gotten into his seat, and off they went.

Marinette could already feel her heart rate starting to quicken during the ride. When they arrived at her home, it felt odd not to be getting out with her parents, but at the same time, it was exhilarating as
well. “See you on Monday, Marinette.” Tom said as he and Sabine waved to her through the window, and she waved back before sitting straight against her seat as the limo sped off towards the last stop of the night.

The Agreste Mansion.

The closer they got to their final destination, the more her earlier excitement was turning inevitably to nervousness. When they arrived, her heartbeat was going double-time, especially as she was getting out of the back seat behind Adrien and heard the limo driver quietly asking him, “Was that fast enough, sir?”

“That was perfect, thank you.” Adrien dug into his pocket to bring out his wallet and took out a hefty tip to hand to him.

The driver looked pleasantly surprised. “Any time. You’re very welcome.” He happily accepted the tip, then wished them a good evening and drove away.

Since Marinette had already started walking up the front steps, Adrien hurried to catch up with her. ‘Breathe, Marinette! Breathe!’ She told herself, as the anxiety was trying very hard to get the best of her as Adrien unlocked the door. To try and distract herself, she let her eyes wander over the interior as they walked inside and took off their shoes. Adrien locked the door behind them before he grabbed her backpack from where he had set it earlier, then took her hand with a smile and started leading her forward.

“Plagg, let’s go to the kitchen.” Tikki had phased through Marinette’s purse as they were taking the stairs, and he soon appeared out of Adrien’s suit pocket.

“I told Adrien to buy your favorite cookies for you! It was all my idea!” Plagg boasted proudly, making Tikki laugh.

“Oh you did, did you?”

“Absolutely!”

“That’s so strange, because Marinette told me Adrien emailed her about cookies and didn’t mention that.”

“Well that’s because…uh…there’s a good reason for that, I swear.”

“Do tell.” Tikki was grinning as she started floating toward the kitchen and Plagg quickly followed after her while chattering away, leaving Marinette and Adrien alone to finish the trip to Adrien’s bedroom.

He flicked on the lights as they entered, setting her backpack down by the end of his bed. When he turned, he saw her still standing just within the doorway, staring out the windows and absently rubbing the back of her hand. “Princess?” He called to her, making her look over in mild surprise, as if she had been deep in thought.

“Sorry.” She walked over to him with a sheepish smile.

“Don’t be.” Adrien sat down on the edge of the mattress, and she did as well. “We’re going to do whatever you want right now.”

“Thank you.” Marinette was feeling glad he was so understanding, but also feeling very frustrated at her nerves.
“I mean it. No matter what it is.” He insisted. “Even if that turns out to be something like counting dust bunnies.”

That made her giggle, and he was glad, because hopefully it meant she was starting to relax. “I don’t have a burning desire to count dust bunnies tonight, so you can officially cross that off the list.”

“Consider it done.” Adrien took her hand and gave it a reassuring squeeze. “You tell me what you want to do, and we’ll go from there.”

Marinette paused. “I do want to be able to wash all this makeup off.”

“Of course, go ahead.” He pressed a kiss to her forehead before she stood, then watched her walk into his bathroom and closed the door.

Inwardly screaming at herself as it clicked shut behind her, Marinette massaged her forehead in frustration. She needed to focus. Her purse was left hanging on the doorknob as she went to the sink and turned on the warm water. Quickly washing off all the makeup and patting her face dry with a towel, she studied her reflection in the mirror. This wasn’t going to be the first time they were going to be together in a physical sense, after all. So she really shouldn’t be so nervous. Though she wanted to take tonight a step further then they had gone previously, she didn’t want that one detail get in the way of things. But, speaking of past rendezvous, she hesitated behind the door as she let her thoughts to start to wander. Maybe this would help her feel more relaxed.

Her mind drifted back to the first such occasion, the night of their ice cream date and how proud she had felt of what she had been able to do for him…

Then to the very next night when he repaid her, and how amazed she had been when he had been so willing to do so…

Next they went to the rainy Tuesday when they had discovered they had fallen for each other on the same day, which led to an afternoon of teasing, and decidedly more in the evening…

And last but certainly not least, most recently was the needy, desperate culmination of her over-charged hormones last week.

She could feel her nerves were losing their hold as heat was drifting over her body now, and that made her sigh with relief. Even if she had to bring back the idea of baby steps, Marinette had not waited this long for this good of a chance to let it go to waste. So she buckled down hard on the last of her anxiety and opened the door.

“Feel better?” Adrien asked, meaning to have the makeup off her face.

With a hint of a grin starting to appear, Marinette meant something completely different as she replied, “Much, actually.”
Marinette sat down next to Adrien at the end of the bed, resting her head on his shoulder. “Can you believe we’re finally done?” She wanted to continue to work on building her confidence, and doing more talking would give her the time she needed.

“It feels great.” Adrien put his arm around her. “It’s going to be a lot easier to balance things like patrol without having to worry about attendance at school.”

“Yeah, no kidding.” Marinette agreed. “All the teachers must’ve thought I had the weakest bladder in history with all the extended trips to the bathroom over the years.” Adrien laughed, and just the sound alone made her feel more at ease. So she decided it was time for the next step. “Do you mind if I take off my shrug?”

“Not at all.” Adrien felt her move from his shoulder and watched her slide off her shrug, spying the now visible white straps of her bra with interest.

She noticed this, and felt her confidence surge as she smirked. “You’re staring.”

“Am not.” He made no moves to look away, however.

Smirking wider now, Marinette moved so she could crawl onto his lap. “Well if you’re going to be staring, you might as well have a better view.”

Adrien was happy to see the current look over her face – amused, flirtatious, and no longer nervous. “And what do I need to give in exchange for this generosity?”

“Hmm…this should do…” Marinette set her arms comfortably behind his neck as she leaned in to kiss him. His hands found their way to her hips, grasping them lightly over the fabric of her dress. They both wanted to take their time with this though, so they let it build slowly, with each subsequent kiss gaining a little more fire.

Finally parting to take in a proper amount of air, there was only a second of pause before Marinette brought her head to the side of his so she could ghost her teeth over his ear. He shivered as she began to trail nibbles down to the lobe, and while she did, Adrien moved his hands down from her hips to brush down her thighs. His fingers found them of her dress and took hold, but he didn’t make any further moves. Pulling back to look at him, Marinette was fairly certain what he was going to ask even before he even opened his mouth. “May I?”
“There’s a zipper, you’ll have to undo that first.” She took his hands and guided them to her back where the zipper sat. Slowly, methodically, Adrien pulled the zipper down. When it was fully undone and he went to grab for her dress, Marinette shook her head and slid off his lap. “I want to do that…” She tugged down her dress and let it collect on the floor around her feet, grinning at how his eyes went as big as saucers at the sight of her fully exposed lingerie set. “Because I have something to show you.”

“Holy…” Adrien couldn’t finish as his voice failed him. She felt quite happy with his response as she picked up her dress and draped it over half of the end-table by his bed. Then she sat back down on his lap, enjoying how he was still staring at her current attire while she started unbuttoning his suit jacket. “Y-You…you look…”

“I thought you were supposed to be a master of words?” She teased as she started pushing his jacket off his shoulders, and he quickly took over the removal.

“Your fault.” He accused, though he looked quite the opposite of angry. Marinette started unbuttoning his shirt next and Adrien trailed his hands along her sides until she was finished, then he discarded it as fast as he had his suit jacket.

Capturing his lips in a passionate kiss, Marinette let her hips start to rock against his and had her hands slide down his back inch by inch. Though she had felt it earlier, this gave her a much better feel for the way his hardness was growing. He moaned into her mouth after she gave a sharper snap of her hips, reaching for the clasp of her bra with palpable need. It was unhooked within seconds and they separated only long enough for her to be able to whip it off her arms, before they were back at it again and now letting their tongues twist together as well.

He leaned back and pulled her with him, his back touching the cool sheets and her torso pressed to his. Adrien’s fingers found their way to her chest easily and circled over her nipples, making her gasp. Then in one quick move, he had rolled them so she was the one against the covers now. Still playing with her breasts, he began to pepper kisses down over her neck, earning a breathy sigh from his love. Before he could move down her body any more, she was grabbing for his pants, undoing the belt and unbuttoning them effortlessly. While sliding down the zipper, she took care to let her hand hover teasingly close over his bulge.

Adrien’s ministrations stopped as he froze at the delightfully devilish sensation, she chuckled beneath him. “Stand up,” She whispered, and he obediently did as he was told so she could sit up and grasp the waistband. Marinette dragged them down his legs and pressed a delicate kiss to the heated skin waiting under his boxers. His moan was deep and low, furthering her desire for him. Next she took hold of the waistband of his boxers in her teeth and let her fingers hook into the sides to bring them down like his pants. The sound he made this time was something akin to a growl, and just the sound of it ignited several new fires within her as his straining member was finally freed.

She scooted back on the bed to lay her head on the pillow, beckoning him toward her with a single look. Kicking aside his already forgotten pants and boxers, Adrien crawled over and gazed down at her with a mirrored level of hunger. He grabbed for her panties and swiftly pulled them off, kissing her hard once she was fully naked at last. His hand drifted down to her core and when his fingers wandered between her folds, her quiet whimper against his lips made him burn. She bucked against him when he found her bud, breaking the kiss to throw her head back against the pillow.

And oh, she looked so beautiful like this. Curls coming loose and splayed askew, cheeks deeply flushed and chest heaving with each of her shaky breaths. Letting his fingers draw agonizingly slow circles around her opening, he loved how she squirmed. And the way she moaned when he finally let one slide inside her was so deliciously arousing. It was getting very difficult to maintain coherent
thoughts but there was one that repeated over and over within him.

How badly he wanted her, now more then ever.

“My Lady…” He murmured, making her open her hazy eyes. “I’m okay with whatever answer you give me, but if I was to ask if tonight could be the night that…that we…”

“We make love?” Marinette was smiling as she finished his sentence, noting with some amusement his look of mild surprise. “The answer is yes. I had planned on it.”

“You did?” Though on second thought, he should’ve known that by the lingerie set she had been wearing for him.

Marinette’s laugh was soft. “Open my backpack.”

Having to take a second to pull out the memory of where he had left it, Adrien brought back his hand and moved to the end of the bed to grab it. Opening it up and seeing the box of condoms immediately coming into view, his eyes widened a little as he looked back at her. “You really did.”

“Remember there was a present Alya gave me that she said I should show you in private?” She reminded him as he set her backpack down after taking out the box.

“Damn.” Adrien crawled back over to her and set the condoms down next to the pillow for now. His heart was starting to beat a mile a minute as the realization of what this meant really sunk in.

Not only did she want to go all the way tonight, she had prepared for it.

God, he loved her.

“You okay, kitty cat?” Her joking words brought him sharply back to reality.

“Better then okay.” Adrien told her, though his brain was already sifting through some certain ‘research’ he had done online. “If we’re going to do this, I want to make sure I get you as ready as possible. So I want get you off once before we try, because then that should make you be relaxed enough…”

“To make it hurt less, I know.” Marinette gave a nod, having done more then a little fact-gathering of her own. “Either way, I can handle a little pain.”

“We both did our homework for this, I guess.” Adrien allowed himself to grin as he slid his hand back down her body while the other started to knead one of her breasts. “I also read that apparently a lot of women don’t climax during their first time, but I’d like to prove that wrong.”

Before she could say anything more, he pressed his lips to hers. There had been enough words already. He didn’t want to lose another second he could be pleasuring her. His finger found its former place within her slick chasm quickly, a murmur of satisfaction escaping her throat. Feeling certain now that the time for talking was definitively over, he parted from their kiss to adjust his position over her with purpose. He began a leisurely rhythm of bringing his finger in and out as he brought his head to hover over the breast that he hadn’t been attending to with his hand to close his mouth over the nipple. Her back arched beneath him and her fingers dug into the sheets, gripping hard when he started to suck.

The last thing he wanted to do was rush this, though. The longer he could make this take for her, the more powerful her orgasm would become. And therefore, the more ready for him she would be. So it was quite a while before he picked up the pace, and even longer before he attempted to add a second
finger to the mix. It joined the first with ease, and Marinette moaned in desperation when he let them curl slightly within her to brush over a particular spot. Sensing he may have found something important, he did it again, making her writhe and buck hard against his hand.

‘There it is.’ He smirked against her breast. This discovery was definitely going to be utilized later on tonight.

And tomorrow, and the next day…

Gaining more speed with his fingers and switching between her nipples, he noticed Marinette’s legs were starting to shake, hard. Adrien tried separating his fingers inside her channel bit by bit to spread her further as he continued, and soon all of this was too much for her to take any longer. “A-Adrien!” She yelled as she came, the spasms of her body around his fingers keeping them locked in place there for the time being. And the mere thought of how amazing it would feel for that to be happening to his aching manhood instead tried to take away his remaining will power and restraint.

When he was finally able to withdraw his hand as her breathing started to regulate, Adrien went straight for the box of condoms. While she was coming back down to Earth he was deftly tearing open the flaps and grabbing one of the gold packages, ripping into it like a man possessed. Marinette’s eyes opened halfway at the sound and she focused her attention on how he pulled out the rubbery item inside before throwing aside the wrapper without so much as a second glance. Any fatigue she had been feeling evaporated as she couldn’t help but stare as she saw him slowly roll it on over himself, hissing at the coolness touching against his throbbing shaft.

When their eyes locked, he pressed a gentle kiss to her cheek. “Are you sure about this?” Adrien asked quietly.

Marinette just smiled up at him. “Absolutely.”

Her flesh was still hypersensitive so when he brushed his arousal between her slit, she shuddered at even that short contact. When Adrien pressed the head to her opening, she took a deep breath to help mentally prepare herself. He took her hands in his and Marinette grasped them tightly, intertwining their fingers. Then, as slow as he could bear, he started to inch his way into her, pausing every time she grimaced or inhaled sharply. The further he pressed inside, as amazing as it felt for him, the more he started to worry about her. When he hesitated, she gave him a soft word of encouragement to proceed. So, steeling his resolve, he gave one final push to bring himself inside her all the way up to the hilt.

Instantly her eyes squeezed tightly shut as she bit her lip. Adrien covered her throat with soft kisses, whispering soothingly to her in between each one, like to take all the time she needed and how much he loved her. Despite how deliciously hot and perfectly tight she felt around his length, he hated seeing her uncomfortable. So until she was feeling okay again, that was all that mattered to him. That alone was his focus right now.

But because of how diligently he had prepped her earlier, the discomfort between her legs was already easing. And all the affection he was showering her with was helping take her mind off it as well. While the initial bit of ache steadily left her, Marinette’s main thought was how odd of a sensation this was. She felt so full. But not unpleasantly so, thankfully, due to all the careful stretching he had done to her inner walls. Giving a hesitant wriggle of her hips, she delighted at how it good it felt, and also the husky moan it elicited from Adrien. She opened her eyes when he moved away from her neck, and their gazes met. Marinette let go of his hands to grasp his shoulders as she nodded in answer to the question in his eyes. Adrien drew himself back so only the tip remained inside, then pushed forward again with utmost care. When she didn’t look pained by this, he did it again, and then again, until an even tempo began.
His fingers were desperately grabbing for the sheets on either side of the pillow at the all-encompassing bliss from this amount of friction. It was unraveling him. But with a truly superhuman amount of effort, Adrien refused to let go of his self-control because as much as he was enjoying this, he wanted her to enjoy it even more. He could hear her beginning to moan beneath him, but in his caution he only let himself go faster by just a hair, until she gave a needy roll of her pelvis to meet his thrust.

Clearly she was ready for and wanted more, so if that was the case, he was more then happy to give it to her.

Now letting himself pick up speed in earnest, Adrien could feel his hold on reality beginning to slip away. But he would not let himself go just yet, and managed to pry his fingers open and let go of the sheets with one hand. Because he still had something that he wanted to disprove. He managed to find the bundle of nerves at the top of her core, and when he did she gasped, shuddering at his touch.

Before this development, Marinette had been starting understand why most women didn’t plateau on their first time. It felt wonderful, yes, but she didn’t think it would be quite enough to send her over the edge. And then Adrien began to play with her nub amongst his thrusts, and everything changed. She was overwhelmed with pure electricity, and a second surge was quickly building in her anew.

Rolling it between his thumb and forefinger, he could hear her crying out for him and knew this was working. And working fast, by the looks of it. The knowledge of his earlier discovery suddenly came back and he angled his next thrust purposefully, though the first attempt missed. But he tried again, and at the same time he was rubbing a firm circle against her bud, he managed to hit her inner spot.

And Marinette screamed.

Her world became bright lights and mind-blowing pleasure as this orgasm hit her even harder then the last one. And the way her channel clamped onto him brought Adrien over his own crest and sent him tumbling into the vortex right along with her. Calling her name like it was his lifeline, his body shook with the intensity of his climax as hers continued to happen all around him. Her inner contractions milked him dry, and he collapsed against her as the last of his energy was officially gone.

For a long time the only sound remaining in the room were their mutual panting breaths. Eventually Adrien found the strength to prop himself up and roll off, though Marinette whimpered a little at the loss of contact as he slid out of her. Exhaustion was taking over her as she looked through half-lidded eyes while he pulled the filled condom off his softening member and wiped himself off with a tissue, then dropped both into a garbage by his bed. She didn’t remember a trash can being there the times she had been here years ago, but she hadn’t really looked the last two times she had come over. So it may have been purchased recently, although that wasn’t the thought that was prevailing right now.

The prevailing thought was that regardless of when and how that garbage turned up, she was glad it was there, since she was certain it would be a good place to have one from now on.

He laid back against the covers heavily, and she curled up against him. “Shower?” He managed to croak, his voice having become beyond raspy, but she shook her head.

“Tomorrow. Tired. Sleep.” Marinette felt his chuckle instead of saw it as she had already closed her eyes by now. The warm blanket of slumber was enveloping her quickly but there was something more she wanted to say. And though forming a sentence was difficult with the current state of her brain, she managed a sleepy, and thoroughly contented, “I love you, Adrien.”
“I love you too, Marinette.” Adrien kissed the top of her head and yawned, his eyes soon falling shut as well. Within seconds their breathing slowed into a matching rhythm as they were swept away into the realm of sleep, and neither one of them stirred all night.

Such a long-awaited union used up a lot of energy, after all.
Chapter 55

Chapter Notes

For the first time ever, there is smut below this note for the second day in a row!

BEWARE, THOSE WITH VIRGIN MINDS! TAKE YOUR LEAVE NOW BEFORE YOUR EYES BURST INTO FLAMES!

But for the rest of my dirty-minded friends, I've prepared another special treat for us! ;) But first, I just wanted to say, I was very happy to see all the positive feedback for yesterday's chapter! I worked really hard on it and was super happy with it, so I'm so glad you all loved it as much as I do. <3 Anyway, I hope you all enjoy the weekend of smut's tea party: round two! =P

It was Adrien who woke first. His eyes fluttered open slowly and he still felt fairly groggy as he stared up at the ceiling. But when he turned his head to see Marinette’s fast asleep and still naked body next to him, he was suddenly wide awake. All the memories of last night came flooding back and made him smile.

Because it had been absolutely perfect.

To him, there was a big difference between having sex and making love. Having sex was something more like a one-night stand, where it was just an act fulfilling a need with no real meaning behind it. But making love was the culmination of deeply felt emotions between two people who meant the world to each other. And that was what he wanted to be able to do with his Lady. So last night, when she herself had said the words ‘make love’ when he had been trying to find the right words to say himself, he was absolutely overjoyed. She may not have realized it then, but that choice of phrase had made him so, so happy.

Adrien slid his arm around Marinette and gently kissed her cheek. She stirred a little, but she didn’t wake. He kissed her cheek again and continued to cover the side of her face in kisses until her eyes eventually fluttered open. “You know, I was trying to sleep.” She murmured with a bit of a grin. “Are you supposed to be my alarm?”

“If I am, then I think my wake-up call is far superior to other alarms.” Adrien was rewarded with the sound of her soft giggle. “Come on, we should probably go and shower.” He sat up and stretched with a yawn. As he got out of bed, he saw the box of condoms had fallen from its former place by the pillow to the floor, so while she wasn’t looking, he stealthily took one into his hand before heading to the bathroom.

One could never be too prepared.

“I’m getting up, I swear.” Marinette didn’t make any immediate moves though and didn’t actually roll over until Adrien was almost to the bathroom. Noticing with some relief that she wasn’t feeling overly sore from all of last night’s activities, she had a bit of smirk as she allowed herself to stare at Adrien’s bare ass while he walked in front of her before she got out of bed.

Following after him, she could hear him turn on the water as she entered. She went to the mirror and
gaped at the sight of her hair. Yesterday’s curls looked abysmal now, pointing every which way and
the hairspray making them crunch slightly under her fingers when she ran them through the strands.
“I look like Medusa.” She shook her head slightly to make what was left of her crazy curls bounce to
and fro.

“That makes sense a lot of sense, actually, because you do have a habit of turning part of me to
stone.” Adrien joked while he was stepping into the shower, making Marinette burst out laughing.

“That was terrible!”

“Then why did you laugh?”

“Shut up.”

Marinette came into the shower and let the water stream down her body, sighing contentedly as it
gently warmed her skin. Adrien passed her the soap while getting to work on washing himself down,
and Marinette took it to do the same. They stole subtle glances at each other in between cleaning
themselves off, and the air in the bathroom was starting to grow warm for reasons other then the
running shower.

After she had thoroughly washed the hairspray from her hair, she conditioned next and rinsed that
out as well. But when she moved out from under the jet of water and went to get out of the shower,
she felt his arms slip around her waist. “And where do you think you’re going?” Adrien murmured
in her ear as he drew her close, and this let Marinette feel his hardness pressing against her.

Which just made her smirk. “No where yet, I assume?”

“No of course not. You were the one who said there’s lots of fun to be had in this big shower.” He
reminded her, kissing the back of her shoulder.

She turned in his grasp and when she did, Adrien moved her to press her back against the wall off to
the side of the stream of water before kissing her deeply. Her hand wandered down to lightly run
over his shaft and he shivered, and he did so again when Marinette let her fingers clasp around him.
He quickly followed her lead so she spread her legs slightly to allow him better access to the tiny
treasure awaiting him there. She licked at his lips and he immediately obliged her request, their
tongues joining together as the pleasuring began.

They did have to break apart to breathe eventually, though it wasn’t long before they were kissing
again. When Adrien slipped a finger within her, Marinette moaned into his mouth and was glad the
wall braced her, especially as he started a rhythm with it while still attending to her button with his
thumb. Soon he added a second finger, and she had a pretty good idea what he was preparing her
for. She increased the pace of her rubbing hand in response, and when she let her hand flick over his
tip, Adrien had to pull back from the kiss to gasp for air. “Love bug,” He whispered, lust burning in
his eyes. “Can I…try something?”

“Anything and everything.” Marinette replied honestly as she kissed his cheek.

After taking a moment to be touched by her level of trust in him, Adrien slid his hand back and she
did the same with her own. Ducking out of the shower, he went to grab the golden package he had
left behind the faucet of the sink, tore it open and rolled the condom on as fast as he could. Marinette
was smirking at him now as she watched him return after sidestepping the puddles that his hasty exit
while still being drenched had splattered the floor with. She moved a little further away from the
water while keeping her back pressed to the wall of the shower in preparation for whatever devious
idea he had that was going to happen next.
Once he was close to her again, he leaned slightly to cup the back of her right knee, pulling lightly so her
foot lifted from the floor and her leg bent accordingly. Holding it up until it was at waist-level, Marinette
quickly got the idea and hooked her leg around his hip. Pausing to look at her and get a nod to assure him
this was okay, Adrien guided his arousal to her opening and began to carefully slide into her.

Enjoying her murmurs of pleasure as he drew himself in all the way, he then brought his hands under
her rear and lifted her into the air. She was a bit surprised, but that was more then drowned out by
how sinfuly exciting this felt. Thank God for years of akuma-fighting making them both strong! Marinette
wrapped her other leg around him and hooked her ankles behind his back, circling her arms around his
shoulders. This position felt very different then the one from last night had, bringing him in so deep. Now
that she didn’t have to worry about waiting for pain to go away, she realized how truly perfectly he fit inside
her channel. ‘Like we were made for each other,’ She thought with a bit of a smile.

When Adrien adjusted his hold on her and therefore her position over his length, a lovely shiver ran
down her spine. Noticing her reaction, he smirked and brought her up and down in his arms, his own
soft moan at the sensation being lost under her much louder, very breathless one. “Like that?” He asked,
starting to bounce her over him before she could reply.

Because of this, Marinette’s only response was to squeal and bury her head in his shoulder. The way
this position made him rub against her inner walls differently then last night was sending shockwaves
through her already, and their tempo had barely begun. The pace built quickly, however, with Marinette
hanging onto Adrien for dear life as her body was speeding toward overload in no time. And her desperate
whimpers and whines were scorching fire through his veins in tandem with the amazing heat and friction,
so his peak was drawing near as well.

But like last night, Adrien didn’t want to finish before Marinette got to have her release. He wouldn’t
be able to reach her nub in this position, so instead he used his knowledge of her other sweet spot.
Not only did he get it the first time he tried, he was able to find it fairly regularly after that with the
angle this gave him. So by the fourth time he hit it, the pleasure was just too much for her and she
was swept away, her yell muffled against his shoulder. Her walls gripped him hard as her orgasm
took her over, and his world faded away into ecstasy shortly after.

They were still for several minutes, with the water drumming a steady cadence on the floor of the
shower covering up the sound of their deep gulps of air. Finally Marinette lifted her head to gaze at
Adrien with slightly hazy and deeply satisfied eyes. “I should’ve known your idea would be
something kinky,” She murmured while unhooking her ankles from around his waist.

He laughed as he set her feet back onto the floor and pulled himself out from within her, kissing her
forehead. “So I’m going to guess that means you liked it, even though you never really said one way
or the other when I asked earlier.”

“Like you even let me have a chance to talk.” Marinette teased, to which he just winked at her before
making a second trip out of the shower to drop the condom into the garbage. “We have to wash off
all over again now, you know.”

“Oh no, what a tragedy!” Adrien grinned as he returned to the shower because she was rolling her
eyes at him while grabbing the soap.

They cleaned themselves much quicker this time, and they were both glad that the Agreste Mansion
had such a large water heater as the warmth of the stream from the showerhead never wavered. At
last they were finished, so Marinette finally turned off the water and the young couple stepped out
one after another, dodging all the puddles on the floor to grab themselves some towels. Adrien
dropped a few towels onto the mosaic of puddles to soak them up before drying off, tying it around his waist once he was finished. Marinette did the same and enjoyed the way he watched her still-bared chest bounce with each step she took to the bathroom door.

Marinette went to her backpack and took out her hair brush, running it through her damp locks with ease before she pulled out her clothes. “Do you have to wear something?” Adrien pretended to pout as she slipped on her bra, making her laugh.

“I’m starving and want to go get something to eat, but I’m not parading around your gigantic house naked, so yes, I do.” Marinette dropped her towel to put on clean panties, and threw the fluffy fabric at him when she saw he was staring. “Not again, kitty cat. We need food, and I have no idea where your kitchen is. So get dressed.”

“If you insist.” Adrien replied with a dramatic sigh. She put on a tank top and shorts as he grabbed himself some fresh boxers, but once he pulled on some sweatpants over top of them, he made no move to grab a shirt as he went for the bedroom door.

“You’re cheating.” She said while walking quickly to catch up with him, holding his hand once they were side-by-side.

“I have no idea what you could possibly mean by that.” He somehow managed to keep a straight face while saying that, but he did have the faintest of smirks as he led her down to the kitchen.

When they arrived they could see Plagg and Tikki sitting on top of the expensive-looking refrigerator. “Hello you two!” Tikki called down once she saw them enter, waving as Plagg gave them a glance over his shoulder.

“Are you guys done yet?” His question earned a light smack from Tikki.

“Best to stay safe and steer clear of my room until she goes home tomorrow.” Adrien advised and had to swallow a chuckle when his kwami groaned.

Even Marinette was smiling as she went to the fridge and opened it wide. Her eyebrows arched a little when she saw the sheer level of food that was inside. “What are you in the mood for?” She asked, glancing back at her boyfriend.

“Other then you?”

“…Seriously?”

“You really should’ve expected that answer. You’re slipping, bugaboo.”

“Just. Pick. Something.”

“I’m fine with whatever you want to have.”

“Now how hard was that to say?” Marinette grabbed some eggs to start to work with, though she couldn’t hide her amusement.

Above them, Plagg was about to say something himself but Tikki quickly took the piece of camembert next to him and expertly shoved it into his mouth. He gave her a bit of a frown and she just kissed his cheek, making him blush deeply and dutifully finish his cheese in silence.
Chapter 56

Chapter Notes

After two days in a row of smut, smut, and more smut, it's time for some fluff to make an appearance! ^^ I have some days off this week so I'm going to have my nose to the grind-stone, writing like crazy. Because of how much I had to work the last two weeks I'm only ahead by six chapters now, and I really want to be further ahead. So if you need me, I'll be nose-to-iMac for most of the week. xD Anyway, enjoy everyone!

Adrien sliced them some fruit while Marinette made up enough scrambled eggs for two. Once their food was ready and they had gotten themselves tall glasses full of apple juice, he led her to the dining room. They sat down next to each other to eat and this was quite the joy for Adrien, as he more often then not ate alone. Not only did he have company at the table this morning, but he was getting to share breakfast with his beloved.

And he didn’t care how big and goofy his grin was.

“Are you even eating?” Marinette teased, making him blink down at his barely-touched plate.

“Mostly enjoying the moment.” Adrien confessed while grabbing his spoon.

“Aww, you’re so cute.” Marinette giggled when his face went pink as he ate his spoonful of eggs.

When they finished eating, Adrien guided them back to the kitchen to quickly wash off their dishes. Plagg and Tikki were no longer on top of the fridge, and must have roamed off elsewhere. After the dishes were cleaned, dried, and put away, it was straight up to Adrien’s room again. Marinette grabbed her toothbrush from her backpack and went to the bathroom to brush her teeth, Adrien doing the same once she had finished. “Do you want to see what’s on TV?” He asked once he emerged from the bathroom, already heading to the couch so Marinette followed behind him.

“Yes.” Marinette sat down as Adrien turned it on. Grabbing the remote, he flipped through show after show until stumbling upon a lighthearted comedy movie that made her eyes light up when she saw it. “I love this one!”

“Then that’s what we’re watching.” Adrien took the spot next to her on the couch, slipping his arm around her as she snuggled close.

Just under two hours later, the credits started to roll. A voice-over from an announcer advertised that the sequel was going to be up next, and one puppy-eyed look from Marinette was more then enough for Adrien to keep the TV set to this station. Somewhere around the middle of this second movie, Adrien started affectionately playing with Marinette’s hair, which was still hanging loosely around her face, and she sighed contentedly.

Could everyday be like this?

It could, if they were living together. But Marinette didn’t want to rush Adrien’s father, even though she was positive her parents would be fine with it no matter when they decided to eventually move in somewhere. Because if too much happened too fast, she was fairly certain Gabriel Agreste would not
approve. And she didn’t want to come between Adrien and his father, especially with what little relationship it sounded like they had.

She was brought out of her thoughts when Adrien stretched back against the couch while the closing scene of the sequel was fading to black. “Do you want to watch something?” Marinette asked. “I’ve gotten two movies now, so it’s your turn.”

“Honestly Princess, I’m happy just getting to sit here with you.” Adrien told her while using the remote to turn off the TV.

Now it was her turn to have her cheeks flush. “Me too.” She said with a smile, resting her head on his shoulder.

The room was quiet a while, as the two simply relished in each other’s company. It was eventually Adrien who broke the silence. “I just realized we never went on patrol last night.”

“Well, I’m pretty sure that since your house is still standing that means the city didn’t burn to the ground in our absence, so I think it’s safe to say they survived one night without us.” Marinette joked.

“I’m just glad we didn’t get interrupted before we could get started, like that time a few weeks ago with the boxing guy.” Adrien shook his head as he recalled the night in question. “I’ve never hated a stranger so much in my entire life.”

Laughing, Marinette thought back to that night too. “You seriously looked hysterical when you showed up after your ‘swim’.”

“Yeah, yeah.” Adrien rolled his eyes, though he was grinning.

“I can understand why though. I may not have shown it as much as you did, but I was feeling pretty pissed off myself.” Marinette said. “Getting cut off in the middle like that is such a tease.”

“And not the good kind of teasing, either.” Adrien gave a waggle of his eyebrows.

“Speaking of which…” Marinette began to smirk. “I’m recalling a series of emails earlier this week, wherein you told me to tease you whenever I want, and I said that would be a promise for the weekend.”

“I also recall those emails.” Adrien tried not to look too excited by this line of conversation, but wasn’t hiding it very well.

Which was quite amusing to Marinette. “And it just so happens to be the weekend.”

“That it does.”

“Just an observation I had.”

“An observation?”

“Yeah. It’s too bad, I’ve already had a shower and a half today. Such a shame, really.”

“Don’t you dare...”

“Teasing comes in many forms, kitty cat.”

Oh, how she vexed him. “This is not what I had in mind.”
There was a triumphant look on her face as she got up from the couch. “Come on, I bet with all those screens you have set up for it, your computer would be amazing for playing video games, and I wouldn’t be surprised if you have a pretty extensive collection too.”

Swallowing a sigh of exasperation, Adrien got up to trudge after his girlfriend, who was not even bothering to hide how very pleased with herself she was. “Hey, did you notice my computer buddy?” He asked once he got closer to her, gesturing to the large desk.

Marinette hadn’t, but when she went closer to get a better look, she noticed that the pony she had bought for him laying underneath one of the monitors. “That’s a perfect spot!” She patted the stuffed animal’s nose affectionately. “I was wondering where you were going to keep it!”

“Kept me company while I was studying this last week.” Adrien said, and Marinette could absolutely picture him with the pony on his shoulder as he studied, which was rather entertaining. “Now, as for my video game collection…”

After browsing through the various titles he had to choose from, they decided to go with the classic Ultimate Mecha Strike III. Neither Marinette or Adrien had played it in a while, but not only was it a great game in itself, it was very nostalgic to them and close to their hearts. After all, it was first video game they ever played together so many years ago. That made it an easy choice, so once Adrien had gone and grabbed Marinette a second chair from another room, that was the game they sat down to. They were a bit rusty at first, as it had been ages since either had played, but it was fun to revisit such a sentimental game for them.

Not necessarily the fun Adrien had had in mind, but still.

They played several matches, and the winner kept switching between the two of them. There would be times Marinette was getting ahead in wins, then Adrien would snatch a few from under her nose. It went back and forth like this the rest of the afternoon, until suppertime was upon them and Marinette’s stomach was beginning to growl ever louder as the minutes ticked by. “Should we stop here?” She glanced over at Adrien as the loading screen between matches was displayed once more, as it was awaiting for someone to start of a new match. “I’m getting hungry.”

“We can’t leave now, we’re tied!” Adrien waved his controller at the screen for emphasis, drawing a chuckle from the woman beside him.

“All right, one more match, to be the tie-breaker.” Marinette then got a mischievous twinkle in her eye. “And how about we raise the stakes a little?”

“Oh?” Adrien looked intrigued.

“If I win, I want you to give me a back massage tomorrow morning before I go home.” Marinette said.

“Just a back massage?” He grinned when she rolled her eyes. “Okay, fine.”

“And if you win,” She was smirking now. “You get to pick what we do instead.”

“Can I pick kinky things?”

“I think it’s safe to say you could, if you win.”

“Hot damn! Deal, deal!” Adrien was already clicking the new game button.

“Hey, wait for me!” Marinette wasn’t too fazed by his early start, however.
Because she *wanted* to lose.

Marinette didn’t want it to be an easy battle though, so she wouldn’t let him have a runaway victory. She fought back with a little less fervor then she usually would, so just as she had planned, Adrien did defeat her in the end, and he positively whooped with joy. “Aha! Beat you!” He beamed, and Marinette did her best not to smile and instead look at least mildly disappointed she lost.

“Well, there goes my massage.” She sighed with as much pretend frustration as she could muster.

“I’m more then happy to give you one some other time, since I happen to be a gentleman.” Adrien grinned as he set his controller down on the desk. “But it’s going to have to wait.”

“That’s fine.” Marinette put her controller next to his. “Fair is fair.”

Adrien stood up and she did as well, and once she was standing he whispered in her ear, “So tomorrow morning, you’re *all mine.*”

A wonderful shiver went through her at his words. She took his hand and lightly kissed his cheek. “I suppose I am. Now let’s go get something to eat.”
Chapter 57

Chapter Notes

I enjoy this chapter. xD Our favorite dorks being dorks, and some more fluff for good measure. =P Because you can never have too much fluff, LOL! On a side note, I was able to get some of the writing done I wanted to today, and have officially passed page 300 in the Word document! I'm so happy! <3 Hope you all enjoy!

Tikki and Plagg were back on top of the fridge again when Marinette and Adrien came into the kitchen, Plagg eating through a mountain of camembert and Tikki working on a chocolate chip cookie version of her own. “Hi again!” Tikki said once she had swallowed her current mouthful. Plagg gave them a distracted wave, but was obviously far more interested in his odiferous pile of cheese.

“Don’t give yourself a stomachache by eating all those at once.” Marinette warned, though she was smiling.

“I’ll be good.” Tikki promised, but was grabbing herself another cookie immediately afterward just the same.

After some debating on what to make for themselves, the young couple decided to go with frying some of the chicken in the fridge to put with some fettuccine they would cover in alfredo sauce. The kitchen chefs had made the pasta and sauce recently, so they would taste far superior to store-bought, and Marinette was getting more and more excited to try it as they were cooking. They got themselves some milk to drink and when everything was done, she took a deep sniff of the mouth-watering aroma as they walked to Adrien’s dining room.

“This smells fantastic!” She gushed while they were taking their seats, once again sitting side-by-side.

“It’s official, we’re amazing cooks.” Adrien announced.

“We haven’t even tried it yet.” Marinette pointed out while she gathered some of the saucy noodles and a slice of chicken on her own spoon.

“A minor formality.” Adrien gave a passive wave of his hand that made her laugh, then they both took a bite from their respective plates which proved it not only tasted as good as it smelled, it may have even tasted better.

They happily devoured their meal, chatting lightly throughout and even as they brought their empty dishes back to the kitchen. Upon arriving, they saw Plagg was snoozing on the fridge and Tikki was gathering some of the camembert wrappers to throw away. She waved at them as they entered and they waved back, then got to work on washing everything they had used for their supper. Plagg slept soundly through the whole thing, and though Marinette was a little surprised by this, Adrien and Tikki, being much more used to Plagg, didn’t look the least bit shocked at all.

Meandering their way back to Adrien’s room, Marinette plopped down onto the couch again as Adrien went to open one of the windows to bring in some of the light breeze that was stirring
outside. “Are we going to head out at the same time tonight?” Marinette asked as the thought suddenly occurred to her.

“I don’t see why not, as long as no one is around to notice.” Adrien replied as he came over to sit a little ways from her on the couch, only to turn and lay his head in her lap, grinning like a Cheshire cat.

The corners of her mouth were turning upward as well. “We should probably do the whole city instead of doing separate halves, since there hasn’t been an akuma attack since Thursday.”

“Sounds good.”

“It’s going to be nice to start patrol together for once. We don’t even really need to go the meeting spot.”

“But we have to, because it’s the perfect place for stars!” Adrien protested.

“Okay, we’ll head there after we’re done, then.” Marinette relented, giggling when Adrien cheered. “It’s just stars.”

“It’s stars with you, so that makes it way better then ‘just stars’.” Adrien said, enjoying seeing her blush.

“You’re such a sap.”

“Truth be told, I’m more of a hopeless romantic, really.”

“You say that like there’s a difference.”

“There is.”

“Like what?”

“If you don’t already know the differences, then alas, you can’t be taught.” Adrien winced when she flicked his forehead, but was chuckling as well. “Ow!”

“How did I fall in love with someone so annoying?” Marinette teased.

“Probably because I’m also devilishly handsome and irresistibly charming.” Adrien received another forehead flick. “Okay, that’s it!” He sat up and grabbed for her hands, making her squeal with laughter and try to wrestle out of his grip.

They eventually ended up with Marinette laying back on the couch with her hands pinned above her head, Adrien’s hold on her wrists firm but still gentle as he was propped over her. The playful air in the room changed, becoming more charged with each second as their gazes met. Before either of them had a second thought they were kissing, Adrien running his free hand along her side and Marinette trembling with heated delight. When they parted, their faces were equally flushed already.

“We still have to go out on patrol,” Marinette whispered, and Adrien nodded.

“I know.” He let go of her hands and sat back, allowing Marinette to sit up again as well. “I just can’t help myself around you sometimes.”

“That’s not necessarily a bad thing.” She was smiling a little. “I feel the same way about you too.”

“See? Irresistibly charming.”
“I can, and will, flick you again.”

“Not if you’re serious about going on patrol tonight, you won’t.”

Rolling her eyes for the umpteenth time, Marinette went to take out her phone to check the time, but realized it wasn’t in the pocket of her shorts. She must’ve left it in her purse last night. Thinking back, she remembered leaving it on the inner doorknob of the bathroom. “I’ll be right back.” Marinette got up from the couch and went to grab it, as it still hung right where she had left it. Opening it and pulling out her phone, she saw the battery was getting low, but was amused by the numerous texts from Alya. She was highly entertained as she walked back to the couch, making up a very short message that consisted of two emoticons: a heart and a smiley face. Knowing Alya, she would want more details, of course, but that was something to talk about with one’s BFF in person. “Can I plug my phone in somewhere?”

“Go ahead, there’s lots of plug-in space behind the computer.” Adrien turned on the couch to watch her grab a charger from her backpack and head to the desk. “Is your battery possibly dying due to being forgotten last night?” He asked cheekily.

“Possibly.” Marinette plugged in her phone and went back to the couch, sitting down next to Adrien again. “I did happen to have much more important things on my mind, after all.”

“Can I ask you something?” Adrien suddenly looked a little nervous as he gazed into her eyes.

“Of course you can.” Marinette cocked her head to the side, a little confused by this.

Adrien bit his lip. “Was it…good, for you?”

Marinette smiled a little. He was always thinking about her. “It absolutely was.”

“Are you sure? I should’ve asked you long ago, I’m really sorry. But with everything else going on this morning, I completely forgot about it and I didn’t think about it again until just now.” Adrien was genuinely concerned while he took hold of her hand. “And I know it still hurt.”

But Marinette just gave his hand a reassuring squeeze and kissed his cheek. “Don’t worry about it. It was beyond amazing, trust me. It did hurt a little at first, yes, but it didn’t stay. Last night was absolutely wonderful, and so was this morning.”

“Really?” Adrien looked like a weight had been lifted from his shoulders. “I was pretty worried about hurting you so I’m really glad you’re okay.” He was starting to blush now. “And I’m especially glad you liked this morning. It may or may not have been one of my fantasies…”

“One of?” Marinette smirked, making him blush more. “So there’s more where that came from?” He gave a small nod. “Good to know.”

“There may or may not be lots more…” Adrien admitted, and Marinette’s smirk grew at his words.

“Perfect.” Marinette patted his knee lightly before standing up. “That means we can alternate trying a few of yours and a few of mine.” She saw his eyes widen as she turned on her heel and headed for the bedroom door. “Come on, we should go find our kwamis.”

“Wait!” Adrien scampered off the couch to follow after her. “What do you mean a few of yours? As in, you have more then one fantasy too? You can’t just leave me hanging like that! **Marinette!**”

She didn’t say another word as she flounced downstairs to the kitchen, spoke only to Tikki and Plagg to tell them it was time to patrol, and was silent again during the trip back upstairs while as
floated behind her while a desperate Adrien trying to pester something out of her. Marinette merely grinned the whole way up to his room, until she at last opened her mouth to say, “Spots on!”

His expression was that of a deep pout as she emerged from the cluster of lights as Ladybug. She giggled and started walking toward the windows, so Adrien just sighed heavily and muttered, “Claws out.” He saw her waiting for him expectantly when the magic around him faded, and trudged over to slide one of the glass panes open. “Sometimes, I really hate you.”

“I doubt that.” Marinette replied sweetly, amused when he rolled his eyes at her.

He paused a moment, looking around to make sure the coast was clear, then took his staff and held it out the window, letting it extend so he could vault himself out and away into the night. Marinette double-checked to make sure there was still no one around, then she unhooked her yo-yo and tossed it high, dropping down from the windowsill and swinging off.

And she was still wearing a broad smile as she did.
Together Marinette and Adrien wound their way through Paris, taking special care to watch out for signs of akuma activity. Though they had to attend to a few would-be fights, attempted break-ins and the like, there were thankfully no hints of any workings from Hawk Moth. So the short-tempered thugs and petty thieves and whatnot may have still out in force, but at least the city was still safe for another night from a certain supernatural villain.

After they had completed the last of their patrol, they headed for the apartment building. They wordlessly went to the center and laid back against the rooftop, curling up against one another to watch the stars once more. It was a warm night, with a few clouds dotting the sky here and there, but there was still a decent view above them. Plus, half of watching the stars was enjoying each other’s company, so even some clouds couldn’t get in the way of that.

“So are you going to tell me more or are you going to keep torturing me?” Adrien glanced down at her as she turned slightly against him, to see her mime locking her lips and throwing away the key. “Torturing me. That’s what I thought.”

Laughing, Marinette rested her head back against his chest again. “It’s much more fun this way. For me, anyway.” She heard him groan at her response and patted his stomach lightly. “Don’t worry, kitty cat, I’m not going to torture you forever. I’m more then happy to share all my fantasies with you.” She cuddled closer to him.

“At least I have something to look forward to, then.” Adrien started running his hand along her arm as usual.

“More then one something, actually.”

“You’re really enjoying this, aren’t you?”

“Yup!”

Adrien couldn’t help but chuckle as he returned his gaze to the stars. He loved holding her in his arms like this, and feeling her warmth pressed against him. When she was with him, he felt complete. He used to only feel that way when he was with Ladybug, but now that he knew Marinette was under the mask, he was able to feel this way so much more. And now that they were officially a couple, their time together would only grow from here. Not just minutes or hours like before. Days, weeks, months, years…he wanted all of it, with her.

He felt her begin to move, and noticed her crawling over him so they would be looking at each other at eye level. “Can I help you?” He grinned.

“Oh, don’t mind me.” She said with a bit of a smile. “I’m just having another one of my ‘I’m so damn happy we’re actually together’ moments right now, so please pardon my staring.”
“If you pardon mine.” Adrien brushed her bangs back gently.

“Fair enough.” Marinette watched him fondly for a few seconds more, then moved to the side so she could get to her feet. “Want to head back?”

“Well, since we’ll be going back to my bedroom, I most certainly do.” Adrien joked while he stood as well. Staffs and yo-ys were brought out, and they began to trip back to the Agreste Mansion. Marinette let him lead the way, because even though she was familiar with the route and didn’t think she would get lost on her own, she enjoyed watching him, especially how his lithe body moved with each jump.

They slipped through the window one at a time once they returned, each releasing their transformations once the pane of glass had been closed. Tikki and Plagg came back into view, with Tikki yawning and Plagg’s stomach audibly growling. The two kwamis floated through the floor together, presumably to the kitchen, which left Marinette and Adrien alone again. “I don’t know about you, but I’m pretty tired.” She told him while walking over to her backpack. “It’s almost like I had some sort of major work-out – actually, more then one work-out – in the last twenty-four hours.”

“You don’t say?” Adrien was pulling off his sweatpants while she grabbed a pair of PJs from her backpack. When he saw them in her hand, he frowned a little. “Aww, come on, you don’t have to wear those.”

A smirk twitching at the corners of her mouth, Marinette set her PJs on the end of the bed as she took off her tank top, and then her shorts. She knew Adrien was watching her as she unhooked her bra, and heard him huff in protest when she picked up her PJ top. “I don’t go to sleep in just my underwear.”

“You could…” Adrien had to duck as she threw her tank top at him. “Hey, I normally wear sleep pants myself but I’d be happy to just wear my underwear to bed if that would make you sleeping in yours feel more comfortable.”

“Oh?” Marinette arched an eyebrow.

“Because I’m such a gentleman, of course.”

“Of course.”

“So, what do you say?”

Marinette paused, thinking it over. Last night she had technically slept in nothing at all, but she had fallen asleep immediately so she hadn’t really dwelled on it. But not having her PJs on now that she would be consciously aware of it might feel a little weird. On the other hand, getting to sleep next to Adrien in just his boxers did sound very appealing. “Okay.” She said finally, putting her PJs back in her backpack.

“Yes!” Adrien exclaimed, although he quickly cleared his throat and tried to maintain some shred of composure. “I mean, that sounds lovely.”

She was giggling as she climbed onto his bed, Adrien eagerly following right behind her. He enfolded her in his arms and she snuggled into his side, resting her head on his chest once more. This spot was quickly becoming her favorite pillow. It wasn’t long before both of them had fallen asleep, as it was very true that both their bodies needed to catch up on their rest.

Especially when another ‘work-out’ was more likely then not going to be happening the next morning.
It was Marinette who woke first this time. She allowed herself to watch Adrien sleep peacefully for a few moments, then disentangled herself from his embrace and got out of bed. Tiptoeing as quietly as she could, she went into the bathroom to find Adrien’s robe, as she hadn’t packed her own, and threw it on. She may have been okay with sleeping with Adrien in only her panties, but she still didn’t want to roam around his house in so little. So after she left the bathroom, she crept to the bedroom door and opened it slowly, then headed out to go down to the kitchen.

She wanted to surprise him with breakfast, if she could manage to make something in time before he got up. The kitchen was empty when she arrived, so Marinette assumed Tikki and Plagg must’ve still be asleep elsewhere in the house. Opening the fridge doors wide, she gathered some ingredients and got to work. She had a smile on her face as she cooked, as she was excited to see how Adrien would react to getting served breakfast in bed.

A short while later, she was taking a fresh batch of raspberry muffins out of the large oven. Setting them on the counter to cool, she then made up a pitcher of lemonade to go with them. She loved having access to the extensive fresh foods available in the Agreste Mansion. But when Adrien said to her he had told the kitchen chefs they could have the weekend off, he didn’t mention Monday to her, so they could possibly be coming back at any moment. So as soon as the muffins weren’t too hot to touch, she transferred them to a large plate, then took that, the pitcher of lemonade and two cups with her as she made the journey back upstairs to Adrien’s room.

When she got back, she saw he was still asleep, so she carefully set her bounty onto the computer desk before crawling back onto the bed. “Wake up, sleepy-head,” She whispered into his ear, and Adrien’s eyes slowly blinked open. Marinette kissed his nose and got off the bed again, hearing him yawn behind her as she went to grab her surprise from the desk.

Adrien noticed her wearing his robe with a bit of a grin. “That looks so much better on you then it does on me.” When she turned with the plate of muffins in hand, his eyes widened. “Did you make me breakfast?”

“Nope, these are actually all mine.” Marinette joked as she handed the plate to him, which he took immediately so she could grab the glasses and the pitcher to set on some space on his end-table that wasn’t currently occupied with her dress.

Adrien laughed. “I see. Well, I’m stealing some, then.” He grabbed one of the muffins and took a bite, a look of bliss on his face as he savored the taste. “Just going to go ahead and say I’m the luckiest man on the face of the planet.”

“It makes sense.” Marinette finished pouring their lemonade, and Adrien set the plate of muffins onto the bed to grab his cup when she passed it to him. She brought over hers as well as she sat down beside him, taking a muffin for herself with her free hand. “Because I’m the luckiest woman.”

“That you are.” Adrien noticed her trying not to laugh mid-bite so she wouldn’t spew muffin everywhere, which was very amusing. Marinette managed to swallow her mouthful without incident, thankfully, so the young couple continued their meal in silence, as they were quite content just enjoying having their beloved next to them.

Once the plate of muffins and lemonade were gone, Adrien sighed contentedly. “That was delicious.”

“I try.” Marinette gave a seated bow, making him chuckle.
“Your croissants are still my all-time favorite, of course, but those muffins were pretty tasty too.” He told her.

“Muffins are quick to make, and I didn’t know when the chefs would be coming back, so I wanted to be in and out before someone caught me there.” She admitted.

“Father isn’t going to be back until mid-afternoon so I told the kitchen chefs they only needed to be back here for noon.” Adrien held out his hand for her empty glass, which she handed to him. He stood and brought both their cups and the similarly empty muffin plate to set by the pitcher of leftover lemonade on remaining space on the end-table.

“Good.” Marinette looked relieved. “That’s still a few hours from now, so I should be able to leave before they even come back.”

“And even if they’re back early and we can’t go out the front door,” Adrien nodded his head in the direction of the window. “We do have other means of exit to use if need be to take you home.”

“You’re coming too?” Marinette hadn’t realized he intended to come with her.

“Of course. I’m absolutely going to be walking my Lady home after such a perfect weekend together.” Adrien smiled when she blushed. “Even if part of the route needs to be taken by Ladybug and Cat Noir.”

“Do you think Plagg will let you?” Marinette asked as he climbed onto the bed beside her once more.

He shrugged. “I think so. He’s been pigging out on all the camembert I bought him since Saturday night, plus he’s been able to spend all this time with Tikki too, so he should be in a good mood.”

“And besides, it’s not like we’re going to be doing anything that’s out of his comfort zone by just walking me back home, so he really shouldn’t have a problem with it anyway.” Marinette grinned.

“Speaking of which…” Adrien gazed at her with salacious intent in eyes.

Marinette giggled. “I know. You won fair and square yesterday, so go ahead and tell me what it is you want me to do.”

“That’s not how this is going to work.” Adrien smirked as he started untying the sash of his bathrobe that was knotted around her waist.

“It’s not?” Marinette could feel warmth spreading over her body at his motions, and especially his words.

“Nope.” Adrien pulled the sash from the robe and started spreading it open. “You’re going to be getting a ravishing.”

She was definitely feeling warm now. “But shouldn’t I be the one ravishing you, since you were the winner?”

“I know you threw the match, Princess.” Adrien saw her eyes widen a little while he coaxed the robe down her arms. “Oh yeah, I noticed. Which technically means you cheated. And that means…” She was obediently finishing pulling off the bathrobe, exposing her nearly naked body once more, so he licked his lips before he finished in a burning whisper, “You need to be punished.”
Chapter 59

Chapter Notes

THERE IS SMUT RIGHT AT THE VERY BEGINNING OF THIS CHAPTER!
LOOK AWAY IF YOU MUST!

In other news, I spent the day with a friend of mine and therefore got zero writing done,
so I'm only five chapters ahead now. And I'm starting to sweat bullets. ^^; So hopefully
I'll be able to get quite a bit done tomorrow. Fingers crossed, at least. Anyway, enjoy
everyone! =)

All her thoughts were evaporating. Marinette was about to protest but couldn’t because he started
kissing her, making her body burn. In seconds he had her laying flat against the bed, hands gliding
along her sides slowly.

When they separated to breathe, Adrien moved to kiss along her neck and let his fingers wander over
her belly, although he wouldn’t bring them higher or lower to her more sensitive areas. He loved
how she was squirming beneath him, and he let his thumbs brush the undersides of her breasts but
nothing further. She trembled and had to swallow a whine in her throat, as she was already wanting
more.

Adrien picked up on this of course, and lazily traced circles over her abs while trailing kisses down
to her shoulder and then her collarbone. His face neared her chest and he heard her breathing hitch,
and glanced up at her with a widening smirk. The look of need on her face, the way her eyes were so
dark already, looked perfect to him. Without looking away from her he found the waistband of her
pants and inched them down, taking his time on purpose. Marinette’s grip on the sheets tightened
as he slowly brought them down past her knees and finally off her ankles. When he let his hands
drag up her thighs toward her core, she bit her lip and hoped he would bring them further, but he
rested them at the top of her thighs and no higher. This time, she couldn’t stop herself from
whimpering.

He started kissing over her chest, though he took special care to stay infuriatingly far away from the
center of either breast. As he did, his fingers began to slide over her thighs to where leg met hip, and
what awaited in the middle. When he suddenly blew a cool puff of air over a hardened nipple,
Marinette’s whole body jerked as she squealed. She arched her back to try and bring herself closer to
him, gasping when his thumbs ghosted over the outside of her folds from this change of position.

The obvious desperation in her movements was a wonderful turn on for Adrien. To think that she
needed this, needed him, so visibly – it was more then just a little arousing, to say the least. His
boxers were feeling very confining by now, so he let go of her thighs to take her hands in his, and
guide them to the top of the restricting garment in question. She instantly yanked them down as fast
as she could, and when his length sprang free she went to reach for it right away, but he took hold of
her wrist lightly and shook his head. “Patience,” Adrien murmured, his voice alone bringing even
more heat scorching through Marinette’s body.

She gave a small nod, and he let go of her wrist so she could let it rest against the bed again. He
smiled at her and moved to give her a quick kiss, then went back to his former position over her. And
at last, he allowed contact to her previously neglected areas, running his tongue over one of her
nipples and pressing a knuckle to her lower bundle of nerves.

Though he had barely started, she had waited for what seemed to be so long, so every sensation felt exponentially more electric then the last. So when he rubbed his thumb over her button while sliding a finger into her soaked channel, she moaned and bucked beneath him. Feeling satisfied with this amount of punishment, Adrien started a rhythm with his finger right away, knowing how badly she needed this by now. He brought his head up from her chest and kissed her deeply, muffling her moans against his lips.

When he added another finger within her, Marinette managed to form a thought in her hazy, pleasure-addled mind. He still hadn’t gotten any ‘attention’ yet. So with shaky hands, she wrapped her fingers around his shaft, making him gasp into their kiss. She was fairly certain he wasn’t going to try and stop her this time, but just to make sure, she began rubbing at a steady pace so he definitely wouldn’t want her to let go. Her plan worked, and he was soon moaning almost as frequently as she was.

Eventually Adrien broke the kiss to gulp in air, and when he did, Marinette tried to find her voice. “W-Wait,” She rasped, stopping the motions of her own hand. Adrien was a little surprised by this but followed suit, withdrawing his fingers from within her. As soon as he had, she rolled on her side to reach over the edge of the bed to where the box of condoms had fallen to, quickly grabbing one of them and turning back around to face him. “Please?” She asked quietly with a shy smile.

Adrien grinned. “Now how could I possibly say no to such a wonderful request?”

He went to grab the package but it was her turn to grab his wrist and shake her head. “Let me.” Adrien’s eyes widened slightly but he nodded, so she let go of his wrist and tore open the golden wrapper. Pulling out the condom, Marinette made sure to grab it by the right side before she positioned it over his tip.

Slowly, carefully, she rolled it over his arousal, feeling Adrien shudder at each of her movements. Once it was fully on, she circled her arms around his shoulders and pressed a kiss to his nose, signaling she was ready. Guiding himself to her entrance, Adrien gently pushed his way inside until he was all the way in. After taking a quick second to enjoy how amazing being buried within her felt, he pulled back and brought himself forward again, repeating these motions over and over with an ever-increasing rate of speed.

Because of how much lovely torture she had endured already, and how close he had brought her to the edge with it, Marinette was feeling the cresting wave approaching her very fast. Especially when he hit her internal sweet spot. She had wanted this to last longer, she really did, but after only a few minutes of this she just couldn’t hold on. Pleasure bombarded her senses as she was tossed into the cyclone, her voice reaching a high note as she was overwhelmed. Adrien only lasted one more thrust himself before he met his orgasm as well, her walls fluttering around his member and drawing every last drop he had.

They were both breathing heavily for a while, neither one of them moving. Now that her body had sufficiently stilled, Adrien moved enough to bring himself out from her chasm and rolled slightly to lay back against the bed beside her. He removed the condom and cleaned up with a tissue, then let both fall from his hand into the garbage can by the bed. When he looked back at Marinette, she was wearing a tired but blissful expression on her face. “You look like you enjoyed being punished.” He teased as he got up.

Marinette rolled her eyes, but was smiling while she sat up, stretching for a moment or two before getting to her feet. Adrien was already walking into the bathroom, and had turned on the shower by the time she got there. They got in together, quickly getting to work on cleaning themselves off. Both
of them knew there couldn’t be any further activities in here like there had been yesterday, and with some will power, they managed to keep the level of heat in the room to only the jet of water.

Once they were finished and the water was turned off, they exited the shower and started drying off. Marinette quickly brushed her teeth once she was dry, bringing her toothbrush with her as she left the bathroom behind. She dropped it into a plastic bag she had packed to keep the wet bristles from contacting anything else, doing the same with her hair brush once she had run it through her hair. By now, Adrien was standing in the bathroom doorway as she pulled her trademark red elastics from her backpack. Since she hadn’t bothered bringing a towel out with her, she knew he was watching her intently, though his eyes probably weren’t focused on how she was splitting her hair into pigtails and putting in her hair elastics.

And when she actually looked over at him, she had to forcibly steer her gaze from his similar lack of towel as well. “So are you going to stand there all day?” She joked before taking out her second change of clothes.

“Just enjoying the view.” Adrien said as he walked over, quickly finding himself something to wear as well.

Now that she was fully dressed, Marinette packed up yesterday’s clothes, her PJs, and her various bras and pairs of underwear that had been left scattered about the bed, but paused when she spied her dress still laying over the end-table. “I never brought a garment bag to bring that home in…” She sighed as the realization hit her.

“No problem.” Adrien gave a wave of his hand after he pulled on his over shirt. “We have lots of those here. Father’s a fashion mogul, after all.”

“I love you.” Marinette kissed his cheek when he walked by, making him chuckle as he left the bedroom, presumably to go get a garment bag.

Sure enough, moments later he returned with one in hand as well as a hanger that had special clips attached to either end. He handed her the hanger while he unzipped the bag, and Marinette carefully closed the clips over the top of the dress to hold it securely in place. Adrien passed her the garment bag and she threaded the hanger through the top before carefully zipping it inside. She laid it at the end of his bed for now while she double-checked to make sure she had packed everything, and it was a good thing that she hadn’t grabbed her purse yet.

Or the box of condoms.

She hurriedly picked up the box of condoms and stuffed it into her backpack, and was bringing her purse out of the bathroom when Tikki and Plagg phased through the bedroom floor. “When is Tikki going to come over for the weekend again?” Plagg flew straight over to Adrien as soon as he saw him. “Can it be soon?”

“I don’t know. I sure hope she and Marinette can come over again sooner rather then later.” He glanced at Marinette while he said this.

“Or maybe the two of you can stay the weekend at my house some time.” Marinette suggested, noting the look of excitement on Plagg’s face with a smile.

“Okay! Just tell me when you want me to show up!” Plagg exclaimed.

“What about Adrien?” Tikki asked, and Adrien folded his arms across his chest, though he looked amused.
“Every man for himself.” Plagg replied, and it was impossible for the other three to keep a straight face.

Putting her purse on over her shoulder and then following suit with her backpack, Marinette went to reach for her dress but Adrien picked it up for her. “Allow me, my Lady.” He gave her a bow, making her giggle.

“Why thank you.” She took her phone from Adrien’s desk and checked the time after stowing the charger in her purse, seeing it was still a while until noon. “Do you think we’ll be safe to go out the front door?”

“We should be.” Adrien looked at Plagg. “Did you hear anyone coming in yet before you came up here?”

Plagg shrugged. “Not that we noticed.”

“Here, we’ll go check again just to be sure.” Tikki offered, and she and Plagg quickly passed through the floor again to come back a few moments later. “No one else is here yet. We’re in the clear.”

“Perfect.” Adrien held open his shirt for Plagg to go into the pocket, and Marinette opened her purse back up for Tikki to do the same. Once their kwamis were safely in their respective hiding places, he took Marinette’s hand in his.

The two of them left Adrien’s bedroom and went downstairs, and while Adrien put on his shoes Marinette dug out the pair of flats she had brought so she didn’t have to walk home in her heels. She undid her heels and fastened them back up through either strap of her backpack so they dangled at her sides, and Adrien was laughing as she put on her flats. “What?”

“That looks hilarious.” Adrien told her, and laughed again when she adjusted her backpack on her shoulders, which made her heels jiggle.

“They won’t fit inside my backpack.” Marinette glanced at them as she walked a few steps, and had to admit, they did look pretty funny as they waved this way and that with each of her movements. “Necessity is the mother of invention.”

“Whatever you say.” Adrien grinned as he unlocked the front door and opened it for her. “Let’s go, gorgeous.”

“Sure, handsome.” It was Marinette’s turn to grin as he blushed, and with that, the young couple headed outside.
Chapter 60

Chapter Notes

Milestone number six! I'm so proud of myself!! <3

Some family fluff this chapter, and the beginnings of some kwami fluff at the end, since I'm all about spreading the love. =P I was able to get lots of writing done today (ten pages!), so I feel better about my chapter cushion. I'd like to be even more ahead, of course, but this will do for now, LOL. Hope you all enjoy! ^^

After Adrien had closed the door and locked it back up, he and Marinette walked down the front steps hand-in-hand and began the trek back to the Dupain-Cheng bakery. The sun was trying to peek out behind the many puffy white clouds that filled the sky, with the temperature being not too hot and not too cold. Though they knew that once they reached their destination, their wonderful weekend would officially come to an end, but that didn’t stop them from enjoying their walk.

Even if the two of them were just sitting in an empty room, they would be able to enjoy it to some degree, because it would still be time spent together.

They purposefully went to the side door of the Dupain-Cheng bakery when they arrived, wanting to have a few more moments of privacy. Marinette unlocked the door and they stepped inside, Adrien shutting the door behind them and hung her dress on a nearby coat hook as Marinette set her backpack down on the floor. She turned back to him and put her arms around his shoulders, and he let his hands find their usual hold on her hips. “Thank you,” He told her quietly. “For planning this whole thing, for all the surprises you had for me…for everything.”

“You’re welcome.” She gave him a light kiss. “Although truth be told, it wasn’t all just for you.” Now she was smirking. “I enjoyed myself too.”

“I should hope you did.” Adrien kissed her this time, making this one last much longer then the first.

They parted eventually, and both their eyes were filled with love as they smiled at each other. “See you later?” She questioned with their double-meaning phrase, to which he nodded.

“See you later.” He echoed, giving her one last hug before leaving her grasp to open the door and then left the bakery behind, the door creaking shut after him.

Marinette locked the door and took off her flats, then picked her backpack up again as well as her dress and headed upstairs. When she got back into her bedroom she felt a sense of happiness to be home again, though at the same time she missed Adrien already. She saw the blankets still covering her windows, grinning to herself as she went over to pull them down. Hanging her dress back on its former spot behind the mirror, she then set her backpack on the chaise lounge to open it up and begin to unpack everything that was inside. Most of her items she would put away properly later, but she made sure to grab the box of condoms and immediately put it back in its usual hiding place behind the cat pillow on her bed.

After she peeled the fabric taped to the trapdoor off and went back down the ladder, she took off her purse and opened it for Tikki to fly out before she draped it over her desk chair. “By the way…” She
held out her hands for her kwami, who sat down in them so Marinette could hug her close. “Thanks for all your help this weekend.”

“I had a lot of fun spending time with Plagg, so it was no trouble at all.” Tikki hugged her bonded back happily. “I’m really glad you and Adrien enjoyed yourselves.”

“It was better then I could’ve imagined.” Marinette sighed dreamily, though she made sure not to let her thoughts go too far back to all that had gone on in the last few days.

Before she went to leave, Marinette took her polka-dotted lingerie set that was still hanging on the back of her ladder and carefully hid it in one of the drawers of her vanity. Now that it was safely out of view, and her other set was still tucked under the pile of the rest of her clothes from this weekend, she went back downstairs to go straight for the bakery kitchen.

Sabine was in the middle of mixing up some cake batter when her daughter walked through the doorway. “Hello Marinette!” She greeted her cheerfully, putting the bowl down and walking over to her to enfold her in a tight hug. “I was wondering when you’d be coming back!”

“Hi Mom.” Marinette returned her mother’s embrace, glad to see her again. “I got back a few minutes ago, actually, I just unpacked some of my stuff first.”

After she let her go so Marinette could grab her apron, Sabine watched her with a small smile. “So how was it?”

“It was…good,” Marinette was trying her best not to blush.

“I see.” Sabine’s smile was growing as she picked her bowl of batter back up. She didn’t feel the need to question her beyond this though, so instead of pressing any further she just want back to stirring without another word.

Which Marinette was very grateful for. There were some cooled cupcakes that needed to be frosted so she got started on making some up for them, and the two women continued working in silence until they heard Tom’s voice approaching the bakery kitchen. “Do you know what time Marinette should be…” He stopped when he walked inside and noticed his daughter already there with his wife, his eyes lighting up. “There you are!”

“Hi Dad.” She received a bear hug from her father, and she grinned as she hugged back. “Did you miss me?”

“Only a whole lot.” Tom told her, making Marinette giggle. “I should get going back to the shop, but I’m glad you’re back.”

“Thanks. It’s nice to be home.” Marinette watched her Dad walk out the door, waving when he turned to wave at her before he slipped out of sight. “You’d think I was gone for a week.” She joked once he was gone.

“You’re our only child, so of course we miss you when you’re gone.” Sabine said.

“I’ve gone for weekend sleepovers with Alya before.” Marinette was starting to pipe frosting onto the cupcakes. “And those were no big deal.”

“But you weren’t just sleeping over at Alya’s house this time, were you?” Sabine saw Marinette’s piping stop mid-swirl. “So there is a difference.”

Hesitantly, Marinette glanced at Sabine. “You guys wouldn’t be…disappointed in me, if certain…
things, happened while I was there?”

“Not in the slightest.” Sabine assured her, meaning every word. She wasn’t going to pry earlier, but now that Marinette was being forthcoming with even the slightest bit of information, she wanted to make sure she knew that she wasn’t going to be in any sort of trouble for wanting to spend ‘quality time’ with the love of her life. “After all, your father and I were young once too, Marinette. So we completely understand.”

Trying not to think about young versions of her parents doing what she and Adrien had been doing, Marinette started piping frosting onto the cupcakes again to hold her focus on that instead. She felt very glad she was lucky enough to have such kind, thoughtful parents. “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome, dear.” Sabine took out a cake pan for her batter.

Not wanting Sabine to possibly be concerned what might happen to her as a result of the goings on this weekend, Marinette took a deep breath. “And you don’t need to worry, we…” She had to pause for a moment before she could continue. Why did this have to be so embarrassing? Steeling her resolve back up again, she willed herself to finish her sentence. “W-We used…p-protection.”

“I’m glad. But you don’t have to say anything more then that if it makes you feel uncomfortable.” Sabine smiled at her daughter. “I trust you. Both of you.”

Sighing with relief, Marinette set down her piping bag to go over and hug her mother tight. “I love you, Mom.”

Sabine smiled as she held her close. “I love you too.”

Meanwhile, at the Agreste Mansion, Adrien had long since returned and was looking through his diploma folder. He couldn’t wait for his Father to come home so he could proudly show his final marks to him. Just the thought of possibly leaving him speechless was making him more and more excited for his arrival.

He checked the time on his phone and saw the flight wouldn’t be coming in for a couple more hours yet. Sighing, he sat down at the end of his bed and flopped back against the sheets. How was he supposed to pass the time? He didn’t have to worry about studying anymore, of course, and now that Marinette was gone he was feeling very bored.

Speaking of Marinette, he did want to come up with some sort of way to repay her for all she had done for him this weekend. But how should he thank her? The best way he could think of was to return the favor somehow. He wasn’t really sure how to go about doing that, though. It would be something that would take a lot of thorough planning.

As well as some research.

One way or another he would need to find out one of, or hopefully more, of Marinette’s fantasies. Once he had that information to go on, he would be able to come up with some ideas on how to fulfill them for her. But he needed to do it as discreetly as possible, so she wouldn’t suspect he was wanting to do.

This was now his new mission, and it would require the utmost stealth.

But it would have to wait. He knew she would probably be busy helping out in the bakery by now, so although he knew she was okay with emailing him during her work, he doubted it would be a
good idea to try and ask her such things while she was baking. Especially since her parents could be nearby. So he wouldn’t be able to start getting details for a while yet, meaning he was back to square one of having no idea how to pass the time.

“You look like you’re having about as much fun as I am.” Plagg came floating by, landing on Adrien’s stomach.

“She’s been gone less then an hour and I already miss her.” Adrien sighed.

“I know, I miss Tikki too.”

“And I know I get to see her again tonight, but still.”

“At least you guys get that. We don’t.”

That made Adrien pause. Now that he thought about it, he got to see Marinette a whole lot more then Plagg got to see Tikki. He suddenly felt guilty for not being more considerate. “Sorry.”

“It’s okay. We’ve been doing this for thousands of years, so I’m used to it.” Plagg frowned a little. “Doesn’t mean I like it, but I’m used to it, anyway.”

“I’m going to make you a promise.” Adrien looked Plagg straight in the eyes. “Since Marinette and I are together now and neither of us have to go to school anymore, I’ll make sure I work something out with her so this summer you and Tikki get more time together.”

Plagg looked surprised. “Really?”

“In fact, I’ll even talk to her about it right now.” Adrien took his phone out of his pocket, Plagg flying off his stomach to allow him to sit up. He immediately opened his Jaguar email and started typing, knowing that Plagg was watching him do so with barely hidden excitement. And he was more then happy to do this for him.

Because no matter how much Plagg liked to annoy him to pieces and sometimes harass him, they were partners. So if he got to be with his soul mate, then so should Plagg. After all his kwami had done for him over the years, he definitely deserved it.
Fluuummmmmmmmmmmmmm! <3 Got another early shift tomorrow so I'm going to be heading to bed right away. Getting up early is never easy for me. ^^; Anyway, please enjoy everyone! =D

Marinette felt her phone vibrate in her pocket as she was bringing out the now frosted cupcakes to the shop portion of the bakery. She put the cupcakes away in their display area and brought the tray back with her into the kitchen, setting it in the sink before she pulled out her phone. Seeing that it was an email from Adrien, she opened it right away.

~I was just talking with Plagg and I came to realize how little he and Tikki actually get to see each other, so I was wondering if you could help me change that.

Her eyes widened. She hadn’t really noticed it before, but they honestly didn’t get to spend a lot of time together. And now that she was aware of it, she wanted to do anything she could to help rectify it. Tikki did a lot for her, right from day one, so she wanted to help her get to see Plagg more regularly, because she knew it would make her very happy.

~You’re right, they don’t. So we definitely need to fix that. Tell me what you want me to do.

Slipping her phone into her apron pocket, Marinette heard the timer on one of the ovens starting to go off. She threw on some oven mitts and opened it wide, carefully pulled out the steaming-hot loaf of bread within. As she was carrying it over to a cooling rack, she could feel her phone vibrating again. But to avoid getting burned, she made sure the pan was securely set onto the cooling rack before she took off the oven mitts and grabbed her phone.

~Now that it’s summer we should be able to go on a lot more dates, and they always come with us anyway, so I think we should try and find a secluded enough area any time we go out to let them have at least a few minutes together.

~That should be easy enough to do, too. Everywhere we go there should be at least some place that will keep them hidden enough so no one would notice but they can still spend time with each other.

~I know the park we usually go to has lots of trees for them to hide out in.

~And as long as we brought something for them to eat afterwards, I’m sure once and a while we could transform back after patrol, so while we’re watching the stars, they can be too.

~That’s a great idea! We could pack food for them in our backpacks and leave them on the rooftop while we’re patrolling. All I would have to do is bring an ice pack to keep Plagg’s camembert cold.

Before she could respond, her phone was vibrating again.

~And then we could all have a picnic together!! =O

She could feel his enthusiasm from here, and was trying not to laugh while starting to type her reply.
~I think we should maybe use something other than our backpacks just on the very offbeat chance they ever get discovered up there, but other than that, I think that’s a good plan.

~Okay! I’m sure I can pick up some insulated lunch boxes for us somewhere, that way no one will know we have them, so they wouldn’t be recognized as ours if they were found. ^^

~Thanks. You know I worry.

~I do. And that’s why it’s my job to make you feel better. <3

~Aww, and you do a very good job. I’m going to get back to work now, but let me know when your Father gets home and what he says.

~Aye aye, Captain!

Smiling, Marinette put her phone away in her apron pocket and went to start working on the next recipe. She knew it would probably be a while yet before Gabriel Agreste and company got back home, but she still couldn’t wait to hear how surprised he would be when he got to see Adrien’s marks. Most of all, she hoped he would be proud of him.

Because she knew she certainly was.

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Adrien actually went out to buy two plain insulated lunch boxes as soon as he finished emailing Marinette. Partly to pass the time, and partly because he was so excited to be able to have picnics with her once and a while after patrol. He knew this was supposed to be for Plagg and Tikki, but he couldn’t help enjoying the idea for himself, too.

He got home a short while later, and stashed the lunch boxes under his bed for safekeeping. Once they were officially hidden, he also quickly cleaned his room, so nothing would look amiss if his Father happened to go by. Marinette’s carefulness was beginning to rub off on him, it seemed.

After he had finished cleaning, he went downstairs to drop off the dishes from this morning’s breakfast into the kitchen, receiving a warm welcome from the kitchen chefs. They thanked him again for letting them have the weekend off, to which he just smiled and told them it was no trouble at all, and so long as they kept it a secret, maybe this could become a regular occurrence whenever Gabriel Agreste went out on business. The response from the chefs was unanimous, and Adrien knew he didn’t have to worry about any of them possibly spilling the beans with the prospect of more time off being on the table now.

As he left the kitchen and was going by the front door, he heard it unlock and start to open. He could see Nathalie come in first, looking somewhat frustrated while talking into her phone as she walked. She followed by the Gorilla, who was carrying numerous pieces of luggage with him. And last but not least, Gabriel was bringing up the rear, eyes glued to the tablet he held in his hands. “Hello Father!” Adrien called to him, making Gabriel look up at the sound of his voice. “How was your trip?”

“It was fine enough. The line debut was a success, of course.” Gabriel shut the door behind him as Adrien walked over to him. He glanced at his son over as he approached, and could easily tell that he was excited about something. “And how was your graduation?”

“I got top marks!” Adrien told him proudly. “Just like you wanted!”

Gabriel arched an eyebrow, and though his expression didn’t often change, now it held a look of
pleasant surprise. “You did?”

“Hold on, I’ll show you, I’ll be right back!” Adrien turned on his heel and dashed upstairs to his room. He was back within seconds, his diploma in one hand and his final marks in the other. “See?”

Holding out his hands expectantly, Gabriel’s eyes were roving over the papers as Adrien immediately passed them to him. He was silent for quite a while, then Adrien could’ve sworn he saw a ghost of a smile on his father’s face. “Congratulations.”

“Thank you.” Adrien’s own smile was so big now, his cheeks hurt. But he didn’t care.

“I’m very pleased.” Gabriel handed the papers back to him. “I’m glad you decided to use your time wisely.”

“I had good motivation.” Adrien shrugged nonchalantly.

And Gabriel’s expression changed again. “I take it this ‘motivation’ of yours is the girl in your life you never said you had.”

“Um…” Adrien’s face was red. Gabriel obviously knew already, so it was pointless to lie about it. So with a bit of a sigh, he nodded. “Yes, she was.”

“I see. Well, considering she was the ‘motivation’ who got you to study so diligently, as you should have, and helped you achieve these impressive marks, I think I would like to meet her.” Gabriel saw Adrien’s eyes widen with some amusement. “So that I may thank her myself.”

“Y-You mean, have her come over?” Adrien asked.

“Once to start with, at least. We’ll see how it goes from there.” Gabriel replied. “I’m not making any promises, but perhaps, if her first visit goes smoothly, I may allow her to visit once and a while.”

“Wow! Okay!” Adrien was over the moon. “That sounds great, I…” He could see Gabriel’s attention had gone back to his tablet already, so he hastily stepped out of the way. “I’ll let you get back to work. But thank you again!” Then he headed back up to his bedroom, an eager bounce in each step.

He had some emails to send.

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By now, Marinette had been glancing at the time on her phone every few minutes. It should’ve been around the time when everyone would have been getting back from the flight, and she was impatiently awaiting news from Adrien. She wanted so desperately to know how things went for him. To say she was distracted was an understatement. In fact, she had been scrubbing down the same area of countertop for a while without even realizing it.

When her phone finally vibrated, she instantly dropped her cloth and hurriedly whipped out her phone.

~He almost smiled!!!!!!!!!!!!

From the extensive use of exclamation marks, Marinette guessed that must’ve been a good thing.

~That’s awesome! I’m so happy for you! =)

~But wait, it gets better!!
~It does?

~Father figured out the reason I studied so hard was because I had a girlfriend who told me to do so. =P AND, not only was he not mad I’m seeing someone, he wants to thank you for getting me to study himself so he wants to meet you!

Marinette nearly dropped her phone. Gabriel Agreste wanted to meet her?!

~Are you serious?

~As serious as a stupidly happy guy can be! <3

Her heart was racing. Adrien had already long met her parents, of course, but they were very welcoming and loved having company. But Adrien’s father on the other hand, clearly allowed extremely few people into his home, and now she was going to become one of them.

~When does he want to meet me?

~I don’t know! I was too excited to ask! ^^; Plus he seemed busy so I didn’t want to bother him anymore. I’m sure he’ll tell me when would be a good time once he’s done catching up from his trip.

Now she was grinning. She wasn’t surprised he had been too excited to get any more details then that. But on the same token, she also wasn’t surprised that he was being considerate to let his father catch up on his work like that. It was very Adrien to look out for the needs of those around him.

And she should know, especially after the last two days.

~That’s fine. Just let me know.

~I will. Oh, and BTW, I went out earlier and bought the lunch boxes already! Want to have a picnic tonight? =D

~Somehow that doesn’t shock me. Sure, Tikki doesn’t know about it yet so she’ll be really surprised.

~Plagg knew I was emailing you about trying to get more time for him and Tikki to spend together but I didn’t tell him our ideas. He should be surprised too.

~I’m looking forward to this.

~Me too! <3

~See you tonight, Jaguar.

~See you, Spots! =*
~This is an important update on my uploading schedule!~

I've been giving this a lot of thought lately. This upload marks two solid months since I started posting this fanfiction here, and for two solid months I've been uploading one chapter a day. And at first it was easy to keep up with that pace. But with both my two jobs, we get busier towards fall, and even busier into the winter (with the coming of Christmas). So I won't be able to write as much as I could this summer. I've been feeling the effects already, as the last couple weeks I've been working a lot of hours. And I've been honestly struggling to keep up the schedule of uploading once a day, it's actually been causing me some stress and anxiety. **So after a lot of debating on what to do, I've decided to start uploading new chapters twice a week instead, which will be Monday night/Tuesday morning at 12 AM and Friday night/Saturday morning at 12 AM (my time).**

This will start as of Tuesday this week; I will post tomorrow (meaning Sunday night/Monday morning at 12 AM), as that chapter is a direct continuation of this one, and I will post the one after it (on Monday night/Tuesday morning at 12 AM), but after that I won't be posting again until Friday night/Saturday morning at 12 AM. I wanted to bring this up today, so you would all have a heads up before I actually change my schedule. I didn't want to just stop uploading everyday without letting you guys know first. I felt it was only fair.

But I want it to be clear: I am NOT going to stop writing this story! I still love writing it and have more ideas I want to do, I just can't keep up the same pace anymore. That's the only reason. I love all of your support I've gotten so far and it means so much to me that so many people love my work! And I will still be replying to comments, because I love talking to you guys too! So please, please don't think I'm giving up on this fic or worse, giving up on you guys. I just need more time, because my jobs are going to keep getting busier for the next few months. I love writing this, but I do want to be able to have some other down time, too. I really hope you all understand. ^^

Anyway! Now that that's out of the way, I had some fun with today's chapter. And tomorrow's too, since as I mentioned above, it's a direct continuation of this one. In the show, so far we've only seen Adrien get controlled by an akuma's magic. So I figured Marinette should have it happen to her, too. And what better time then an akuma like the one below? =P BTW, for the record, Happy!Chloe is now one of my favorite things in my story so far, I'm 100% serious. xD Phew, this is a long Note. A virtual cookie to you if you actually read all this, LOL! Hope you all enjoy, guys!

Once the bakery was closed for the evening, Marinette followed her parents back upstairs for supper. They were in the middle of eating when Tom seemed to remember something and took out his phone. “We’re going to go grocery shopping tonight, do you want anything?” He asked, opening up the list he had started earlier in his phone’s notes.
“I’m not sure…” Marinette paused, thinking. She didn’t need anything easy to pack for lunches anymore, so she couldn’t think of anything off of the top of her head. “No, I don’t think I need anything in particular.”

“Just call me if you end up thinking of something.” Tom told her, already typing something new into the list.

“We still have to do the dishes so you don’t have to rush.” Sabine said.

“I can do them.” Marinette offered, getting up from the table with her empty plate and glass.

“Are you sure? I can dry,” Sabine got up too but Marinette shook her head.

“I’m positive. You and Dad go ahead.” She insisted.

“All right. Thank you, Marinette.” Sabine passed her plate to her, and Marinette carried them to the sink. Tom brought his own dishes soon after as well, and once Sabine had finished her drink, she brought her cup over too to officially clear off the table. Marinette was running the water and filling the sink, so Tom and Sabine gave her a wave before they headed out to go do the grocery shopping.

They had been long gone by the time Marinette saw Tikki float in front of her. “Do you want some help?” Her kwami looked down at her bonded’s hands wrist-deep in soap bubbles.

“They are a bit bigger than you are.” Marinette teased.

“I might be on the small side, but I’m mighty!” Tikki flexed her tiny arms, making Marinette giggle.

“Okay, okay. How about I put away some of your things from this weekend for you instead?”

“That would really help, thanks Tikki.” Marinette smiled when Tikki gave her a salute and flew off, then went back to doing the dishes.

Once they were all washed and she had dried them off as well, Marinette put them all away in their respective homes. She had just hung the towel up to dry when Tikki came zipping over to her again.

“Marinette! Something’s happening outside!”

The look on Tikki’s face told her it wasn’t good. She dashed to the nearest window and peered out, to see chaos below. Some people were weeping on the street, others were destroying anything they could get their hands on, and some were actually skipping along and looked to be singing! There was no question, this was the work of an akuma. Marinette turned to Tikki, who was already hovering beside her, and the two of them nodded in unison. “Spots on!”

Wearing the familiar polka-dots once more, Marinette bolted upstairs and made her way through the trapdoor as fast as she could, swinging up and away slightly with her yo-yo so that she would land just off to the side of the bakery. Now that she was outside, things looked even crazier. As people ran (or skipped) past her, she noticed all their eyes were glowing different colors. She could see people crying had deep blue eyes, the people ripping things to shreds had bright red eyes, and the people singing had shining yellow eyes. Clearly, they were under the effect of magic, but where was it coming from?

“Ladybug!” Marinette heard him before she saw him. Adrien landed next to her, retracting his staff with a flick of his wrist and putting it on its usual spot on his back. The scene before him left him looking beyond astonished. “Half the city is like this already! What the Hell is going on?”

“I can tell you!” Called a voice from behind them. Marinette and Adrien whirled to see a tall woman sauntering toward them, who was definitely the akuma victim. She wore a black shirt with white
drama masks on the front, and each horizontal stripe of her pants was a different color of the rainbow. On her left wrist was a bracelet with a large circular dial that looked like it could be turned to each colored slab on its surface. Around her neck was a purple locket she currently had open to show a picture of smiling couple within. “This was my boyfriend and I. James and Elle, we should’ve been a perfect match. I loved him with everything I have, but he just broke up with me because he says I’m ‘too emotional’.” She gave a humorless laugh. “Well after today, I’m going to be the most emotionally stable person in this whole city!”

“Let us help you. Things will get better, we promise.” Adrien tried to take a step toward her but she held up her hand.

“I’m not falling for that.” She started turning the dial on her bracelet. “I have some more people to attend to, but don’t worry, I’ll let you guys have some fun.” Two balls of pink light emerged from the top of the dial and a wicked grin crossed her face. “A special present from Emotion-Elle to you!” And with a wave of her hand, the orbs shot forward towards Marinette and Adrien’s eyes.

Since she had been so close and the magic moved so fast, neither of them were able to move away, so both orbs hit their targets eyes. Or tried to, in Adrien’s case, but the green night-vision screen of his mask protected him as the light bounced off it harmlessly and fizzled into nothingness. But Marinette’s eyes were exposed, and the magic entered her body with ease, spreading through her and making her fall to her knees with a grimace as her whole body prickled like pins and needles. It hurt.

Adrien saw her drop and immediately knelt beside her, knowing that Emotion-Elle was walking away but he was much more worried about Marinette right now. “She got you?” Marinette gave a short nod, and Adrien could see that her eyes starting to change to a vivid pink. He glanced at the other people around them and noticed the various colors in their eyes too. After some quick deduction at their actions, he assumed yellow must’ve meant happy, red meant anger, and blue meant sadness.

So what did pink mean?

Marinette suddenly gasped as the pins and needles left her to be immediately replaced by a scorching blaze of lust. Every inch of her was on fire, completely encompassing all of her senses. It was exceptionally difficult to even think of anything besides how much she wanted Adrien right now. “Oh no…”

“What? What’s wrong?” Adrien put a hand on her shoulder but she quickly shoved it off. Just even that tiny contact made her ache with need.

“Don’t…” She was doing her best to focus her concentration on resisting. The fact he was right there was only making her desire for him worse, and it was taking all her will power to fight the sway of the magic.

“Talk to me.” Adrien wanted to help but he still had no idea what pink meant. He was beginning to think fear, because of the way she seemed to by shying away from him, but he wasn’t really sure. “I can’t help if you don’t tell me what she’s making you feel. Please, love bug.”

The last time he had called her love bug was right before they had made love in the shower. Marinette whimpered as the memory blazed to life in her mind, her hands clenching tightly into fists as she shook her head hard, as if to try and physically shake the thought away. “It’s bad.” She finally managed in a hoarse whisper.
“What is it?” Adrien put his hand on hers but she quickly pulled it away. “You don’t need to be scared of me, no matter what that stuff is trying to tell you to think. I promise you that. You know me.”

“That’s not it…” Marinette tried to force herself to her feet, but even just moving was hard when the idea of tackling Adrien to the street filled her brain as she did. When he stood up next to her and his shoulder brushed hers, she shuddered and bit her lip at the nearly overwhelming desire for him it caused her.

He was still feeling very confused. If the magic wasn’t making her afraid of him, then what was going on? “Just tell me what you need.”

“I need you!” The words slipped past her lips before she could stop them, and she hastily covered her mouth to keep from saying anything more. Adrien’s eyes grew wide, finally understanding what pink meant. Marinette took a deep breath and uncovered her mouth again. “We can’t let her escape, we have to stop her.” As another wave of heat threatened to pull her under its power, she held her forehead in her hands. “And you have to stay as far away from me as possible.”

“But I…” Adrien fell silent when he saw the sheer amount of struggle on her face. “All right. Leave her to me.”

“Go on ahead. I’ll follow as fast as I can.” Marinette saw him nod and he took off, leaving her amongst all the other spelled citizens. None of them had taken notice of what had happened to her or the words she had exchanged with Adrien, thankfully, as they were all completely enthralled by whatever magic had possessed them. She was fairly certain the only reason she was able to fight this was due to being somewhat protected by her Miraculous, but she was afraid it wouldn’t last much longer. So with lots of effort, she put one foot in front of the other, and started slowly making her way in the direction Emotion-Elle and Adrien had gone.

After only a block, she had to lean against a nearby building to take a moment to try and collect her thoughts again. Marinette could feel herself losing the battle against the magic by now. She wanted Adrien so badly, it was becoming all she could think of. “Hey, it’s Ladybug!” A sudden voice made her turn her head, and when she did she could see Chloe bouncing her way over, eyes gleaming yellow. “Hi Ladybug!”

“Not now…” Marinette muttered under her breath, but didn’t have the concentration to make a move to stop Chloe from grabbing her hand and giving it an excited shake.

“It’s me, Chloe Bourgeois! Your biggest fan, remember?” Chloe didn’t notice the other girl’s look of annoyance as she started glancing around. “Wait a second, why are you by yourself? Where’s Cat Noir?”

“He’s trying to catch the akuma,” Marinette told her, pointing in the direction he had gone earlier. “And I’m trying to catch up to him.”

“Well you’re not going to catch up with him just standing there!” Chloe kept a tight grip on Marinette’s hand as she pulled her forward away from the wall, and started running with her in tow. “Here, I’ll help you!”

Marinette’s body screamed in protest, but she had no choice but to follow Chloe and keep moving at the hurried pace she was going. Technically Chloe really was helping, as on her own Marinette had been struggling to keep moving. And she did need to get going, because without her the akuma that was obviously hiding in Emotion-Elle’s locket wouldn’t be able to be purified. But with each step closer they took, they were closing the distance not just between her and Emotion-Elle, but between
her and Adrien too.

And with the strength to fight the spell slipping away already, Marinette honestly didn’t know if she would be able to control herself once she saw him.
Chapter 63

Chapter Notes

First off, thank you all so much for being so understanding about my new posting schedule! The support means so much to me, you have no idea. =')

Anyway! I'm also really glad you all like Emotion-Elle as much as I do; I even mentioned to some of you she's my new favorite akuma. =P And Happy! Chloe is the most annoying thing ever, which is why I love her and her magicked bubbly need to be helpful SO DAMN MUCH. xD And, AND, I've decided Marinette and Adrien will give akuma victims pep talks after they're healed from now on. Partly because those people obviously would need a bit of a pick-me-up if they were upset/angry/whatever enough to be akumatized, and partly because I just really enjoy writing our favorite dorks trying to give advice, especially corny advice, LOL. But I've talked long enough. Please enjoy! ^^

Eventually, after storming past dozens of other people also under the power of various emotions, Marinette and Chloe came upon one of the two they had been looking for. Emotion-Elle was sitting on a bench, watching her handiwork with glee, but Adrien was nowhere to be seen. “We need to hide,” Marinette said, so Chloe quickly dragged her behind a nearby building into an alley.

“What do we do next?” Chloe asked, looking excited.

“We?” Marinette sighed when Chloe nodded.

“Yeah! Honestly I’m just so happy to see you right now I could burst!” Chloe gave a giddy clap of her hands.

“You should really just stay out of harm’s way, because this could end up getting dangerous…” Marinette warned.

“No way! I’m totally helping!” Chloe insisted, and the vehement enthusiasm in her voice showed that there was no point in trying to argue with her.

This made Marinette massage her temples in frustration. Partly from being around Chloe, and partly from the magic still roaring around her body. “Fine, if you want to help, then go keep watch on Emotion-Elle. Make sure she doesn’t try to leave.”

“You got it, Ladybug!” Chloe skipped to the corner of the building and peered around it, intently watching the woman on the bench’s every movement.

But before Marinette could start trying to think of a plan, there was movement out of the corner of her eye. When she turned, she saw a familiar staff next to her and soon Adrien dropped down next to her. “There you are!” Her heart rate skyrocketed just at the sound of his voice, and him being so close to her wasn’t helping either. “I was starting to worry when I couldn’t find you, and…wait, is that Chloe?”

The Mayor’s daughter had looked back over her shoulder when she heard the new voice behind her,
and gave an eager wave to Adrien. “Hi Cat Noir! So good to see you again! And guess what? I’m helping Ladybug! Best helper ever, am I right? Who am I kidding, of course I’m right!”

That completely took Adrien by surprise. “You’re…what?”

While this exchange was going on, Marinette was staring at Adrien. Seeing how perfectly messy his hair was, and how kissable his lips looked, and how wonderfully snugly the leather of his suit hugged his body…

And with that, the last of her resistance was broken.

“Chloe…” She finally managed, her fingers twitching at her sides. “I need you to go get me as many different kinds of leaves as you can find.”

“Okay!” Chloe scampered off immediately.

“What do you need leaves for?” Adrien asked, but when he looked at Marinette closely, he saw she was watching at him hungrily.

“She’s finally gone!” As soon as Chloe was out of sight, Marinette pressed him against the opposite wall and kissed him deeply.

Adrien’s eyes went wide, but he knew this to be the work of the spell she was under, so as much as it pained him to do it, he pushed her back. “Ladybug, stop!”

“Come on, we’re alone back here…” Marinette pinned Adrien’s hands against his sides so he couldn’t keep pushing her away. She tried to kiss him again but he turned his head, so instead she started to press kisses along his neck. “And Chloe’s not going to be coming back any time soon…”

Though Adrien was strong from all the years of being a superhero, so was Marinette, and it seemed the magic was adding to her strength because he couldn’t move a muscle. “You have to fight it!”

She chuckled softly. “Fight what?” Now she moved her head once more to nibble his ear. Marinette was gone now, fully swept under the power of the spell.

Realizing this, Adrien bit his lip. He knew that they needed to take care of Emotion-Elle before things got worse, but at the same time, the things Marinette was doing to him were trying hard to steal his focus. “The akuma, she’s making you feel this way.”

“You’re making me feel this way,” Marinette whispered, and when he turned to her again she captured his lips again in another fiery kiss.

Since Adrien couldn’t move anyway, he kissed her back this time, hoping she would become distracted enough to let his hands go. Soon enough she did, her fingers winding their way into his hair. Adrien quickly gripped her shoulders firmly and pushed her back for the second time, looking right into her eyes. “Don’t let her control you like this. Please, Marinette.”

Something about the use of her real name made something flicker within her. She blinked a few times, then she took a step back, holding her head and giving it a shake as if to clear it. When she looked back at him again, the hunger was still there but was definitely diminished. “Thank you,” She said quietly, and Adrien breathed a sigh of relief. She was back!

“Are you okay?” He asked, still seeing pink where blue should be.

“I think so, for now,” Marinette unhooked her yo-yo from around her waist. “We need to fix this
before…” She looked a little embarrassed, remembering what she had been doing seconds before. “That, happens again.”

“It’s not your fault.” Adrien assured her. “Don’t blame yourself for even one second. I want you to promise me.”

Despite struggling against the magic still within her, Marinette smiled a little. “Okay, I promise.”

“Good.” Adrien went to the corner of the building and checked to make sure that Emotion-Elle was still there, which she was. “Let’s go.”

“Wait!” Marinette took his hand, doing her best to ignore all the other things her brain was telling her to do to him. “I need to do something first.” She held out her yo-yo and he nodded, so she tossed it high. “Lucky Charm!” Into her outstretched palm dropped a small red and black hand-held mirror. Marinette was once again left confused by the object she received, and as she peered down at her reflection, she could easily see the pink glow still in her eyes.

“What are we supposed to do with that?” Adrien looked just as perplexed by the mirror as she was. She hooked her yo-yo back around her waist and tried to think of what she could possibly use a mirror for. It took a moment with the haze in her brain, but at last she was able to formulate an idea she hoped would work. “I think we’re supposed to use it to bounce her magic back at her bracelet, hopefully to short it out.”

“And when she sees I’m not under her spell, she’ll probably try and hit me with another one.” Adrien said. “That’ll be our opportunity to strike.”

“She doesn’t know that I’ve been able to fight it, either…” Even with all the sinful thoughts in her head right now, Marinette was getting another idea so she was focusing her attention on that instead. “She’ll think I don’t have any control. So we can use that to our advantage too.”

“I’m assuming you have a plan.” Adrien guessed with a grin.

Marinette was already grabbing for her yo-yo. “Here’s what I’m thinking…”

_______________________________________________________________

Emotion-Elle was thoroughly enjoying the sight of all the crazed antics of the people around her. But when Cat Noir came barreling out of a nearby alley with Ladybug chasing after him, she arched an eyebrow in confusion. Why was he running from her? The two of them should be busy joined at the mouth by now! If not more!

When he spotted her he came running over, with Ladybug close behind. “What did you do to her?” He demanded.

“The same thing that should’ve happened to you,” Emotion-Elle got to her feet. “I was even being pretty generous, letting you two have an emotion I haven’t given to anyone else. Even going out of my way to tune it to only work on each other so you guys didn’t end up getting busy with the wrong person. That’s so weird, I don’t know why it didn’t work the first time.” She was reaching for her bracelet. “But don’t worry, I’ll fix it for you.”

When the pink light came out of the dial, she waved her hand to send it his way, but this time Adrien and Marinette were ready for it. Adrien ducked and Marinette grabbed the mirror that he had hooked into the back of his belt, holding it up to bounce the magic off the reflective surface and sending it shooting back into Emotion-Elle’s bracelet. It immediately started to spark and shudder, making her
scream in terror and try to rip it off her arm. When it went ‘bang’ loudly and erupted in a plume of smoke, she collapsed against the bench, having fainted.

“I guess that’s one way to do it,” Adrien joked while Marinette was going around the bench, though she froze when he uttered the words ‘do it’. He noticed her stop but he didn’t understand why, but she was already moving again so he just shrugged it off as nothing.

The reason, of course, had been those words had sent another wave of lust through her body. It had hard enough to take the mirror out from being tucked in the back of Adrien’s belt and keeping her thoughts straight. So by now Marinette had to really buckle down to keep herself walking. “You’re not helping.”

“She really must be pretty sensitive to faint like that.” Adrien continued, glancing the unconscious woman over.

Even the word ‘sensitive’ sent a shiver tumbling down Marinette’s spine. “Please stop talking.” She meant it as nicely as she could, but she was more worried about getting swept under the spell again then to bother with niceties. Adrien knew that that was probably the case, however, so he didn’t take offense and just nodded to show his understanding. Once Marinette was behind Emotion-Elle, she undid the necklace’s clasp and took it off, dropping it to crush the locket under her heel. The akuma within tried to fly away but she was waiting with her yo-yo, capturing it quickly and sending the purified butterfly off on its way. Then, with significant relief this was about to be over, she threw the mirror into the sky. “Miraculous Ladybug!”

Cleansing lights spread out and some enveloped Marinette, and when they left her she finally felt herself again. Adrien looked into her once again blue eyes with a smile, and they watched as the rest of the lights continued to swirl around the other effected citizens. Once everyone appeared to be back to normal, Adrien held out his fist to her. “Pound it!” And Marinette was very happy to give him a knuckle bump.

They turned to the woman on the bench, and once the purple glow that had been around her seconds ago faded away and had returned her to her usual self, she was opening her eyes and groggily rubbing her head. “How are you feeling?” Marinette sat down next to the woman on her left, and Adrien did the same on her right.

“I…” The woman, who’s name was apparently Elle, frowned a little, looking like she was trying to recall what had happened. She must’ve remembered what had happened this afternoon before this all started because suddenly her eyes filled with tears. “Not good…”

“When one door closes, another one opens.” Marinette told her, handing her the now fixed locket. “If he really wasn’t the one for you, the right one will come around.” So she sounded a little like a tacky motivational poster. This girl was clearly in need off some cheering up. And it was the thought that counted, right?

Elle opened the locket and gazed at the picture within for a while, sniffling her tears back, then she sighed and closed it back up. “I know. I just thought he was the one.”

“Give yourself some time.” Adrien said, making Elle turn to look at him. “You’re going to need to heal for a while, but that’s normal.” He was so glad he had watched so many animes over the years to be able to give semi-decent advice on things like a breakup, which was something he’d never actually gone through himself before!

“You’ll be all right. We believe in you.” Marinette assured her, and Adrien nodded to show his agreement.
Looking touched, Elle was actually starting to smile as she stood. “Thank you.” When Marinette and Adrien got up as well, the woman enveloped them both in a big (and very tight) hug, then she walked away.

Adrien rubbed his shoulder. “She’s a lot stronger then she looks.”

Marinette grinned, but then she put a hand to her ear as she heard her Miraculous beeping. “I have to go.”

She wished she could stay with him longer, to tell him how badly she felt for letting herself get influenced by that spell, but when she went to say more he just held up his hand and shook his head. “We’ll talk later, okay?” He whispered, noting some people starting to come their way.

“Okay.” Marinette relented, then she threw out her yo-yo and swung off.

Giving a wave to the cheering fans approaching, Adrien took out his staff and vaulted onto the nearest building. He hadn’t had to use Cataclysm so his transformation wasn’t wearing off any time soon, so he waited for the crowd below to disperse before he started to jump from rooftop to rooftop in the direction of the Dupain-Cheng bakery.

After all, even if it was just by a few minutes, it would still mean that they would be talking ‘later’.
Chapter 64

Chapter Notes

So much fluff ahead today! <3 Just a friendly reminder, after tonight I won't be uploading a new chapter until Friday night/Saturday morning at 12 AM (my time). But I will still reply to everyone's comments, so I promise I won't be completely dropping off the face of the planet. =P Enjoy everyone!

After she touched down on the terrace, Marinette slipped through the trapdoor and managed to get down the ladder before her earrings gave their final beep as the last dot faded away. When Tikki had reappeared, she dropped into Marinette’s outstretched hands, looking beyond exhausted. “I’m so sorry, Tikki…” Holding her kwami close, Marinette peered down through her still-open bedroom door to see if the coast was clear. Thankfully it seemed like her parents weren’t home yet, so she went downstairs and right into the bakery.

Tikki crawled onto her shoulder so Marinette could use her hands, and she grabbed as many cookies as she could possibly carry before heading back to her room. She kicked the door shut behind her and set the cookies in a mountain over the plate on her desk, then held out her hands for Tikki to climb back on to so she could set her next to the plate. Tikki took a cookie and started munching, and Marinette sat down on her desk chair to watch her eat. “I’m fine, really,” Tikki tried to say in between a mouthful of cookie.

“I should’ve been more careful.” Marinette rested her head on her hands, looking more than just a little upset. “And what I did to Adrien…”

As if on cue, there was a knock that came from her trapdoor. Surprised by the sound, Marinette glanced up and saw familiar green eyes looking down at her. She got up from her chair and climbed the ladder, crawling over her bed to the trapdoor. She opened it wide for him so he could drop down onto the mattress below right next to her. “Hi.” Adrien flashed her a bright smile.

“What are you doing here?” Marinette was completely dumbfounded. She definitely had not been expecting to see him.

He took her hands in his clawed ones and gently pressed a kiss to the back of each of them. “I said that we would talk later, and technically, this is later.”

Blushing, Marinette looked away. “I’m really sorry. I…”

“It’s okay.” Adrien let go of her hands to place one on her cheek, gently turning her face back to him. “I’m not upset, or angry, or hurt, or anything like that. So I don’t want you to worry about me. And I don’t want you to feel anything like that either, because none of this was your fault. You made me a promise that you wouldn’t blame yourself, remember?”

“Yes, but…” Marinette trailed off, sighing heavily.

“You couldn’t help yourself.”

“But that doesn’t change that it was wrong.”
“It does too. You couldn’t think straight. She was in your head.”

“That’s not the point. I was forcing myself on you.”

“All you were doing was kissing me.” Adrien didn’t know if she could remember all that had happened while under the control of the magic, so he wanted to reassure her. “It didn’t go any further.”

“Yeah…” Marinette did remember what she had done. It was rather fuzzy, but the memories were there. “But if you hadn’t gotten through to me, I was going to…” She grimaced as she thought back to what happened when she had lost control. Their suits would’ve been in the way and would’ve thankfully kept her from doing what she had been intending, but if they hadn’t been, and he hadn’t brought her back to her senses, kissing him would’ve been the least of the things she would’ve done. “I-I was going to…”

“It’s not your fault.” He didn’t want her to force herself to finish, as they both knew very well what she had clearly wanted to do.

And Marinette hated herself for it. “It is. It should never have even happened. I should’ve been stronger.”

“Hey, I’ve gotten controlled by akumas’ powers before.” Adrien reminded her. “And you were actually able to fight back. I never could. Not to mention, all I know from the times it happened to me is from what you’ve told me. So if you can remember some of it, then you did better then I ever have in that way too. Please don’t beat yourself up over it like this. It doesn’t have anything to do with strength. Magic is magic, it’s crazy shit.”

Marinette giggled. “Adrien…”

“There’s that beautiful smile!” Adrien beamed, making her laugh again. He leaned in to kiss her, and though Marinette initially tensed, she soon relaxed and wrapped her arms around him. He did the same, holding her close and pouring every ounce of love he could into this moment. And when they separated, he could see tears shining in her eyes. “What’s wrong, Princess?”

Quickly wiping them away, Marinette lightly shook her head. “Nothing. I’m just really happy, that’s all.”

“Good, because that makes me happy.” Adrien kissed her forehead.

Hugging him tight, Marinette rested her head on his shoulder and the two of them just stayed like that for a while. Then she could make out the distant sound of a door opening below them and Tom and Sabine’s faint voices shortly after. “My parents just got home,” She said, and he nodded, having heard it as well. “They might ask questions if they see you here.”

“Plus I’m not really myself right now, which would just add to the questions.” Adrien gestured to his leather suit with a bit of a grin. “Don’t worry, I’ll be gone before they could realize I was ever even here.”

“One more thing…” Marinette gave him one last heartfelt kiss, smiling when she pulled back. “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome.” Adrien went to stand to open the trapdoor, then he stopped and met her gaze. “I love you, Marinette.”

“I love you too, Adrien.” She waved at him once he had gone up through the trapdoor, and after he
had waved back and disappeared from view, she made the trek down the ladder from her bed. Marinette double-checked on Tikki, who was contentedly chowing down on her cookies, then she opened her bedroom door and headed downstairs. “Hi Mom, hi Dad.”

“We’re so sorry that took so long!” Tom poked his head out from behind the open fridge door. “Right after we started shopping, people started going crazy outside! So the workers locked the doors and we all waited inside the grocery store until things quieted down.”

“I’m just really glad you’re safe.” Marinette went over and hugged each of them one after the other, extremely relieved that neither of them had fallen victim to Emotion-Elle and her magic.

“That’s our line,” Sabine joked, and Marinette could feel another smile tugging at the corners of her mouth.

“Here, let me help.” She took some of the food out of the nearest grocery bag and started putting it away, and between the three of them working together, it wasn’t long before everything Tom and Sabine had brought home had been put into its proper place. “Is there anything else I can do?”

“I think that’s all of it.” Tom took a look around to make sure nothing had been forgotten. “Yeah, looks like we’re good to go.”

Suddenly Marinette’s phone started to ring from in her pocket, and when she pulled it out she saw that it was Alya. She realized now that had never gotten back to her with more details about her weekend, so no wonder she was calling her. Marinette glanced back at her parents. “Go ahead.” Sabine told her, waving her off toward her room with a smile.

“Thanks.” Marinette started walking up the stairs as she pressed the answer button with her thumb. “Hi Alya.”

“Don’t you ‘hi Alya’ me! You’re in so much trouble for leaving me hanging so long like that!” Alya practically shouted, and Marinette had to bite her lip to keep from laughing as she closed her bedroom door behind her. “Where have you been?!?”

“Sorry, I’ve been busy.”

“Well obviously! And I need details!”

Marinette did laugh that time. “Alya…”

“You have to spill the beans, girl! How did it go?” Alya sounded more than just a little excited to finally hear how things went.

“But I wanted to tell you in person…” Marinette began.

“This is close enough! Come on, I’ve been dying waiting over here!” Alya exclaimed, and since talking on the phone was at least better then texting, Marinette decided that this would have to do.

“It was…” She paused as she sat down on her chaise lounge, trying to think of the best word to describe it. The first word she thought she could use ‘amazing’, but she didn’t feel that that quite covered it. And the same went for ‘wonderful’. Eventually she went with the only word that would truly describe how the last few days had felt for her. “Perfect.”

“Aww, I’m so glad!” Alya gave a fake sob. “It feels like it was just yesterday you were tripping over your words trying to talk to him! And now look at you! Kids today just grow up so fast!”
“Funny.” Marinette was grinning though.

“I know I am.” Alya didn’t miss a beat. “So how did he like your lingerie?”

Thinking back to Saturday night, Marinette could feel a bit of a blush starting to rise to her cheeks as the memories started to play before her mind’s eye. “When he first saw me wearing it, he was speechless.”

“Damn, and here I thought he was going to drool.” Alya sighed dramatically, making Marinette giggle.

“Maybe he will with the second one.” Marinette mused, and considering how her other lingerie set’s fabric that was basically a Ladybug pattern, she wouldn’t be surprised if it did.

“Are you going to tell me what the other one looks like?”

“Nope.”

“Not even a tiny little detail?”

“It’s lingerie.”

“Okay, okay, I get it. I won’t pry. We’re allowed to have a few trade secrets.”

“Thank you.”

“So did my other present come in handy?” Alya asked.

Now Marinette blushed more. “It definitely did.”

“See? And you were all embarrassed.” Alya sounded victorious. “I told you it was a good present!”

“I suppose it was.” Marinette relented.

“You mean it obviously was!” Alya corrected, and Marinette found herself rolling her eyes even though Alya wouldn’t be able to see her do it.

“Oh, you’re so right. My bad. What would I ever do without you?”

“Not get laid, that’s what.”

“Alya!”
Hi everyone! =D I was out with my family at a local event here in town so this chapter is a little late for 12 AM (my time), but here it is nonetheless! I was debating whether or not to let Marinette win the internship, but when I did some research and saw how much work was involved, not to mention how it's usually for college kids, I decided not to have her win. And it adds a little more realism too, as no one can win at everything. =P But there is no angst in my story, so Marinette takes it like a trooper. She's a tough cookie, after all. ^^ And don't worry, something even better is going to come her way! :) Anyway, I have a morning shift tomorrow so I'm straight off to bed though. Good night, and enjoy! <3

They talked for a while longer, then Alya had to go so they said their goodbyes and ended the call. And Marinette was glad, because though she loved talking with Alya, the time to go out on patrol was practically here. She was still pretty worried about Tikki, who was fast asleep next to her half-eaten plate of cookies, so she wanted to email Adrien to see if she could give Tikki the night off. Though she knew they had been planning their picnic for tonight, she really wanted to let Tikki rest. So now that her phone wasn’t occupied with a call, she opened up her Spots email account.

~Tikki’s bushed from earlier. Would it be all right if I let her rest tonight and we postponed the picnic for her and Plagg until tomorrow night?

Soon enough, her screen lit up with a notification of a new message.

~Of course! Honestly, with the akuma happening just a little while ago, I don’t think there’s going to be much in the way of activity out there. I think I’ll give Plagg the night off too. Boy, will he be happy to hear that. xD

Though she knew it was only just now time for them to usually be heading out on patrol, Marinette was feeling pretty tired herself. With the activity this morning, and then having such a long, exhausting mental battle after supper, she was thinking heading to bed early herself would be a good idea, too.

~I know it’s still pretty early for us, but I think I’m going to take advantage of not having to go out on patrol and turn in for the night.

~Sleep tight, my Lady. Sweet dreams. <3

Smiling, Marinette plugged in her phone and got up from her chair, then started to get undressed. Once she put on her PJs, she carefully picked up Tikki and carried her still-sleeping form up the ladder with her, setting her gently on the cat pillow so she would be more comfortable. Then she got under the covers herself and snuggled under them, her eyes soon shutting and within minutes, she had drifted off as well.

Morning found her with one arm dangling over the side of her bed, and her hair thoroughly mussed
to the point it was coming out of her pigtails on its own. She probably tossed and turned a lot during
the night. And when she sat up, she could tell she must have, because her body was somewhat sore
as she stretched. Rubbing the back of her neck and one of her shoulders, Marinette glanced over at
the cat pillow, but Tikki wasn’t there. Looking around for her, she eventually found her kwami
sitting on her computer monitor, looking out the window. “How are you feeling this morning?” She
asked as she started making her way down the ladder.

Tikki turned to her and gave her a big smile. “I feel good. Getting that extra rest really helped.” She
floated off the monitor toward Marinette. “How about you?”

“I’m okay.” Marinette said. “Adrien made me feel a lot better about what happened.”

“Which is good, because he’s right. It wasn’t your fault.” Tikki nodded for emphasis.

“I know, but I still felt awful.” As she thought back to how Adrien had gone out of his way to cheer
her up last night, she started to smile. “I’m really lucky to have him.”

“And me!” Tikki added, and Marinette laughed.

“Of course, and you too.” She cupped her hands around Tikki to give her a hug, then she let her fly
off so she could open the door and head downstairs.

After a shower and some breakfast, Marinette returned to her room to get dressed and grab her
phone. Then it was time to go down to the bakery, which today was filled with customers, so she
helped Sabine run the shop portion while Tom baked up a storm in the kitchen. By noon it quieted
down, so the family of three took turns sneaking in some time for lunch. While she was gobbling
down some food, Marinette felt her phone vibrate and upon taking it out, saw it was a message from
her Jaguar.

~Hey bugaboo! Just wanted to tell you Father has me doing a photo-shoot soon, so I’ll be away from
my phone for a bit. I’ll let you know as soon as I’m done though. ^^

~Modeling anything exciting?

~For the cameras, shirts. For you, whatever you want. ;3

~I guess I walked right in to that one, huh.

~Sure did. =P

Marinette was grinning as she put her phone away and went back to work. The afternoon went by as
fast as the morning, the flow of customers staying steady right up until it was time to close, so they
ended up closing a little later then usual. They were ravenous by the time they got upstairs, but tired
from all the work they had put in. And since nothing had been started yet, they decided to make
things easier, they would treat themselves to eating out. So after Marinette had gone into her room to
ger her purse (and Tikki), she and her parents went out to get their supper.

They always liked to support small, local businesses, as they had their own small, local business, so
they went to a nearby family-owned restaurant that specialized in seafood. Once they had been
seated and placed their order, Marinette’s phone started vibrating. She was expecting an email from
her boyfriend, saying he was done his photo-shoot, but this time it wasn’t one from Adrien.

This was from the committee of people running the internship contest.

Suddenly her world froze. Did she dare to look? What if it was something along the lines of a
‘thanks for trying but your designs aren’t good enough for us’ email? She had tried to mentally prepare for not winning, as she was fairly certain she wouldn’t even come close, but still, the idea of having to read that kind of message twisted her stomach in knots.

Her parents noticed the look on her face and shared a quick glanced between themselves. “Is everything okay, Marinette?” Tom asked.

“I just got an email…” Marinette began, swallowing hard over the lump that had started forming in her throat. “And it’s about the internship.”

“What does it say?” Sabine sounded hopeful.

“I don’t know.” Marinette took a deep breath, then she unlocked her phone and brought up her main email account which it had been sent to. She shut her eyes before she opened the email, taking another moment to gather her courage, then she opened one eye and looked down.

She didn’t win.

Shoulder’s sagging a little, Marinette sighed. “Bad news?” Tom guessed, and Marinette nodded. “I’m so sorry…”

“It’s okay.” After taking a second to feel disappointed, Marinette closed the email and set her phone on the table. “It was just an internship. Who knows, maybe an actual job posting will come up with them soon.”

“That’s the spirit!” Sabine encouraged.

“A job would be better then an internship anyway, because I would actually get paid.” Marinette added. “So it’s not the end of the world.”

Their meals arrived then, so they started eating, and while she ate, the more she thought about it, the less upset Marinette felt. Sure, she had wanted to win, but she also knew internships usually were very hard with menial jobs and little pay. So it may have been good the internship was going to someone else. After all, she had a pretty full plate working in the bakery and being Ladybug. And with all the years of being the superhero of luck, she had learned things often happened for a reason.

After their food had disappeared and their cups had been drained, the bill was brought to their table. Once it had been paid, they got up from their seats, and Marinette made sure to not leave her phone there and put it safely in her pocket as they went to leave. The walk home was short, and when they got home, Tom and Sabine went upstairs ahead of Marinette, so she quickly snuck some fresh cookies into her pockets for Tikki before going up herself.

It was only once she had gotten back to her room and shut the door did she feel her phone vibrate. After setting the cookies on Tikki’s plate and opening her purse, Marinette took out her phone while her kwami flew out to start eating.

~Finally done! X_x Sorry that took so long. Sometimes the photographers feel the need to obsess over the tiniest details.

~It’s all right. We’re still on for the picnic tonight, right?

~You bet! =D

~See you tonight.
Can’t wait! <3

Setting her phone down on her desk, Marinette went downstairs to grab a plastic container and a grocery bag from the kitchen. Her parents weren’t in the living room so she didn’t have to answer any questions as to why she needed it, thankfully, and she stowed them behind her back as she went back to her room. And upon her return, she made sure Tikki wasn’t watching as she stashed the container and bag in one of her vanity drawers for now. She was going to use them to bring whatever cookies Tikki hadn’t eaten to the picnic, of course. Since she didn’t have one of the lunch boxes Adrien bought yet, this would have to do.

To fill in the time until patrol, she turned on her computer and browsed the Internet for a while. It still felt somewhat weird not to have to do homework or study. Once the time for patrol came around, Marinette turned her computer back off and when she looked over at Tikki, she saw behind her that there were still some cookies left on her plate, which would be perfect for her to slip into the container and throw into the bag once she was transformed. “Good to go?”

“You bet I am!” Tikki gave her a salute.

“Spots on!” The lights faded away and Marinette immediately went to her vanity, bringing out the container and the bag. She opened the container and stashed the cookies inside, then closed it back up and put it into the bag. Threading the loops of the bag over her arm, Marinette went up to the trapdoor and onto the terrace. She unhooked her yo-yo and after silently praying that no one would look up and see Ladybug with a bag on her arm, she swung off into the night.

When she arrived at the apartment building, Adrien was already there. “Necessity the mother of invention again?” He quipped while motioning to her grocery bag.

“Yup.” Marinette slid it off her arm, noting the two lunch boxes that hung from either of his shoulders. “Are you going to give me one of those?”

“Oh, right.” Adrien quickly took one off his shoulder and handed it to her, and after she had opened it she stuffed the bag and container of cookies within it inside the lunch box. Then both of them set them in the middle of the rooftop and grabbed for their respective method of transport. “East or west?”

“West.” She decided, and they took off on their separate routes. Patrol was fairly uneventful tonight, which was good, because Marinette really wanted to spend time with Adrien. They got back around the same time, and he looked excited for what was about to happen. “Ready?”

“Definitely.” Adrien grinned at her. They sat down on the middle of the rooftop by the lunch boxes and set them on their laps, then after sharing a nod, both of them called off their transformations.

Tikki and Plagg soon came back into view, both looking equally baffled. “What did you guys do that for? Now we’re stuck up here!” Plagg accused.

“I promised I would help you and Tikki spend more time together, didn’t I?” Adrien opened up his lunch box to reveal the camembert sitting on an ice pack that laid within. “And we know you need to eat after we transform. So we planned an after patrol picnic.”

“This…this is for us?” Tikki breathed, eyes widening as Marinette opened her lunch box and pulled the container of cookies out of the bag.

“Absolutely.” Marinette assured her. “We’ll be watching the stars anyway, so you two can chow down and enjoy each other’s company.”
“This is the best surprise ever!” Tikki flew over and hugged Marinette’s shoulder tightly, then grabbed the container of cookies from her bonded’s hand. “Let’s go eat by the corner, Plagg!”

Plagg took the camembert from Adrien’s lunch box and paused, then gave him a bit of a smile. “Thank you.” Then he flew off after Tikki.

“They’re happy.” Adrien observed as he set the lunch box to the side and laid back, Marinette quickly doing the same.

“And they deserve it.” Marinette set her head on his chest, then turned slightly so she could look up at Adrien. “I got an email today about the internship.” She saw his eyes light up, but she shook her head. “I didn’t get it.”

“What?” Adrien was astonished.

“And before you ask, yes, I am a little disappointed. But I’m okay.” Marinette told him. “The fashion world is tough, and this just means I might find something better down the road.”

Adrien studied her for a while, wanting to see if she was just saying that. But she looked sincere, so he believed her. “If you’re sure.”

“I am.” She cuddled closer into his side. “I know I’ll get something eventually. It just takes hard work and dedication, and I’m not a quitter.”

“You’re amazing.” Adrien stated simply, making her blush.

“I’m just being positive.” Marinette said bashfully. “Besides, I do happen to have a pretty good cheering section that can help keep me motivated. I have my parents, Alya and Nino, Tikki, and I’m sure even Plagg would be rooting for me. And then of course there’s you…”

“Damn right.” Adrien kissed the top of her head.

Feeling warm and content, Marinette gazed back up at the stars. There would definitely be other opportunities in the future. And for now, she was happy with all she had. A loving family, great friends, some extra special miniature guardians, and last but certainly not least, the man of her dreams. So until the time opportunity knocked again, she was okay with waiting.

Because she didn’t doubt for a second that her time would eventually come.
Since I was lucky enough to be blessed with an end-of-summer cold, I’m going to keep the Note short tonight and head back under the covers to hibernate it away, LOL. Enjoy guys! ♥

“How’s the picnic?” Marinette asked Tikki and Plagg after a while.

“Amazing!” Tikki had cookie crumbs all over her mouth and a wide grin. Plagg just nodded his agreement, as his own mouth was currently filled with camembert.

“Let us know when you’re finished.” Adrien told them, then he turned his attention back to his girlfriend. “Are you going to be doing anything this Sunday night?”

Marinette paused for a moment to think. “I don’t think I am, why?”

“Father said that if you’re free, he would like to invite you over for supper.” Adrien saw her eyes light up. “So I take it that means you want to come?”

“Of course I do!” Marinette propped herself up to look at him better. “I can still hardly believe he wants to meet me!”

“Well you are pretty special.” Adrien grinned when she blushed.

“You do that on purpose.” She accused, covering her pink cheeks with her hands.

“Do not.” Adrien reached out to lightly pull her arms so that her hands would move away from her face. “I just like complimenting you.”

“And turning me into a tomato face.” Marinette allowed him to pull down her hands so that she could poke his nose.

“That just happens to be an adorable side effect.” Adrien chuckled when she blushed more. “See? Adorable.”

She crawled over him and looked down into his eyes. “You’re so annoying.”

“I love you too.” Adrien took hold of her shoulders and rolled them so she was beneath him, and smirked a little at her look of slight surprise before he closed the distance between them to kiss her. It was soft, with her arms circling around his shoulders and his sliding down from hers to rest around her waist. After a quick breath they were kissing again, and didn’t stop until the sound of someone clearing their throat rather loudly nearby broke them apart.

Their kwamis were hovering in the air directly above them. Plagg was frowning down at them with his arms folded across his chest, though Tikki was looking quite amused. Whether her amusement was from their actions or from Plagg’s reaction to it, no one could really be sure. It was most likely a mixture of both. “We’re ready to go whenever you are.” Tikki said, but Plagg immediately shook his head vehemently.
“No way! Not when they’re ready! We go now!” He insisted, and everyone around them laughed.

“I guess we have no real choice in the matter, then, so now it is.” Adrien moved over slightly so he could get up and Marinette could as well. “They are our ride home, so to speak.”

After they had stood up, they transformed and gathered up the lunch boxes and anything leftover, like camembert wrappers and the bag Marinette had originally brought the cookies in. Each of them slung one lunch box over their shoulder, then after sharing a short hug and another quick kiss, they took off toward their respective homes.

The lunch box didn’t interfere with her range of movement, so the trip home didn’t take any longer then it usually would. Once she was safely inside, she went down the ladder and set the lunch box down on the desk, opening it and pulling out the two cookies Tikki hadn’t eaten yet to set back onto her plate. Then she zipped the lunch box back up and hung the strap off the hook on the back of her mirror over her graduation dress to keep it hidden. “Spots off.” The flash of light faded away and Tikki came floating over, the overjoyed expression on her face making Marinette smile herself. “Were you surprised?”

“Completely!” Tikki flew in a happy circle through the air around her bonded. “That was so sweet of you and Adrien to do for us!”

“And we were thinking of doing it every once and a while too from now on, so you two can get to spend more time together.” Marinette loved Tikki’s excited twirl at this news.

“You guys are the best!” Tikki flew over to hug Marinette’s shoulder again. “Thank you so much!”

“Any time.” Marinette watched her kwami zip down to her cookie plate before she turned to get ready for bed. Climbing into her PJs and then up the ladder into bed, she curled up under the covers to get nice and comfortable. Tikki came up shortly after, taking her usual spot on the cat pillow.

Tonight it took longer for Marinette to fall asleep, as she was busy planning other ideas for Tikki and Plagg to spend time together to go along with after patrol picnics.

It also meant more time for her and Adrien to spend together, but that was just an added bonus.

_______________________________________________________________

The sound of her phone’s alarm going off roused her many hours later, and she grumpily trudged down the ladder to turn it off. She still felt tired and would have liked to go back to bed, but she knew she had promised her parents that she would help in the bakery more now that school was done. So dutifully, she went down to shower and have a bite to eat, went back upstairs to quickly get dressed, then headed off to the bakery kitchen to get to work.

Unlike yesterday, the customer flow was more on the quiet side. The weather was scorching hot, so Marinette was glad to be inside with the air conditioner running. It was still fairly warm in the kitchen area, as there were ovens on almost constantly baking one recipe or another, but at least she could escape into the shop portion every once and a while to cool down.

Halfway into the afternoon, Marinette’s phone started vibrating. She couldn’t check it right away, as she had her hands covered in flour, so it had to wait a few minutes until she finished kneading the dough she was working with and was able to wash her hands. Finally, she took out her phone and unlocked it to open her email.

~I told Father that you can come on Sunday night for supper, so he wanted me to tell you to be here for 5 PM sharp.
She had mentioned to Tom and Sabine this morning that she was going to be going over to meet Gabriel Agreste, and they had both been very excited for her. Now she could update them what time she would be going there for, as she was probably going to leave extra early just to be safe, even though Adrien didn’t live very far away from her.

~Okay. To be honest, I’m really looking forward to this.

~Me too. I know he’s going to love you. ^^

And Marinette could feel another blush coming on.

~I’ll be happy as long as he doesn’t hate me. It would be nice to come visit you and not have to do it in secrecy.

~Although visiting me in secrecy was very fun. ;3

~I meant being able to visit for things other then just that.

~Party pooper. =P

Grinning, Marinette put her phone away. The rest of the afternoon slipped by in short succession, and by the time they closed up the bakery for supper, the temperature had only gone down by a few degrees. “Marinette, would you be able to do us a favor tomorrow?” Sabine asked as they sat down around the table.

Marinette nodded. “Sure Mom, what is it?”

“We were thinking of using the gift card set for dinner and a movie that you and your friends got for us tomorrow night,” Sabine began. “But to make sure we left enough time to get to the movie we want to see, we would have to leave for supper a little before the bakery closes. Would you mind running the bakery by yourself for a while and closing it up for us so we could leave early?”

“Of course I can!” Marinette immediately replied. She had almost forgotten about the gift card set, so this was a pleasant surprise.

“Are you sure? If you already have plans with your friends tomorrow, we can try doing it another night.” Tom offered.

“No, I don’t have any plans! That’s fine!” Marinette was trying not to appear over-eager but she couldn’t help herself.

The house was going to be free tomorrow night. Just wait until she told Adrien!

“Thanks Marinette.” Tom shared a glance with Sabine and they were both doing their best not to smile at Marinette’s response. They knew what she was thinking, of course, and were very entertained.

They had just finished eating when Marinette felt her phone vibrate. She had been just about to take it out to email Adrien about tomorrow night, so she took it out of her pocket right away.

~It’s so hot. o.- Want to go back to that ice cream parlor we went to on our first date tonight? I could really go for some right now.

Meaning she could tell him the good news in person? Even better. “Is it all right if I go out for ice cream with Adrien tonight?” Marinette glanced up from her phone to look at her parents.
“That sounds like a good idea in this heat.” Sabine gave her a smile. “Go ahead.”

Her daughter’s thumbs were already dancing over the keys. “Thank you!” She remembered to say in between typing out her message.

~I’d love to, we’re already done supper so feel free to come on over.

~Yay! =) Be right there!

Dashing upstairs, Marinette quickly told Tikki she was going out with Adrien so her kwami went right into her purse. She slung it on over her shoulder and practically skipped downstairs, bidding her parents a bubbly goodbye before she went down to wait for her boyfriend by the front door. Within minutes he was knocking on the door, so she quickly opened it wide for him while she was stepping into some sandals. “Ready?” Adrien waited for her outside the doorway since he could see she was already coming through the door.

“Wow, it really is hot.” Marinette made a bit of a face as the wall of heat enveloped her as soon as she was outside, shutting the door and locking it behind her before taking Adrien’s hand in hers.

“Exactly why there’s a need for ice cream.” Adrien gave her hand an affectionate squeeze as they started walking.

“Don’t you have any ice cream in that giant kitchen of yours?” Marinette teased.

“Probably.” Adrien admitted. “But why would I have ice cream by myself, when I can have ice cream with my girlfriend?”

That was the kind of answer she had been expecting, but it still made her wear a smile from ear to ear.
The walk to the ice cream parlor in heat like this made walking into the little shop and feeling the cool air welcome them in extra satisfying. There was quite a line inside today, but it wasn’t surprising. When it was finally their turn to order, Marinette decided to go with a caramel sundae, and Adrien went with a cone piled high with swirls of chocolate soft serve. They had to wait a few minutes for one to get free, but eventually there was a table available in the corner of the parlor, so they made their way over before anyone else would be able to take it and sat down.

“This is so good,” Marinette sighed happily after swallowing her first taste of her sundae. It definitely hit the spot on a hot day like today.

“Mine too. Want to try some?” Adrien held out his cone to her, and Marinette nodded and went to take a lick when he leaned it slightly so she got ice cream on her nose too. “Oops.” He grinned at her withering look, then handed her a napkin.

“You keep that up and I won’t tell you my surprise.” Marinette threw the proverbial hook while she wiped the ice cream from her nose and knew it had hit its mark as his eyebrows arched.

“Surprise?” Adrien was clearly intrigued.

Time to reel that hook in. “There might be something good happening tomorrow.”

“Like what?” He quickly took a few licks of his ice cream so it wouldn’t drop down the cone onto his hand.

“My parents are going to use their gift card set.” Marinette saw him freeze mid-lick, and now she was the one grinning. “Meaning the house will be mostly empty.”

Adrien had a devious look in his eyes as he swallowed his mouthful of ice cream. “I see. Well, maybe I should come over to help make it seem less empty.”

“Maybe you should.” Marinette could hear a heavy sigh come from Adrien’s shirt and giggled. “Oh, don’t pout. You get to come too, you know.” She whispered so no one nearby would realize she was directing this part of the conversation to someone other than the man she was sitting beside.

“We call the kitchen, then.” Was Plagg’s equally quiet response, knowing better then to speak louder in case he was heard.

“It’s all yours.” Adrien wore a bit of a smirk as he added, “We’ll be wanting the bedroom anyway.”

And Plagg audibly groaned, inciting laughter not only from Marinette and Adrien, but from within Marinette’s purse, Tikki was as well.
They made short work of their ice cream after that, and once they were done, they got up from their table so someone else would be able to use it and headed back outside. Now that it was evening, the temperature was starting to drop but it was doing so very slowly, and the air around them still felt muggy as they made their way back to the Dupain-Cheng bakery. Even with the heat though, they took their time with their walk, wanting to enjoy the few extra minutes of time together it provided them.

When they arrived and Marinette had unlocked the door, they stepped inside and closed the door behind them to not let in too much of the heat. Adrien watched her take off her sandals and as she straightened, he slid his arms around her waist. “See you later?” He murmured, their usual double-meaning phrase now including a third with tomorrow night’s rendezvous.

Marinette smiled as she rested her hands on his shoulders. “You bet.” Their kiss was short but filled with promises of things to come. When they parted, they gazed fondly into each other’s eyes. “I love you.”

“Love you too.” Adrien gave her one last smile before he turned to leave, opening the door and slipping out before closing it behind him.

Putting her sandals aside and locking the door, Marinette went into the bakery to grab some oatmeal raisin cookies before she upstairs to see Tom and Sabine locked in another tense checkers match. Or at least, it looked to be tense from Tom’s end, but Sabine didn’t look at all worried. Grinning to herself, Marinette took the last flight of stairs up to her room and set the cookies down on the plate on the desk as Tikki phased out of her purse.

“You’ll have to tell Adrien what time the bakery closes so he’ll know what time to come over for.” Tikki told her as she sat down by her cookie plate.

“Good idea. I think he has a general idea of when we close, but it probably wouldn’t hurt.” Marinette took out her phone and quickly sent off an email to her Jaguar of what time the bakery would close tomorrow, so that he could come for around then since by that time, Tom and Sabine would definitely be gone.

Not like it would have been a surprise to either of them to see him coming over, but Marinette and Adrien didn’t know that.

She then took out her sketchbook and worked on a few designs, as she wanted to keep her portfolio full with new ideas despite not winning the internship. Since no one could never know when opportunity would knock, it was best to keep one’s options open. And having a portfolio filled with designs she was proud of would mean she’d be ready for whenever a good chance came by.

Eventually the time for patrol was near, so she put away her sketchbook and glanced over at Tikki. “I’m ready if you are.” She floated over to her, so Marinette nodded and got to her feet.

“Spots on!” Wearing the mantle of Ladybug once more, she went up through the trapdoor and waited on the terrace a moment for a family walking by to head safely into the distance, then took off toward the usual meeting place.

Though she got to the apartment building first, she didn’t have to wait long for Adrien to get there. But since it was around five minutes, she decided it was fair game to charge him for it. “You owe me a late fee kiss.” Marinette announced once he had landed and was walking over to her.
“Oh no!” Adrien gave an overly-dramatic gasp, making the sound of her giggle fill his ears and warm his heart. He loved hearing the sound of her laugh. “Say it isn’t so!”

“It most certainly is.” Marinette was smiling as she unhooked her yo-yo. “I’m going to go north, so when I come back, I want my kiss.”

“As you wish, my Lady.” Adrien bowed to her, and watched her toss her yo-yo high into the air before she swung out into the night. He waited a little while on top of the rooftop on purpose before actually setting off himself, because this way, she would probably be back before him again.

Which meant he would get to kiss her more.

Due to the heat, most people seemed to be inside and therefore keeping out of trouble. But because he left so much later then she had, and took his time looping through the streets, Marinette was standing waiting for him like he had predicted as he made his way back to the rooftop. She didn’t have any idea that he had done this on purpose, of course, so when he finally was making his approach she had her arms folded over her chest and was tapping her foot, though she didn’t look mad in the slightest. “That’s another three.” She said as soon as he touched down. “So now you owe me four.”

“Then I accept my fate humbly and with dignity!” Adrien took her hand as he walked by, and together they went to the center of the rooftop and laid down. “And where would you like them?”

“How about you choose this time?” Marinette offered as he moved so he was perched over her, and felt a wonderful shiver run down her spine at the look that entered his eyes at her words.

“Well then,” Adrien whispered in a way that made her shiver again. “Let’s start here…” He pressed his lips to hers and the heat of the air around them began to pale in comparison to what they were generating. His hands found their favorite spot at her hips and her fingers were threading their way into his hair. They had to separate to breathe after a while, and Adrien moved slightly so that his face was inches from her suit-covered neck. “I think a couple should go here, too…”

She gave a breathy sigh as he pressed two to her neck. “And what about the last one?” Marinette saw him smirk and move his head towards her chest. “But there’s only one kiss left.”

“I think I’ll be generous and let you have two more.” Adrien gave her a wink before kissing against her nipples through her suit, enjoying her quiet moan as he did so.

Now that his kisses were done, Marinette rolled them so she was looking down at him now. Though there were lingering feelings of worry about what she had done and had planned to do with him when she had been under Emotion-Elle’s power, she knew he wouldn’t want her to feel that way. And besides, she wasn’t forcing herself on him now, they both wanted this. So she let those feelings die as others were taking hold of her attention. “I wish it could be tomorrow night already,” She murmured, straddling his waist and letting her hips rub slowly against his. “You just always have to be arousing.”

Seeing her positioned like that and feeling the contact only served to increase his growing desire for her. “So do I.” He let his hands cup her breasts and began to massage them gently at a languid pace. “And for the record, I’m not the only one who happens to be arousing, thank you very much.”

Both the compliment and the lovely sensation brought a smile to her face. “I guess not.” Marinette leaned in to kiss him while continuing to grind against him, earning more then one moan against her lips from him as she did. The friction felt great, but despite their hold on reality not being as strong as it used to be, they both knew it couldn’t really go further then this. But Adrien had told her to tease
him whenever she wanted, and this would have been much more along the lines of what he had truly meant by that. And she really liked doing this. Being in control felt good.

So more teasing should happen tomorrow night, she decided.

With some effort on both sides, they broke apart from their kiss several breathless moments later. Marinette moved off him and laid against the rooftop next to him as both of them tried to cool themselves down. The evening still felt hot but for reasons other then the temperature now, and it took a while before either of them made a move to sit up and get to their feet.

“I think you’re going to need to get more peace-offering camembert for Plagg for this.” Adrien advised as he adjusted his position somewhat awkwardly. “He’s going to be pretty pissed off at us again.”

Smirking, Marinette grabbed her yo-yo. “Since that means I did a good job, I think I can swing in a grocery run in the near future.”

“You’re only smug because you being uncomfortable doesn’t effect your walking.”

“One of the perks of being a woman.”

“True. But I’m more fond of two of your other womanly ‘perks’, myself.”

“Honestly, Adrien, you and your damn puns…!”

He was laughing as she stuck her tongue out at him, then the two superheroes went off on their separate routes home. One took longer then the other for obvious reasons, and when they got back to their bedrooms and called off their transformations, one of them was greeted by a very entertained kwami and the other by a very annoyed one. They both got changed quickly and climbed into their individual beds, though both were wide-awake for a long time.

With their kwamis around, eating and going to sleep themselves soon after, meant neither of them could do much about the way they were still feeling. So it felt like ages before either of them were welcomed into the realm of sleep, and both were in for some rather pleasant dreams tonight.
Chapter 68

Marinette was groggy when her alarm started going off, but despite having a restless night, she wasn’t feeling grumpy. Frustrated, yes, for obvious reasons. But she was feeling far too excited for what tonight would bring to be grumpy.

It was somewhat difficult to keep a lid on her happiness through the morning as she worked in the bakery kitchen, but it was even harder as the afternoon crept by and it came closer for Tom and Sabine to head out. Finally they told her they were going to go get ready, so Marinette quickly left the kitchen to watch the shop area so they could do so. There were some customers to help, so by the time she had finished helping them and ringing them in, her parents were waiting in the hallway. “We’re heading out now,” Sabine called to her once the customers had walked outside.

“As soon it shut behind them, she locked it and went back out into the shop area to eagerly wait for the time to go by. When it was only few minutes left until closing, she saw a familiar face through the window in the door. “Sorry, sir,” She had a bit of a grin as Adrien came inside. “But I’m about to close up shop for the day.”

“That’s just such a shame,” He did his best to look disappointed as he walked over to her. “Because I was really in the mood for some dessert.”

Her grin widened. “Well, perhaps something could be arranged for you.” His chuckle was soft as he came behind the till to slip his arms around her waist and press a kiss to her cheek. “You can go ahead upstairs. I’ll be up as soon as I’m done in here.”

“You haven’t had supper yet, right?” She shook her head. “Neither have I. Do you mind if I start making us something while I wait?”

“That would be great, thank you.” Marinette gave him a light peck on the lips.

“You’re welcome.” Adrien let go of her and started going toward the hallway, only to turn back and say cheekily, “Just don’t make me wait too long.”

She blew him a kiss in reply and after ‘catching’ it, Adrien started to make his way upstairs. Once it was officially time to do so, Marinette went through all the closing procedures carefully so she wouldn’t make any mistakes, but was itching to finish so she would be able to go upstairs herself. Once she was done everything, she made sure to turn off the lights on her way out, then she took the stairs two at a time to be able to meet up with her beloved that much quicker.

When she opened the door to the living room and kitchen, she saw Adrien setting the table. “So...
what’s on the menu tonight?” She peered around him and saw bread sitting on the table, as well as various things that had been in the fridge that could be used to make sandwiches on the fly, with milk poured into two glasses and standing next to either plate.

“Sandwiches, because they’re fast.” Adrien could hear her laughing from behind him while he moved to pull out one of the chairs for her with a sweeping bow. “My Lady, your feast awaits.”

Still giggling as she sat down, Marinette grabbed herself two of the slices of bread he had cut up for them. After Adrien had taken two for himself, they took turns grabbing things to make their sandwiches with. Once they had enough of each, they quickly got to work on starting to eat. It wasn’t the most filling supper, of course, but neither of them were really worried about that. They could always get something else to eat later on if they were still hungry.

Right now, there was a hunger of a different sort wanting their attention.

They were done their sandwiches and milk within minutes, and got to work on cleaning up right away. The dishes went into the sink and the bread and other fixings were put back where they belonged, then it was time to head upstairs. Tikki was waiting for them as they came into Marinette’s room, so Adrien opened his shirt so Plagg could float out of his pocket. “The kitchen is now officially off limits to you two, so you better not come in!” Plagg declared, narrowing his eyes at Marinette and Adrien who were trying but failing to keep a straight face.

“We’ll resist the temptation.” Adrien’s response earned an eye roll from his kwami, then Plagg and Tikki went out through Marinette’s bedroom door and passed through the floor below the stairs as well.

“Good thing they’re going down to the bakery kitchen.” She mused while shutting the door. “That way, they won’t be able to hear us.”

“I don’t know, the way you screamed Saturday night was pretty loud,” Adrien teased while sliding his arms around her from behind, kissing along the back of her neck.

Marinette smirked and waited until he was in between kisses to turn around in his arms. “And what makes you think I’ll be the one screaming?” His eyes widened a little and she kissed him deeply, not wanting to give him a chance to reply.

After a couple more burning kisses, she separated from him to lightly push him back towards the chaise lounge, and he obediently sat down onto the end of it. Now she took her time as she pulled her right hair elastic out, then the left, before giving her head a shake to make her hair fan out around her face. She knew he was watching intently as she slipped them into the pocket of her capris, then brought her hands to the hem of her shirt and began to inch it up over her torso. It finally came off and she dropped it to the floor, licking her lips while she let her hands run down her body.

“How do I get to help?” Adrien asked when she took a step closer, even though he had already started reaching out towards her.

“You do not.” Marinette grabbed his hands and pushed them down lightly to rest on top of his knees. “In fact…” Her smirk was growing. “I’m going to be undressing you too once I’m done, so I better not see you moving again. Understood, kitty cat?”

Hell, this was such a turn on. The way she was taking charge like this made him want her all the more, so it was likely going to take all his concentration to keep his hands from moving. But he desperately wanted more of this, so Adrien swallowed hard and gave a quick nod.
Satisfied, Marinette let go of his hands so she could bring her own back and slowly undo the button of her capris. She began to slide down the zipper below it little by little while letting her other hand wander up to sit on her shoulder over one of the straps of her bra, and she could already see Adrien’s hands twitching.

And was she ever enjoying this.

She hooked a finger under her bra strap and pulled so it fell off her shoulder while pushing the waistband of her capris down to expose the top of her panties. Next she did the same with the other bra strap, letting them both hang around her arms as she moved the waistband of her capris down a smidgen more. By now it looked like it was taking everything Adrien have not to move, much to Marinette’s delight.

With one more push her capris dropped from her hips to rest at her feet, so she stepped out of them and kicked them aside. Marinette took another step closer to Adrien and heard him take a deep breath as she did, but he somehow managed to keep himself from moving. His level of will power impressed her, though she doubted he would be able to last much longer. Not with what she still had planned.

Reaching back, Marinette unhooked her bra and brought her arms to her sides so it slid off, and once it had she rubbed her hands over her breasts and allowed herself to hum contentedly at the sensation. “Now?” Adrien pleaded, but she just shook her head. He sighed heavily and was about to speak again, although he immediately stopped when he saw her hands leave her breasts and travel towards her panties.

First she slipped one thumb into the waistband, and then the other. She let her hips sway as she dragged them down an inch at a time until they fell off like her capris had, and when she stepped out of them, she now stood right in front of Adrien, who now had a white-knuckled tight grip on his knees. “Only move the way I move you, okay?” She whispered with a wink, then took hold of his wrists to gently tug upward.

Relieved to able to move even in the slightest, Adrien instantly let go of his knees so she could lift his arms into the air. Marinette carefully pulled his over shirt off one arm and then the other, then casually tossed it aside to join her own discarded clothes. Next she brought his arms straight up, and slid the right side of his shirt up a bit before doing the same to the left, until she gently pulled it over his head. She guided his arms back down to rest at his sides, and, knowing he would be expecting her to start on his pants next, she instead sat down on his lap. “Oh!” He jumped a little in surprise, and the way that her skin pressed against the layers of fabric covering his large (and still growing) bulge made him moan low in his throat.

This just brought her smirk back. Marinette captured his lips in hers and leaned into him, making him lay flat on the chaise lounge as he hungrily kissed her back. Loving how obviously this was affecting him, she let herself grind her hips into his a few times, which brought another deep moan from Adrien. She broke the kiss eventually so they could catch their breath, then she lifted herself off him. This movement initially earned her a confused pout from her lover, until she pushed his knees apart so she could crouch in between his legs.

Which made his eyes grow wide.

By now, the heat she was feeling herself was trying to steal her focus, but she wouldn’t let it. There was still much more she had planned that she wanted to do for him. So Marinette started with undoing his belt, then popped open the button that lay beneath it. When she dragged down the zipper of his jeans, the contact against his confined arousal it brought made Adrien’s grip tighten on the cushion of the chaise lounge. She let her fingers curl into the waistband of his jeans so she could
begin dragging them off, first over his thighs then past his knees, before having to back up slightly to be able to bring them down to his ankles.

Each of her movements held his rapt attention, no matter how small, and his gaze never left her. Marinette crept back between his legs to grab for the waistband of his boxers, and Adrien was looking forward to finally having them off. But she wasn’t going to take them off quickly, of course, because that would’ve been too easy. So instead she worked them over his legs leisurely, and his relieved sigh when his length was able to spring free made her chuckle softly. “I have to say, I didn’t think that you’d be able to keep yourself from moving this long.” She told him as she brought his boxers down to join his jeans at his feet.

Grinning, Adrien managed to find his voice. “I’m going to take that as a compliment.”

“But I wonder,” Marinette began as she pulled both his jeans and his boxers off completely now to throw them amongst everything else on the floor, then crouched between his legs again. “How long will you be able to keep from moving now?” And with a wicked look in her eyes, she ran her tongue over his shaft from base to tip.

The way he gasped was music to her ears. When she closed her lips over the head and swirled her tongue around the extremely sensitive flesh, Adrien threw his head back and moaned, so she did it again. “God, Marinette…p-please…” He begged, squeezing his eyes tightly shut at the wonderfully electrifying sensation. “Please don’t stop…!”

Normally she would’ve told him his wish was her command, but her mouth was otherwise occupied at the moment, and he did ask her so nicely not to stop. So Marinette happily continued, with each of his moans sending more fire straight to her core. But she was going to let him have his release first this time, after all the times he had done it for her already, so she wouldn’t allow her fingers to start drifting down. So to keep one of her hands occupied, she let it wrap around his hardness, and with the other, she was going to put into play some research she had down a while ago.

His whole body jerked when she took gentle hold of his sack. Pleased with getting this kind of response already, Marinette let her fingers start massaging it while never ceasing her attentions further up. And with all the waiting he had had to endure, the intense need he had felt for her, and now this, there was no way Adrien could last any longer. He shouted her name over and over as wave after wave of pleasure slammed through him, completely sweeping him away.

But Marinette had been prepared for his orgasm to hit quickly and was ready for it, so she wasn’t surprised when he began to fill her mouth. She swallowed everything he had, and noted absently that she felt a bit more used to the taste this time. When she was sure he was finished, she brought her head back and let go of him, and his heavy panting made her feel quite proud of what she had been able to do for him.

She was getting pretty good at this, if she did say so herself.

It was a while before he opened his eyes again, focusing his gaze on her as a deeply satisfied smile crossed his face. “Hi,” She said with a grin, and his response was a tired wave. “Uh oh. And you were doing so well.” Marinette chided while crawling around to the side of the chaise lounge to be able to look at him at eye level. “Hate to break it to you, but that counts as moving.”

Adrien gave a somewhat hoarse laugh. “Sometimes, love bug…”

“I know, I know.” Marinette gave him a peck on the cheek. She let him have a few more moments to recover, then got to her feet. “Do you need some help to sit up?”
“That depends if I can move now.” He teased, and she smirked but nodded. “Then I’ve got this.” Adrien slowly sat up and as soon as he had, Marinette walked over to the ladder leading to her bed and climbed up it. Watching her lay down on top of the blankets and rest her head on the pillow brought him a smirk of his own. “Let me guess, rest time is over?”

“If you don’t mind.” She called down sweetly.

“Pleasuring the woman I love?” Adrien stood and followed the path she had just taken, crawling over top of her once he too was on the bed. He knew it would be a while before he would be able to harden up again, but there was nothing stopping him from using his hands on her. Or his mouth, for that matter. His chuckle was soft as he finished, “I think I can manage.”
Chapter 69

Chapter Notes

Man, have I ever had crazy few days! My hard drive on my iMac died on Thursday, so I rushed it into the store where I bought it five years ago. They said they could definitely get their technicians to take a look at it, IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS. x_x And I simply could not wait that long. I have stuff on here for work, as well as this story, of course! So I bought a new hard drive and a kit to replace it at home, and got my Dad to help me. He's in IT, and although he's not Mac certified, he's been working with computers for as long as I can remember and so I was really glad to have him help. My Dad and I replaced the hard drive ourselves and I set it to restore from my latest Time Machine backup overnight (which is a total life saver, trust me, start doing Time Machine backups if you have an iMac if you don't already!!), and turned it on this morning to everything working perfectly! I could not be happier. <3 I told my Dad that for helping me fix my baby, I'm taking him out to supper, LOL. =P

ANYWAY! I know you're all eagerly awaiting part two of our lovely tea party, so I won't make you wait much longer. Just the obligatory RUN WHILE YOU STILL CAN! message, but other then that, please enjoy. ;)

First Adrien started with a kiss, and Marinette wound her arms around his shoulders. He let his hands wander along her body, and even the lightest of contacts were making her shiver. Once they had parted, he gave her a smile while brushing her hair away from her face, his eyes holding so much love. Hers held the same as she smiled back. Then their lips met again, and soon their tongues met as well.

He could never get enough of kissing her, of touching her, of just being near her in general. And knowing that she felt the same way was the best feeling in the world.

Though he knew she had been waiting a while now because of giving him a turn first, he didn’t want to rush this for her. Adrien liked to be able to take his time when he pleasured her, right from the first time he had been able to do so for her. Plus, with the amazing show she had just given him and proven how worthwhile a wait could be, he definitely wanted to make this extra sweet for her in return. So when they separated for air again, he pressed a soft kiss to her forehead before moving down her body slowly.

Marinette watched his journey through half-lidded eyes, and gave a contented sigh when his hands cupped her breasts to start softly massaging them. When his fingers brushed over her nipples she shuddered, her back arching to try and press her body closer to his. Her whole body felt so sensitive already from giving Adrien his strip tease and finishing him off, so when he gave each nipple a light pinch, she gasped and dug her fingers into the sheets.

The sounds she made always aroused him to no end. His body couldn’t physically respond just yet, but it wouldn’t be long before it would be able to. So for now, he was content to continue his ministrations and just listen to her. Adrien started kissing a line down her body, down the valley between her breasts and over her chiseled stomach, ever closer to his ultimate destination.

When he pressed one just beneath her belly button he glanced up at her, and saw her eyes had
widened slightly and her cheeks had gone rosy. He smirked at her and licked his lips, and her cheeks darkened further. “Do you have to do that?” She asked quietly, though she let him spread her legs just the same.

“Of course I do.” Adrien replied with a wink, running his hands over her thighs. He let his tongue slip past her folds and run over her button slowly, drawing circles around it. Her squeal filled his ears as he dragged his tongue down lower, letting it slip into her entrance momentarily before he pulled back. “Yup, you still taste as good as I remember.”

“Adrien, c-cut it out…ah!” Marinette was surprised when he slid a finger into her slick opening and couldn’t help herself from bucking against his hand. She saw his smirk grow before he lowered his head again, and as he began a rhythm with his finger he started to suck on her nub.

Her first moan was followed by many more as they fell from her lips almost constantly as he continued. He kept the pace slow for several minutes, and the more sounds she made, the more he could feel his body start to respond again. Noticing this, he brought another finger within her, but didn’t increase the pace so that this wouldn’t take her over the edge just yet. After running his tongue once more over her currently extra-sensitive bundle of nerves, Adrien brought back his head to look up at her. She had focused her gaze on him when he had pulled away, and must’ve retained enough cognitive thought to guess his intention because she nodded, so he crawled up enough so she would be able to reach her hand down to his growing hardness and take gentle hold.

As Marinette’s fingers slowly slid down his shaft, he moaned low in his throat. He could never get enough of her touching him, either. He saw her grin a little and she ghosted her thumb across his tip, earning her another deep moan before he could stop it. She was quite obviously enjoying this, but Adrien wasn’t about to let her win so easily. So he kissed her passionately as he let the motions of his fingers increase, and her rubbing picked up speed as well.

It wasn’t long before they had to part for air, and it was good timing too, because both of them were more than ready by now. “Where are the…” Adrien began, and Marinette used her free hand to point to where the box of condoms was hidden behind her cat pillow. He reached around and stuck his hand into the box, pulling out one of the packages and bringing his hand back. “Mind helping me? I only have one free hand at the moment.”

She laughed. “That’s okay, so do I.” Marinette took one corner of the wrapper while Adrien held it in place for her and tore it open, then pulled out the condom from inside. “So allow me…” Her free hand went down to join up with the other, and once she let go of him she gently rolled it on over his manhood. And each of her movements made him shiver, much to her delight.

Managing to not lose focus from the wonderful sensations, he brought his fingers out from within her as she finished her task. He noticed her smirking as she circled her arms around his shoulders, and he loved seeing that look on her. Seeing his Lady look at him like that, and him alone, was another thing he definitely could not get enough of. Adrien captured her lips in his as he guided his member to her entrance and slid inside, muffling her pleased murmur against his mouth.

He didn’t start moving right away, just reveling once more on how perfect it felt to be within her. At last he began to thrust into her, but slowly, wanting to be able to take his time with this as well. There would most likely be times where there would be a need for a faster pace with future love making (especially if he had anything to say about it), but for now Adrien wanted to enjoy every second. And Marinette seemed to be enjoying this as well, mewling against his lips. So a slow speed was in order for tonight.

There was something special about this kind of pace. It seemed extra romantic, with each kiss and movement meaning so much. Time seemed to evaporate away as all that mattered were the two of
them. How much they meant to each other. Years of loving each other from afar without even realizing it, protecting one another through battle after battle, and so much more. Their love was built on the strongest of foundations, and this perfect moment was proof of that.

But eventually the time for quickening the tempo did arrive, as both of them were nearing the edge. And once the speed increased, with how teasingly slowly Adrien had been to her before, and how long she had been waiting for a release by now, Marinette was already racing toward it in no time. After all, he could unravel her like nothing else. Crying out for him as her senses were overwhelmed, her world became bliss as she rode the waves. He followed her soon after as her walls clamping down around him sped him into his second orgasm of the night in quick order.

When they could finally move again, Adrien slowly slid himself out of her and lay next to her by the wall. Both of them were still breathing heavily, minds still far off but steadily making the trip back to reality. After a moment of slightly fuzzy thoughts, Adrien managed to remember Marinette kept tissues above her bed, so he reached up to grab one, and then another for good measure. He pulled off the spent condom and cleaned himself off with one of the tissues, then wrapped both in the extra one and followed her example from last time by throwing it into her vanity sink for now.

Marinette cuddled into his side, her eyes drifting shut. “That was…” She trailed off, a smile starting to emerge on her lips. “Beautiful.”

“It was.” Adrien wrapped his arms around her and kissed the top of her head, his own eyes closing as well. “Thank you, Marinette.”

“You’re welcome.” Marinette stifled a yawn. “And thank you, too.”

Both of them were beyond tired, and before either of them fully realized it, they were falling asleep. After all, it couldn’t hurt to just doze for a few minutes, right?

_______________________________________________________________

“Plagg! Get up here! We have to wake them up!”

“But they’re…they’re naked!”

“Oh you big baby, don’t make me drag you by the tail…!”

“All right, all right!”

Voices nearby started to stir Marinette awake. But exhaustion still clung to her so she didn’t open her eyes. Besides, maybe this was just a dream.

“Adrien! Marinette! You need to wake up!”

“And put some clothes on…”

“Not now, Plagg!”

The voices seemed to have gotten closer. And they sounded familiar, too. But in her drowsy state, things just weren’t quite registering. Then she could feel some fervent tapping to her shoulder, and with some effort she cracked her eyes open. Before her was Tikki, who looked very relieved to see her awake at last, even if it was only partially. “Tikki?” She muttered, untangling one arm from Adrien’s still-sleeping embrace to rub one of her eyes tiredly. “What’s going on?”

“You two have to get up, right now!” Tikki told her urgently, casting a somewhat nervous look
towards the floor.

But Marinette didn’t notice that as she was busy glancing behind her to see Plagg trying to take swings at Adrien to wake him up, but he was doing it with his eyes closed so it wasn’t going very well. “Why?”

Tikki floated over so she was in Marinette’s view again to break the news. “Because your parents are home!”

And suddenly Marinette was wide-awake.

How long had they been asleep? Not that it really mattered now. Marinette rolled slightly to give Adrien’s arm a firm shake, causing his eyes to finally open. “My parents are home!” She hissed, and though it took a moment for her words to really click in, when they did, he was instantly as awake as she was.

They practically jumped down the ladder and scurried about the room gathering their clothes, starting to put them on in a flash. “What are we going to do?” Adrien whispered while stepping into his jeans.

“I don’t know!” Trying to fight the instinct to panic, Marinette’s mind was reeling as she tried to come up with a plan.

“We’re home, Marinette!” They could hear Tom call from downstairs.

“H-Hi Dad, hi Mom!” She managed to reply with some semblance of calmness in her voice. Wanting to buy them some time, Marinette asked through the door, “How was the movie?”

“It was really good!” Sabine’s voice drifted through the floor as the young couple finished getting themselves dressed. “We’ll be buying it as soon as it comes out!”

“That’s great!” Marinette glanced at Adrien, who was currently talking quietly with Plagg by her desk.

“Please, just this once!” Adrien begged, and Plagg sighed heavily.

“Fine.” His kwami relented, much Adrien’s visible relief. “But you owe me.”

“Claws out!” In a flash of bright green he reappeared as Cat Noir, and Marinette allowed herself to breath again. This way, he’d be able to sneak out the trapdoor and escape undetected. Adrien pulled her into a quick hug and gave her a soft kiss on the cheek. “See you at patrol?” When she nodded, he flashed her a smile then let go of her to scamper up the ladder to her bed.

As he was slipping out the trapdoor onto the roof, Marinette was running her fingers through her messy hair before taking her hair elastics from her pockets to put them back in again, now that her hair was at least a little tidier. When she felt she looked presentable enough, she took one last look at Tikki who gave her an encouraging smile, then she took a deep breath and opened the door to head downstairs.

“Thanks again for closing up the shop for us.” Tom said once he noticed his daughter coming in to view. “Was it busy at all after we left?”

“There were a couple customers I helped as you guys were heading out, but other then them, it was quiet.” Marinette replied, which was technically truthful. Adrien had come over after that, of course, but he hadn’t bought anything from the bakery so he, in fact, wasn’t a customer.
Sabine noticed how disheveled Marinette looked right away, but she wasn’t going to bring it up since it would just fluster her even more. “I’m glad.”

“Actually, I, uh…” Marinette tried not to seem nervous but her heart was still racing after so nearly getting caught. “Would it be all right if I used the shower? I just realized I forgot to have one this morning.” She added that last part to hopefully make her question seem less fishy. Plus it was true, she really had forgotten to have one this morning.

“Sure.” Tom had to swallow a grin at Marinette’s quiet sigh of relief and pretended not to hear it.

“Thanks.” Marinette dashed up into her room to grab her PJs, then went back down and headed straight for the door, as she desperately wanted to excuse herself from going through any more of this awkward conversation. “And I’ll probably head to bed after I’m done.”

“Okay. See you later.” Sabine waved as her daughter ducked out the door and closed it behind her. Then she turned to her husband, and the two of them just chuckled. “If she’s that nervous, they must’ve cut it pretty close to when we got home.”

“Do you think he’s still up there?” Tom cast a glance over his shoulder towards Marinette’s bedroom door.

“I doubt it. I don’t think she would’ve come out if he was still there.” Sabine mused as she sat down at the kitchen table. “But he must’ve just left in the last few minutes, because she looked like she was having a bit of a heart attack.”

“She doesn’t even need to worry, she knows we have no problem with them being together.” Tom sat down across from his wife.

“True, but I’m not surprised she does.” Sabine smiled. “I know I would’ve nearly died if my parents had almost walked in on us.”

Tom shot a grin her way. “Speaking of which…”

“Nope, you turned me down last time. So I think I’d like to play checkers.”

“But that’s not fair, I had a cold!”

“Checkers now.”

A heavy sigh. “Yes, dear.”

“And maybe something else later.”

“…I’ll get the board!”
Chapter 70

Chapter Notes

Time for another upload, and milestone number seven! ♥ I had some fun with this one. I also wanted to let you all know, this time next week I'll be on vacation with my family. I'll be taking a laptop with me to continue writing, but I'm not sure if I'll be able to post a chapter depending on how good my Internet connection will be. I'll see what I can do. But I just wanted to give everyone the heads up. =) Anyway, hope you all enjoy!

Once Marinette had finished her shower and thrown on her PJs, she headed upstairs to give her parents each a hug goodnight in the midst of their checkers game, then she went up into her room. After she made sure the door was locked, she flopped down onto the chaise lounge with a heavy sigh. “That was way too close,” She declared as Tikki zipped of her to her. “And thanks for the save.”

“No problem.” Her kwami floated down to sit on her knee. “We lost track of time a little too, to be honest. But when we heard them coming in we came straight up here so we could warn you…and boy, you should’ve seen the look on Plagg’s face when he first saw you two!”

The thought made Marinette blush. Over the years Tikki had seen her naked before more then once, but they were partners, so that didn’t bother her. But Plagg seeing her naked, that made her a little embarrassed. She took out her phone out of her pocket and checked the time, and saw it was close enough to the time for patrol that she might as well get ready to go. “Did you have enough cookies earlier?” Tikki gave a nod, so without further ado, Marinette called, “Spots on!”

She carefully crept out the trapdoor moments later, and since she was early, she took a leisurely speed on her trip towards the apartment building. Since she took the route slow, she ended up arriving right about on time, and could see Adrien making his way over in the distance. When he touched down they just looked at each other for a moment, then they started laughing. “That was a pretty close call, huh?” Adrien put an arm around her for a hug.

“Much too close for my liking. I don’t know if my poor heart would be able to take another one of those.” Marinette said, leaning against him comfortably.

“Me either.” Adrien agreed. “Hopefully there won’t be any more.”

“From now on, no more naps unless we know no one’s supposed to be coming back for several hours.”

“Aww, can’t we still take clothed naps together?”

At this Marinette laughed. “Okay, maybe clothed naps are still fine.”

“Yay!” Adrien whooped, making Marinette laugh more.

“Come on, we should get going.” She unhooked her yo-yo as he let go of her to grab for his staff. “I’ll go south this time?” Looking over her shoulder she saw Adrien nod, so Marinette swung her yo-yo out and headed off.
Tonight was pretty busy. It was as if the city was trying to make up for being quiet the last few days. Marinette had to deal with several attempted break-ins, and even saw a van that was fleeing chasing police cars. So she swung ahead and landed on the sidewalk off the to side, then through out her yo-yo to use the string to make a woven barrier to stop the van from getting away. When the driver saw the string barrier they slammed on the brakes, and stopped inches away from it. As the driver attempted to get out of her vehicle, Marinette pulled back her yo-yo quickly and threw it around the older woman to ensnare her and keep her from escaping.

When the police arrived moments later, they thanked her profusely and took the woman into custody once Marinette had released her from being entangled in her yo-yo. She said it was no trouble it all and shook hands with a grateful officer nearest her, then swung off into the night again. On her way back to the meeting spot, she found some brainiac had lit a fire in a dumpster, but could hear sirens from fire engines already on their way, so she continued her journey knowing that it would be in safer and better hands with the professionals.

It was nice to finally get back to the apartment building. But despite all she had had to deal with, she was still the first one back. Adrien must have had his hands as full as she had. So Marinette sat down in the middle of the rooftop and laid back comfortably to wait for him. He stopped when he was standing over her and peered down at her. “I think we missed the memo that today was ‘stupid shenanigans day’.”

“We certainly did.” Marinette arched an eyebrow when he didn’t move. “So are you going to lay down with me or what?”

“I just like looking at you.” He grinned when a faint blush colored her cheeks and she stuck her tongue out at him to try and detract from that fact. But he saw it all the same. At last he crouched down and laid down beside her, and he held her close as she cuddled up into his side. “And I will always lay down with you, Princess.”

Marinette giggled. “I’m sure you meant that to be sweet, but my brain took it straight to the gutter.”

“Yeah, I guess that did come out pretty bad, huh?” Though that hadn’t been his intention, Adrien suddenly got an idea that he could use the dirtier connotations of what he had said to his advantage. He did still want to find out more about her fantasies so he could repay her for their weekend together, after all. “Oh well. I will stand by both meanings of my sentence.”

“Somehow that doesn’t surprise me.” Marinette looked up at him as she playfully poked his nose. “You’re completely insatiable.”

The conversation was going exactly in the direction he wanted. “Takes one to know one, bugaboo.”

She snorted with laughter. “Okay, I walked into that one.”

“I’m just glad you didn’t try to disagree.” Adrien saw her roll her eyes as he let one hand drift down to cup her backside, and then saw her blush. “Because you’re just as insatiable as I am. If not more.”

“More? Seriously? And how do you figure that?” Marinette moved in his embrace to prop herself on all fours over him, so now Adrien could properly grasp her firm rear.

“Let’s see…” Adrien pretended to be deep in thought. “You bought an admittedly exquisite lingerie set to wear for me…”

“That was Alya’s idea.”
“You planned a weekend of seduction while my Father was overseas…”

“Adrien!”

“You’re undressing me with your eyes right now…”

“I’m seriously going to hit you.”

He just chuckled. “And just earlier this evening, you had clearly planned to do much naughtier things tonight then our usual.” Her cheeks went as red as her suit, and now that the door was wide open, Adrien walked right in. “What other wonderfully sinful do you have planned for us in that brilliant mind of yours?”

“I-I…uh…” Marinette stammered, trying to find her voice. She had come so far with her level of confidence, but it seemed that there were clearly still times when she could be reduced to a babbling mess around him.

“To be honest,” Adrien began, wanting to help ease her nerves. He could read her so easily now, and he wasn’t surprised this made her a little flustered, either. So he figured sharing something himself would be a good way to try and help relax her. “I had been secretly hoping you’d strip for me like that someday, so I was really glad it was today.”

Her eyes widened a little. “Really?”

“Really.” Adrien nodded for emphasis. “And you have no idea how difficult it was for me to not touch you while you did, let alone not move at all.”

Now a bit of a smirk was starting to cross her lips. “To quote an earlier statement of yours, I’m going to take that as a compliment.”

“As you should.” He could tell she wasn’t as nervous now, so he decided to press on with some more confession. “And you know what else?” She cocked her head to the side as she awaited him to continue. “Remember Saturday morning, in the shower?”

“How could I forget?” Truthfully, Marinette had enjoyed that one a lot, so she remembered it very fondly.

“I know I sort of said as much already, but that was another one of mine.” Adrien admitted, running his hands up along her sides. “And I’d really like to do it again soon, if you’d be game for another one.”

“Yes, I definitely do.” She smiled shyly at him. “I liked that very much.” After a moment’s hesitation, Marinette added, “And maybe another time we’re in bed together, I could try…being on top?”

Victory!

And what a victory it was. The thought of her riding him sent heat racing through Adrien’s body already. But he merely smiled and replied, “Of course.”

“And I have lots of extra strips of fabric we could try using as a blindfold some other time, too,” Marinette continued.

A delightful shiver ran down Adrien’s spine. “Do I get to wear it or do you?”
“We could take turns?” She let the question hang in the air but he eagerly nodded right away. And now that Marinette had gotten started, it was a lot easier to let her ideas come out. “What about using some of my longer fabric strips instead of a rope for tying hands together?”

“Can we take turns with that too?”

“Sure. How about doing more contests like with Ultimate Mecha Strike III where the winner gets to have their way with the loser?”

“Hell yes.”

“Maybe we could go camping together sometime, and we could make it somewhere secluded so we can do what we want, wherever we want.”

“I’ll buy the tent!”

“And—”

“Oh! Sorry!” Marinette blushed and quickly climbed off from over him, and Adrien sat up a little awkwardly. “My bad…”

“Don’t apologize.” Adrien kissed her cheek. “Those were amazing ideas. Honestly, if it wasn’t for these suits in the way, I’d be on you again.”

Giggling, Marinette playfully smacked his shoulder. “See? Completely insatiable.”

They got to their feet and shared a quick hug and light, tender kiss, then the two superheroes headed off on their routes home. Adrien was grinning to himself the whole way back to the Agreste Mansion, and as soon as he was back into his room and the window was shut, he hurried over to his desk and sat down. “Claws in.” He said in between booting up his computer.

Plagg was sighing as he came back into view. “Can’t you control your hormones for more then five minutes?”

“You should just be getting used to this stuff by now.” Adrien was opening up his computer’s Internet browser.

“Not like you give me much of a choice.”

“Nope. Besides, I know you like Marinette, so you really shouldn’t be giving us such a hard time.”

“Yeah, yeah…” Plagg muttered as he floated closer to the desk chair so he could look at the screen over Adrien’s shoulder. “What are you even doing on that thing at this time of night, anyway?”

“I’m not really tired yet since Marinette and I had that nap earlier. Besides, I’m looking for a tent.” He replied, making Plagg roll his eyes and fly down through the floor to head into the kitchen. Adrien just chuckled and continued his browsing for different brands and prices of tents online. Because the sooner he found one, the sooner he could repay Marinette by taking her on a getaway.

And then all he would have to do is figure out how to discreetly snitch a couple different lengths of fabric strips from Marinette’s stash without her noticing.
Hi again! =D Had a crazy day at work today so I'm super glad I have the day off tomorrow. And then it's off for a week vacation with my family! I'm super excited! <3 Like I said last chapter, I'm fairly certain I'll still be able to post the next chapter on time, but I'll let you all know if anything changes. And I'm not going to lie, I was really stuck on this chapter for a while, so I hope it came out okay. ^^; Anyway, please enjoy!

Since Marinette wasn’t overly tired either, once she had returned home and called off her transformation, she carefully unlocked and opened her bedroom door to creep downstairs. She tiptoed through the house down the two levels to the bakery so she could grab a handful of cookies for Tikki, then she carefully and quietly headed back up to her room. After she set the cookies down on Tikki’s plate (to a very grateful smile from her hungry kwami), the bluenette grabbed her sketchbook and stretched out on the chaise lounge comfortably to start doodling.

She was part way through designing a stylish jacket when a thought suddenly occurred to her. What was she going to wear to the supper with Gabriel Agreste on Sunday? There was definitely no way she was going to wear store-bought clothes on a meeting as special as this dinner was going to be, but should she go with something she had already made? Or design something new?

Her brain was abuzz with questions now. Though it was only two days away, she was leaning towards making a new outfit for this meeting. She would have to ask her parents if she could take tomorrow and Sunday off from the bakery to make something, but luckily Marinette was pretty sure they wouldn’t mind. But should it be casual or fancy? Probably fancy, since she wanted to make a good impression. So should it be a dress, or a top and skirt? Or even a top and pants for that matter?

All these questions were starting to stress her out. Shutting her eyes, she took a deep breath, then exhaled slowly before opening her eyes again. She looked down at her sketchbook and started flipping through the pages to see if something suitable for Sunday would catch her eye. After leafing through several pages, she landed on the sketches she’d made after taking the sunset photos several weeks ago. Thinking back, she remembered that that was the day after she had found out Adrien was Cat Noir; the night he had stopped by the terrace to share his exciting news that he thought Ladybug loved him, and had detailed how deep his love for Ladybug was.

Now Marinette was smiling. These designs were ones she was proud of, and they held a lot of sentiment for her as well. So she decided that one of these would be what she would go with. After a moment of thinking, she settled on a skirt that would have lots of ruffles, each being a different color, to represent the various hues at sunset. She would make a black sleeveless top with it, which would be like the deep evening sky. With that in mind, she got up from the chaise lounge and sat down at her desk, now that Tikki had left her half-empty plate and gone up to bed. Setting down her sketchbook on the desk, she went back to a blank page and started to redraw the design, so she could iron out all the details.

Because she wanted it to be perfect.

At some point she must’ve dozed off, because the next thing she knew a loud banging noise startled her awake. Marinette jerked her head up and her sketchbook dropped from her face after being stuck
to her cheek for the last few hours. She rubbed her eyes and tried peering out the window, but couldn’t see anything. But there was another banging sound from nearby, so she dashed up the ladder to her bed to slip through the trapdoor to get a better look outside.

It was early morning, but she could see several people below fleeing from whatever was going on a block away. More bangs reached her ears, and there wasn’t a doubt in her mind this was an akuma. Marinette quickly jumped back down into her room and found Tikki already waiting for her. “Spots on!” She was back onto the terrace in a flash, and took out her yo-yo to start swinging off to find the source of the noise.

When she arrived she saw a man standing in the street, looking like he was straight out of an old rock and roll music video, complete with studded leather clothes and long flowing hair. There was a drum at his waist in an apparatus like a marching band player would wear, and on one of his drumsticks was a purple butterfly. He was the cause the banging of course, as when he drummed, it made shockwaves that turned anything around him to rubble. “Not good enough for their band? Ha! Fine! I don’t need them! Soon everyone will be talking about my music and no one else’s!”

“Sure, people will talk,” Marinette shouted down from the roof she was on, making him look up at her. “But I doubt it’ll be anything nice with all the stuff you trashed.”

“I was wondering when one of you would show up!” The man gave her a devious grin. “Sure glad it was you though, hot stuff. Say, why don’t you come on down and Solo here will give you a private lesson?”

Marinette groaned. “Oh please…”

“Come on, we don’t really have to fight! You give me your Miraculous and I’ll let you be my groupie!” Solo twirled his drumsticks with a practiced ease, oozing confidence and swagger. “Drummers are exceptionally good with their hands, you know…I’ll make it worth your while, baby…”

‘Great, he thinks with his pants,’ Marinette thought with a sigh, swinging down to ground level. “Thanks but no thanks. I’m not into the villain type.”

“Bet I can change your mind!” Solo started drumming on the snare, and shockwaves spread out toward her. Marinette easily dodged the blows, but it was going to be difficult to get close to him like this. She was pretty sure the akuma was hiding in the drumstick with the butterfly, but getting him to stop drumming long enough to get it away from him was probably going to be tricky. What she needed was some help.

Speaking of which, where was Adrien?

Ducking behind a nearby building, Marinette tried to see if she could see any signs of her leather-clad partner. It was only just now that she could make out movement crossing the distant rooftops, and she sighed with relief. She had been beginning to worry about him. Stepping back out of hiding, she saw Solo looking around for her, as he had lost sight of her earlier. So she brought her fingers to her lips to whistle loudly and gain his attention, causing him to turn to face her. “Over here, genius!”

“You should’ve stayed hidden.” Solo warned with a sneer. “I like a good chase. It makes the reward so much more fun.”

Rolling her eyes, Marinette saw Adrien land a ways behind Solo. “How nice of you to join to the party!” She called, making Solo turn again to see who she was talking to.
“Sorry, I overslept.” Adrien said with a shrug while he retracted his staff, though she could tell there was sheepishness under his usual bravado.

“Can’t you see we’re busy here?” Solo demanded, causing Adrien to arch an eyebrow. “I’m in the middle of wooing my new groupie, so shove off.”

It took a lot of effort for Marinette not to laugh at the disgusted face Adrien made at Solo’s last sentence. “You call drumming explosions at me trying to woo me?” She taunted, bringing Solo’s attention back to her. “And how’s that supposed to work?”

That made the villain falter, but he soon gave an irritated shout. “Stop confusing me!” And with that Solo started playing his drum again with renewed vigor.

Ducking and rolling out of the way, Marinette took out her yo-yo. “See, this isn’t making me like you more!” Solo growled in frustration and Marinette quickly spun out of the way of another volley, using her yo-yo to hook a street lamp and pull herself up onto it. “Yup, definitely liking you less!”

“Quit moving!” Solo yelled, trying to keep track of her as she bounced around.

Since he couldn’t see her holding anything, Adrien knew Marinette still needed to make a Lucky Charm. He took out his staff and made it extend until it knocked into the middle of Solo’s back, making him stumble forward. “Don’t forget about me!”

Solo whirled with an angry snarl. “You’re going to regret that!” His drumming grew faster and more aggressive, making the shockwaves bigger as they went zooming Adrien’s way. But it was still easy enough for a superhero to dodge, and he had no trouble doing so, much to Solo’s chagrin. So with how focused he was on trying to catch Adrien, Solo seemed to have completely forgotten about Marinette.

And with all the noise from the drumming and the shockwaves, he didn’t hear the words she spoke either. “Lucky Charm!” Marinette soon caught a red and black cloth bag. She tipped it upside down and nothing came out, so she was baffled for a while as to what to do with an empty bag before she finally got an idea that could work.

Carefully and quietly, she crept up behind Solo as the villain was busy playing his drum. Once she was close enough, she pulled the bag down over Solo’s head with one hand and spun her yo-yo around him with the other in one smooth motion, so now he could neither see nor move. “Hey!”

Marinette stepped around him and was glad to see in his confusion over getting trapped, he had dropped his drumsticks. And though she was fairly positive which one the akuma was in, she’d rather be safe then sorry so she picked up both and snapped the two of them in half. As she had thought, the akuma fluttered out of the drumstick that had the butterfly insignia, so she purified it and let it fly away. Then she pulled the cloth bag off of Solo’s head to toss into the sky. “Miraculous Ladybug!”

As the lights were spreading out through the air and putting everything back to normal, Marinette retracted her yo-yo to free Solo as he was reverting to his usual self. The young man rubbed his head and blinked in confusion once the purple magic had faded away. “Where am I?” When he saw Marinette holding out his repaired drumsticks, a deep blush colored his cheeks. “W-Wow, you’re Ladybug! I mean, is that really you? It is, isn’t it? Oh man, this is amazing! Can I…have your autograph?”

‘Aww, so he’s a fanboy,’ Marinette thought in amusement. ‘I much prefer this version of him.’ Outwardly she gave a shrug. “Sure, if you have a pen.”
The young man quickly rifled through his pockets and when he came up empty-handed, gave a dejected sigh. “I don’t have one…”

“That’s okay. Here, how about a hug?” Marinette offered, and the man’s eyes lit up as he nodded excitedly. She swallowed a grin as she gave him a quick hug, then handed the awestruck-looking man his drumsticks. “And I’m sure you’re an amazing drummer. You’ll find a band that will appreciate you someday soon, I’m sure of it.”

“Thank you! Thank you so much!” The young man was giggling to himself as he happily walked away.

Someone was clearing their throat next to her rather loudly, and Marinette just laughed. “Hey, it was just a hug.”

“I don’t like him.” Adrien muttered sourly.

“The real him is way better then Solo. And it’s not like we haven’t dealt with fans like that before over the years.” Marinette said and Adrien just huffed. She was about to tease him more when she could see civilians making their way over, not to mention she could hear her earrings starting to beep their warnings. “I should get going.”

Adrien just nodded. “Yeah, okay.”

Slipping behind him so she was out of sight, Marinette pressed a kiss to the back of his neck. “And stop pouting. You know the only one for me is you.” As she tossed her yo-yo and swung off, she looked back over her shoulder and saw Adrien now wore a big smile on his face. Satisfied, she made her way back home and since it had only been a block away, slipped into her room with still two spots left on her earrings to spare. So once she had closed the trapdoor, she whispered a quiet, “Spots off.”

Tikki reappeared and Marinette caught her kwami in her hands. “I don’t think akumas should be allowed to be alarms.”

Laughing, Marinette set Tikki down on the desk so she could eat up her leftover cookies. “I agree.” It was still early, and though her parents would have long been up by now, she knew they didn’t expect her to be up yet so they probably wouldn’t have even noticed she had been gone. But now she was wide-awake, so she gathered some clothes to wear for the day then headed downstairs to have her shower.

Once she was done, she quickly got dressed and headed into the bakery. She saw Sabine behind the counter, but there weren’t any customers in the store at the moment, so she took the opportunity to talk to her mother about the idea she had gotten last night. “Mom, would it be all right if I took some time today to make myself a new outfit to wear for the supper with Adrien’s father?”

“Sure, that should be fine.” Sabine glanced at the register to check the time. “Most other stores should be opening soon if you need get any new fabric.”

“Thanks Mom, I’m going to head out as soon as I have some breakfast.” Marinette left the bakery behind, then headed back upstairs to have something to eat.

She had a lot of work to do.
Hey guys. Long day of traveling yesterday, a fitful night's sleep, and a jam-packed day today make for a tired Rainbow. ^^; So I'm off to bed, but I will mention a few things. One, I don't pretend to know anything about sewing, so I did do some research but please excuse any flaws that might remain. Two, my Mom taught me about that salt trick, and that I do know for a fact really works like a charm! I think that's all for now, so I hope you all enjoy this new chapter, everyone! =D

Chapter Notes

After she had grabbed herself something to gobble down fast, Marinette went up to her room to retrieve a purse for Tikki to hide out in, as well as her sketchbook. With her purse over her shoulder and her sketchbook in hand, she hurried downstairs to quickly say good-bye to her parents, slip into a pair of shoes, and then she was off.

Her first stop was to her favorite fabric store. The kindly woman behind the till welcomed her with a smile, as she had gotten to know her well over the years. “Hi again! What can I help you find today?”

“I’m on a mission, so I think I’ll be fine for now,” Marinette told her as she opened up her sketchbook to the page with her design. “But I’ll let you know if I need anything.”

“Sounds good.” The woman waved to her before turning to greet a new customer, and Marinette slipped into the aisles to begin shopping.

She did have a decent supply of fabrics back at home, of course, but since she wanted vivid hues for the skirt, she wanted to find colors that popped. So after some browsing, she had found suitable sunset colors: yellow for the bottom layer, then it would be followed by orange, magenta, a dark purple, and lastly a deep navy for the top section at her waist. Marinette even found some soft black fabric that had some flecks of silver woven within, which would be perfect to represent the stars. And two of her fabric choices were even on sale, much to her delight.

Happy with her selections, Marinette headed up to the till. She told the woman how much she needed cut of each one, and as she went to get it cut up for her, Marinette opened her purse. Tikki held up her wallet with a smile, which her bonded took with a smile back. The woman soon returned and rung in her purchases, and once everything was paid for, bagged up the fabric for her and sent her on her way.

And though she now had all the fabric she needed to start working on making her outfit, Marinette had another stop that she wanted to make. So it was off to the nearest grocery store to buy some camembert for Plagg. She asked the cashier to double bag the rather stinky cheese for her, then she put it into the bag with all her fabric. Thank goodness any lingering smell would be no match for the pre-sewing wash all her fabrics would be going through!

Now all her shopping was finished, so it was time to head home. She walked quickly as the day was getting steadily warmer, and she didn’t want Plagg’s cheese to spoil in the heat (and possibly make it smell even worse). Marinette could see a few customers in the shop area as she walked by the front door, so she went around to the side door instead. She took off her shoes and went straight upstairs,
going first to the family kitchen to stash the camembert in the fridge. Then it was straight back down the stairs again to go to the laundry room.

Setting down her fabric bag, Marinette pulled out the fabrics and separated them into two piles; once with the yellow, orange and magenta, and the other being the purple, navy and black. Normally she liked to wash her fabrics in smaller loads, preferably by themselves if she had the time, but today time was her enemy. So she would do two loads and use the trick that her mother had taught her: using salt in the water. Sabine had told her that the colors wouldn’t run in salty water, and Marinette had used this tip time and again and it was true, the colors never ran.

So, armed with the container of salt she kept in the laundry room, she put in the first load, the darker one, and started the water. She measured out her soap and tossed it in, followed by a liberal dousing of salt. Closing the lid and putting the other fabrics back into the bag, Marinette put the bag on the dryer to sit until it was their turn to wash, and was about to leave the laundry room when her phone vibrated.

When she pulled out her phone she saw it was a text from Alya, saying she missed her BFF with a heart-shaped emoticon. This was quickly followed by another text that they needed to get together sometime soon before time ravaged them both and made them into wrinkly old women. Giggling, Marinette sent a text back saying they should maybe plan something for next week since she would be busy Sunday night with the supper at the Agreste Mansion.

And then her phone started to ring.

Marinette grinned as she pressed the answer button. “Hello?”

“Are you meeting Adrien’s father?!” Alya practically screamed in excitement.

“I am,” Marinette said proudly, and also absently hoping the sound of the washing machine wouldn’t be too loud in the background. “He actually asked Adrien to set up a dinner for us together because he wanted to meet me.”

“He wanted to meet you!” Alya repeated with a squeal. “Oh my God, Marinette! This is amazing! World-renowned fashion emperor Gabriel Agreste wants to meet you!”

The ‘fashion emperor’ bit had Marinette snorting with laughter. “I know, I’m so excited. I’m making myself a whole new outfit today to wear for Sunday night.”

“Well yeah, girl, you should strut your stuff!” Alya encouraged her. “Show off your own mad style skills!”

“I just hope he doesn’t think it looks awful.” Marinette tried to sound casual, though she secretly would be absolutely heartbroken if Gabriel Agreste thought one of her designs looked awful.

“Are you kidding?” And Marinette could tell that Alya had her free hand on her hip just by the tone of her voice. “Now you listen here, Miss Marinette Dupain-Cheng. I happen to know for a fact that you’re the best designer in Paris, and that’s not just because you also happen to be my best friend. But because you have talent! And your outfit is going to look amazing. I don’t need to see it to know that, because it’s one of yours. You put so much effort into every one of your designs, so it’s going to look spectacular regardless. And because it’s for a special occasion, I know it’s going to look even better then spectacular. So don’t start second guessing yourself for even one second! You hear me?”

Beyond humbled, Marinette allowed herself to wear a small smile from the high praise. “Thanks Alya. I won’t.”
“You better not, or I will personally kick your ass.” Alya warned playfully, making Marinette burst out laughing. Then Alya’s tone took a more serious turn. “And I know you’re probably bummed about not getting the internship. I know you’re a tough cookie, but I also know that it would’ve stung too.”

The night she got the email, Marinette had a text of the news to Alya. Her best friend had sent her a reassuring reply back right away, but since Marinette hadn’t wanted to dwell on it, she had just left it at that. But that didn’t mean she wasn’t still feeling a little upset by the loss, so Alya was correct, of course. So she sighed softly and admitted, “It did. I know it’s not the end of the world, but it does suck.”

“I know it does, but I didn’t want this small hiccup to make you doubt yourself.” Alya said. “And notice how I said hiccup and didn’t use the word setback? That’s because this isn’t a setback. It just means better things are coming your way instead.”

“I’m hoping that, anyway,” Marinette barely got the words out before Alya was cutting in. “Nuh uh, you are not hoping! You are waiting expectantly and patiently for a way better opportunity!”

“Okay, okay, waiting expectantly and patiently.”

“That’s better.”

“Have you ever thought of being a motivational speaker?”

“Nah, most people wouldn’t be able to handle the Alya Method.”

“You know, I think you’re probably right.” Marinette glanced over to check the dial on the washing machine. “I should probably let you go soon though. My first load of fabric is already in the wash and I still have to make up my patterns yet.”

“I thought I heard a washer.” Alya gave a yawn. “Sure, you do your sewing thing. The little angels got me up at six this morning so I think I’m going to go take a nap. Man, I love summer!”

Both of them were laughing as they ended the call. Slipping her phone back into her pocket, Marinette left the laundry room and decided to go downstairs. Both Tom and Sabine were out in the shop area chatting with one of their regular customers, so she took the chance to be able to slip into the kitchen and snitch a few cookies for Tikki. Then, before she could be seen, she dashed back upstairs to go to her room.

She found Tikki laying in a sunbeam streaming through the window on the desk, relaxing comfortably, and her kwami waved at her when she saw her enter. “How’s it coming so far?”

“First load’s already in,” Marinette set the cookies down on Tikki’s plate. “So I’m going to start working on the patterns now.”

“And I’ll help!” Tikki floated off the desk to hover by her bonded. “Just tell me what you need!”

‘The best kwami a girl could ask for,’ Marinette thought with a smile. The two of them quickly got to work, as Tikki had helped her numerous times over the years with her designs, sewing and patterns, so they were like a well-oiled machine. When it was time to move the clothes from the washer to the dryer, Marinette zipped back down to the laundry room to switch them out. She opened the washer to find her fabric pristine with no bled colors, just like clockwork. They went straight into the dryer so she could get the second load set up in the washing machine. Once it was filled with the fabrics,
water, soap and salt, it was back upstairs to bedroom again.

It wasn’t long before they had gotten all the patterns made up, so as soon as the first load was done in the dryer, Marinette brought them to her room so she and Tikki could lay them out and pin on the patterns. The fabrics were cut carefully, though in between colors she had to pop downstairs again to move the second load to the dryer. Then it was finally time to start doing some sewing.

Since she had done the darker load first, she had the choice of starting with the black shirt or starting on the top layers of the skirt. Because the skirt would take more time to finish then the shirt, she decided to start there. So a trip down to the living room was in order, to bring out her good sewing machine. The kitchen table provided much more space for her to sew on then her desk could, so that’s where she usually did any sewing requiring a machine. Hand sewing she could do in her room easily, but it was nice to have the extra room for her more intricate designs.

First came the navy layer, which would also hold an elastic waistband. It would be much easier to get in and out of it then with a zipper, not to mention save her time by not having to sew one in. The purple layer came next, though in between sewing it she had to make a stop to take her second load from the dryer. She took a break from sewing to lay the patterns on the magenta, orange and yellow layers and cut them out, before taking them down to the kitchen table with her again. Before she started again she made sure they were in a spot where they wouldn’t fall off the table, then she got back to work.

By the time she was finished sewing the purple layer, Marinette’s stomach was starting to growl. Checking the time, she saw it was about time for supper, although neither of her parents had come up from the bakery yet. And come to think of it, they also hadn’t come up at all this afternoon to start getting anything cooking, either. As if on cue, as she was thinking this, Tom came through the door. “How’s the new outfit going?” He asked, coming over to take a peek.

“How’s the new outfit going?” He asked, coming over to take a peek.

“Slow and steady. I don’t want to rush and make a mistake.” Marinette replied, leaning back in her chair to stretch. “But I’m getting hungry though.”

“How about sandwiches?” Tom was heading toward the fridge. “We can all take turns making them on the counter here, and Mom and I can eat ours on the couch so we don’t have to use the table on you.”

The mention of sandwiches sent Marinette’s mind back to last night, and how Adrien had wanted to use them to save time rather then space. Fighting back giggles at the memory, she merely gave her father a smile. “That’s a great idea. Thanks Dad.”
Chapter 73

Chapter Notes

Back from vacation! Got an opening shift tomorrow though so I'll keep the Note short to head to bed. Good night all!

As Tom and Marinette were starting to prepare the sandwich fixings, Sabine came through the door with a small tray with a fancily iced cupcake. “This is for you, sweetie,” She carefully set the tray next to Marinette’s sewing machine. “A little extra energy to help you finish your new outfit.”

“So do I get to eat it before or after supper?” Marinette asked with a grin while taking out some plates.

“Tough choice.” Tom glanced back at the cupcake. “Personally I would eat it first, but I’m going to officially tell you that you should eat it afterward so I’m not a terrible influence as a father.”

Laughing, Marinette gave her Dad a hug. “Dually noted.”

So her parents could get started on making their sandwiches first, Marinette went up to her room to grab her phone. She had left it on her desk earlier while she had been cutting patterns, and when she picked it up she saw she had two emails. Both from the same certain person, of course.

~I don’t want to jinx it, but I haven’t heard anything from Father about starting my lessons back up again yet, even though it’s officially summer now. Fingers crossed!

~Because in all honesty, we have a piano here at home, so I can play whenever I want. I’m fluent in Chinese already so other then actually going to China (which admittedly would be super awesome!), there’s not much more I can really learn here. And as for fencing, I tend to use a staff more then a sword. =P

This was a good sign. Perhaps with how hard he had worked to get his high marks, his Father was going to let him have the summer off as well. And that would be perfectly fine with Marinette, because any extra time with Adrien was definitely good time. As she went back down the stairs, she was already typing up a response.

~Sorry for the late reply, I left my phone in my room. But I’m going to be crossing my fingers for you too.

Her phone was vibrating with a new email by the time she was at the counter about to make her sandwich.

~No worries! I’m just watching TV anyway, nothing exciting. But doing nothing is honestly really nice, it still feels weird not to have to do any school stuff.

She waited until she had finished putting her sandwich together and gone back to the table to set her plate on her lap to start typing again, and after some debating on whether or not she should mention what she was doing herself, decided it could still be a surprise for him if she didn’t say exactly what she was making.
~It does. I’ve been busy today myself, doing lots of sewing. I’m hoping to get this outfit I’m working on finished today, if not by tomorrow for sure.

One bite of sandwich later and her phone was vibrating again.

~Say no more! I’ll leave the master designer to her work. ^^

~Thanks. See you tonight.

Still blushing lightly from Adrien’s compliment, Marinette put her phone down and went back to eating. She was almost finished when Tom and Sabine came by to bring their empty dishes to the sink. “You’re finished with the washer, right?” Sabine watched her daughter nod, since her mouth was full. “Then I’m going to do some laundry tonight.”

“And I’m going to go reorganize the pantry downstairs, because I swear we have more cinnamon somewhere but I couldn’t find any this afternoon no matter how hard I looked.” Tom said. “But feel free just let us know if you need an extra pair of hands with anything, okay Marinette?”

Quickly swallowing her mouthful, the bluenette gave them a smile. “I will.” Her parents then went off to work on their respective tasks, leaving Marinette alone.

Or rather, alone until Tikki floated into the room. “It looks great so far,” She told her as she hovered over the first two layers of the skirt to give them a closer look. “It’s going to be so pretty once it’s done.”

“I think so too. I can’t wait to wear it on Sunday.” Popping the last bite of her sandwich into her mouth, Marinette got up and brought her plate to the sink.

“And I can’t wait for you to tell Adrien what the inspiration for the outfit actually was too.” Tikki added. “I know he’ll love it no matter what, of course, but when you tell him where the idea for it came from, he’ll love it even more.”

Smiling at the memory herself, Marinette allowed her thoughts to dwell on that night. Since it was Friday, it was actually five weeks exactly since the sunset in question, and therefore five weeks and a day since she had found out about Adrien’s secret identity. But so much had happened in these last few weeks, because of how long in coming their romance had been due to years gone by of waiting and pining for each other without truly knowing it, it honestly felt more like months had gone by already.

And she wouldn’t change a single thing.

Returning to the table and sitting back down, she picked up the finished layers of the skirt as well as the next color, to add to it, which was magenta. Tikki kept her company as she began sewing again, and they chatted as Marinette worked. The magenta layer went on fairly easily and she got to work on the orange layer right away. When Sabine came upstairs to grab a book to read in between laundry loads, Tikki dove under the table to hide until the door was safely shut again, but making herself scarce was easy for such an experienced kwami. And over the years, even Marinette didn’t get overly worried about Tikki getting discovered much anymore, because time and again she proved to be an expert at staying hidden.

Once the orange layer was completed, Marinette checked the time on her phone. It was about time for patrol, so she went downstairs to the bakery. Tom was in the kitchen, knee-deep in dry goods, and after she took a few cookies from the shop area for Tikki to have, she knocked on the door to get his attention. “I think I’m going to head off to bed so that I can get an early start tomorrow,” She

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“So is it okay if I leave my materials on the table overnight?”

“Go ahead. I’ll let Mom know for you.” Tom wiped his forehead with the back of his hand as he looked down at all the various sized containers around him. “And for the record, I did end up finding the cinnamon, but now I have to put away all this mess without losing it again.”

“Maybe try putting it on top of the oven or something for now, that’ll make sure you put it away last,” Marinette suggested.

“Good idea.” Tom picked up the bottle of cinnamon and got to his feet, and by then Marinette had already left the entranceway of the kitchen to go upstairs again.

When she got back to the dining room table, she saw her cupcake still waiting for her, so she transferred Tikki’s cookies to one hand so she could grab the cupcake with the other and bring both of them with her to her room. Her kwami was already waiting for her inside, so Marinette set her cookies onto the plate on her desk before sitting down in the chair to eat her own snack. There was lots of fluffy frosting on the cupcake and it tasted delicious, so it made a speedy disappearance. Once she was finished tossed the liner into the trash before she glanced over at Tikki to see if she was ready too. “I’m good to go whenever you are,” Tikki told her bonded, though she looked like she was trying not to laugh at something.

Confused, Marinette arched an eyebrow. “What?”

“Oh, it’s nothing.”

“You sure?”

“I definitely am. Come on, let’s get going.”

“Well, if you’re sure. Spots on!”

The familiar suit and mask covered her skin in seconds, and as soon as it had Marinette was slipping out the trapdoor to swing off into the sky. She could see Adrien already standing on the apartment building’s rooftop waiting for her as she approached, so he must’ve gotten here early because she was arriving on time. As she was touching down he bowed to her. “Hello beautiful!”

“Hello yourself.” Marinette greeted, though when Adrien stood and gazed at her, he immediately burst out laughing, which thoroughly baffled her. First Tikki, and now Adrien. What was so funny? “Okay, what is it?” She finally asked as his laughter began to subside.

“I’m going to take a guess there was cake on the menu tonight?” Adrien walked over to her, still snickering.

“A cupcake actually, why?” Marinette watched him reach a clawed finger under her chin and tilt her head up slightly. Expecting a kiss, she was surprised when he brushed his other thumb beneath her nose and held it out to her, which was now covered in the icing that had been sitting above her lip.

“Just a hunch.” Adrien teased, licking the icing from his thumb.

Marinette blushed and went to lift a hand to her face to try and wipe away any lingering icing. “This is so embarrassing…and to think Tikki never told me! Why would she let me go out like that?”

“Because you look adorable,” Adrien took hold of her hand lightly so she wouldn’t be able to wipe her face.
“Well I can’t go on patrol with icing on my face, so…” Marinette started saying exasperatedly, though she felt silent when Adrien pulled her close.

“I can get it off for you.” He murmured, and Marinette’s cheeks went pink again, but not from embarrassment this time. Adrien pressed a kiss just below her nose and when he pulled back, she saw him licking icing off his lips. Just seeing that made her shiver, and when he did it again she could feel heat spreading through her body. But then he released her from his grasp and gave her sly grin. “There, all gone.”

Damn him, purposefully firing her up like that. Trying to regain her composure, Marinette cleared her throat while she grabbed for her yo-yo. “Thanks. We should, uh, probably start patrol now.”

“Sure thing, bugaboo.” Adrien reached back for his staff dutifully, though he was still looking quite pleased with himself.

After deciding on which halves to take, the two superheroes set off to their areas of the city. The akuma this morning meant there was no activity from Hawk Moth, but there were still some hoodlums out and about. Marinette didn’t have any trouble dealing with the ones that popped up on her route, thankfully enough, and made it back to the apartment building’s rooftop in good time. She got there first this time, and was alone for a few minutes before she could see Adrien making his way over.

Once he landed Marinette went to the middle of the rooftop to lay down, so he followed her lead and cuddled up beside her. Noticing that he was still looking like a Cheshire Cat, she folded her arms across her chest. “Are you enjoying yourself?”

“Lots.” Adrien replied instantly, making Marinette roll her eyes. Chuckling, Adrien set a hand on her hip. “But you were enjoying yourself too, weren’t you?”

Her cheeks flushed again. “I’m not answering that.”

“Suit yourself.” Adrien gave her hip a bit of a squeeze as he started kissing her neck as well.

Though it certainly felt wonderful, Marinette moved enough so she could put a finger to his lips. “I have an outfit I have to finish tomorrow and I need to get a good night’s sleep tonight so I’ll be good and rested, because I don’t want to make any mistakes on it. So I mean this in the nicest possible way, but could you please stop being so distracting?”

“Aww, okay.” Adrien relented with a dramatic sigh as she pulled her finger away from his mouth. “I’ll be good.”

“Thank you.”

“Until tomorrow night.”

“Adrien…”
First of all, I want to apologize to everyone about how I haven't been replying to comments as fast as I used to. I've been struggling the last little while with feeling frustrated and discouraged, and I don't want to be too much of a Debbie Downer, but it's just I've been feeling lately like nothing I do matters. I'm not trying to use this as an excuse, just as an explanation for being slower to reply. Because I want it to be clear that it's in no way because your comments don't matter to me. Quite the opposite in fact; the support I get from all of you is a ray of sunshine for me. So thank you. =) Anyway, now that I've gotten that off my chest, it's time to get right into the new chapter. Please enjoy!

The young couple snuggled comfortably together under the stars for another good ten minutes or so before they got up to leave. After they shared a soft kiss, Marinette smiled up at Adrien. “Good night. I love you.”

“I love you too. Sweet dreams, Princess.” Adrien gave her another gentle hug before both he and she took their own trips back home.

When she got back into her room, Marinette went down the ladder to stand beside her desk. “Spots off.” As Tikki reappeared, Marinette grabbed the cookie plate to hold it ransom from her kwami. “So I had icing on my face earlier, hmm?”

Tikki just smiled wide. “You sure did.”

“And you let me go out like that.”

“Yup. I figured Adrien would get a kick out of it.”

“He did, he laughed like crazy as soon as he saw me.”

“And he also kissed all the icing off for you, so I think that automatically absolves me of any wrongdoing.”

Marinette could feel the corners of her lips curling, so she set Tikki’s cookie plate back down on the desk. “You win this round.”

“Naturally.” Tikki sat down next to the plate and picked up a cookie. “Need I remind you this isn’t my first rodeo.”

“I know, I know.” Marinette went to grab her PJs. “The wise and generous guardian of love known as Tikki strikes again.”

“All in a day’s work.” Tikki replied with a wink before biting into her cookie.

An amused grin had worked its way onto Marinette’s face as she got changed into her PJs, and stayed there as she climbed up the ladder to bed. And by the time Tikki finished her cookies and floated up herself, her bonded was already asleep.
Before she had gone to bed, Marinette had set an alarm on her phone so she wouldn’t sleep in too late and could get a good start on her outfit. When its ringing awoke her the next morning she didn’t get up to turn it off right away, trying to get the cobwebs out of her head first. Eventually she trudged down the ladder and turned the alarm off, noticing Tikki yawning and rubbing her eyes as she slowly flew down beside her.

“Morning,” She murmured sleepily to her kwami, who waved tiredly back. Marinette grabbed some clothes and went downstairs and went directly to the bathroom to have her shower to use it to try and help wake herself up. Once she was finished washing and drying off, she headed back up to the kitchen and grabbed herself an apple from the fridge to munch on before sitting down at the table. Because Tom and Sabine were down in the bakery already, Tikki was sitting down by her sewing machine waiting for her. Together the two got to work on making Marinette’s new outfit with practiced ease. Tikki set pins in the black fabric to line the pieces up for when Marinette would sew them together to make her shirt, while Marinette herself was busy working on the last layer of the skirt, the yellow layer. In between sewing she finished off her apple and took a moment to throw the core away, as well as bring out a water bottle to fill for herself and set on the floor next to the table. She didn’t want there to be any possible accidents with water around her sewing machine so she was taking every precaution, especially for how important getting this outfit finished was.

Once she had finished the yellow layer and the skirt was complete, she got up from the table again to try it on. She shimmied out of the shorts she had been wearing and pulled on the skirt before turning to Tikki. “How does it look?”

“Amazing.” Tikki replied with a smile. “Just like your design, if not better.”

“Aww, thank you!” Pleased, Marinette slipped the skirt back off carefully and put her shorts back on. As she brought it back to the table she set it aside so she could get to work on the shirt, as she would hand-stitch her embroidered signature onto each piece after they both were completed. She picked up the fabric for the shirt gingerly, not wanting to disturb the pins as she laid it out under the needle of her machine. As she was just about to start working on it, however, she heard a soft knock on the door to the family room since she had shut it after returning from her shower. Tikki ducked out of sight immediately so Marinette called, “Come in!”

The door opened and Sabine came in. “Sorry to bother you, but we’re swamped downstairs,” She told her, looking a little frazzled. “Would you be able to come down and help us out for a few minutes? I promise we won’t keep you long, just until we get through some of the back-log of customers.”

“No problem, I’ll be right there.” Marinette saw Sabine’s relieved smile as she got up from her chair, and the two women walked downstairs together. When they walked into the shop area they found it jam-packed with customers, with Tom standing at the till with a large line stemming from it. Marinette started helping the people closest to her as Sabine returned to the bakery kitchen to keep cooking.

Apparently a local swim team had just won their tournament and had wanted to celebrate with goodies, and that’s what had packed the bakery. But the more people they helped, the more people kept coming in in their place so what was meant to be just helping a few customers took over an hour and a half. By the time the customer flow was down to a more normal level, it was now mid-afternoon. “I’m so sorry Marinette, that took way longer then we expected,” Tom said to her when she walked by the till.
“Dad, it’s fine. You and Mom were nice enough to give me all of yesterday off so I don’t mind at all.” Marinette assured him with a bright smile. “Besides, I already have the skirt done so I’m not going to have to worry about running out of time.”

“That’s great!” Tom ruffled his daughter’s hair, making Marinette laugh. “You’ll have to show us how they look on you as soon as you’ve got both of them finished.”

“I will.” Marinette promised.

“Now go on back upstairs. We can handle the rest of this.” Tom gave her a light push towards the door to the hallway.

“All right, I’m going!” Marinette giggled, dutifully going out into the hall to go upstairs again. When she got back to the table and sat down she couldn’t see Tikki around, although it wasn’t surprising since she had been gone so long. But when she started working on sewing her shirt, the sound of the machine running brought her kwami flying down from her bedroom. “Do anything exciting while I was gone?”

“I watched people go by out your window for a while,” Tikki hovered over the sewing machine to tell her story. “There was a cute family walking their dog outside, but then the dog started chasing a bird and dragged the Dad around behind him, you should’ve seen it…”

Tikki re-enacted the scene as she spoke while Marinette continued sewing, then went on to talk about the other people she had watched go by. Time ticked slowly by and as suppertime drew near, Marinette’s shirt was about half finished. Tikki made sure to go up to Marinette’s room when it got to be about he time Tom and Sabine would be coming upstairs any minute, so when they did come in, Marinette was alone working on her shirt. “Thanks again for your help this afternoon.” Sabine came over to give her an appreciative hug.

“Any time.” Marinette hugged her mother back happily.

“So what’s everyone hungry for tonight?” Tom opened up their dry goods cupboard to peer inside to possibly get some inspiration.

“How about we make up some chicken fried rice?” Sabine suggested. “While we cook it, it will give Marinette some more time to work on her outfit, and we can eat on the couch like we did with the sandwiches last night if we put it into some bowls.”

“I like it!” Tom was already pulling out the box of rice.

After spending most of her day focused on sewing or helping customers, Marinette realized she had only had an apple to eat so far and her stomach growled loudly in response to this thought. So something filling sounded good to her too, especially the way their family usually made their chicken fried rice. Big pieces of flavorfully cooked chicken, lots of fluffy rice, as many fresh veggies as they had in the fridge…it wasn’t a side dish anymore at their house, it was truly a meal of its own. “Is there anything I can do to help?” She went to get up from the table so she could offer some assistance, but Sabine just put a hand on her shoulder.

“You keep sewing.” Sabine insisted. “Tomorrow’s dinner is going to be a big moment for you, so you keep working on your outfit.”

“Okay, but I’ll do the dishes then.” Marinette wanted to compromise. She didn’t want to not be able to help at all.

Sabine paused, thinking, then nodded. “All right, you can do the dishes, but only once your outfit is
“Deal.” Marinette held out her hand to her mother and with a grin, Sabine shook her hand to make the deal official. Then Sabine went to help Tom get things prepared to make the rice, and Marinette went back to sewing.

As her parents were cooking, though Marinette still kept her work careful, she tried to work fast so she could get as much of the shirt done by the time their meal would be ready to eat. So she was actually able to get to the point where she only had two seams left to sew up when Tom walked over to hand her a bowl. “The rice is ready to go whenever you are.”

“Can you leave the burner on to keep the pan warm for me?” Marinette asked. “As soon as I finish these last seams I can put my sewing machine away.”

“Sure. I’ll leave your bowl on the counter for you.” Tom brought her bowl back with him and he set it down and turned the burner under the pan to low before dishing out some for himself and Sabine. After pouring themselves something to drink, as well as pouring a glass for Marinette, the two of them went over to the couch to eat.

Marinette finished up the last two seams within a few minutes, and with a sigh of relief she set down her shirt on top of the skirt. Getting up from the table and taking a moment to stretch, she picked up her sewing machine carefully and put it away, then gathered up the few scraps of fabric around the table and gathered them in her arm while she took hold of her shirt and skirt in the other to bring them upstairs to her room. She dumped the bigger fabric scraps into her bin of extra pieces, threw the scraps that were too small to be of future use into the trash, and gently set her outfit down onto the chaise lounge.

True, she had yet to try on the shirt but the skirt had turned out well so it was safe to assume that the shirt would too. So all she would have to do after supper and doing the dishes was to embroider her signature, and then she would be completely finished her outfit. Not bad for two days work, if she did say so herself.

And with that it was time to go back downstairs to get a big helping of chicken fried rice, because a job well done like that made for a big appetite.
Chapter 75

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone. Thanks for all the kind words last chapter. =) There's the beginnings of more kwami fluff below! ^^ And the meeting with Gabriel Agreste is almost here! Are you excited yet? =P For now, I hope you on enjoy today's installment!

Since they had started eating before her again, Tom and Sabine were finished well before Marinette so they set their dishes into the sink. “What was the address of that ice cream parlor you and Adrien tried?” Sabine made sure to wait this time until her daughter was in between mouthfuls to pose her question to her. “We were thinking of waiting this time until her daughter was in between mouthfuls to pose her question to her. “We were thinking of going there tonight to try it for ourselves.”

“I don’t know the exact address, let me see if I can find it on my phone.” Marinette pulled it out and went to her phone’s Internet browser. Once she typed in the name of the ice cream parlor and searched for it, the address as well as the phone number for it came up right away. “Here it is.” She passed her phone to Sabine to look over, who then passed it to Tom so they both could memorize the address. “It’s about an hour walk from here just to get there but it’s definitely worth it. I really think you guys will like it, their ice cream is very good.”

“Well I happen have a very discriminating palate, so we shall see about that.” Tom joked while handing Marinette her phone back.

“In case we get back after you’ve gone to bed for the night, will you show us your outfit tomorrow?” Sabine asked as she and Tom were starting to head for the family room’s door.

“Yes.” Marinette was looking forward to showing her outfit to them, so that could definitely be arranged. “See you later!” She waved to her parents as they walked out the door, then she went back to finishing off the rest of her rice.

Tikki came down a short while after Tom and Sabine had gone. “I’m going to go grab myself some cookies from the bakery,” She said while floating down towards the floor. “Then I’ll be right back up to help you out with the embroidery.”

“Take your time, I still have to wash the dishes.” Marinette called after her kwami, who gave a quick nod before passing through the floor.

After washing down her last spoonful of rice with the remaining juice that had been left in her glass, she gathered all her dishes to take them over to the sink. She turned on the water and splashed in some soap, with bubbles frothing up quickly around the dishes sitting within. Getting straight to work, Marinette started humming a familiar tune to herself as she washed. She was in a pretty good mood after all.

By the time she had rinsed all the dishes off and pulled the plug from the sink drain, Tikki had come back through the floor with a few cookie crumbs lining her mouth. “I was wondering,” She began as Marinette turned to look at her. “Do you think we could do another picnic tonight? It doesn’t have to be for long or anything.”

Marinette smiled at her. “Of course we can. And since I picked up that camembert for Plagg
yesterday, I can bring that with me too.”

“Yay! Thank you!” Tikki flew over to hug Marinette’s shoulder tightly. “But can we leave it as a surprise for Plagg?”

“I think so. Since I’ll be bringing everything myself it should be a surprise for Adrien too.” Marinette paused, getting an idea. “Do you think that lunch box would be big enough to fit Plagg’s camembert and the ice pack to keep it cold, your cookies, and a croissant for Adrien?”

“Probably.” Tikki shrugged. “It couldn’t hurt to try!”

So although she still wanted to do her signature embroidery tonight, Marinette headed downstairs to the bakery kitchen first to start making up a quick batch of croissants. Once they were in the oven, she gathered a few cookies for Tikki and scooted upstairs to throw them into a small container, then went back down to wait for the croissants to be done. Soon enough the timer on the oven was going off, so she threw on some oven mitts and took them out carefully before setting the tray onto a rack to cool.

Since it would be a while before they were cool enough to pack, it was a perfect time to go back to her room and start on the embroidering. When she got up to her room Tikki was already waiting for her, having lined up several spools of thread along her desk, each a different color. “So what were you thinking of using this time?” Her kwami asked as she hovered above the various spools, watching Marinette grab the shirt and skirt from where she had left them on the chaise lounge and bring them over to sit down in her desk chair.

“I was thinking silver this time, since the shirt already has some silver in the fabric already.” Marinette rolled her chair close to the standing drawer set on her desk to pull out her needles, selecting one from her collection as well as a thimble. She would rather not stick herself tonight. “What do you think?”

“Silver it is!” Tikki landed behind the spool of silver thread and pushed it forward for Marinette to grab as she rolled her chair back.

As Tikki put away the rest of the spools of thread for her, Marinette started getting her signature embroidered into the skirt. She put it just under the waistband at the back of the skirt, which is where she usually would put it on bottoms, and since she had done this so many times over the years, it didn’t take her long to finish it off. So she went right onto the shirt next, setting her signature under the back of the neckline, which was her go-to place for it on tops.

By the time she was doing the last few stitches, Tikki was sitting comfortably on her shoulder to watch. Once she cut off the ends of the thread and held it up to take a glance at her handiwork, Tikki was clapping to show her approval. “Does it look okay?” Marinette grabbed her shirt with the other hand to hold both of them up at the same time.

“Well I might be a little biased, but I think they look perfect.” Tikki told her, grinning as she flew off Marinette’s shoulder. “You should try them on together so we can see how they look on you!”

She took a moment to pull out her phone so she could check the time on the screen, and saw she still had a while before patrol. With that settled, Marinette got up from her chair and set her new outfit back down on the desk while she slipped out of her current shirt and shorts. First she pulled on the shirt, since she had already gotten to try on the skirt once already, and took a look at herself in her mirror. She had designed the sleeveless shirt to have ruffles around the arm-holes to tie in with the ruffled layers of the skirt, but even on its own it looked nice. It was simple but classy, so she could easily wear it with other bottoms in the future.
Next she stepped into the skirt and after a second of debating, decided to tuck her shirt into it rather then have it overtop. She thought it would make the outfit look more professional (especially around someone like Gabriel Agreste) to have her shirt tucked in. And since she wanted to make a good first impression tomorrow, though she didn’t often tuck in her shirts, this time tucking it in would be a must. So she turned back to the mirror again to see how her outfit looked all together, and was pleased at the sight.

The combination of the whole outfit together looked just as she had imagined it to right from her design sketch. The black shirt made the colors of the skirt pop, and the bright shades she had picked really looked like they were straight out of a sunset sky. And because the fabric for her shirt had the silver woven in, when she moved it would catch the light and practically sparkle, just like stars. So that was an added bonus, as her original design had just had the black shirt being plain.

For two days work, she was very happy with the outcome of her new outfit. Not to mention rather proud of herself. She did half a turn in front of the mirror to see how her skirt would spin around her legs and declared, “I like it.”

“Like it? You should love it!” Tikki gushed, flying in a loop around her to get a better view of the whole outfit herself. “It turned out beautiful, Marinette!”

“Aww, thanks, Tikki.” Marinette couldn’t help but beam from the compliment, and decided to relent. “Okay, I love it.”

“That’s better!” Having finished her loop around, Tikki came to a stop to hover right in front of her bonded. “Because I love it, and Adrien is going to love it, so it makes sense that you should love it too!”

“It’s not so much Adrien I’m worried about.” Marinette admitted while she was starting to pull off her new outfit. “I know he would love anything I make. I’m lucky he’s so supportive of me, like you are. But as for his Father…”

“I’m sure his Father is going to be very impressed with it, especially once he finds out that you made it yourself.” Tikki assured her, her voice carrying all the confidence in the world, which made Marinette smile. “And in two days, no less!”

Marinette got changed into her PJs, so that she wouldn’t have to change clothes again for bed when she would get back from patrol. “I sure hope so.” She took her phone out of the pocket of her shorts to check the time again, and since patrol was a lot closer now, it was time to get ready. After she set her phone down on the desk, she ducked behind her mirror to grab her hidden lunch box before starting to make the trek downstairs.

Her first stop was to the family kitchen, to take out an ice pack from the freezer and set it at the bottom of her lunch box. Plagg’s camembert went straight from the fridge to sit directly on top of the ice pack, then she grabbed a couple containers from the cupboard before she went down to the bakery. She packed up most of the cooled croissants into a larger container, but left one out to wrap in an unfolded napkin to put into her lunch box. Then she grabbed some cookies for Tikki that she put into a smaller container, and after some maneuvering within the lunch box, she was able to get everything to fit with some room to spare.

And, since there was some room to spare, Marinette returned to the family kitchen to throw an orange in for herself to have when everyone would be having their snacks. Zipping up her lunch box, she took the last flight of stairs up to her room and handed Tikki the cookie she had brought up for her to eat now. Tikki happily made short work of her treat, and as she did Marinette put the container of remaining croissants on top of her desk. When she looked back to her kwami and saw
she had polished off her cookie, she grinned at the speed of the cookie’s disappearance before she recited the familiar call to become Ladybug once more.

She slung the strap of the lunch box over her shoulder and was about to head up the ladder when she could hear movement on the floor beneath her. The voices of her parents travelled to her ears and Marinette quickly flicked off her light so hopefully they would think she had gone to bed for the night. Just to be safe though, she waited a few minutes to be sure they wouldn’t try calling up to her, and only when she felt she was in the clear did she allow herself to move. But she still kept her movements light, like tiptoeing back to the ladder and taking each step quietly, easing the trapdoor open above her bed and climbing through. Once it was carefully shut behind her, she breathed a sigh of relief as she unhooked her yo-yo to toss into the night and swing off.

When she started to get near the usual meeting spot she could see Adrien’s silhouette waiting for her. Marinette landed behind him and he turned when he heard her touch down, and he cocked his head to the side in a mix of mild confusion and surprise when he noticed her lunch box. “Did I forget we had another picnic planned for tonight?”

“No, this was last minute.” Marinette explained as she slid it off her shoulder. “Tikki wanted to surprise Plagg tonight, so since I bought some peace-offering camembert for him yesterday, I figured I’d bring everything myself.”

Adrien smiled. “That’s so sweet of Tikki. Plagg will definitely be surprised.”

‘He’s not the only one,’ Marinette thought to herself, but kept a straight face so she wouldn’t give anything away. “Which half do you want to take tonight?” She asked while walking over to the middle of the rooftop to set her lunch box down.

“Hmm…how about I go west this time?” Adrien suggested, reaching back for his staff. Marinette nodded her agreement while grabbing for her yo-yo, so with that the superhero duo set off for patrol.

There wasn’t too much going on in Paris tonight, save for a few minor incidents here and there. At one point Marinette had to camp out on the roof of a house as a bunch of chatting teens and their cell phones took forever to go by. She did not want to have to stand for a million photos tonight.

Most days she didn’t mind taking pictures with her fans, but tonight she had a picnic to go to.
Chapter 76

Chapter Summary

Hi guys, first off I want to sincerely apologize for not uploading on Monday. Long story short, the chapter wasn't finished due to chaos at work leaving me beyond tired as well as picking up the flu from my sister (she was so kind to share with me, LOL). So thank you all for being so super patient with me! I hope today's chapter makes up for it, because there's lots of fluff awaiting down below. ^^ Please enjoy, everyone!

At last she was able to go back to the apartment building, and for the second time tonight Adrien was awaiting her arrival. “Okay, how many do I owe you?” Marinette asked while walking over to him after she landed.

“Owe me?” Adrien clearly wasn’t following what she meant.

“Late fee kisses.” Marinette met up with him and the two of them then went straight to the middle of the rooftop where she had left her lunch box earlier. “You got here before me twice today.”

“Well the first time I only barely got here before you,” Adrien explained as they sat down. “And as for just now, I guess I was waiting for a little over five minutes? Or something?” He gave a shrug. “I wasn’t really keeping track.”

“How about I give you two just to be safe then.” Marinette leaned over to give him two light kisses with a small grin. “Because I’m just so generous.”

Adrien couldn’t help but laugh at that. “I think I’m rubbing off on you, my Lady.”

“That was bound to happen sooner or later.” Marinette joked while unzipping her lunch box but made sure to not actually open it up yet. “Ready?”

“Ready.”

“Spots off.”

“Claws in.”

Tikki looked excited from the second she came back into view, especially when Plagg reappeared and flew right over to her to envelop her in a tight hug. “This is a great surprise! Thank you!” Plagg happily nuzzled her cheek, making Tikki giggle.

“You’re welcome.” She hugged him back for a few moments more before separating from him to float towards the lunch box. “Now close your eyes.”

“Both of you.” Marinette added once Plagg had obediently shut his own eyes.

“Me too? But I thought you said this was a surprise for Plagg…” Adrien arched his eyebrows but soon did as he was told when Marinette waved at him in a silent ‘just do it’ motion.

Now that neither of them could see, Marinette finally opened her lunch box. She took out her orange
and set it down beside her, then pulled out Tikki’s container of cookies next. After she opened the lid for Tikki she grabbed Plagg’s camembert and opened the wrapper before handing the stinky cheese to her kwami to hold. Lastly she picked up Adrien’s napkin-wrapped croissant and unfolded the napkin so the pastry inside was visible. “Ta-da!”

Both Adrien and Plagg opened their eyes. “Hello cheesy!” Plagg zipped over to take his camembert from Tikki with a delighted twirl, to which Tikki rolled her eyes with a bit of a smile.

When he saw the croissant, Adrien’s whole face lit up. “That’s for me?”

“And so the rest of the batch back in my room.” Marinette handed him the croissant, which he took almost reverently.

“I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again: you’re way too good for me.” Adrien declared before he took a big bite.

Marinette just chuckled while she started peeling her orange. “You’re welcome.” She watched Tikki drag her container of cookies after Plagg, who had already started floating off towards the corner of the rooftop the two kwamis had eaten at during the last picnic. Now that they were gone, Marinette laid back and once Adrien had followed her lead, she rested her head comfortably against his chest.

“So how does it taste? I had to make those under a bit of a time crunch tonight to make sure they’d be ready for patrol.”

“Tastes amazing as always.” Adrien was already licking the flaky pastry crumbs off his fingers, having eagerly devoured the croissant in only a few bites. “Oh, speaking of time crunch, were you able to get that outfit you were working on finished?”

“I did.” Marinette said, popping an orange wedge into her mouth. “And I’m pretty happy with how it came out too.”

“So when do I get to see it?” Adrien asked.

“Tomorrow, actually.” Marinette glanced up to gauge his reaction. “I’m going to wear it to supper with your father.”

And Adrien looked decidedly pleased by this news. “That’s a great idea! Father has a very discerning eye so when he sees you wearing it he’ll easily be able to tell it was hand-made. Knowing you’re in to fashion design too will be a perfect icebreaker.”

“As long as he doesn’t think it’s ugly,” Marinette sighed a little. “Honestly, I’m kind of nervous about him seeing one of my designs.”

This surprised Adrien. “Why? You already sent in your portfolio for the internship contest, so…”

“The internship contest is run by its own special committee, so I don’t think your father actually looks through them himself. At least, that’s what it sounded like on the information they listed on the entry form.” Marinette told him. “And yes, I know he did like my derby hat design all those years ago, but that wasn’t as important as this. I really, really want to make a good impression on him because…” She felt a blush rise to her cheeks.

“Because we’re dating now?” When she nodded, Adrien snuggled closer to her. “I understand. But you don’t have to worry. Tomorrow is going to go well. I have a good feeling about this.”

But Marinette wasn’t totally convinced herself. “What makes you think that?” She queried after swallowing her last mouthful of orange.
“Well, for one thing, you’re perfect.” Adrien stated matter-of-factly, and that made Marinette burst out laughing.

“That’s your argument?” Marinette teased. “I think we would lose the debate before it even begins.”

Adrien wasn’t fazed by this, however. “That, and I love you more then anything. So he’d better like you, because us being together is not going to change. Not after how long we waited for each other. With everything we’ve been through, we absolutely deserve to have whatever kind of fairytale ending that we want. And I don’t know about you, but I happen to want the biggest, best fairytale ending ever, since as you like to say, I’m such a sap.” He couldn’t resist teasing her, though the smile he wore held so much love, it was clear that he was very serious about everything he had just said to her, as well as very serious about the next words the left his lips. “I’m never ever going to let you go.”

That made Marinette’s blush darken. She, of course, wanted nothing more then to be able to be with Adrien for the rest of their lives. After all, she had dreamt of being his bride and the mother of his children for years now. But to hear him say something with those kinds of implications himself gave her a dizzying rush of joy. Because when she heard the words ‘fairytale ending’, those were exactly the kinds of things that came to her mind, and that made her heartbeat race. “I agree,” She eventually managed to say once she found her voice again.

“Good.” Satisfied with her response, Adrien started rubbing her arm affectionately as the couple then fell into a comfortable silence, enjoying cuddling together and watching the stars.

A while later Tikki and Plagg returned, holding the empty cookie container in between them as they floated over. “So am I off the hook again?” Marinette looked up at Plagg while reaching out to take the container from him and Tikki.

After a long pause to appear to that he was deep in thought, Plagg finally nodded. “I suppose so…”

“How kind of you.” Tikki laughed.

“I know, I’m such a giver.” Plagg puffed his chest out proudly, and now the mirth from all three of his companions was carried off into the night air.

Closing the lid of the container firmly, Marinette sat up to start packing her lunch box back up. Adrien sat up right after her and gave her his empty napkin, which she used to wrap up the rind of her orange in and set into her lunch box so she could properly throw them away once she got home. The wrapper for Plagg’s camembert had already been put inside after she had unwrapped it, and the ice pack had never been removed, so once she put in the empty cookie container her lunch box was ready to be zipped up and hung off of her shoulder. “Shall we get going?” She glanced at Adrien as the two of them stood up.

“Probably, since as much as I enjoy watching the stars with you, accidentally falling asleep here on this rooftop would be super uncomfortable.” Adrien mused while taking a moment for a quick stretch.

They each transformed and shared a tender hug once the magical lights had faded away. “I’ll head over to your house about fifteen minutes before your father wants me there tomorrow to make sure I won’t be late,” Marinette said as they separated.

“Sounds like a plan.” Adrien pressed a kiss to her forehead. “And everything’s going to go great, you’ll see. I love you, Marinette.”
“I love you too, Adrien.” Marinette stood on her tiptoes to give him on last peck on the lips, then they each took out their respective means of transportation and made their individual trips home.

Save for a precarious moment when her lunch box nearly slipped off her shoulder to tumble to the Parisian streets below, the journey back to the Dupain-Cheng bakery went by smoothly. Carefully easing open the trapdoor and slipping into her room, Marinette called off her transformation as she stood to close the trapdoor back up again. “Plagg was so happy with the picnic!” Tikki burbled gleefully when she reappeared behind her bonded, spinning a set of joyful loops through the air. “Thank you again for helping me get that surprise set up for him.”

“No problem Tikki, it was my pleasure.” Marinette sat down on her bed and scooped Tikki into her hands so she could give her a little hug. “Besides, it was nice for me to be able to surprise Adrien too.”

“They’re so lucky to have us.” Tikki grinned.

Laughing, Marinette let her kwami float away as she climbed down the ladder to hang her lunch box on the peg behind her mirror. She then unzipped it where it hung to pull out the garbage from inside and threw it away, but left the empty container and slowly thawing ice pack inside to put away in the family kitchen tomorrow morning. When she walked by her desk, she saw Tikki’s cookie plate was empty. “Uh oh, I forgot to refill your plate today. I’m sorry.”

“That’s okay, don’t worry about it. I’m actually still pretty full from earlier.” Tikki was already getting comfortable on the cat pillow when Marinette climbed back up to bed. “Good night, Marinette.”

Marinette smiled at how Tikki’s words got interrupted by a big yawn. “Good night, Tikki.” Climbing under the covers, the bluenette laid on her side for a while before she rolled onto her back to look up at the sky through the trapdoor in the roof. It wasn’t from lack of trying to fall asleep, it was more because she was still abuzz with what Adrien had said earlier.

She was well aware that their relationship was technically still very new, so for most people this would be much too early for hints about marriage, a family, a house together, the whole nine yards. But the love she felt for him was obviously much older then the month and a half they had been ‘dating’. Which meant likewise, his was for her. Their case was so different from the norm since it had taken them so many years to finally be together. So it stood to reason that if she had had those kinds of dreams about him in the years of her secret pining, so had he. True, initially his dreams would have been to have those things with whoever was behind the Ladybug mask, but now that they knew each other’s identities, that meant that he wanted to have that with her.

And those thoughts were making her heart feel like it may very well burst with pure, unadulterated elation.

This was definitely something to discuss further, but at a later date. For now she needed to focus on making the best impression she could with Adrien’s father tomorrow. If things did go smoothly as Adrien reassured her they would, that would be a big step in the right direction. Then more steps would be able to be made of course, slowly but surely, and they could go from there.

But even now, if (and hopefully, when) the time came for the biggest step towards their fairytale ending and the all-important question was asked, without a shadow of a doubt, her answer would be yes.
Despite her giddy excitement trying its best to keep her from falling asleep, she was able to eventually doze off. And when she awoke in the morning, she could already feel butterflies in her stomach again, but these were for an entirely different reason.

Today was the day.

In a few hours, she was going to be meeting the world-renowned Gabriel Agreste, face to face.

Not just as Marinette Dupain-Cheng, but also as Adrien’s girlfriend.

Taking a few deep breaths to try and settle the fluttering in her stomach, Marinette got up and went down the ladder to take a look at her outfit. She wasn’t going to put it on just yet, because she was going to help her parents in the bakery today for as long as she could to thank them giving her the last two days off, and she didn’t want something to get spilled onto it. So she would put it on just before she would head over to Adrien’s and show them how it looked then. For now, she gathered up some of her regular clothes into her arms, then headed down to take a shower.

Once she was finished her shower and a speedy breakfast, she returned to her room to put away her PJs. Marinette then took out the empty container and thawed ice pack from her lunch box to put them away in the family kitchen. When she came back to her room for the second time to grab her phone, she noticed Tikki had floated down to hover just above the new outfit. “I think if you wore some white shoes it would look really nice with this.” Her kwami moved slowly through the air toward the bottom yellow layer of the skirt. “The sun is white so it would make sense with the sunset theme, plus it wouldn’t clash with any of the other colors.”

“Yeah, I was thinking the same thing.” Marinette told her while she slipped her phone into her pocket. “I’m probably going to go with a white purse too.”

“And how about using some white ribbon and tying it around your hair elastics to complete the look?” Tikki suggested.

That was something Marinette hadn’t thought of. Her red hair elastics were part of her signature style, but they wouldn’t really go with the rest of her new outfit for tonight. So tying some white ribbon over top of them would not only conceal them, but work really well with rest of her ensemble. “That’s a great idea. Thanks Tikki.”

“I’m starting to turn into a regular fashion designer myself!” Tikki beamed with pride, making Marinette smile.

With that settled, it was time to head downstairs and get to work. Marinette made the trip down the three levels to the bakery kitchen, where Tom was already busy whipping up some frosting for the
freshly cooled chocolate cake sitting in front of him. “Good morning!” He welcomed her warmly as soon as she walked inside. “Are you getting excited for tonight?”

“A little excited, and a little nervous,” Marinette admitted as she was slipping her apron on.

“You’re going to do just fine.” Tom assured her with the same level of conviction as Adrien had last night. “And for the record, it’s good to be a little nervous. It means you care how this goes and you’ll be extra careful to make sure things go smoothly.”

It did make sense, as Marinette definitely did care about how this meeting went tonight. “I guess so…”

“I know so.” Tom started to grin as he added, “Trust me, this is your much older and therefore much wiser Dad speaking from experience.”

Marinette giggled. “Okay, okay.”

Grabbing some ingredients, Marinette got started on making some muffins while Tom continued on the chocolate cake. When Tom finished the cake and left to bring it out to the shop area, a handful of cookies were quickly stashed into Marinette’s apron. After he came back, she waited a couple minutes before pretending to have forgotten her phone upstairs, to which Tom said it was fine for her to go grab it. So Marinette went straight to her room to deposit Tikki’s cookies onto her plate before going down again and getting back to work.

The day went by smoothly and with only taking a break to eat a light lunch, the hours seemed to pass by very fast for Marinette. She was taking out a batch of soft dinner rolls to the shop area when Sabine held out a hand to stop her. “It’s almost four.” Her mother reached out to take the tray out from Marinette’s hands. “You go ahead and get ready for tonight. We’ll take it from here.”

“Are you sure?” Marinette let Sabine take the tray but didn’t want to just leave when there was still some time (though it was admittedly rather small) that she could be helping out in the bakery.

“I’m positive.” Sabine put away the dinner rolls and when she saw Marinette was still standing there when she was finished, she playfully waved the now empty tray at her daughter. “Now get going!”

“All right, I’m going!” Marinette sidestepped the reach of the tray, then did as she was told and went upstairs to her room.

Tikki had pulled out a spool of diamond white, satiny ribbon for her and left it on Marinette’s desk for after her bonded was finished changing. Once her new outfit was on and she had fished out a cute white purse from her stash of handbags, Marinette set it down on her desk next to the spool of ribbon while she found a pair of scissors to cut the ribbon with. She cut two identical lengths of ribbon and just held on to them in her hand for now, then she slipped her purse on over her shoulder and took a look at herself in her mirror.

The butterflies from this morning were starting to make a come back, but seeing how well everything looked together did help ease them a bit. Nothing was clashing or looking out of place, so hopefully Adrien’s father would approve. She really, really hoped so, anyway. Tikki sat down on her shoulder and gave it a couple comforting pats, which Marinette was grateful for. Then she flew down into her open purse and waved cheerfully as it was carefully zipped closed above her.

Her next stop was to the bathroom. For several minutes Marinette wrestled with what makeup she should wear, until she eventually settled on keeping it light. She set her ribbons onto the counter before she got started on applying her makeup, so in case any powder went astray, they would still
be a pristine white. When she was done, she took out her hair elastics and carefully ran a brush through her hair. Once her locks were completely tangle-free, her hair elastics went back in to their usual pigtail positions, then she grabbed her ribbons to tie each one in a bow over top of them. She took a moment to study herself in the mirror once more to make sure that everything looked okay, and after careful scrutiny, decided that it did.

After one last trip to her room to grab her phone and set it into her purse next to Tikki, Marinette went down to the first floor to put on her sandals. She poked her head into the bakery kitchen, but saw no one there, so she went to the shop area to see Tom and Sabine were waiting for her behind the till. “Wow Marinette, your new outfit came out beautifully!” Sabine praised when she saw her daughter come in through the doorway.

“Did it ever! Turn around for us!” Tom instructed, and Marinette did with a bit of a smile. “I think this is one of my new favorites of yours.”

Although Marinette was sure she could design an outfit out of a burlap sack and her parents would still love it, their support meant the world to her. “Thank you.” She walked over to give them each a hug. “By the way, I don’t really know how long this supper is going to be, or even if there’s anything planned for after we’re done eating, so how about I phone you with any updates?”

“Don’t worry about phoning us.” Sabine gave a passive wave of her hand. “You just focus on having a good time.”

“It’s not like you’re going very far, anyway,” Tom reminded her with a grin. “That big house of theirs is only a short walk from here.”

He was right, of course, and so despite still feeling nervous, Marinette laughed. “Fair enough.” Checking the time on the till, she saw it was about twenty-five minutes before she was supposed to be at the Agreste Mansion. And although she had told Adrien she would leave fifteen minutes early, since she was ready anyway, leaving now was still close enough. “I think I’m going to head off now.”

“See you later, dear.” Sabine gave her one last hug, then she and Tom waved to her as she went out into the hallway.

Marinette went out the side door and as it shut behind her, she took out her phone and opened it to her Spots email account.

~Just left my house but I’ll walk slow so I don’t show up too early.

As she started walking, she didn’t bother putting her phone away since she expected a reply back fairly soon. Sure enough, it was vibrating against her fingers right away.

~Show up too early? You really worry too much, bugaboo. =P I’d much rather you walk fast so I can see you sooner. ^^

And in one email, she was already smiling. Not only that, it was making her nerves starting to lessen too. So perhaps if she kept emailing him on her walk over, they would go away entirely. It was worth a shot, at least.

~How about average walking speed?

~Aww, okay, if you insist… =’(

~Remember how I’m immune to fake pouting?
~Damn. Can I convince you to walk faster if I say the chefs spent all day making the food we’re having tonight?

~They did? What are we having?

~Nuh uh, not telling. You have to walk faster to get here and find out! =3

By now Marinette was half way there and definitely feeling more at ease. Adrien never failed to make her feel better. She let her thumbs skip across the screen of her phone to write her next response.

~Thanks, by the way.

~For what?

~I was feeling pretty anxious but talking to you has helped a lot.

~You’re welcome. :) And for the record, we’re emailing, which means there’s really no need for full words. So you should’ve said BTW. ;P

She couldn’t resist rolling her eyes after reading that last email. Looking up from her phone, Marinette saw she was almost at the outer wall of the Agreste Mansion. And though the butterflies tried to swarm in again, she stopped at the corner of the wall and swallowed hard with steeled resolve. Carefully opening her purse to stow her phone inside next to Tikki, who gave her a quick encouraging smile, she then closed it back up before striding purposefully toward the front gate.

There must have been someone watching the camera at the gate for her arrival because as soon as she was in front of the gate’s bars, there was a loud buzzing sound followed by a click. Marinette stepped closer and when she lightly pushed on one of the big doors of the gate, it swung open. Mustering up all her courage, she walked inside and heard the door close itself behind her.

With each step she took forward, she could feel her heart starting to race. Try as she might she was still feeling a little nervous, but she was also starting to feel excited now too. For years she had admired the Gabriel label and all its bold designs, and tonight she was going to actually meet the mind behind them.

She took each stair towards the front doors slowly to gather her confidence. This was going to be a big night. Gabriel Agreste was known as a reclusive man and yet here she was, being invited into his home. In mere moments she was about to meet a celebrity, a millionaire, and most importantly, the father of the man she loved.

Having arrived at the front door, Marinette paused to shut her eyes. Taking one last deep breath, she opened her eyes again, reached out, and knocked on the door.
Chapter 78

Chapter Summary

Right off the bat, I want to be clear: though I am of the belief that Gabriel Agreste is Hawk Moth, this supper meeting is NOT a trap. My reasoning being that Marinette and Adrien never recognized each other, so the magic from their Miraculouses obviously protects their identity from being discovered, even by other Miraculous wielders. Which means, Gabriel has no idea who Ladybug and Cat Noir really are, like Marinette and Adrien have no idea who Hawk Moth is. So! This dinner is solely set by Gabriel to meet his son's girlfriend, nothing more. Because what better cover is there then of a (mostly) normal father? ;P

Also! I looked up the legal age to drink in France and with them both being 18 in my story, Marinette and Adrien would be legally able to if they wanted to. However, I think it would be a terrible idea for them to drink, because drinking can lead to getting drunk enough to say things you never would've said while sober. So as superheroes with a lot to hide, and how smart both of them are, I think neither of them would want to run the risk. Plus I don't drink myself so it makes things a lot easier for me, LOL.

Anyway, now that all that's out of the way, please enjoy today's chapter, guys! =D

For a painstakingly long moment, nothing happened. Then she could hear footsteps coming up behind the door and the sound of it being unlocked, and as the handle turned Marinette’s heart skipped a beat…

And she allowed herself to breathe again when it’s was Adrien who appeared in the opened doorway. “Hi!” He greeted cheerfully, stepping out and enveloping her in tight hug that she gratefully returned. “Come inside, I want to see your outfit!”

When they separated and walked inside, Marinette peered around the foyer intently but saw no one around. “Where’s…?”

“He’s around here somewhere,” Adrien shut the door behind them with a shrug. “He said he’ll meet us in the dinning room when the food’s ready.” He held out a hand to her when she went to take off her sandals. “Not yet. I want to get the full effect of the master designer’s new ensemble.”

Smiling a little, Marinette spun in a slow circle for him to show off her look. “So, what do you think?”

“Absolutely gorgeous.” Adrien replied immediately, sporting a bit of a grin as he added, “Wait, did you mean the outfit or just you in general?”

Now Marinette couldn’t help but laugh. “Adrien…”

“The outfit, got it.” Adrien closed the distance between them and slipped his arms around her waist comfortably. “I think it looks amazing. Is it a sunrise theme?”

“Close, it’s actually a sunset theme.” Marinette let her own arms curl around his shoulders. Being
around him eased her jitters significantly. “It’s a pretty sentimental design because of where the inspiration for it originally came from, but I’ll tell you more about it later.”

“The colors are perfect,” Adrien went on, his eyes wandering over her outfit…or was it just her body? She dare not think like that right now. His eyes returned to her face soon enough however so she brought her attention to what he was saying. “And I really love the bows in your hair.”

“Those I can’t take credit for. Got the idea from a mutual friend of ours.” Marinette gave the slightest of nods toward her purse so Adrien would know what she meant, and the look of understanding on his face told her he had.

“Gotcha. They still look cute on you though.” He placed a soft kiss on her cheek. “And do you know what else I think?” Adrien’s voice lowered with this second statement and the look in his eyes sent a shiver down Marinette’s spine. “I think it’ll look even better off of you.”

“Come on, I’m trying to make a good impression here.” She tried her best to ignore the tingling sensation his words had instantaneously invoked within her. “If your father heard…”

Adrien just chuckled. “Spoilsport.” But he dutifully said nothing more and moved out of their embrace enough to take her hand. “Here, allow me to lead you to the dining room.” He was smirking now. “Since this is your first time here and everything.”

“Oh, yes, please do.” Marinette took a couple steps with him when she suddenly stopped. “Wait, what about my shoes?”

“I wouldn’t worry about it.” Adrien told her. “They aren’t dirty or wet so it should be fine. Besides, then this way Father can get your whole outfit together like I did.”

“All right, if you’re sure.” They resumed walking and together they went straight to the dining room. When they entered Marinette saw an elegant tablecloth covered in golden swirls over the table, with three place settings set: one at the head of the table, and one on either side of each other in the middle. Each of the place settings had a gold cloth napkin wrapped around the silver cutlery. These napkin bundles sat next to vivid white plates and in front of tall, crystalline glasses, and at the sight of them, suddenly Marinette was worried what they were for. “Are those for…alcohol?”

“That’s probably what they’re originally intended for, but Father has a strict ‘no liquor in the house’ policy, so they’ll most likely be for water. Or maybe sparkling water, if he’s feeling generous.” Adrien noticed her barely audible sigh of relief. “So I’m guessing that that’s a good thing?”

“Yes, water is definitely okay with me.” Marinette had heard so many stories of people having serious problems with drinking, she wasn’t in any way interested in doing it herself to find out. Not only that, she didn’t want to run the risk of someone finding out she was Ladybug if she ever had too much to drink. But on the same token, she wouldn’t have wanted to turn down anything that was served to her tonight and possibly look like a bad guest, so she was very glad that wouldn’t be an issue. “I don’t want to drink by I would’ve tried it if that was what was given to me.”

And that was a similar sentiment Adrien shared. Sure, some drinks might taste wonderful, but it didn’t seem worth doing with all the other problems that went alongside it. Especially when they each had secret identities on the line. Possibly getting drunk and spilling the beans to someone did not sound like a good idea in any way, shape, or form. So knowing Marinette wasn’t interested in drinking either was nice to hear. “Me either, to be honest. Even if Father didn’t have that rule, I’ve never had an interest in it.” They shared a glance and he gave her hand a soft squeeze. “Too much important stuff on the line, you know?”
Marinette smiled, catching his drift about their alter egos easily, but aloud she merely said, “I definitely do. Imagine if I was tipsy and told all my parent’s secret recipes. Our business would be ruined!”

“Exactly what I mean.” Adrien nodded for emphasis, but Marinette could see the hint of a grin ghosting over his lips. “Here, let’s sit down until Father comes.”

Letting go of her hand, Adrien moved forward to pull out one of the chairs and gave a grand bow in her direction. Amused, Marinette sat down and kissed him on the cheek. “Thank you.” Scooting her chair closer to the table, she watched as he went around to take his seat right across from her.

A chef came in a moment later carrying a large pitcher filled with ice water. “Hello there, miss!” His boisterous voice carried through the room as he walked over toward Marinette. “We’re so glad you could join us tonight! It’s not very often we get to cook for company so this is quite the treat for us in the kitchen!”

“I felt honored to be invited, so the pleasure is all mine.” Marinette told him honestly as he filled her glass with water.

“And if I have my way she’ll be over a lot more in the future.” Adrien added, which brought a bit of a blush to Marinette’s cheeks.

“That’s certainly fine by us chefs. The more the merrier!” The chef circled around the table to fill Adrien’s glass. Once it was full, he did the same to what would evidently be Gabriel’s spot, before going back around the table again to take the three plates under his arm. He then looked back over to Marinette. “It was a pleasure meet you, miss. Please enjoy tonight’s meal, and I hope to see you back here again soon!” With that, he left the dining room to return to the kitchen.

“See, everyone loves you.” Adrien said brightly. “Nothing to worry about.”

Marinette was about to reply when they could hear footsteps approaching from beyond the open door to the foyer. They both turned to look toward the doorway and seconds later in walked the one, the only, Gabriel Agreste. Heart thundering in her chest, Marinette quickly pushed back her chair to stand in respect for his arrival, wincing slightly at the noise the chair made against the floor. “H-Hello!” She stammered, while hoping her voice hadn’t squeaked as badly as she thought it had. Hard blue eyes looked her up and down with intensity as Gabriel approached, and Marinette swallowed hard over the nervous lump forming in her throat. Adrien stood as well, though at a normal speed so his chair was much quieter then hers had been, and cleared his throat. “Father, this is my girlfriend, Marinette Dupain-Cheng.”

Having stopped directly in front of Marinette, Gabriel paused as he studied her. An excruciatingly long second went by, and then two, before he finally extended his hand to her. “I believe I recognize your name.” His voice was quiet and calm while Marinette hesitantly shook his hand. “Have we met before?”

“Several years ago I made a derby hat design at school for a competition, and you chose it as the winner,” Marinette willed her voice to stay steady as she spoke. “So that day I saw you through a tablet screen held by your assistant.”

“Yes, I remember that now.” Gabriel’s gaze started to drift over her outfit. “So I assume that you still partake in fashion design?”

A shy nod. “I do, sir.”
“You made this outfit then?”

“I did.”

“And how long did it take you?”

“About two days.”

“Hmm.” It was impossible to tell if that was a good ‘hmm’ or a bad ‘hmm’. Marinette desperately hoped it was the former. “And are you proud of it?”

That made Marinette falter. She was proud of it, but she didn’t want to seem like she was full of herself. “I am,” Was her eventual response. “Because I wouldn’t wear something that I wasn’t happy with.”

There was (what seemed to be) a long silence. Then Gabriel’s eyebrows arched slightly with intrigue and his expression changed to one that held the faintest look of being mildly impressed. “A good answer.”

Though her knees felt like they were about to give way from beneath her with the flood of relief that swept through her, Marinette somehow managed to stay standing as she breathed a very grateful, “Thank you.”

“I think we should all sit down to our meal now.” Gabriel stepped around her so he could walk to his chair.

Adrien flashed Marinette a huge grin and an excited thumbs up when she looked his way while his father’s back was turned, then they each took their seats as well. Both Gabriel and Adrien took their napkin bundles from their plates and unrolled them to retrieve their cutlery and set their napkins on their laps, which Marinette hurriedly followed suit. Then, as if on cue, the chef from earlier rolled out a trolley covered with the three plates he had taken earlier, though now each was covered by silvery lids to keep the food warm. He set one in front of Gabriel first, then one in front of Adrien, and came around to Marinette last. His smile was warm as he lifted the lid for her. “Dinner is served!”

Her plate was dressed with mouth-watering spread, identical to the ones Gabriel and Adrien were unveiling for themselves. Thinly sliced roast beef lightly drizzled with gravy, roasted baby red potatoes, cooked slivered carrots with green and yellow beans…all of it looked and smelled absolutely heavenly. “Wow,” Marinette murmured reverently as she stared at the food before her. The chef looked tickled pink by her reaction while he set the lid from her plate back on to the trolley. “Is there anything else I can get for you?” He asked as he took the lids Gabriel and Adrien passed to him.

“No, that will be all for now.” Gabriel dismissed him with a nod of his head.

“Very well.” The chef dutifully wheeled the trolley back to the kitchen, though he did quickly steal a glance back over his shoulder at Marinette, who was still looking at her plate in wonder. “Is there anything else I can get for you?” He asked as he took the lids Gabriel and Adrien passed to him.

“No, that will be all for now.” Gabriel dismissed him with a nod of his head.

“Very well.” The chef dutifully wheeled the trolley back to the kitchen, though he did quickly steal a glance back over his shoulder at Marinette, who was still looking at her plate in wonder. “So, Marinette,” Gabriel began, his words breaking her out of her reverie. “Please tell me about yourself.”

Oh no. More talking meant more possible opportunities to say something stupid. She really wished they could just eat together quietly, but it didn’t look like it was going to be the case. A glance over to Adrien who gave her an encouraging nod helped her find her voice again. “What would you like to know?” She asked, grabbing her fork and knife to start cutting her roast beef.
“Anything would be fine. For instance, how long have you been interested in fashion design? What do your parents do for a living?” Those were fine questions, and to be expected, but the next one brought the room to a screeching halt. “What are your intentions with my son?”
Happy belated Thanksgiving to my fellow Canadians! =D I'm going to be honest, I'm pretty proud of this chapter. ^^ I knew I wanted to get here for a while but I was feeling stuck the last couple weeks trying to get from where I was to here. Writing from Point A to Point B was tough for a while, but now that I got to this chapter, it felt easy again, which was such a relief! I've also found Gabriel easier to write the more I use him. I do honestly think that despite everything, deep down he does love Adrien, though he doesn't really show it well. So seeing him happy is important to him, which is why after hearing what Marinette has to say and how much it means to Adrien, he responds as he does below. Anyway, I really hope you all like the fluff in here as much as I do. <3 Please enjoy, guys!

“Father!” Adrien exclaimed, looking aghast.

“It’s a fair question.” Gabriel’s expression remained unchanged. “You are well-known model and I run one of the biggest fashion companies in the world. Which means, there are certain individuals who would try to take advantage of our status.”

“Are you implying that…that she…” Adrien’s voice held such anger in those few words that Marinette quickly held out her hands to stop him from saying more.

“It’s okay, Adrien.” She smiled warmly at him when he looked at her, not wanting things to get out of hand. “I’ll answer them.” Though Adrien didn’t look happy about it, he said nothing more so Marinette took that as her cue to go on, so she turned to Gabriel as she began. “I’ve been interested in fashion design for a long time now. I actually have been a fan of the designs made by your company since I was much younger, so meeting you tonight is like a dream come true for me. I want to be able to work in the fashion industry as soon as I can, and hopefully I’ll even become an accomplished designer in my own right someday.”

“I see.” Again, it was impossible to tell if Gabriel’s response was good or bad.

So since she couldn’t tell, Marinette just pressed on. “My parents names are Tom Dupain and Sabine Cheng. They’re the owners and operators of the Tom & Sabine Boulangerie Patisserie not too far from here. The bakery is on the main floor, and my family and I live in the floors above it. I help my parents in the bakery everyday, as much as I can.”

Gabriel’s gaze on her intensified as the silence hung in the air. “Go on.”

Time for the question he really wanted answered. But instead of feeling intimidated, Marinette actually felt her confidence swell as she thought of what to say. She knew her intentions were pure and true, so she had nothing to hide or to fear. Honesty would definitely be the best policy here. That meant she was about to say things she had yet to actually tell Adrien directly, but at least it would be along the same lines as the beautiful things he had said to her last night. They were things she did want to say to him eventually, for sure, so it wasn’t a question of whether or not she wanted him to hear them. She had just originally wanted to say these things when they were alone. But despite her initial plans for this kind of speech, her gut was telling her that the time to (at least partially) bring
And if everything hung on this moment for her to impress Gabriel, she wasn’t going to hold anything back.

With that in mind, she looked Gabriel straight in the eye, gathered all the courage she possessed, and started to speak. “Adrien and I have only been dating for a little while now, but I’ve been in love with him for years, since the first week I met him. It was something I couldn’t act upon for a long time because I would get painfully shy around him and wouldn’t be able to speak without tripping over my words.” She couldn’t help but glance over at Adrien as she continued. “We’ve been friends for so long now but he never knew how I felt about him. I could never work up the courage to say how I really felt. But recently I decided I didn’t want to waste any more time that we could be together, and the last few weeks have been the happiest of my life.”

Adrien already looked touched. “Marinette…”

“He’s the most amazing person I know. No matter who it is, Adrien is always kind to anyone and everyone. Despite how busy he can get, he works hard and with everything he has. He always makes me laugh, and whenever I’m feeling down, he always knows exactly how to make me feel better.” By now, Marinette could see Adrien’s eyes starting to tear up. “And I don’t want any of this happiness, this excitement, this perfection we’ve finally been able to share together to ever come to an end.” She brought her focus back to Gabriel again. “So my intentions with Adrien are to love him with everything I am, for as long as I can. I’d honestly like it to be for the rest of our lives. I don’t care about job titles or material things or anything like that. All I care about is being with Adrien, because when I’m with him, I’m whole.”

When she finally finished, Marinette took a deep breath as she was feeling winded from all the talking. But it had been worth it. All her feelings were now officially laid bare. She had done everything she could to try and win Gabriel’s favor with that confession, so hopefully it would be enough.

And for a while, Gabriel didn’t move. But then, ever so slightly, the corners of his usually tight-lipped mouth turned upwards. “And I believe you.”

“Do?” Marinette’s eyes grew wide.

“As a businessman, I know a genuine speech when I hear one. And through that experience, there is no question in my mind that you meant every word you just said.” Gabriel picked up his fork to casually gather some carrots with its shining tines as he continued. “Not only that, as pleased as I am to hear what you told me, it’s clear your words held even more weight and meaning to someone else.”

Turning back to Adrien, Marinette saw him wiping the tears from his face, and when their eyes locked, he looked like the happiest man on the planet. “I love you.” He whispered with so much emotion that Marinette felt her own eyes starting to fill.

“And despite quite possibly showing it differently then some parents, perhaps even most parents, I care about my son and how he feels.” Gabriel lifted his fork to study the carrots for a second before looking toward Marinette again. “So since it’s very obvious that you mean a lot to him, I will not stand in the way of your relationship.”

Marinette could hardly believe her ears. “Th-Thank you…”!

“However,” Gabriel’s expression returned to that same intensity from earlier. “If any of that
He didn’t finish that sentence, but he didn’t need to. Marinette caught his drift loud and clear. “Yes, sir. I understand.”

“Good.” Sitting back in his chair comfortably, Gabriel returned his attention back to his forkful of carrots. “Now that that’s all been settled, I believe we should all get to eating so our meal doesn’t get cold.”

Both Marinette and Adrien nodded their agreements, and so the three of them began to eat. The room was silent now, but it was comfortably so. Every so often Marinette and Adrien would steal glances at each other wearing smiles filled with a palpable joy, and Gabriel either didn’t notice or didn’t care. Most likely it was ‘didn’t care’.

The food was scrumptious (perhaps partially due to the level of happiness radiating from the two youngest attendees of the meal) and it wasn’t long before everyone’s plates were equally emptied. Marinette sighed contentedly, feeling full in both belly and heart. As she was draining the last bit of water from her glass, she noticed the chef return with the trolley from earlier to take their plates for them. “Everything was delicious,” She gushed when he made his way over to her. “Thank you.”

“You’re most welcome, miss!” The chef replied brightly while he took her plate. “And are we ready for dessert?”

Though Marinette didn’t think she could eat another bite, Gabriel was already talking before she could answer. “We are, please bring it out.” The chef gave a nod and quickly gathered up the other plates and rolled them away.

Hopefully whatever dessert was going to be tonight, it wouldn’t be a large serving, because after how well this meal had gone so far, Marinette really didn’t want to possibly dampen things by wasting food. But to her relief, when the chef returned, on his tray were three white ramekins that were thankfully on the small side. Her first thought was they would be filled with some sort of fancy ice cream topped with various garnishes, so she was very surprised when one was set before her and saw it held crème brûlée. The delight must’ve been visible on her face because the chef chuckled. “Have you ever had one of these before?”

“No,” Marinette gratefully took the clean spoon he gave her. “I can’t wait to try it.”

“Well I hope you like it.” The chef went around to hand out a crème brûlée and spoons to Adrien and Gabriel. “I’ll be right back with more water.” Then he took the trip back to the kitchen once more.

Not wanting to appear to be a rude guest, Marinette waited until both Adrien and Gabriel had taken their first spoonful of crème brûlée before taking hers. It tasted simply divine when it reached her lips, and somehow she magically seemed to find enough room left in her stomach as she began devouring. She gave the chef a big smile of her approval since her mouth was so full when he came back to refill their glasses, to which he looked decidedly thrilled.

More minutes slipped by and by the time she had polished off the entire contents of her ramekin, Marinette was beyond stuffed. She had already thanked the chef, but there was another person she wanted to thank for this amazing meal. “Thank you for inviting me to supper.” Marinette said to Gabriel, wanting him to know her sincere appreciation. “I’m really glad I got to come. This meant a lot to me.”
“And to me.” Adrien added right away.

“You’re both welcome.” Gabriel set his spoon down into his empty ramekin. “Now that I’ve met you, I’m glad you were able to come as well.” Marinette’s smile was so big that her cheeks were starting to hurt, but she didn’t care. “And perhaps in the future, as long as there is advance notice so things can be properly planned, you could come here some more, every once and a while.”

There it was. Marinette had actually done it. She had made such a good impression that she was welcome to come back. Sure, there would need to be advance notice and everything, but that was to be expected with someone as busy and regimented as Gabriel Agreste. That was completely fine with her, to say the least. She was totally over the moon with jubilation, and would’ve loved to jump around screaming to the world about this incredible victory, but outwardly she did her best to retain an air of at least semi-calmness. “I’d like that.”

Satisfied with her response, Gabriel pushed back his chair and got to his feet. “I do need to get back to work in my office, so please excuse me.” He then seemed to pause, like he was thinking about something. “Marinette, since our supper together is over now, you are free to go,” Gabriel’s eyes drifted over toward his son just a hair. “And I know your home is only a short distance from here, but if you would feel safer not having to walk alone, I’m sure I could arrange for someone to escort you.”

“I’ll walk with her!” Adrien exclaimed immediately, jumping up from his seat almost identically to how Marinette had earlier, chair squeak and all.

Was that amusement on Gabriel’s face? It was there and gone so fast, no one could really be sure. “Very well.” He strode over to Marinette and as she stood, he held out his hand to her for the second time tonight. “Thank you for joining us tonight. It was nice to be able to meet you.”

This time around, Marinette was able to shake his hand with much more ease then she had previously. “It was nice to meet you too.”

Gabriel let go of her hand and took a second to adjust his tie, then he walked through the dinning room and out the door. The second he was gone from view, Adrien dashed around the table and grabbed hold of Marinette’s hand. He pulled her along behind him as he sped toward the doorway, and though he skidded to a stop to poke his around the side to be sure the coast was clear, he quickly started running again into the foyer. As soon as they were close enough to it, Adrien turned enough to guide Marinette toward the front door, press her back against the wood, and kiss her deeply.

A surprised blush quickly colored Marinette’s cheeks. The way he had barreled her out of the dinning room, and especially the fervor with which he was kissing her, left her heart aflutter. She returned his kiss happily, until they had to break apart for air, though as soon as he had grabbed a breath Adrien was planting kiss after kiss along her neck. “I…love…you…so…much…” He murmured between kisses, both his delightful ministrations and the warmth of his breath against her skin sending a pleasant shiver through her body.

“What’s all this for?” Marinette managed find her voice enough to quietly ask.

Adrien paused in his trail down her neck to look into her eyes. “You were amazing in there. You are amazing.”

Her blush deepened. “A-All I said was…”

“That the most wonderful things I’ve ever heard.” Adrien captured her lips again for a few heated seconds before pulling back once more. “We should get going in case Father happens to come
“Yeah, we probably should.” Marinette agreed, trying to sort her thoughts back together into the proper level of priorities.

When she went to move away from the door however, Adrien didn’t immediately release her. “But I’m definitely not finished with you yet, Princess.” His tone was husky as he moved closer to be able to whisper into her ear. “I don’t care if it’s your room or mine, but after patrol tonight, I want to show you exactly how much what you said meant to me.”

Heat was already starting to smolder within her, so Marinette’s nod was a little more eager then she meant it to. “Okay.”

“Excellent.” With a devilish smirk working its way onto his face, Adrien stepped back so Marinette could move aside from the door. “Then I think it’s about time to get you home, don’t you?”

Marinette couldn’t help but grin. “I think so too.” And so with that, Adrien unlocked the handle and opened the door for her, and after taking her hand in his, the young couple made their way outside to start the trip back to the Dupain-Cheng bakery.
Chapter Notes

Milestone number eight! =D

Other then that though, this is a short Note tonight as I’ve worked a lot this week and therefore am in some sorrowful need of a good night’s sleep. ^^; Good night all! Please enjoy!

When they were rounding the wall around the Agreste Mansion, Marinette had a realization. “I never finished my water, or got to say good-bye to that nice chef.”

“It’s just water, it’s fine.” Adrien didn’t look worried. “And as for Bernard, you’ll be able to see him again soon now that you’re officially allowed to come over here.”

“I guess so.” Marinette gave Adrien’s hand a soft squeeze. “I’m so glad your good feeling about tonight’s supper was right.”

“So am I.” Adrien rubbed his thumb against the back of her hand affectionately. “I knew you had nothing to worry about.”

“It was nerve wracking for a while though.” Marinette admitted.

“He’s hard to read. Even I have trouble knowing what he’s really thinking most of the time.” Adrien gazed up at the sky as he thought aloud. “Honestly though, I think all the overprotectiveness and strictness is his way of trying to look out for me. So I would have the structure to guide me and to keep me on the straight and narrow, you know? For a long time it was pretty hard for me to understand why he does the things he does, and sometimes it still is. But now that I’m older, when I really look back and think about it, I realize that all in all, he was just looking out for me.”

“I think so too. You obviously mean a lot to him.” Marinette smiled.

“Yeah, the only thing is he usually has a funny way of showing it though.” Adrien chuckled as he went on, “Father tends to have a stick up his ass…”

“Adrien!” Marinette burst out laughing.

“But at the end of the day, he wants what’s best for me.” His expression grew more serious then. “I am sorry that Father put you on the spot like that though.”

“It’s okay. The first two questions were no big deal. And even with the last one, it wasn’t anything that I hadn’t planning on saying to you. I had just planned on talking about some of that when we were alone.” Marinette could see Adrien’s earlier look of pure happiness return at the memory of her speech. “Besides, you said a bunch of similar stuff to me last night, so it’s nice to know we’re both on the same page.”

“My Lady, we’re on the same line of the same paragraph of the same page.” Adrien’s words made her giggle, and no matter how many times he heard it, he loved the sound every time. “Speaking of which, do your parents make wedding cakes?”
“They would for their daughter.”

“Good point. What do you think of a spring wedding?”

“Works for me. That way it won’t be too hot yet, especially since I’m going to be in a thousand pounds of dress.”

“But hopefully not to cold either, I don’t want us to get married in snow!”

Talking like this was Adrien felt so relaxing to Marinette. Thinking about a future together might give some people the willies, especially in a relationship that was still so ‘new’, but for her, it was paradise. As they were walking past the front door of the Dupain-Cheng bakery to go around to the side, she noticed Adrien peering into the darkened shop portion. “What are you looking for?”

“Nothing. It just looks so different in the dark.” Adrien flashed her a grin. “Although in all seriousness, even when all the lights are on, it’s not nearly as interesting when you’re not inside it.”

Marinette snorted with laughter. “Don’t you ever get tired of being so corny?”

“Never.” Adrien waited while Marinette checked the side door, which Tom or Sabine had thought ahead to leave unlocked for her, then followed her inside when she opened it wide. He waited again as she shut it behind them, then he slipped his arms around her waist from behind her. “If it weren’t for your parents being home, I’d be taking you straight up to your bedroom right now,” He cooed in her ear.

The fires that had simmered to life in the foyer of the Agreste Mansion were very easily rekindled. “And what if I didn’t let you?” Marinette posed the question as she angled her body while slowly swaying her hips to brush against him purposefully before turning around to look up into his darkening eyes.

“Then I’d have to do this…” And with the practiced ease only a superhero could possess, Adrien picked her up and slung her over his shoulder like a proverbial sack of potatoes.

Squealing, Marinette started flailing her arms. “Put me down!” She tried to order, but it was rather difficult to sound commanding when she was giggling so much. “I said put me down! Right now!”

Not at all fazed by her (albeit meager) attempts to get free from his grasp, Adrien let his free hand rest on the back of Marinette’s knee and begin to drift upwards little by little. Marinette immediately stilled and he could feel her tremble at his touch with a victorious smirk. When his fingers slipped under her skirt towards where hip would meet thigh, he heard her breathing hitch. “What’s the matter, bugaboo?” He teased as his hand slowly wandered ever higher up her leg. “You were so talkative before…has a cat got your tongue?”

Her groan of annoyance quickly turned to a breathy moan when Adrien’s thumb slid across her already dampening panties. “Y-You’re such a-” But she couldn’t finish due to gasping sharply when Adrien curled a finger around the fabric in his way.

“Let’s get these out of the way, shall we?” His tone was low as he began to coax Marinette’s panties down an inch, and another…

Then the sound of footsteps coming from overhead made them both freeze. In one swift motion Adrien had Marinette back standing on the floor and she was quickly adjusting her skirt and panties as discreetly as she could. They were holding their breath in unison as they waited several seconds to see if anyone was coming down, but it looked like no one was. Whoever had been walking upstairs appeared to be staying on that level, thankfully enough. Both of them sighed with mutually felt relief,
then Marinette smacked Adrien’s arm. “You could’ve gotten us caught!”

“I didn’t see you trying very hard to get away from me.” Adrien’s grin perfectly mirrored that of a Cheshire cat.

“Oh, shut up.” Sticking her tongue out at Adrien and making him chuckle, Marinette slipped off her sandals, then she had a thought. “Well if no one’s coming down,” She began while opening her purse for Tikki to cautiously float outside. “I think we should be safe for a few more moments.”

“Good idea.” Adrien opened his shirt and poked at the pocket inside, trying to rouse the sleeping Plagg within. “Wake up, lazy bones.”

Plagg grunted and finally stuck his head out after receiving a second poke. “I’m up, I’m up…” He grumbled, rubbing his eyes with a big yawn. When he noticed who was now hovering in front of him, however, he was suddenly wide-awake. “Tikki!” He exclaimed excitedly, zipping out of the pocket to hug her tightly.

“Well hello to you too.” Tikki happily snuggled closer to him.

After a while of contentedly cuddling his beloved, Plagg seemed to notice where they all were. “So…I guess this means supper is over?” When Marinette and Adrien nodded, Plagg studied them intently. “And neither of you look miserable…”

“I heard everything from Marinette’s purse and it all went well, if that’s what you’re wondering,” Tikki told him, smiling proudly at her bonded, who smiled shyly back.

“Just ‘went well’? I’m sorry Tikki, but I have to disagree. It went fantastic.” Adrien gave his blushing girlfriend a tight hug.

“So Tikki can officially come over to visit us now?” Plagg’s excitement was evident.

“As long as there is advance notice so things can be properly planned,” Marinette repeated what Gabriel had said to her earlier.

“Yahoo!” Plagg twirled himself and Tikki through the air in delighted loops, making Tikki laugh. “This is great!”

“Don’t I know it.” Adrien looked equally as happy as he kissed Marinette’s cheek.

Though she would’ve liked to have more time for the four of them to talk together and just enjoy each other’s company, Marinette knew time was of the essence as her Mom or Dad could possibly come downstairs at any time. “I hate to be a spoilsport, but after coming so far to impress your father today,” She glanced at Adrien. “I don’t want to upset him by keeping you out too long.”

With a bit of a sigh, Adrien nodded. “Yeah, I guess you’re right. Come on, Plagg.”

“Aww…” Plagg looked very disappointed as he and Tikki ended their embrace, until Tikki pecked him on the cheek. Then a big smile crossed his face and he obediently flew back into Adrien’s awaiting shirt pocket.

Winking at Marinette and Adrien, Tikki returned to Marinette’s purse, which she closed up behind her. Now that they were ‘alone’ again, a bit of the heat from earlier seemed to return to the air around them as their gazes met. His hands found her hips and hers found his shoulders, though her fingers didn’t stay there long as their kiss began and were soon curled into his hair. When they eventually parted moments later, they were breathless and clearly hungry for more. But as much as it frustrated
them both, they knew it was going to have to wait for now. “See you later?” Adrien whispered against her lips with more than their usual double meaning hanging on to that phrase.

With some effort, Marinette brought down her hands and took a step back while trying to ignore the ache within her trying so desperately to demand all her attention. “Definitely.” She replied, noticing he looked just as displeased by being unable to do more right now as she did.

Adrien leaned in to press one last kiss to her forehead, then walked past her to the door. He opened it and stopped to wave at her, then went outside and let the door creak shut behind him. Marinette sighed heavily once he was gone, massaging her forehead in frustration that wasn’t of an emotional nature. After another few seconds of forcing her body to calm down, she ducked into the shop portion of the bakery to grab a few cookies. Since her skirt didn’t have any pockets, she opened up her purse to slip them in with Tikki, and noticed her kwami’s rather large and very amused grin.

Knowing full well what was the source of her entertainment, Marinette blushed a little and silently set the cookies next to Tikki, then closed her purse again made the trek up the stairs to the family room.

When she entered, she saw Tom and Sabine sitting on the couch watching TV. “Hi Marinette!” Tom noticed her first and greeted her eagerly. “We didn’t expect you to be back so soon! How did it go?”

“Since Adrien’s father had work he had to get back to, he just stayed for supper and dessert.” Marinette couldn’t help but smile at the memories of what had transpired at the Agreste Mansion. “But before he had to leave, he said I’m welcome to come back some time.”

Tom positively whooped with joy. “That’s my girl!”

Even Sabine, usually the calmer of the two, let out an excited cheer. “I knew it!” She got up from the couch and hurried over to Marinette to envelop her in a proud hug, which Tom quickly joined. “I knew you could do it, sweetheart!”

Touched by their level of enthusiasm, Marinette happily hugged them back. “Thanks Mom, thanks Dad.”

“So tell us, what’s he like?” Sabine asked when the family of three finally separated from their group hug.

Marinette paused, trying to think of how best to describe Gabriel Agreste. “He’s very…serious.”

“Sounds about right.” Tom said. “Any time he does an interview or poses for pictures or something, it always looks like he’s thinking about the hardest algebra problem ever.” Noticing the look that brought to his wife’s face, he put up his hands as if in defense. “What? It does!”

Trying not to laugh, Marinette started to head towards the stairs to her room. “I’m going to go clean my room a bit, since I left quite a mess the last few days with trying to finish my outfit on time,” She told them, which was only partially untrue. Her stash of fabrics was a mess but the rest of her room was fine. “But I’ll be ready to help in the bakery first thing tomorrow. Thanks again for letting me have the last two days off.”

“Sure, go on ahead.” Sabine waved her daughter off with a warm smile. “And you’re most welcome.”

Keeping a normal pace so she didn’t appear eager to leave, Marinette went up to her room and shut the door before collapsing onto the chaise lounge with a loud groan. Tikki was giggling as she phased out of her purse to float overhead. “I can leave for a while if you need some time.” She
offered politely to her clearly frustrated bonded.

“No, it’s fine. I’ll wait it out.” Marinette muttered into the cushions.

“Okay.” Tikki still made herself scarce however out of respect, which left Marinette alone with her thoughts.

So although it was tempting to take matters into her own hands for obvious reasons, Marinette eventually got up and started tidying her room as she said to her parents she would. Because as much as waiting was unpleasant right now, she knew Adrien would be feeling the same way. So at least they were suffering together.

Besides, she knew it would be worth it and that her patience would be handsomely rewarded later tonight. And that knowledge far outweighed any other option.
After cleaning up her fabric stash and straightening a few other things around her room, Marinette remembered about the cookies she had grabbed earlier and took them out of her purse to set on Tikki’s plate. Grabbing her phone from inside it before shaking out the few cookie crumbs that were lingering within her purse into the garbage, she then put her purse away with the others in her collection. Checking the time on her phone she saw it was still a while until patrol would even start, much to her chagrin.

Time seemed to pass much slower when there was such a delectable treat she was waiting for. At first she toyed with the idea of emailing Adrien to help make the time pass by faster, but she knew that more likely then not that would just end up making things harder for them. “Especially for him,” she thought with a grin. So for now she set her phone down onto her desk and turned on her computer, before sitting down in her chair while she waited for it to finish booting up.

Tikki came floating over to sit next to her plate and grabbed one of her cookies to nibble on. “I wanted to tell you I’m really proud of you,” she said to Marinette after swallowing her first mouthful of cookie. “What you did at supper was very brave.”

Smiling a little, Marinette just shrugged. “It wasn’t anything I didn’t want to say to Adrien at some point, so…”

“Yes, but not only did you say it to him, you said it to his father. It must’ve taken a lot of courage for you to do that.” Tikki saw Marinette nod. “But you did it without even batting an eyelash. You’ve come so far from not being able to even talk to Adrien, to what you were able to say tonight.” After another quick bite of her cookie, she reached over to pat Marinette’s hand. “Adrien was right earlier. You were amazing.”

“I was, wasn’t I?” Her smile grew as she thought back. “I’m just really glad Adrien’s father believed me. I put everything I had into what I said, so if he didn’t, I don’t know what I would’ve done.”

“That’s just it. People can tell when someone really means something. And because you put your heart and soul into that, every one of us in that dining room could feel it.” Having finished her first cookie, Tikki grabbed another. “So really, there was no way anyone who heard you wouldn’t have believed you.”

“But he was quiet for so long after I finished, I was feeling pretty worried for a while.” Marinette confessed. “I know it probably wasn’t actually that long, but to me it felt like it was ages before he said anything.”
“Believe me, it felt like that to me too.” Tikki agreed.

“Really? It did?” Marinette was surprised.

“Of course! I wasn’t worried he’d believe you, but waiting for him to say he did was more then just a little terrifying.” Tikki held out one of her arms with a grin. “That was one of the times where I really wished I had fingers so I could’ve crossed them for you!”

Both of them laughed. As Tikki went back to eating, Marinette turned her attention back to her computer screen. Since she hadn’t checked in on it in a while, she decided to bring up her Internet browser and head to the Ladyblog. As soon as it loaded, what she saw left her grinning. Right at the top of the screen were pictures of Alya wearing her various colors and styles of ‘Ladyblogger’ shirts, with a plug for the custom t-shirt store right beneath. ‘Suave business-woman indeed.’ She thought to herself in amusement.

Scrolling down, she saw few new posts, mostly discussing the most recent amazing feats of Ladybug and Cat Noir…though Ladybug’s name was far more prevalent over the page, of course. Whenever she read articles on the Ladyblog, since Alya was her best friend and her writing style was very similar to how she spoke, Marinette would hear Alya’s voice in her mind as she read. Which always proved to be very entertaining, especially whenever there was more then one article for her to catch up on, like there was tonight, because then it felt like she had sat down to story time with Alya as the narrator.

When she finished the last new article, she noticed the time on her computer finally said it was nearing the time for patrol (or at least, it was close enough for how eager she was to get there tonight), so Marinette shut it down and got up from her desk chair. After taking a moment to stretch, she then looked over at Tikki and saw her brushing off the last few cookie crumbs from her face.

“Ready?”

“Ready!” Her kwami declared brightly.

“Spots on!” The magic faded seconds later and Marinette wasted no time going out onto the roof. As soon as the trapdoor was shut securely, she grabbed her yo-yo and tossed it high to begin swinging through Paris towards the apartment building.

Once it came into view, she saw she wasn’t the only one who had the idea to come to patrol early. Not that that really surprised her. Landing in front of Adrien on the rooftop, Marinette immediately found herself swept up into a tight embrace and a deep kiss. Stoking the coals of her fires that had only just simmered down with ease, his hands drifted along her body as her arms curled comfortably around his broad shoulders. “Good evening,” He murmured with a smirk when they parted for air quite a while later.

“I’d say it’s a great evening, actually.” Smirking herself, Marinette slid her arms down his back to take his staff from where it sat above his belt and brought her hands back around to hold it out to him. “The sooner we start patrol…”

“Say no more.” Adrien took his staff from her and extended it with a light flick of his wrist. “I’ll go north, you go south.” Marinette gave him a nod of understanding, then the two of them took off into the night.

Going through the majority of her route was easy, although there was a very perturbed group of teens who were clearly unhappy to be caught joyriding in a stolen car took a lot of her time, as she had to string them up with her yo-yo to keep them from escaping until the police arrived. In all fairness, it was probably an average amount of time from the time she alerted them and when they
got to the scene, but for an impatient Marinette, it felt a lot longer. She gave them a quick smile when they thanked her for apprehending the carjackers and took them into custody, then she hastily made her leave.

Despite feeling like she had taken forever, she actually got back to the apartment building before Adrien did. After touching down and hooking her yo-yo around her waist, Marinette walked to the middle and looked out over the darkened horizon. No matter how many times she saw it, the skyline of Paris was beautiful, especially at night when it was filled with twinkling lights. She let herself get lost in the view until she could hear familiar footsteps behind her and a pair of strong arms envelop her soon after. “Now that that’s out of the way…” Adrien’s voice purred in her ear while his fingers were sliding up her belly towards her chest. “I think it’s about damn time we get out of here.”

Leaning her head back against him, Marinette sighed contentedly when his hands took gentle hold of her breasts. She let her backside brush slowly across him where a bulge was already forming and relished in his low moan at the sensation. “I think so too,” Was her soft reply, which she just managed to get out before his thumbs were gliding over her nipples through her suit and left her gasping.

The warmth of his hands disappeared as he stepped back to grab for his staff, and although a little disappointed at the absence of contact, Marinette knew it would only be temporary as she unhooked her yo-yo. “Let’s go back to my place,” Adrien suggested, already heading toward the edge of the rooftop.

“Wait!” Marinette saw him turn back and look at her in confusion. “Shouldn’t we go to my place instead, since I’m the only one who has the…” She paused and dropped her voice to finish, “The condoms?”

“And that’s where you’re wrong, love bug.” Adrien’s smirk had returned. “I made a stop at the drugstore on the way home from dropping you off. After all, it’s only fair that I should keep some in my room too, don’t you think?”

Marinette didn’t even bother to hide her excitement. “Did you get the same kind?”

“You bet I did.” He looked quite proud of himself. “I made sure I committed that box to memory last weekend.”

“Then what are we waiting for?” Marinette threw her yo-yo and swung off, and a chuckling Adrien followed after her.

Shortly before they came up to the Agreste Mansion, Marinette let him pass her, so once they arrived he would be able to push open the window he had left ajar the rest of the way to let them both climb in. Once they were both inside Marinette slid the window closed behind her and as she did, she heard Adrien say, “Claws in.” A quick flash of green light later brought Plagg back into view as she turned and saw him floating nearby, looking slightly grumpy. Though it was noticeably less grumpy then he usually looked when she and Adrien were intimate, she noticed with some delight. It was a small victory, but she would take it.

Since she had been thinking, she had yet to transform back herself, but it seemed like Adrien couldn’t wait any longer because he pulled her close to him and kissed her passionately. Marinette returned the kiss with the same level of fervor until a loud cough reached both their ears. “Can I please have Tikki now?” Plagg huffed, frowning with his arms folded across his chest when the young couple parted to look back at him.

“Sorry Plagg,” Marinette said sheepishly. “Spots off.”
When Tikki reappeared from the burst of magic, she looked quite entertained by the whole situation. “Okay, cranky kitty, let’s go.” She teased as she started floating to the floor. A grumbling Plagg flew behind her and soon, they passed through the floor and out of sight.

As soon as they were gone, Adrien took Marinette’s hand and guided her to the wall under his basketball hoop and gently pressed her against it like he had at the front door earlier this evening. His lips found her neck again and his left hand rested on her hip, while his right was beginning to work its way under her shirt. Shutting her eyes and tilting her head back against the wall, Marinette already felt like her skin was burning for him. When his left hand lifted from her hip, she took no notice, until she felt it touch against her thigh before moving beneath her skirt. Then she was very aware of every move it made. His fingers drifted up along her thigh but as much as she wanted them to, they didn’t go higher just yet.

Adrien soon pulled away from her neck slightly to look at her, wearing a smile filled with love. “Marinette…my beautiful, incredible Lady…”

“Yes?” She breathed, trying to settle the beat of her heart that was still going double time from his attentions.

“You are the single greatest thing in my life. I want you to know that.” Adrien pressed an affectionate kiss to the tip of her nose, then a smirk stole its way onto his face. “So I hope you’re ready for everything I have planned for you tonight.”

A lovely shiver ran down Marinette’s back. “Like what?”

“I want to bring you to your own personal Heaven on Earth. To make you feel as perfectly spectacular as you absolutely deserve, over and over again. So when I’m done with you…” The look in his eyes alone was sending heat flooding through her body before he even began to speak. “Well, let’s just say if you happen to fall asleep from blissful exhaustion, I’ll take that as a compliment.”
Chapter 82

Chapter Notes

Surprise, my dedicated, patient readers! I have an extra long chapter for you today, filled with the steamiest of tea! ;3 Not gonna lie, I'm super happy with this one, just like I was with the last extra long chapter (54). Anyway, I won't talk any longer and keep you guys from your present more then neccessary, LOL. Enjoy everyone! ^^

Oh, and just in case any of you out there are still reading after 80+ chapters and don't like my kind of tea parties, YOU'D BETTER RUN NOW! xD

The tantalizing implications of his words coupled with her heightened state of arousal were a potent mix for Marinette. Seeing the growing anticipation in her eyes, Adrien’s smirk widened and he captured her lips in his, all the while letting his hands trail upwards in their respective locations. Marinette moaned into his mouth when his fingers rubbed against her core through her already wet panties, but all too soon he was pulling back again for them to breathe and brought back his hands with him, leaving her whimpering in disappointment. “Please don’t stop…”

“I wouldn’t dream of it.” Adrien took hold of the hem of her shirt. “But I have to get you undressed first, don’t I?” The blush that bloomed over her cheeks and her small nod was a good enough answer for Adrien. “Now as I recall, you were telling me this outfit was sentimental to you because of the inspiration behind it.”

“I did,” Marinette answered distractedly, as her attention was focused on how he was slowly bringing her shirt up.

“Care to tell me more?” Adrien had a mischievous look in his eyes while continuing to slide up her shirt, though his actions slowed to a crawl as he awaited her reply.

Swallowing hard to bring moisture back to her dry throat, Marinette had to take a second to organize her thoughts through the haze of desire in her brain. “I made this design based on the pictures I took of the sunset on the night after I found out who you were…when you came and talked to me on my terrace as…”

“As Cat Noir, I remember.” Adrien lightly pulled her shoulders forward to carefully finish pulling off her shirt for her, paying special attention to lay it down on the floor flat beside them, so such a special outfit wouldn’t wrinkle.

“And you were telling me how much you truly loved Ladybug…” Marinette went on, and although she was shirtless now she didn’t feel the least bit cold. In fact, she couldn’t wait for the rest of her clothes to be off because she was feeling much too warm. “You wouldn’t have realized it at the time, but you basically told me you loved me as much as I loved you. And that meant a lot to me.”

“I’m glad I said it, then. All of it was the truth.” Adrien kissed her forehead tenderly while he grabbed of the waistband of her skirt next.

Her breathing hitched as her skirt started sliding down her legs. “I know. That’s why that was the night I decided that I wasn’t going to make you wait for me anymore.”
“Really?” The ruffled layers collapsed in on themselves as her skirt fell into a brightly colored heap around her ankles. Crouching down, Adrien paused for Marinette to step out of her skirt so he could lay it down on top of her shirt. “Then I like this outfit even more now.” He declared before beginning to gently kiss his way up one of her legs.

Each kiss seemed to make Marinette’s heart beat faster, waiting on baited breath while he steadily moved ever higher up her body. However, he deliberately kept his path infuriatingly far from the places she wanted contact most. Once he completed his journey up to her cheek and placed the last kiss there, the desperation on her face was clear. Adrien would never get tired of seeing the need in her eyes; a need for him and him alone. He slipped his fingers behind her, and Marinette instantly arched her back to allow him access to where the clasp of her bra lay. Unhooking it with ease, Adrien then took hold of her bra straps and pulled them down faster then he had with her shirt or skirt. Letting it fall to the floor in the vicinity of the rest of her clothes, he cupped her breasts with his hands and heard her inhale sharply.

Pleased with her response, he began massaging them and loved the sound of Marinette’s little gasp. “Adrien…” The way her eyes shut tight and the way she said his name tried to steal his attention to the hardness uncomfortably restricted in his boxers and jeans, but he wouldn’t allow it. Tonight he wanted to thank the love of his life for what she had done for him this evening and repay her with all the pleasure he possibly could, so his own need would just have to wait until he brought her over the precipice to orgasm.

At least once.

Kissing a path along one of her shoulders, Adrien moved his left hand to circle his thumb around her nipple, feeling her tremble. His right hand let go so he could take hold of her panties to finish removing her clothing at last. Pulling down on them enough to let them drop onto the floor, the second he let his fingers glide in between her folds, Marinette was a moaning, shuddering mess. It was evident she was climbing towards the edge already so to keep her from waiting any longer, Adrien rubbed his thumb in purposeful circles around her bud.

Her breathing was soon coming in only short gulps, especially after he allowed a finger to enter her soaking channel. After that addition, the combination of all this electricity proved to be too much for Marinette rather quickly, however. She was so tightly wound at this point that he didn’t even have time to add a second finger to the mix before her hands suddenly rushed to cover mouth and muffle her cry of ecstasy. Adrien held her close as her body shook so her legs wouldn’t give out from beneath her, and whispered sweet nothings into her ear while she slowly drifted back down to Earth.

Gradually, Marinette came back to her senses. Her knees felt weak so she was grateful for how Adrien was carefully holding her upright, not to mention the unmoving support of the wall. After waiting through all the tension since supper, this peak had hit her hard, and though she was feeling tired now, she was also wearing a contented smile. This was exactly what she had needed, and she was so glad that she hadn’t given in to temptation earlier this evening.

When the rise and fall of her chest seemed to settle back down to normal, Adrien brought back his hands slowly to make sure she was strong enough to support herself against the wall. She was, and when her gaze focused on him, a devious smirk formed as he licked her fluids off his fingers, enjoying the way her cheeks darkened at the sight. Knowing she was watching his every move, he knelt down and took hold of her thighs, gently pressing them open. “Mind helping me out?” He asked with casual ease, like this was the most natural thing in the world. And though Marinette’s face was well past red now since she knew what he was planning to do, she immediately let him.

Or at least, she thought she knew what he was going to do. Because yes, licking his Lady clean was
definitely on the agenda, but it would only be half of Adrien’s next plan. When his tongue made its first pass through her slit, he could hear her soft murmur of pleasure. He knew her flesh would be extra sensitive right now so he took his time as he carefully cleared away the juices, but he didn’t stop there. It took a moment before Marinette realized there was clearly something more going on then what she had originally thought. “Wh-What are you…?” She rasped, but she couldn’t finish as that was the moment his lips closed around her bundle of nerves, causing all the air to leave her lungs.

Since Adrien didn’t want to rush her forward again too fast, he kept things slow for a while. It was only when he paused slightly and heard her soft whine at the drop in speed did he feel she was ready for him to pick up the pace. And with having plateaued once already tonight, Marinette’s second one approaching even faster then the first. His name was cascading from her lips over and over now, and that was a reward in itself for Adrien. The sounds she made for him never ceased to arouse him to no end, like throwing gasoline on a fire.

All of a sudden her body tensed and her mouth fell open in a silent wail while she was swept away again. This time, if it weren’t for Adrien and the wall supporting her, Marinette’s knees would’ve definitely given out from under her. Thankfully having the physique he had from years of being a magical crime fighter meant her weight was nothing for her lover to handle, and keeping her upright was easy for him. Adrien’s tongue gently cleaned her up once more, and he kept his grip on her thighs as he stood back up. Once he was back on his feet, the look of pure bliss on her face was anther lovely reward for him. “Hey you,” He said softly, kissing her cheek and watching as her eyes fluttered open.

Seeing him brought that same tired, contented smile from earlier back to Marinette’s face. It took a second for her to get her brain and mouth to work in tandem to make words, though. “Hey,” She replied eventually, managing to lift her arms away from the wall enough to slip around his waist. “Do you think you can stand up on your own?” Adrien meant his question in all seriousness, so he was surprised when Marinette gave a quiet laugh.

“Well, seeing as you did a damn good job of making sure I wouldn’t be able to, I’m going to go with no,” She teased, making Adrien grin. “A fair point. I’ll carry you then.” When she nodded, he bent slightly to pick her up, holding her bridal-style.

“Over to the bed,” Marinette insisted, especially when she saw the look of awkward discomfort on his face after he took his first step. She knew it wasn’t from carrying her, since he had carried her like this on the night of her terrible headache, and brought her all the way home like that, without any issue.

Adrien did as he was told and brought her over to his bed, laying her gently on top of the blankets. “Are you sure?” He asked as she rubbed her eyes.

“Very sure. You haven’t gotten anything yet, and that’s not fair to you.” Marinette slowly sat up and reached out to grab the waistband of his jeans. His whole body jerked a little at her touch and she could only imagine how uncomfortable he must be by now. And that certainly would not do. “And we did kind of come to your room instead of mine so we could break in your new box of condoms, so to speak.”

Not able to hold back his sigh of relief when she popped the button on his jeans, Adrien tried not to let himself get distracted by how close her hands were to his aching need. “We don’t have to tonight, if you’re tired…” He had to bite his lip to suppress a low moan as her slim fingers steadily inched
down the zipper of his incredibly restricting fly. “I-I’d understand…”

“I know you’d understand, because you’re the greatest boyfriend a girl could ask for.” Marinette saw his cheeks flush at her words while she worked his jeans down his legs. “But I also know you want to, just as much as I do. So I’m going to do us both a favor and ignore you saying we don’t have to.” That made Adrien chuckle, until she pressed a kiss against the large bulge still covered by his boxers, then he couldn’t keep himself from moaning this time. “I might need some time to warm up again, but I don’t think that’s going to be a problem.”

Yes, she could feel fatigue trying to creep up on her, but she pushed that to the back of her mind. Adrien had done such wonderful things for her, there was no way she wasn’t going to return the favor. And though she did want to allow her lower half rest for at least a few minutes, she did mean what she said about wanting to be with him. That’s what she had been wanting since the beginning, when she hadn’t known he was going to give her not one, but two solos. So she wasn’t going to be doing anything she didn’t truly want, and it was clear just how much he wanted her too.

Getting up on to her knees, Marinette helped Adrien pull off his shirt next. His eyes were darkening very quickly, and it was a sight to behold. Wrapping her arms around his shoulders, his hands found a home on her hips right after. Smiling a little, she kissed him softly at first, wanting to let the moment build. And before long, she could feel heat beginning to stir within her body again.

Now that they had done this a few times, it seemed another advantage of being a superhero, besides getting increased strength and fitness, was a level of endurance useful for things other then long akuma battles.

Marinette let her hands slide down his back to take hold of his boxers, dragging them down and finally setting free Adrien’s throbbing member. He moaned into her mouth and when her belly brushed against his shaft, he had to pull back to gasp for air. Through the cloud of lust he was under he noticed she seemed to be looking for something, and he managed to figure out she must be looking for the box of condoms he had bought. “I’ll get them,” He told her, kneeling down to retrieve them from where he had stashed them under his bed.

But they seemed to be stuck at first, so while he tried to free them, Marinette decided it would be a good time to give both Adrien and herself a treat. After all, she wasn’t exactly ready yet. So while he was preoccupied, she moved to the middle of the bed and laid down comfortably, then let her hands wander down. One cupped her left breast, and the other went between her spreading legs as she closed her eyes. Thankfully her flesh wasn’t as over-stimulated as it had been before, though it was still more sensitive then usual. Nothing hurt, and that was really all the mattered to her. She could handle being more sensitive then usual. So there was nothing stopping her from what she was about to do.

Just as Adrien stood back up with the box in hand, her fingers were tracing over her nub, and the sight before him plus the pleasant sigh that escaped her lips made him promptly drop said box. Eyes wide, Adrien couldn’t look away. Not that he would ever want to. Seeing Marinette like this, laid bare and pleasuring herself, was so new and intoxicating for him. He was entranced, watching every little movement of her body and listening to every sinful noise she made. And for a long time he couldn’t move a muscle, rooted to the spot as Marinette’s hands slowly worked their magic.

On her body as well as his.

Finally he started to kneel back down, reaching out a hand to try and find the box of condoms blindly so he wouldn’t have to look away from his private show. Somehow he managed to grab it, and he hastily stood back up while tearing in to the box. He grabbed one of the golden packages inside and let the box once again fall to the floor, already long forgotten. Marinette’s moans were
growing louder now, serving as the most powerful of motivations for him to not only open, but to practically obliterate the foil surrounding the condom. It was rolled on over his length within seconds, with the coolness of the slippery rubber against his much hotter skin brought a husky growl from his throat.

He climbed onto his bed and lightly took hold of Marinette’s wrists, making her open her eyes. When she saw the amount of passionate hunger in his eyes, she couldn’t help but smirk. “Can I help you?”

“You are both the most perfect and the most horrible tease at the same time,” Adrien murmured, pinning her hands above her head against the pillow with one of his own, and using the other to guide his tip toward her once again wet entrance.

Marinette just laughed. “Thank you.”

“No, thank you.” Adrien emphasized the last word by entering her chasm slowly, though he had to stop moving once he brought himself all the way in. With how long he had waited for this, just being finally within her was almost enough to take him over the edge all by itself. But he did not want that to be how tonight ended. So with a lot of effort he mentally brought himself back from the brink, focusing his attention on Marinette instead as he let go of her wrists. “How are you feeling?”

“Good,” She replied, lightly grabbing on to his shoulders now that her hands were free to do so. “Just a little tender, but it definitely still feels good. I think we should start slow though.”

“Agreed.” He knew he wouldn’t be able to last otherwise. When he didn’t start moving right away, she looked up at him and saw he wore a small smile. “I love you, Marinette Dupain-Cheng.”

She returned his smile. “I love you too, Adrien Agreste.”

Then their lips met in another heartfelt kiss and the tempo of their lovemaking began. And with everything that had gone on tonight, despite each of them wishing to have this last much longer, they both unraveled fairly quickly. Within minutes they were calling out for each other as their orgasms captured them at almost the same time, her walls clamping down on him until both of them were thoroughly spent. Adrien rolled off of her with the last of his energy, and the only sounds in the room were their heavy panting breaths.

After a while Adrien found himself a tissue to pull off the condom and another to clean himself off with, and even managed to turn enough to throw them into the garbage can without missing. By the time he turned back to Marinette, he saw that she had already fallen fast asleep. Not surprising, with how much energy her body would have used up in the last few hours. Speaking of sleeping though, that reminded him of a few things. He was vaguely aware they still needed to shower, but at least that could be done in the morning. And he should probably set an alarm for them so she could do that and get back home before she was possibly discovered missing from her bed, or he was discovered to have her in his. But sleep was pulling too strongly at him as well for him to resist.

So upon cuddling closer to Marinette, Adrien enfolded her in his arms and shut his eyes, then he followed his beloved into the realm of the dreaming.
Chapter 83

Chapter Summary

I really like this chapter, it amuses me. xD Work's been really picking up and I'm on day six of a seven day in a row stretch (then I'll have Wednesday off and do another week solid), so I'll keep the Note short tonight. Please enjoy guys! =)

The skyline was still dark a couple hours later when Marinette began to stir. At some point during her sleeping she had laid on to her arm in an uncomfortable position, and the heaviness of the limb when she went to roll, followed by the pins and needles shooting through it as the blood flow returned to normal, woke her up. Her eyes opened slowly, and in her grogginess, she didn’t notice anything out of the ordinary at first. She was snuggled next to Adrien, after a truly wonderful night together, with the blankets of his bed were keeping her nice and warm…

And that’s when the sirens started going off in her brain.

She was still at the Agreste Mansion!

‘Shit, shit, shit!’ Marinette hurriedly disentangled herself from her lover’s arms and scrambled out of bed. Whacking her knee against the bedframe in the dark and cursing some more, this time out loud, she tried to figure out where her clothes were. Because in her haste, she didn’t seem to realize that it wasn’t any where near morning yet. All she could think of was how catastrophic it would be if her Mom or Dad found out she wasn’t in her room, but in Adrien’s.

Or worse yet, if Gabriel found out.

With the jostling of the bed and the sound of his girlfriend’s angry mutterings, Adrien was soon roused from his slumber as well. “Marinette?” He sat up and tried to stifle a yawn as he watched her dash around the room. “What are you doing?”

“Where did my clothes go?” She hissed, her panic prevalent in her voice.

Still feeling half asleep, Adrien was confused. “Do you need them?”

“Yes! I need them right now!”

“Why?”

“I need to go home!”

“But…”

“No buts! I have to leave before we get caught!”

“Marinette…”

“I wouldn’t be able to live myself if we got caught because of me! And then my parents wouldn’t trust me anymore and your father would totally hate me and he would never let me see you again and-”
“Marinette!”

“What?!”

“It’s the middle of the night.”

Wait, it was? Marinette turned around and looked through the wall of windows and saw that it was, in fact, the middle of the night. All the terror that had swept her up ground to a halt, and a veritable tidal wave of relief took its place. No one else would be awake right now. They were still safe. “I…”

Turning back to Adrien, Marinette exhaled slowly and ran a hand over her face before she allowed herself to speak again. “You’re right. I didn’t even notice.” Her gaze dropped down to her feet as guilt began to set in. “Sorry for snapping at you.”

“Don’t be.” Adrien got out of bed and walked over to her. “I know the reason you worry is because you care so much.” He smiled brightly at her and slipped his arms around her waist, wanting her to know he wasn’t mad or upset with her at all. “So, do you want to come back to bed or do you still want to find your clothes?”

“I really should be going home…” Marinette murmured.

“Then that’s what you’ll do.” Adrien gave her a tender kiss before letting go of her to head to the wall where a majority of the sinful wonders had taken place just hours before. Having been the one to take them off her, he knew exactly where her clothes were and gathered them up in his arms to bring them back to her. “Here you go.”

“Thanks.” Marinette went to take them from him, then she paused. “I should probably shower first before I get dressed.”

“Only if I can join you.” Adrien grinned, making her roll her eyes. Before she could even reply he was already walking to the bathroom with all her clothes, so with a sigh of amusement rather than frustration, Marinette followed after him.

Adrien turned on the water while she went to the mirror to untie the ribbons from her hair. Setting them on the sink and her hair elastics on top of them soon after, she walked to the shower and climbed in alongside her boyfriend. It was the quickest shower they had shared, as for once getting clean was the only thing on either of their minds. Once they finished, they stepped out one after another and grabbed some towels to dry off with. When Marinette went to get dressed, however, Adrien suddenly reached out and snatched something from her pile of clothes. When she saw it was her panties, her face went crimson. “What do you think you’re doing?”

“Doing you a favor,” Adrien told her matter-of-factly, though there was a definite wicked gleam in his eyes. “The thought occurred to me that would make no sense for you to wear something that isn’t clean after you just had a shower. And I know for a fact these are not clean anymore. Mostly because I made them that way, but still.”

And although she hated to admit it, he really was right. With how wet he had gotten her last night, it really would be a waste to put them on after getting washed up. “I guess so,” Marinette relented after a while, noticing the look of victory that crossed Adrien’s face. “But what am I supposed to wear home?”

“You’ll be Ladybug.” Adrien reminded her. “The suit covers everything.”

Oh, how she hated his accurate logic. “When will I be able to get them back?”

“I’ll wash them for you, then I can give them back to you whenever.”
“But how exactly can you give them to me without any of our parents knowing?”

“Well, as luck would have it, my suit happens to have pockets.” He loved the way her eyes were widening. “So I’ll bring them with me to give to you at patrol.” Adrien soon had his Cheshire cat grin back on again. “But hold on a second, I just thought of something else. Since your suit doesn’t have pockets, I guess that means I’ll just have to follow you home after patrol and give them to you there.”

That meant that he was going to patrol through the streets of Paris with her panties in his pocket. The thought embarrassed her, but at the same time it also excited her, although she would never admit to it. “Sometimes…” Marinette began while picking up her bra and slipping it on.

“You really hate me?”

“So, so much.”

“I doubt that.”

“Shut up.”

“No thank you.”

She stuck her tongue out at him, making him snort with laughter. After taking her shirt and pulling it on over her head, she grabbed her skirt and hesitated a moment before she stepped into it and pulled it on. It felt rather odd to feel the fabric swish against her bare skin, especially over her behind. As she adjusted the position of her skirt and tried to get used to the feeling, Adrien was watching her every move with great enjoyment. When she noticed that he was, Marinette grabbed the nearest towel and lobbed it at him, which he was able to easily dodge with a chuckle. “Eyes to yourself,” Marinette scolded with as much seriousness as she could, even though she truly loved the way he was looking at her.

They had done so well to keep on track during their shower, but those efforts were starting to fall apart. When she turned to go to the sink so she could retrieve her hair elastics and her ribbons, Adrien watched her ass move with each step she took and could feel heat starting to smolder within him again as his desire for her continued to build. No one would be able to tell from looking at her that there was nothing under her skirt, but since he knew otherwise, it was the only thing on his mind. He followed after her and slid his arms around her waist when he caught up to her at the sink, pressing kisses to the back of her neck. “You know, I think I like it when you go panty-less,” He whispered, voice low.

Not only did his ministrations make her blush, but Marinette could see their reflections in the mirror, and the lewdness of it all was stirring arousal in her body already. Her heart skipped a beat at the sight in the mirror, but she knew they needed to stop. “We can’t be doing this right now,” She protested, as much as she really would have loved to continue.

“I know, I know.” Adrien left one final kiss on the back of her neck before finally forcing himself to move away from her with some effort and taking a deep breath to try and calm himself down. “You’re just very hard to resist.”

“So are you.” The smirk on Adrien’s face brought a bit of a smile to her own as Marinette started parting her hair into pigtails.

While she was finishing up, Adrien opened the bathroom door and went out into his room. He grabbed himself some clean boxers and put them on before finding his current pair of sleep pants and
doing the same with them. “Plagg and Tikki aren’t in here, so I’m going to go look for them.” He explained when he saw her emerge from the bathroom. “They’ll most likely be downstairs in the kitchen. That’s where Plagg always crashes when he’s pissed off at me.”

Giggling, Marinette nodded. “Okay. Guess I need to buy more camembert soon.”

“Probably couldn’t hurt,” Adrien agreed, then went to his bedroom door to quietly open it and cautiously slip out into the hallway.

Soon enough Adrien returned with two sleepy-looking kwamis sitting on each of his shoulders. Once he had closed the door behind him, Plagg floated away with a yawn toward the couch to curl up comfortably on one of the armrests and fell back to sleep almost instantly. “Plagg really is like a house cat,” Marinette joked.

“You have no idea.” Adrien looked down at his shoulder to Tikki, who was rubbing her eyes. “Sorry about having to wake you guys up like this.”

“Don’t worry about it.” Tikki’s words were interrupted by a tiny yawn of her own. “I had planned to come and get you two whenever you were done so you wouldn’t fall asleep, since the coast wouldn’t be clear in the morning for you like it was last time, but I ended up falling asleep myself. So I’m sorry too.”

Tikki was always looking out for them. Feeling touched, Marinette gently scooped her kwami up into her hands to hug her close to her cheek. “You don’t have anything to feel sorry for.” She assured her. “We’ll be more careful from now on.”

“Sure. But I’m still going to watch out for you anyway.” Tikki smiled. “Nothing bad is going to happen to my two favorite Humans on my watch.”

“Can I just tell you that you’re really awesome?” Adrien’s words made Tikki laugh.

“She absolutely is.” Marinette agreed, then she brought her attention back to the task at hand: getting back home. “Are you okay to transform me right now?”

“I am. Plagg found me a few cookies when we were in the kitchen earlier, and I should still have some of the ones left on my plate from before so I can refuel again when we get back.” Tikki said. “So I’m ready whenever you are.”

“All right.” Letting Tikki float off her hands, Marinette allowed her eyes to drift towards Adrien so their gazes were locked for what happened next. “Spots on.”

When the magic died away and she was Ladybug again, Adrien immediately swept her into his arms for a tight embrace. “I’ll never get tired of watching that.” He managed to say before pressing his lips to hers.

Enjoying his response, Marinette kissed him back for a while but forced herself to pull away from him long before she usually would have. “Time for me to go.” She was saying that for herself as much as she was saying it for him.

“Unfortunately…” Adrien sighed, heading to the wall of windows to slide one open for her to leave through.

“We’ll still be seeing each other at patrol, you know,” Marinette reminded him as she walked over, rather amused by how dramatic he was being. “As a matter of fact, because of patrol, we get to see each other every day, which is something a lot of other couples don’t get.”
Pouting, Adrien folded his arms across his chest. “Being rational is cheating.”

Marinette laughed as she unhooked her yo-yo and pecked him on the cheek. “See you later, kitty cat.” Then she climbed onto the windowsill, tossed her yo-yo high and quickly swung off.

With another heavy sigh, Adrien closed the window behind her and sullenly walked back to bed. Flopping down on top of the covers, he stared up at the ceiling with a frown as if it were the source of his consternation. He really wished he could just have his Lady all to himself already, but he knew that it would be a while before they could take those kinds of steps forward without raising a few eyebrows. Especially his father’s. Sure, he had said he wouldn’t stand in the way of their relationship, but that was only the beginning. There would definitely need to be more time taken to build the rapport between Gabriel and Marinette before Adrien would feel his father would okay with them moving beyond dating like they each wanted.

Which meant for now, he had to share her. So he would be frowning at the ceiling for at least a while yet.
Chapter 84

Chapter Notes

~This is another important Note about my uploading schedule!~

I really hate to be doing this to you guys again, especially after only changing my schedule to this one I have currently just two and a half months ago. But I've got to be honest: my workload has already started to increase at both jobs in preparation for Christmas, and I'm finding it increasingly difficult to finish chapters on time. It's not in any way because I'm running out of ideas, as I still have plenty of things I want to do with this story. It's solely because I've got less free time now because of the extra hours, and because of that, I've been a lot more tired lately too. And while I do thoroughly enjoy my writing, I want to be able to do other things to unwind as well. I also really hope that doesn't sound as horribly selfish as I think it does. ^^;

So after a lot of thought on what to do, as of the start of November, I will no longer have a set schedule for uploading chapters and will only upload when I have them finished.

So I will still upload on Monday night/Tuesday morning (Halloween), so I won't just be stopping the schedule without any notice, but after that I'll just put them up once I've finished one off. And I do that know most other users upload chapters for their stories this way, but I did like having a set schedule so you all could rely on when a new chapter was coming from me. I just can't keep up with it anymore. I'm so, so sorry. But I know from past experience with my last schedule change that you guys are the most awesome, supportive readers out there, so I want to thank you all in advance for being so understanding. ♥

Now! With that being said, I hope you can tell that I definitely had a lot of fun writing the banter between Marinette and Adrien in this chapter. And look! Marinette is getting so much better at her confidence! <3 What can I say, I'm a total dork and character development makes me happy. =P Anyway, please enjoy, everyone! ^^

Paris in the middle of the night was a lot quieter then it was during the evening. It wasn’t completely still by any means of course, mostly due to the sheer size of the city, but the decrease in activity from when she was usually out was easily visible to Marinette. No wonder there was never any akuma attacks happening in the wee hours of the morning, something she was eternally grateful for.

After slipping into her room, she released her transformation immediately so she could start getting undressed and let Tikki start eating. The first thing she did was grab herself a new pair of panties and pull them on under her skirt even before she even made an attempt to get undressed, with a blush returning to her cheeks while she did. Marinette really hoped Tikki hadn’t noticed what she was doing while she chowed down on her cookies, but knowing how very observant her kwami was, she was pretty sure she would have. But at least she didn’t say anything if she had.

Once that was out of the way, Marinette got changed for bed as normal. Before she went up to bed she stopped to plug in her phone, and saw a text from Alya late last night asking how her dinner with
‘Daddy Agreste’ had gone. As much as she would love to tell her best friend how spectacularly things went at supper, Marinette knew she should try and get back to sleep before she would be completely exhausted by the time the sun made its reappearance in a few hours. So she made herself a mental note to reply to Alya’s text first thing after she would have her breakfast, then she climbed up the ladder to bed.

Crawling under her blankets and getting herself comfortable, it was time to try and go back to sleep, as difficult an endeavor as that would be by now. For a long time she was just gazing up through the trapdoor at all the stars overhead, but eventually her eyelids did start to feel heavy again. Which made sense, because after everything that had gone on last night, the few hours of sleep she had gotten so far wouldn’t have been nearly enough to fully recharge her. So she let her eyes fall shut and before she knew it, bright sunlight streaming through the trapdoor was warming her face and coaxing her awake many hours later.

Initially annoyed that she had been woken up before her alarm, Marinette was in the middle of sitting up when her phone started to chime away, so at least it was only about a minute early. Trudging down the ladder and walking over to her desk to grab her phone, she noticed Tikki’s plate completely cleaned of cookies. Glancing upward, she saw her kwami on top of the cat pillow, either still asleep or trying to ignore the sound of the alarm so she could get back to sleep. Turning off the chiming in question, Marinette set her phone back down and quietly slipped out her through bedroom door to head downstairs.

Since she had showered in the middle of the night, she didn’t need to have one again this morning. So after a quick breakfast, all she needed to do was do her hair and brush her teeth. Once those had been done, Marinette went back upstairs and poked her head into her room first to see how Tikki was doing. It appeared that she had, in fact, gone back to sleep, which is something she could understand as she still felt rather tired herself. So the blunette tiptoed inside and got dressed as soundlessly as she could before taking her phone and going downstairs again.

As she made her way down towards the first floor, she started typing up a reply to Alya. She told her that not only did dinner yesterday go amazingly, but under the proper circumstances, she was even welcome back at the Agreste Mansion. Adding an excited emoticon to the end of her message and sending it off, she put her phone into her pocket and went in to the bakery kitchen.

“Good morning Marinette!” Sabine smiled at her as she walked inside.

“Morning Mom.” As she slipped her apron on over her head, Marinette managed to stifle a yawn before she turned around. “What should I start on?”

“Well, we need some more muffins, so you can go ahead and pick whichever kind you want to make and we’ll go from there.” Sabine suggested while stirring her own mixing bowl.

So Marinette got to work on making some muffins, and the morning passed by slowly. A text from Alya came just before noon telling her how happy she was for her, and asking her to give her a call once she was free tonight to get all the details. It brought a smile to Marinette’s face; Alya was always genuinely excited to hear about anything about her relationship with Adrien. Considering she had been her number one fan and cheering section since Marinette had fallen head over heels so many years ago, it really wasn’t surprising. But it still warmed her heart all the same.

After the clock rolled into early afternoon, she waited until after her parents had each grabbed something to eat before getting something for herself. When she came back downstairs, her phone vibrated in her pocket and upon pulling it out, instead of a text from Alya like she had assumed it was, it was an email from Jaguar.
~You know, photo shoots would be so much more exciting if you were here. ;-;

Grinning, Marinette typed up a response as she walked back into the bakery kitchen.

~Aww, you poor thing. I have to ask though, what brought this on all of a sudden?

Her phone was vibrating again by the time she was leafing through the recipe book for the next item to make.

~Just been thinking about you. =) It can get pretty boring during these things so why not spend my time thinking about my beloved? <3

That sent warmth spreading pink over her cheeks.

~Aww…but what did you do before we started dating?

~I'd think about Ladybug. =P

Sabine heard Marinette’s giggling from the other side of the kitchen. Smiling to herself, she said nothing about it, however. She was just happy her daughter was this happy. After all, Marinette would still work in between chatting with Adrien, so neither she nor Tom had a problem with them talking whenever they wanted.

Marinette had started typing out her email back as soon as her mirth had subsided after Adrien’s last one.

~While I’m flattered, you have such a one-track mind. Shouldn’t you be thinking about, oh, I don’t know, maybe your photo shoot?

~Nah. The photographer is just going through today’s shots to see if there are any that need retakes, so we’re basically done. And besides, when you’ve done a bajillion like I have, you can pretty much do these things in your sleep. Trust me. ^^;

~I hate to break it to you, but I don’t think bajillion is a real word. Or a real number.

~Well it is now! So there! xD

Laughing, Marinette just shook her head. Trying to have a rational argument with him was pointless. Not that she minded in the slightest – she secretly loved every second of their playful banter. Before she knew Cat Noir was Adrien, she would give him a hard time about all his joking around, but even then she always found it entertaining. And now that she knew the two of them were one and the same, it made it even more fun.

~I’m just waiting for a cat pun at this point.

~How about this: I think you’re paw-some. =*

~Cute, but that was pretty weak. I know you can do better.

~Hmm… well, I did get to do some laundry this morning so I have your panties clean and ready to go to give them back to you tonight. And I was thinking that, purr-haps, I could purr-pose an exchange for them and the extra croissants you said you had left in your room from Saturday night. I think it’s a fair trade. But if need be, I’m sure that I could purr-suade you. ;3

The pink settled across cheeks from earlier had started to subside, but now they went straight to scarlet. Trying to keep her composure, Marinette did her best to appear unaffected as she typed out
her reply.

~Really? Just using the same word three times?

~Technically speaking, I used three different words, they just had the same prefix.

~You’re very proud of yourself, aren’t you?

~Don’t you mean purr-roud? ;P

~I can and will turn off my phone.

~But you won’t!

And he was completely right, of course. Which left her feeling an odd mix of frustration and amusement. Putting down her phone on the counter and dumping the ingredients she had been measuring in between emails into her bowl, she started stirring them together with more vigor then was truly necessary while thinking about what to say next. Once everything was thoroughly mixed and she had decided on what her next move would be, she picked her phone back up again and opened up her Inbox.

~Okay, fine. We can do a trade. But since you’re only giving me one pair of panties, you only get one croissant. You’ll have to earn the rest.

Putting her phone back down on the counter and going to grab a pan for the cake batter she had just finished, she smirked when her phone vibrated before she even made it back from the cupboard. The question was, had he taken the bait? When Marinette got back to the counter and unlocked her phone to read his latest message, she was crossing the fingers of her free hand, hoping he had.

~Name your (hopefully sinful) terms, my Lady.

He had.

Smirk widening, her thumbs skipped nimbly over the virtual keyboard.

~So you know I can be pretty stubborn, right? Be careful how you answer that!

~I may or not be aware of that fact…

Trying not to laugh at his perfect answer to her last question, Marinette took a second to steel her resolve before typing what would come next. This would be something she could never have even dreamed of suggesting when she and Adrien first started dating, let alone actually saying it. But here she was, writing it out into pixelated words and sending it off with a confident pride.

~The terms are this: you’ll get all the croissants if you can make me beg.

Face hot and body starting to warm up as well, she stashed her phone back into her apron pocket so she could grab some cooking spray to use on her her cake pan. Her heart was beating double-time as she sprayed it down and returned the can back to where it belonged, each second feeling like it was taking an agonizingly long time to go by. So when her phone finally vibrated when she was in the middle of her pouring the batter into the cake pan, she swore under her breath and quickly scooped the rest of the batter out of the bowl so she could grab her phone again.

~Challenge accepted. Not like it’ll be much of a challenge for me, mind you!

~My, my. Don’t you sound confident.
~Oh trust me, I have a plan for you, love bug. But you’ll just have to wait and see. ;D

She liked the sound of that.

A lovely shiver running down her spine, Marinette put her phone back into her apron pocket once more, this time to leave it there. She really should focus more on her baking, after all. And definitely not all the wonderful fantasies that had begun to run rampant through her mind’s eye.
Chapter 85

Chapter Summary

Hey guys! I hope you all had a fun and safe Halloween! ^^ Now for a friendly reminder, this is the last chapter I'm uploading on a scheduled date. The next one will come out once I finish it. That being said, I'm not going to drop off the face of the Earth! I'll definitely still be writing, but just when I have time. I'll still reply to comments too, because I really love talking with you guys! So don't worry, I'll still be around. =)

Next up, I wanted to point out something about the chapter. Jam Fest is something completely original that I made up, mostly so I wouldn't have to research to try and base it off a real music festival. xD I have big, big plans for this Jam Fest so it'll be nice to be able to use it how I need to. And here's a tidbit: it's going to be super fluffy! <3 But that's all I'm going to say for now. You'll just have to wait and see! ;P

Anyway! Now that that's all sorted, I hope you all enjoy the chapter, and I'll see you all sometime soon! =D

But try as she might, it was all Marinette could think about for the rest of the day. All the mental images kept trying to steal her focus for the rest of the afternoon until the bakery closed for the day, and even as she and her parents went upstairs to get supper ready, they danced through her imagination with gusto.

Tom and Sabine got right to work on making a supper of salmon fillets with some potatoes in another casserole dish to roast alongside it in the oven, and steamed asparagus to finish it off. And it all smelled amazing, but even that couldn't break Marinette from her dirty reverie. She sat on the couch staring out the window aimlessly, completely lost in her thoughts. “Supper’s almost ready, could you set the table for us?” Tom called to Marinette, but she didn’t initially hear him. He had to leave the kitchen so he could tap her on the shoulder before she was startled back to reality with a jump.

“S-Sorry Dad, what was that?” Marinette asked, hoping he would assume the flush on her cheeks was from her embarrassment, which was at least partially true.

“Can you set the table?” Tom saw her nod. “Great, thank you. Everything should be ready to eat in the next few minutes.”

“Got it. I’ll get started right now.” Getting up from the couch, Marinette went straight to the cupboard to grab enough plates, cutlery and glasses for each of them.

As she was laying out the place settings she did her best to bring her mind out of the gutter, but it was proving to be quite the effort to do so by now. For the second day in a row her brain was being her biggest enemy, followed closely by time. It felt like it would be forever before she would get to see Adrien tonight. And like yesterday, they would have to patrol first before anything else could come afterward. She knew a lot of it was her own fault for proposing the challenge in the first place, but with how Adrien had left the intentions of his plans up in the air in his last message, her mental state (and physical state) was much more his fault then hers.
Besides, it was more fun to blame him then it was to blame herself, too.

Once the food had been dished out, milk had been poured into each cup and the family of three got to sit down to their meal, with a Herculean effort Marinette forced herself to concentrate on something other then her salacious fantasies. “I was wondering,” She began while cutting her potatoes into smaller pieces. “What did you guys think of the ice cream parlor the other night?”

“Oh, it was lovely.” Sabine smiled as she thought back. “You were absolutely right, their ice cream is delicious.”

“We got chatting with the owners, actually,” Tom went on. “It’s a pair of brothers that run it. They’re both very friendly.”

As they continued on talking about the parlor and kindly brothers who owned it, Marinette used this conversation to focus her thoughts on reality. And it worked for the most part, though it couldn’t change the fact her hormones had already been revved up for the last few hours. But she managed to make it through the rest of their meal without getting lost in risqué thoughts again.

Everyone brought their dirty dishes to the sink once they had finished, and since Sabine was already turning on the water before she could offer to do the dishes, Marinette grabbed a towel so she could dry. Though it would’ve been easy to go straight to her room now that dinner was over, where things would be much more private, she didn’t want to just get up and leave right away. Since she had been gone last night at the Agreste mansion, and had been thoroughly distracted during the cooking of tonight’s supper, she wanted to make up for it by helping with the dishes.

And with the two of them working together they were done soon enough. While Marinette put away the last plate she saw Sabine head over to Tom. “What do you think, should we put on the orange ones or the blue ones?” She asked while she was finishing up drying off her hands.

“Right, we were going to change the sheets tonight.” Tom seemed to have just remembered that now. “Uh…I think the orange ones should be fine.”

“Works for me.” Sabine brought back the towel she had been using to the kitchen and hung it over the side of the counter next to Marinette. Then she walked out through the door to the hallway, with Tom following right behind her.

Since it sounded like her parents were going to be busy, after waiting a minute or two to make sure they would be in the middle of sheet changing, Marinette went downstairs to the bakery to grab Tikki some cookies. Thankfully enough they had their bedroom door closed on her way down, but on her way up she could hear the door start to open, so she dashed the rest of the way upstairs. Hopefully she wasn’t noticed, and more importantly, her rather big handfuls of ginger snaps.

Upon entering her room, Marinette used her foot to shut the door behind her and went over to her desk to lay out all the cookies for Tikki. She must’ve smelled the telltale scent of these particular baked goods because she floated over immediately and inhaled deeply. “Chocolate chip is by far my favorite, but there’s definitely something to be said about the smell of ginger snaps.” She said with a happy sigh.

Grinning, she watched Tikki sit down next to her cookie plate and start eating before turning around to gaze about her room. What should she do to pass the time until patrol? She had done some tidying yesterday, of course, so there was no real need to straighten anything. Her laundry basket was only about half full, so that could wait for a day or two. And for once she was actually caught up on Ladyblog articles too.
But thinking about the Ladyblog reminded her about how she’d promised to phone Alya tonight. Which would be a perfect way to not only fill in at least part of her evening, but to keep any of her thoughts from wandering away from her again. So she took out her phone before getting comfy on the chaise lounge, picked Alya out of her contacts list, and pressed the call button.

It was only a few rings before her best friend answered. “There you are!” Her voice rang through the phone. “I was beginning to think you forgot about me again.”

“I did not,” Marinette lied as flawlessly as she could. “After we were finished eating supper I helped Mom with the dishes and I only just got upstairs.”

“Fine, you’re in the clear. For now.” Alya warned. “Now tell me all about yesterday.”

“How about you tell me something first so I don’t feel like all we ever talk about is my love life?” Marinette suggested, partially in jest and partially because she honestly didn’t want every one of their conversations to be her and Adrien, which was starting to make her feel rather selfish.

“Well, okay, but only because you asked so nicely.” Alya paused, like she was trying to think if there was anything new she still had to tell her. “Oh, I know! Nino got all of us our tickets to Jam Fest yesterday.”

Jam Fest was a small festival that had started a few summers ago by a local music shop. It was held in the park across from the Dupain-Cheng bakery, and several different artists would get to strut their stuff on the small stage. On one side of the stage were usually some food stalls, with the other holding games for the kids, and directly in front of the stage was a large area in the grass left clear for dancing. And right from the first year, Nino had participated as one of the entertainment acts.

Nino frequented the music shop that sponsored the event regularly, and when he heard they were planning something where he could potentially show off his DJ skills, he was the first one to sign up. He played a session every year, and there were always lots of different kinds of musical acts to round out the day’s talent. All the musicians were from their community, so the core group who performed regularly had become close. Not only that, as word of the festival continued to grow, each summer the event had better and better turn out. So it was something they looked forward to every time the beginning of July rolled around.

“Great!” Marinette would have to remember to give Nino the few euros for her ticket the next time she saw him. “What day is it?”

“It’s next Friday.” Alya replied. “Apparently they wanted to do it this Friday but someone’s in Germany visiting family and wouldn’t be back in time…or something…I don’t really know. Nino told me but I was only half listening.”

“Wasn’t that nice of you.” Marinette joked.

“Hey, I was writing a very important article for the Ladyblog at the time.” Alya defended herself and then tried to turn the tables around. “Speaking of which, what was the last one you read?”

“Actually, the last one you posted.” The bluenette was happy to say. “For once I’m totally up-to-date.”

“Gasp!” Instead of doing the action Alya said the word for dramatic effect. “Someone call the newspapers! This is headlining story!”

“Alya…”
“Come on, you’re never caught up on my Ladyblog.”

“Yeah, I know.”

“So I’m allowed to pick on you.”

“Something you exercise on the regular.”

“Damn straight.”

That left both girls giggling. “Anyway, can you please tell me how supper yesterday went now?” Alya asked. “I want to know everything.”

“I think it went well. Adrien’s father is super hard to read but he definitely doesn’t hate me, which is really a good sign.” Marinette began. “Even if he doesn’t like me and just tolerates me, I’m okay with that.”

“You’re way, way too hard on yourself, girl. I’m sure he likes you.” The certainty in Alya’s voice was unwavering. “And with the more you go over there and he gets to know you better, I’m sure he’ll love you like the rest of us who know you do.”

“Aww, thanks.” Marinette smiled at the compliment. “But I’ll just be pleasantly surprised with being liked to start with.”

“So, what was meeting him like?” The sound of air whooshing through cushions could be heard from Alya’s end of the call, as if she had flopped down on a couch or a bed to get comfy.

“To be honest, it was pretty terrifying.” Marinette thought back to when Gabriel first entered the dinning room at the Agreste Mansion and stared her down. “I was so nervous when he came in I probably sounded like a chipmunk when I said hi, and I got up so fast to greet him, my chair made the most awful noise against the floor.”

Alya just laughed. “Yeah, that sounds like you.”

“Hey!”

“Keep going, I want to know more.”

And Marinette did keep going for a while, telling her a little bit of everything. About how Gabriel had remembered her name from the derby hat contest from school so long ago, how he had asked her some questions with one intense one at the end (to which Alya literally applauded her answer to the last one once she said what she had replied with), to how scrumptious the supper and dessert was. “Then Adrien’s father had to get back to work, and Adrien walked me home.” She ended off her recounting of last night’s events with that.

“That’s so awesome. I’m so happy for you guys.” Alya told her honestly. “And Nino is too. I keep him updated.”

“Really?” Though it honestly shouldn’t have surprised Marinette.

“Yes really. He knows how long you had been pining for Adrien, almost as long as I have.” Alya reminded her. “So for us, seeing you guys finally together is the most satisfying thing ever.”

“Stop it, you’re making me blush.” Marinette didn’t have to be facing her mirror to know that her cheeks were pink again.
“It’s the truth, so too bad.” Alya wasn’t the least bit fazed. “So when you two finally have beautiful babies together, we expect to be the godparents.”

Now Marinette’s cheeks were red. “Alya!”

“And if I remember correctly, it should be three kids. And a hamster.”

“I can’t believe you even remember that after all these years.”

“Of course I do. I’m insulted you think I wouldn’t.” Alya pretended to sound hurt.

“But why?” Marinette was confused. “Sure, it is something I still do want, but it was just more of me babbling on again like the love-struck teenager that I was at the time. Why would you bother to remember something like that?”

“Isn’t it obvious? Because no matter how long it would end up taking, I wanted my BFF to have her happy ending.” Alya’s answer made Marinette’s eyes widen. “I’ve always been your wingman, you know that. Or wing-woman. Whatever, it’s not the point. The point is I’ve always wanted you to finally be able to live your dream and get to be with Adrien. Especially once Nino and I started dating and you were so supportive of us. So I wanted to make sure that even if it was the last thing ever I did, you got the happiness you deserve too.”

At first Marinette was speechless, feeling very moved as tears filled her eyes. Finally she managed a quiet and extremely heartfelt, “Thank you.”

To which Alya replied with a genuine, “Any time, girl. Any time.”
Hi everyone! I'm alive! xD I'm so sorry I haven't posted in so long. I came down with a cold right after I put up the last chapter, and the hours at work have gotten crazy already. So I'm over my cold but haven't had a lot of free time, which is why this took so long to write. However! I am pretty happy with how it turned out so I hope you all like it too. =) It's so nice to be writing again. I missed all of you! Air hugs! <3 Anyway, please enjoy!

“Can I ask you a question?”

“You just did.”

“Fine then, I’m going to ask you another one.”

“Okay, shoot.”

Marinette bit her lip. Alya had told her she would be happy to share some of her knowledge with her of ‘pleasurable dos and don’ts’, and now that she and Adrien had been intimate several times, she did have some questions she wanted to ask her about. But due to the nature of the subject matter of said questions, she didn’t think she was confident enough just yet to comfortably bring them up right now. So instead, she made a quick Plan B to ask her instead. “When do you think we could do another picnic together? I haven’t seen you or Nino since the graduation.”

“I know, it’s been killing me!” Alya agreed. “But I’m not sure. I’m pretty much free whenever but Nino is pretty busy right now getting ready for Jam Fest. How about I tell him to text you when he’ll be free?”

“Okay. And tomorrow I’ll ask Adrien what his schedule is going to be like,” Marinette offered. “Then we can figure out when we can meet up from there.”

“Good plan.” There was a short silence between the two girls, then all of a sudden there was a ‘crash’ sound from Alya’s end of the conversation. “Oh no! Damn it!”

“What was that? Are you all right?” Marinette’s heart filled with dread at the thought of something happening to her best friend.

“Yeah, I’m fine, just pissed,” Alya muttered, sounding frustrated. “I went to grab my iced tea and spilled it everywhere. All over me, all over my desk, all over my floor…”

So she was soggy, and clearly annoyed, but otherwise okay. Marinette breathed a quiet sigh of relief. “Uh oh, I’ll let you go then.”

“Sorry girl, I’d love to talk more, but I want to get this mess cleaned up before it gets any worse then it already is.” Alya said.

“Don’t worry about it. I’ll keep you posted once I talk to Adrien and when I hear from Nino, okay?” Marinette heard Alya give a distracted ‘okay’ back, then they exchanged good-byes and they ended the call.
Once the call was over, Marinette checked the time and saw it was close enough to patrol that she could get ready to leave without being too excessively early. Just thinking about patrol, however, brought back all the illicit thoughts from earlier roaring back. She would have to try hard to keep a lid on her imagination, because there was a challenge on the line after all. And she did not like to lose.

Although in this case, losing would actually offer a sinfully sweet reward, but still.

“Time to head out?” Tikki asked as she floated over.

“Might as well.” Marinette got up from the chaise lounge. “Spots on!”

Once the polka-dotted suit had covered her body and the mask sat securely on her face, Marinette went over to her desk to open up the container of croissants. She took one out and set it on top of the lid once she had closed it back up so some of the buttery scent would hopefully waft throughout her room. With that done, she made her way up and out onto the terrace, and after waiting a moment for a man walking his dog to pass by so she would remain unseen, she swung her yo-yo out into the night and took off. Marinette took her time looping through the streets since she was leaving ahead of schedule, but still made it to the apartment building before Adrien. She landed on the rooftop and hooked her yo-yo around her waist, walking to the middle and gazing out into the skyline at the city sprawled out before her. And trying to keep her thoughts from wandering any more, of course, though that was proving to be rather difficult once again.

“You’re here early, beautiful.” Came Adrien’s voice from behind her suddenly, snapping her out of her thoughts and causing her to turn to face him. When had he arrived? She hadn’t heard a thing. Clearly she had been more absorbed in her thoughts then she had initially realized. He must’ve guessed that that was the case as he was wearing a devilish smirk already, and in her current state that alone was enough to send a pleasant shiver through her. “So how many kisses do I owe you?”

“Uh…let me think for a second.” Marinette honestly had no idea how long she had been waiting. Not only that, she didn’t want to get herself too distracted before they started out on patrol. “I think one should be fine.”

“As you wish…” Adrien slid one arm around her waist and pulled her close while using his free hand to tilt her chin up toward him. The flush over her cheeks and the way her eyes were beginning to darken just from this was exactly what he wanted to see. He held her there without moving for a second or two, wanting her level of tension to build, then he lay a chaste kiss to the very tip of her nose and released her from his grasp. “There you go.” He declared cheerfully. “One kiss.”

Bewildered, Marinette blinked a few times and tried to steady the already rapid beating of her heart. “Th-Thank you.”

“You’re welcome, Princess.” Adrien took out his staff and extended it with an easy flick of his wrist so he could point it out toward the blackened horizon. “So I’ll go east and you can go west, then we’ll meet back here for a little star gazing before we both go back to your place.” He lightly patted the right pocket of his suit with a waggle of his eyebrows. “So we can do our trade, among other things.”

Damn it all. How could he be so damn good at winding her up just by talking? This could end up being a lot more difficult then she originally thought. Trying to focus her concentration, Marinette cleared her throat and gave a short nod. “Sounds good.” She tried to sound as casual as she could.

And without further ado, the superhero duo took off. It was a much busier night out tonight, much to Marinette’s chagrin. Several incidents required her attention from the little to the large end of the
spectrum, though thankfully there was no akuma activity. She would have been exceptionally cranky if an akuma had shown up so she was eternally thankful Hawk Moth seemed to have turned in for the night. By now, having luck on her side had definitely proved to be handy in more ways the one.

Making her way back had her feeling much happier then she had been making her way out. Though it had felt like her rounds had taken ages, Marinette was coming up to the apartment building at the same time as Adrien, and the two of them landed at almost the exact same time. He went straight for the middle of the rooftop and laid down, and after a moment’s hesitation she followed suit. Watching the stars would be a piece of cake as long as she didn’t let herself get distracted anymore. It would be a simple case of mind over matter. She was the one in control here!

The second she laid down next to him, however, Adrien slipped an arm around her waist and began drawing circles over her hip with his thumb. When she looked over at him, he was gazing at the stars innocently, though even from this side view she could make out his impish grin. It was clear he wasn’t going to make this easy for her, but that was fine. This game wouldn’t be any fun if it wasn’t a challenge.

After a few minutes of looking up into the sky peacefully, he moved again. This time he used his free hand to grab one of hers and set it on his stomach, slightly off to the side. At first Marinette didn’t understand why, but then she figured out where her fingers actually sat: the pocket he had patted earlier that had her panties inside. Her face instantly heated up at the realization, but she didn’t move her hand away from it. Stubborn as she was, she didn’t want him to know if this was working on her.

Which it definitely was.

She saw him turn his head toward her so she kept her eyes rooted upward as he had done earlier, but she was pretty sure it would be easy for him to tell how much she was blushing already. And he must have, since he chuckled softly before returning his focus back to the stars. This was so infuriating. The simple yet significant gestures, the silence that left her alone to her increasingly lewd thoughts…he had barely done anything so far and yet, it was having such a potent effect on her.

All of a sudden Adrien moved once more, this time climbing over top of her with his hands on her shoulders and his knees pressing against her sides, pining her beneath him. “Well, that was lovely,” He began, voice soft but more then enough to send shivers skipping down her spine. “But I think we should get going, don’t you?”

Marinette hadn’t gotten a chance to try and find her voice to reply before he was kissing her, deeply and passionately. And though she knew it may very well lead to her undoing at this point, she hungrily licked him back. Her arms threaded their way around his shoulders and when his tongue licked along her lower lip, she immediately obliged the silent request for entry. All too soon, however, Adrien was pulling back from her, looking decidedly victorious when she couldn’t stop a quiet whine at the abrupt ending of their kiss. “Yes,” She managed to say eventually once she was able to catch her breath. “Let’s go, now.”

He quickly moved off of her and stood up, though it took Marinette longer to get to her feet. After she had unhooked her yo-yo and Adrien grabbed for his staff, they both took off. The trek back to the Dupain-Cheng bakery was thankfully not a long one, and within minutes they had landed on the terrace. The way she was fumbling to try and get the trapdoor open left her boyfriend very amused, but soon enough it was opened wide and they were able to slip into her room one after another.

Once inside, Adrien could immediately smell the croissants waiting for him. He followed Marinette down the ladder from her bed to her desk where she stopped, holding out her hand expectantly. It looked like she was trying her utmost to take back control of this situation, but it just made him grin.
Slowly, purposefully, Adrien unzipped the pocket of his suit that held her panties, fishing them out from inside and setting the carefully folded garment into her outstretched palm. While she turned to set them down on her desk (as well as to hide the current deep crimson hue of her cheeks), he mimicked her earlier gesture with his own hand. “Your turn.”

Grabbing the croissant she had left out for him, she handed it to him as she turned back, and he immediately began to eagerly devour it. As he did, Marinette grabbed her panties again and went to put them away in one of her vanity’s drawers. Now that that was done, the more serious part of the game could begin. “Spots off.” Tikki reappeared wearing an amused grin, but kept her thoughts to herself and silently passed through the floor to get herself some cookies, and to give them some space.

“That was delicious.” Adrien sighed contentedly, making Marinette glance back at him. As their gazes met, a smirk found a home on his lips once more and she felt her heart skip a beat. He strode over to her and curled his arms around her waist, loving the way her body instantly leaned into his. “Too bad I don’t have any more…”

Since this game had already proved to be way too much fun for her to just lose without a fight, so Marinette summoned up some bravado as she looked up into his eyes. “You’re going to have to earn the rest. So what are you going to do to change my mind?” She whispered, letting her hands run up his leather-clad back.

“Let me see…” Adrien captured her lips in another scorching kiss, and soon the clawed fingers of his right hand curled into the waistband of her pants while the others began to drift under her shirt. Marinette moaned softly against his mouth, shuddering in excited anticipation…and then all of a sudden, his hands were gone from her and he pulled back. Blinking her eyes open, she was baffled by this sudden lack of contact until she saw the decidedly wicked gleam in his emerald orbs. “Well, I tried. But it doesn’t look like I can change your mind tonight.” He mused with a dramatic shrug. “Oh well. Guess I’ll just have to try again tomorrow!”

“What?” Marinette squeaked. Instead of responding, he started walking towards the ladder and she called out a desperate, “Wait!”

The second she did, Adrien looked back at her with a triumphant smirk. “Yes?”

“Where do you think you’re going?” She asked, not wanting to appear too desperate.

“Home.” He came back over to her and leaned in to whisper in her ear, “Because a certain someone was kind enough to tell me that teasing comes in many forms.”

Oh, Hell no.

Now she understood. This had been his plan all along. To make her beg for him, he was going to make her need him and then leave her hanging. “Y-You…you little brat,” Marinette huffed, sticking her tongue out at him when he stood straight again.

“I said that I had a plan for you, didn’t I?” Adrien ducked aside as she tried to take a frustrated swing at him, laughing as he headed back for the ladder again. “I’m going to get all those croissants, you’ll see.” Climbing up the rungs with ease, he paused once he reached her mattress. “And I had better not find out you didn’t wait for me, my Lady. Because that’s just not playing fair.”

For what felt like it was the thousandth time tonight, Marinette’s face flushed. That’s exactly what she had been thinking of doing as soon as he was gone. But as much as she hated to admit it, he really was right. Sure, Adrien may have been playing dirty, but if she were to take matters into her
own hands to release her frustration, that wouldn’t have been fair. “Fine. But for the record, sometimes, I really hate you.” She announced with as much venom as she could muster. “So much.”

“I doubt that.” Adrien replied sweetly before blowing her down a kiss. “Good night Marinette!” And with that, he climbed out through the trapdoor and was gone.

Stomping over to the chaise lounge, Marinette picked up a small cushion and screamed into it. She had been beaten at her own game, easily. He had executed his plan perfectly, and therefore she was a complete mess because of it. Throwing the cushion back down, and letting herself fume for a bit, she eventually started getting undressed and begrudgingly put on her PJs. Since she had made a promise not to do anything without him, she went up to bed and crawled under the covers. Frowning up at the sky through the trapdoor, she was knew it would be quite a while before she would be able to fall asleep feeling the way she did right now.

This was going to be a long, long night.
Chapter 87

Chapter Notes

IT'S AN EARLY CHRISTMAS MIRACLE! RAINBOW POSTED A NEW CHAPTER! xD

Seriously though, I am so, so sorry this chapter has taken me a month to make. As I mentioned in the comments of the last chapter to someone, during said month I ended up working 20 days in a row without a day off in between my two jobs, and came down with strep. throat as well. Not to mention the level of chaos has increased exponentially the last week or two at both jobs with Christmas right around the corner, too. So things have been more then a little bit crazy for me. ^^; Anyway! The chapter is done and the English version of the MLB Christmas Special comes out in a few hours, so I thought what better way to celebrate then with a little gift to the best readers a girl could ask for? =)

Also! There's something I've wanted to mention for a while. I've decided that my fanfic is going to be canon-divergent. By this I mean that everything that happened in the first season of the show will be canon for my fanfic, but everything that will be happening afterward will not have happened. This is mainly because there are so many changes to the universe apparently coming as of season two and beyond, like with new Miraculous holders and new villains, that I would constantly have to be changing my story to keep up with it. So my fanfic will be slightly AU wherein only the season one events occurred in it. Plus this also gives me some more freedoms, like coming up with birth dates for our favorite dorks, because I'm a nerd and like matching horoscopes and such. =P

Phew! Long Author's Note is long, LOL. I've missed you guys SO much, and I've missed writing SO much. It's nice to get back to this, and hopefully now that things should start winding down in the next week at work, it shouldn't be another month until the next one. I hope you all enjoy everyone, and I wish you all happy holidays! <3

When her alarm went off the next morning, she groaned loudly with deeply felt irritation. Several times over the last few hours, her dreams had brought her to sinful places and when she would wake, her need from last night had come raging back each time. It would take her a while to fall back to sleep afterward too, so Marinette was now exhausted as well as frustrated. Which when mixed together led to her being in a decidedly grumpy mood.

For a long time she just laid in bed, scowling up at the ceiling as her alarm rang on undisturbed. Eventually Tikki floated over the bluenette to see if there reason she hadn’t gotten up yet was perhaps she was still asleep, but when she saw the deep frown across Marinette’s face, she quickly zipped down to the desk where the phone was still chiming sat to turn off the alarm. “Thank you Tikki.” Marinette sat up slowly and massaged her forehead with a heavy sigh.

“No problem.” Tikki flew back up again to hover next to her bonded. “Is there anything else I can get for you?”

Marinette shook her head. “No thank you, I’m all right.” When she saw the way Tikki had arched
her eyebrows, she added a more honest, “Okay, I’m mostly all right.”

Throwing off the covers, she headed down the ladder from her bed and started to grab herself some clothes to change into after her shower. She could already tell it was going to take a lot of will power to go through said shower without letting her hands wander, but a deal was a deal. So she made the trek to the bathroom and got undressed, started the water and slipped into the steady stream. As she washed, all her focus was locked on doing that alone, despite how desperately by now she wanted to touch herself. A soft whimper escaped her lips when her soapy fingers drifted between her already heated folds, but with a lot of effort she merely cleaned herself off and let the soap rinse away while taking deep breaths to steel her resolve.

This was proving to be a lot more difficult then she had initially anticipated.

When she stepped out of the shower several minutes later, Marinette grabbed a towel and dried herself off as fast as she could so her thoughts wouldn’t wander any more then they already had. She got dressed and ran a brush through her hair, slipping her hair elastics into her signature pigtails and grabbing her toothbrush. As she looked at her reflection in the slightly foggy mirror, she remembered the other night in Adrien’s bathroom and how they had looked in front of his mirror. With a loud groan of frustration, she dragged her focus back to the present to squeeze some toothpaste onto the awaiting bristles.

She was absolutely, positively going to get Adrien back for this.

_______________________________________________________________

After a breakfast she mostly poked at and didn’t really eat, it was time to head down to the bakery. Marinette wordlessly walked into the kitchen and put on her apron, and merely gave a small wave to Sabine when her mother came in from the shop area. Sabine could immediately tell her daughter was not herself today but she didn’t pry, and instead went back out into the shop area to quietly tell Tom that they should try to give Marinette her space.

It was around noon when she realized that they were running low on baking soda, and since going to get more would provide an opportunity to go out and get some fresh air, when she went to let her parents know, Marinette offered to go to the grocery store herself. Tom and Sabine agreed and told her to head out now since their customer flow still wasn’t overly busy so they could hopefully avoid a rush. So after dashing upstairs to tell Tikki that she was heading out, Marinette slung her purse over her shoulder and zipped it up once her kwami had camped out comfortably inside, hurried back downstairs to throw on her favorite pair of flats and then made her way outside.

There was a gentle breeze and the weather wasn’t too hot, which was a refreshing change to how warm she had been feeling on and off for about the last twenty-four hours. She took her time walking to the grocery store, wanting to relax at least somewhat before she would go back home. Unfortunately it seemed the fates had other ideas however, because just as she was about to head into the front doors of the grocery store a deafening cacophony tore through the air. It was like hundreds of different instruments all playing at once. Everyone outside instantly covered their ears with a wince, and although Marinette did too, she was also on high alert. Years of being Ladybug had given her a sixth sense as to when something happened that just wasn’t normal. And sure enough, she soon saw a man riding on a huge piece of floating sheet music whiz by, like it was some sort of magic carpet.

Dressed in a black tuxedo with a bright purple shirt and matching bow tie, the older man’s whitening hair spiked wildly around his head in a way that was akin to a mad scientist. In his right hand he held a thin wood baton, and the second he waved it, all the awful noise finally fell silent. “Listen up, fools!” He bellowed. “Maestro has come to you today to bring his music to all of Paris and soon, all
of the world!” A wicked gleam shone in his eyes and a sneer curled on to his lips. “Because *this* is what true genius sounds like!” Then he gave another wave of his baton, and the whirlwind of instruments started back up again.

Hands covering her ears once more, Marinette ducked into the grocery store to try and escape the terrible sound. It was only marginally quieter inside, so all the workers and shoppers in the store were so distracted by what was happening that she was able to slip through the doors marked ‘Employees Only’ without anyone noticing her do so. After taking a quick scan of the hallway for cameras and luckily finding none, she opened her purse for Tikki and after reciting the familiar call followed by the usual flash of light later, Ladybug carefully slipped out the back door into the empty alleyway.

By now the ‘music’ being performed by Maestro seemed to be fading away, and despite the fact it meant she could hear herself think again, it also meant that he must be on the move now. Normally she would follow after the akuma victim to avoid them possibly escaping, but this time she had a different plan. It would be easy to find him again with the level of noise he was making, so for now she wanted to find something that would protect her ears so she could actually get close to him. So she unhooked her yo-yo, said a silent prayer to get something useful, and threw it over her head. “Lucky Charm!”

Fortunately her prayer seemed to be answered, as what dropped into her hands was a pair of red and black wireless headphones. Breathing a sigh of relief, Marinette quickly slipped them on over her head and adjusted them to completely cover her ears, giving a snug but comfortable fit. Now that she was properly prepared for the eventual return of total auditory discord, she swung her yo-yo onto the nearest streetlight and started swinging off to find Maestro.

Now that she wasn’t able to hear much with the headphones on, she watched the reactions of the citizens below her to see how close she was getting to the source of the river of noise. Soon enough she did find today’s akuma victim, and to her surprise she found him conducting his invisible orchestra at her partner. He had Adrien pinned down in the middle of the empty street, his clawed hands clamped over the cat ears atop his head and grimacing in visible agony. With how loud and painful Maestro’s ‘music’ had been for her normal ears, she couldn’t imagine how bad it must be for the heightened sense of hearing Adrien gained as Cat Noir. And with how much it looked like it was hurting him, the storm of anger it brought to her heart meant all she could think about right now was stopping Maestro, by any means necessary.

So what did she do? She angled her next swing so she collided right into the older man, sending him careening off his levitating sheet music and her right behind him.

Maestro tumbled head over heels until he landed on his back, clearly dazed. This gave Marinette (who had landed much more gracefully on her feet, though her shoulder was now a little sore) the opportunity to walk over and pick up his baton where it lay on the asphalt. Satisfied, she easily snapped it in half to free the hidden akuma inside…

Except one never came flying out.

Shocked, Marinette shook both halves of the broken baton, and then again even more vigorously, but nothing happened. By now Maestro had gotten back up and grinned triumphantly at her dumbfounded expression. With a snap of his fingers his sheet music instantly zipped over to him and he jumped onto it, and although she couldn’t hear if he was, as it flew him away, she was positive he was laughing at her.

A hand on her shoulder made her jump in surprise, but when she turned she saw it was Adrien, so she pulled off the headphones. “Thank you.” He said, looking very relieved that all the horrendous noise was gone at last. “I really needed a save.”
“But I didn’t get the akuma,” Marinette let the broken pieces of baton drop from her fingers to the ground. “I was positive it was inside this…”

“That’s okay LB, we’ll just figure out where it’s really hiding.” Adrien quickly reassured her with a bright smile. “We always do.”

“I know, but I used my Lucky Charm already to get those headphones.” As if on cue, her earrings gave out a warning beep. “What are we going to do?”

“We’re going to get you out of here, first of all.” Grabbing for his staff, Adrien arched an eyebrow when he saw the small frown over his Lady’s face. “What is it?”

“Before this happened, I was on my way to the grocery store for my parents, so I can’t exactly go back home empty handed,” Marinette explained. “But as soon as I change back I’m going to need to get something for you-know-who to eat so I can transform again right away and we can go catch Maestro.”

Adrien shrugged. “Buy her some cookies while you’re at the grocery store.”

That made Marinette pull a face. “Store bought cookies? I’m the daughter of-” She managed to cut herself off from saying ‘bakers’ in case anyone else was listening to their conversation and instead finished off with saying, “Uh, you know. You do know who you’re talking to, right?”

Rolling his eyes, Adrien extended his staff. “I’m sure she’ll survive, and you will too, love bug. Desperate times call for desperate measures.” Marinette proceeded to mime gagging regardless, making him chuckle. “Come on, you need to get going before those spots keep disappearing.”

“Fine…” When he vaulted up to land on top of a nearby traffic light, Marinette shouted up to him, “Wait! Where should I meet up with you?”

“Don’t worry about it, I have a plan! Just get going, bugaboo!” He called back down to her, then continued his journey across the various light poles and buildings.

Knowing he was right, of course, Marinette sighed and unhooked her yo-yo to begin her own trek back to the grocery store. She landed in an alley about a block away from it just before her transformation melted away. Tikki reappeared in a flash and she floated tiredly into Marinette’s awaiting opened purse, which she quickly closed again before making her way out onto the sidewalk. This time she walked quickly to the grocery store, and after grabbing the baking soda she had come for, she couldn’t help but wrinkle her nose a little as she picked up a small box of cookies for Tikki as well. Desperate times indeed.

After she had paid for everything and gone back outside, she opened the box of cookies and stealthily slipped a few into her purse for her kwami. Marinette made the trip back home and upon arrival, got enveloped by the arms of her concerned parents. They had been worried as they had seen (and heard) Maestro go by outside the bakery earlier, so it was easy for her to use that as an excuse as to why she had taken so long to get back. It also provided her an idea, as she went on to tell them that the level of noise she had endured being outside when he had gone by the grocery store had given her ‘a really nasty headache’. Tom and Sabine immediately told her that she should go up to her room and lay down, a suggestion she only took with some (completely fake) chagrin.

Now that she was off the hook for the rest of the afternoon, Marinette made sure she walked to the kitchen at a slow pace to be believable enough of her supposed headache to drop off the baking soda, leaving the half empty box of cookies still in the bag. And since she was now out of sight of her parents, she then scurried up the stairs so she could make a beeline straight to her room.
However, once she had gotten inside and locked the door behind her, what she saw in front of her made her jaw drop and the bag fall from her grasp to the floor.

Sitting with his legs dangling off the side of her bed was Adrien, still transformed and wearing an amused grin at her reaction. “Hey Princess!” He gave a wave, then pointed to her ceiling. “You might want to think about getting a lock for that trapdoor of yours. People could try and get in here that way, you know.”
Chapter 88

Chapter Notes

So...hi. ^^;

In case anyone was wondering, having writer's block + fighting depression at the same time = complete and total suckage. X.x

Without getting too much into everything that's been going on at my end, I got a little stuck while working on this chapter early in January (shortly after my birthday), right about when I started battling a bout of depression. I've gone through it before (as it runs in my mother's side of the family), but I haven't fought one this strong in a long time, probably not since high school. There's been a lot of lethargy and lack of motivation, and my writing definitely suffered because of it. There were times in the last three months I didn't even turn on my computer for days at a time. And while I'm still feeling the effects of it, I'm pleased to say I'm doing better now. =)

And I know you've all been waiting for an update. Waiting a long time. And I'm sorry it took as long as it did. But I also know that I'm lucky enough to have an audience that is so supportive. You guys are so eternally patient, and I'm so grateful for you all putting up with the delay for so long. Thank you all for sticking by me through this, it really means a lot. <3

But now it's time for what you've all been waiting for! A new chapter from Rainbow! =O I hope you all enjoy - it felt so, so good to be writing again. I can't wait to do more! =D

“What are you doing here?!” Marinette demanded, only just managing to keep herself from shouting in her surprise.

“I told you that I had a plan for where we should meet up, remember?” Adrien reminded her as he lightly dropped to the floor from her bed.

“What if my parents had seen you?” The bluenette asked pointedly while bending down to pick up the dropped grocery bag, which thankfully Tikki had been able to fly out of before it had hit the hardwood at their feet. “That would’ve been an absolute disaster!”

“Don’t worry, I made sure I could see both of them in the bakery windows from across the street before I swung over.” Since Adrien could see she was about to protest more, he went on. “And I also made sure that no one saw me come up here or climb in, so everything is okay. You can calm down now, my Lady.”

Lips still pursed and brow still furrowed, Marinette went over to her desk to set down the bag and take out the now mostly empty box of cookies from inside. She sighed a little as she turned back around to face Adrien again, then gave a reluctant nod. “All right, if you’re sure no one saw you.”

“I’m very sure.” Adrien smiled confidently at her to reassure her, then glanced over at Tikki, who was brushing cookie crumbs from her face. “So how are you feeling?”
“A lot better now, thank you.” Tikki replied. “I’m ready to go again.”

Not wanting to waste another second, Marinette took a quick breath before calling out, “Spots on!” She soon emerged from the cloud of lights as Ladybug for the second time today. When she noticed Adrien’s grin, she arched an eyebrow. “What?”

Instead of answering right away, he just walked over to give her a soft peck on the forehead. “I will never, ever get tired of seeing you do that.” Adrien said with a smile, then he walked past her toward the ladder to her bed. “Now we should get going and find out where Maestro flew off to.”

Hints of a blush coloring her face, Marinette followed behind him after he had climbed up himself. “And we still need to figure out where his akuma is hiding, too.”

The superhero duo slipped out through the trapdoor and checked that the coast was clear before they took off. They couldn’t hear any of Maestro’s so-called music as they wound their way through the streets, and while it was a plus to not have to endure more of the noise, it meant he would be harder to find. In fact, it appeared like he must have gone into hiding somewhere because Adrien and Marinette’s initial search of the city left them empty-handed. So after some deliberating on what they should do next, they eventually decided to do another more thorough search, but this time they would split up so they could cover more ground faster.

Marinette combed through each block with diligence, looking for even the smallest clue as to where Maestro was lurking. But there were no signs of him and everything was quiet…eerily quiet. She was used to the streets getting deserted during akuma attacks as citizens hid from the battle, but maybe because of all the uproar from earlier, it felt all the more odd. Thankfully because she had been listening so intently while musing, she heard a soft ‘whoosh’ sound behind her and whirled in time to see the wild-haired man diving down through the sky towards her on his sheet music.

Diving out of the way just in time, she jumped back to her feet as he steered through the air to come back around toward her, cackling madly. They played cat and mouse like this for a good few minutes, until she was able to slip out of his view behind the corner of a tall building. Thinking fast, Marinette weighed the options of using her Lucky Charm now (and possibly losing him while she was back here) or waiting for a better opportunity, but she quickly decided to do it now in case another chance never presented itself. After tossing her yo-yo high and reciting the familiar phrase however, she was thoroughly disappointed by the polka-dotted roll of packing tape that dropped into her hands. What was she supposed to do with this? She supposed that it was the tradeoff for getting an actually useful item earlier this afternoon. For now, she just slid it over her wrist and ran back into the street to find Maestro again.

As she did though, it turned out in his search for her he was on a direct collision course with her. She was able to move aside, but she purposefully only moved just enough so he couldn’t grab her and she would be able to grab on to his sheet music as it went by instead. Digging her heels into the sidewalk as best she could while the sheet music tried to pull her along, she had initially hoped to pull it out from under him but that was looking doubtful. It was stronger then she had anticipated and it was taking everything she had not to lose her grip or get whisked away. When she had first grabbed it she had seen Maestro stumble as this clearly threw off his balance, but he didn’t fall. Once he steadied himself he turned and glowered down at her, but when he saw the struggle clearly visible on her face he sneered. “Having a bit of trouble, are we?” He taunted, walking across the sheet music closer to her. Choosing to ignore him, Marinette knew that she needed to distract him to stall for time. The sheet music was continuing to struggle in her grasp and it was taking all she could to keep her grip, so her hands were full. It had been a while since they had parted ways, so she only needed to wait long
enough for Adrien to discover that she wasn’t coming back and to look for her. The only problem was that she was working against the clock, as her earrings would start beeping a countdown any moment now. Hoping that this akuma victim would be one of the people that liked to talk about themselves and that Adrien was on his way, she met Maestro’s gaze as he stood over her to counter his question with one her own. “Why are you doing this?”

“Why?” Maestro knelt so they were closer to being eye-to-eye. “Because despite everything I’ve done over the years for the musical community of this city, I’ve been completely taken for granted.” His growing frown deepened further. “I can play, I can conduct, I can teach…but when I try to show off the masterpiece I’ve worked on tirelessly for ages, to peers I used to trust and respect…” Looking down to the enchanted sheet music beneath his feet, he gave a bitter sigh.

‘His masterpiece?’ Marinette followed his gaze and realization began to dawn. If this page of sheet music was part of something he had written himself, then it could very well be where the akuma was hiding. But how was she going to going to set it free when the sheet music had enough magic to fight her vehemently of its own accord?

“I was told it needs work. Needs work!” Standing up straight again, Maestro started to pace up and down as his anger built and his monologue continued. “Who do they think they are? They seem to conveniently forget that it was me who taught several of them back in the day! If it weren’t for me, most of those…those uncultured buffoons, they wouldn’t even be half the musicians they are now! Why, the lot of them should be applauding my work! Praising it, celebrating it! They owe it to me!”

While he had been carrying on, a certain blonde had thankfully landed on a rooftop alongside the street they occupied. Adrien was out of Maestro’s sight (not that he would have really noticed at this point, so deep was he into his frustrated soliloquy), but Marinette saw him touch down out of the corner of her eye. In the years since they had become Ladybug and Cat Noir, they were easily able to understand each other mid-battle without saying much or even anything at all, which came in very handy today. So as the partners shared a glance, Marinette only needed to make a small nod toward the sheet music she was still managing to hold on to and Adrien gave her a quick thumbs-up before he ducked out of sight.

“I will admit, this is my first time trying to orchestrate my own piece, and there were some challenges I ran into, but I am very proud of what I have composed!” Maestro was still going. “Some minor hiccups are to be expected for a beginning attempt, of course…but they way they said it, they made it sound like they thought my hard work was total garbage! How dare they treat me that way, after everything I’ve done for them! I’m going to make sure that they all pay for passing off my work like that!”

By now Adrien had stealthily crept out of the nearby alleyway, a familiar black glow surrounding his fist. Which was a relief, because the muscles in Marinette’s arms and legs were angrily protesting about the pull she had been constantly fighting, not to mention she had heard some beeps from her earrings already. Once Adrien was close enough to them, Marinette shouted up to Maestro, “Sorry to interrupt…” The older man turned and blinked down at her in slight confusion, as if he had totally forgotten that she was even here. “But I think it’s about time for your grand finale!”

Like the well-oiled machine that they were, the next few moments were executed like a practiced dance for the two superheroes. Marinette let go of the sheet music as Adrien touched his fingers over its surface. It instantly crumbled into black dust, making Maestro fall the few feet to the ground with a bit of a surprised yelp. While Marinette unhooked her yo-yo with one hand, she slid the packing tape off her wrist with the other to toss over to Adrien. Catching the roll with ease, he grabbed hold of a still baffled Maestro by the hands and pinned his wrists behind his back, quickly pulling off a piece of tape to wrap around them and secure them in place.
It was suddenly clear why the sheet music had been so abnormally strong before, as the akuma that had been inside it took off like a shot as soon as it had become exposed. Marinette ran after it immediately and was luckily able to catch up with it fairly soon though, catching with a long toss of her yo-yo. Sighing with relief, she let it sit inside her yo-yo for now as she dashed back to where Adrien and Maestro were still standing. By now Maestro was loudly demanding to be set free, and the annoyed look on Adrien’s face brought a grin to Marinette’s as he handed her the packing tape when she got back to them. “Please hurry up and put everything back to normal before I put a piece of this stuff over his mouth.”

“Oh come on, I had to listen to a lot more then you did.” Marinette reminded him, purifying the akuma in her yo-yo and finally setting it free before grabbing the roll of packing tape and throwing it up into the air. “Miraculous Ladybug!”

The usual flurry of lights erupted into existence once more and flew around them in busy whirling circles. In seconds the sheet music had been restored to its original state and size, and the tape bound around Maestro’s wrists vanished as he himself was surrounded by the cloud of dark purple magic that signified it leaving his system. When he came back into view he rubbed his eyes and looked a little lost until he saw the two people standing on either side of him. “Ladybug? Cat Noir?” His true voice was quite soft and timid. “What happened? What am I doing here?”

“Don’t worry about it.” Marinette picked up the sheet music and handed it to him. “I believe this belongs to you.”

Looking sullen, he grasped the paper. “Yes, it’s mine. It isn’t any good, but it’s mine.”

She could see that Adrien was gesturing at her behind him by miming pointing to his ear, and she knew she was running rather short on time, but she really wanted to give the man some of the encouragement he clearly needed. “Maybe you could ask for a little help with it. I bet it just needs a couple of tweaks before it’ll be perfect.”

“You really think so?” The older man started to smile as he watched her nod. “Maybe you’re right. Trying couldn’t hurt, anyway.”

“That’s the spirit!” Marinette gave him a bright smile and returned the gesture as the man waved to her and Adrien before clutching his sheet music tight and walking off.

“Okay, that was sweet and everything, but you should really get going…” Adrien warned as the last dot on Marinette’s earring started fading out.

Making a beeline for the alley Adrien had come out of earlier, Marinette managed to get out of sight before her transformation melted away. She had cut it closer then she had thought she had. Tikki looked decidedly bushed when she reappeared, and Marinette opened her purse and held it out to her tired kwami. Giving her a grateful smile, she floated into it and curled up inside, shutting her eyes as her bonded it closed it for her. By now Adrien had made his way into the alleyway with her, and the bluenette massaged her forehead with a sigh. “Now how am I supposed to go home?” She muttered, frustrated with herself for getting carried away. Sure, it had been the right thing to do but she had just made things a lot harder for herself.

“What do you mean?” Adrien unhooked his staff and used it to point in the direction of the address on the street post at the end of the alley. “This isn’t very far from your house, it won’t take too long to walk there.”

“My parents think I’m up in my room, resting off a headache. So I can’t exactly walk right through the front door.” Marinette explained.
Adrien paused a moment, thinking, then an idea bloomed that brought a smile to his lips. “Never fear Princess, I shall take you home myself!” He announced. “I can get you up onto the roof no problem and you can back into your room without anyone even knowing you were gone!”

Rolling her eyes, she knew it was probably the best route she could use, but she also knew there was probably going to be some sort of a catch involved. “Let me guess, I’m going to owe you for this, aren’t I?”

“Purr-haps.” Was all Adrien said with a wink.

Willing herself not to blush, Marinette walked behind him and wrapped her arms around his shoulders as one would if they were getting a piggyback ride, and held on tight as he vaulted them up into the air soon after. Despite often being up this high when she was Ladybug, perhaps it was because this time she wasn’t in the suit, because there were a few butterflies in Marinette’s stomach. She hurriedly wrapped her legs around Adrien’s waist for extra stability and shut her eyes, glad for the fact they weren’t that far from her house. Not that she would ever admit that out loud.

It was only a few short minutes later when they touched down on top of the Dupain-Cheng bakery, and Marinette was silently relieved to be able to plant her feet firmly onto her terrace. “Thank you.” She came around Adrien and gave him a hug.

“Any time, beautiful.” Adrien snuck a quick kiss to her cheek before she had started to pull back from their embrace.

Smiling a little, Marinette bent down and opened the trapdoor to her room when a thought crossed her mind. “Would you call us even for the ride if I let you have another croissant?” She asked sweetly, looking back at him over her shoulder.

“As long as there’s one left for me to try and earn from you later, then sure.” The way her cheeks flushed at his insinuation left Adrien smirking. He loved how easily he could press her buttons now…and he loved how she could press his even more.

“Fine. You’re coming down for a snack and that’s it.” The way his smirk grew when she said the word ‘snack’ made her blush go several shades deeper. “A croissant! A snack of a croissant! You knew what I meant, you pervert!” And Adrien just laughed as they headed down into her room.
Hooray! Time for a new chapter already! <3 Writing has become easy for me again. I'm already working in to the next one! I'm so, so happy to be writing again. =)

Anyway, there's some things I wanted to mention. Two chapters ago I mentioned that I intend for my fanfiction to be considered canon-divergent. So I figured I'd share some details of the slightly alternate universe my fanfiction will be set in:

- Anything happening from season 2 onward will not be a part of my story. This just makes it a lot easier for me, since this way I won't have to constantly ret-con my writing once season 2 and beyond come out. Because I loathe ret-cons. xD
- This also means that because the announcements about Chloe and Alya gaining the Bee and Fox Miraculous came out after season 1, they will NOT be Miraculous holders in my story. In fact the only active Miraculous holders here will be Ladybug, Cat Noir and Hawk Moth. And Master Fu I suppose, although he's not nearly as active as the other three, of course.
- And it means the Christmas special won't have happened in my story, since it's a standalone episode outside of season 1. For two reasons: because I had been under the assumption that Adrien's mother had been gone for several years, not just one. And because it also shows the guy from Animan being Alya's father, and up until that point there had been no mention of her having one. So in my story, Mrs Agreste has been missing since Adrien was a young boy and Mrs Cesaire is a single parent to Alya and her younger sisters.
- On the topic of family, since there has yet been no mention of what Nino's family is like, I'm going to say he has a mother and father but no siblings.
- Since Marinette and Adrien don't have canon birthdays as of when I post this chapter, I've decided to come up with ones for them. Since Adrien's birthday was shown in the show to be a warm time of the year, plus it also seemed like everyone knew each other well enough for it to be past the beginning of the school year, I'm going to put him as May 19. As for Marinette I'm going to put her at February 26, mainly because I'm a winter baby myself and want her to be one too. =P This means that she's a few months older then Adrien in my story, as well.

That's all for now. There's a bunch of fluff in this chapter, so I hope everyone enjoys! ^^

Once they were inside her room however, there was an innocent little beeping sound that immediately caught their attention. The last spot on Adrien’s ring had just vanished. With how they had been focusing on Marinette’s transformation timing out and getting her home, they had both completely forgotten his was on its way down too. They locked eyes just as he was surrounded by the magic of his suit fading away, leaving the two of them sitting in civilian mode on Marinette’s bed.

“Uh oh.” Adrien was the first to speak. “Um…what now?”

Marinette’s brain was already working overtime. What were they supposed to do now? Adrien was
trapped here. At least until Plagg recharged anyway, as he looked rather exhausted from where he floated beside them. But she hadn’t gotten any new camembert to keep at her house for him, and she had just gone to the grocery store earlier so even if she pretended her headache was magically healed, it would sound odd if she said she was going back there. Or if she fibbed and just said she was ‘going out’, that still meant leaving Adrien and Plagg in her room, by themselves, with the possibility of getting caught increasing exponentially every second she was away.

“I don’t know…” Marinette finally managed to mumble, swallowing hard over the nervous lump in her throat. She really hated not having a plan. She felt so lost.

By this time, Tikki had passed through Marinette’s purse, and since she had dozed off on the way home and had only just awoken seconds before, she looked slightly confused to see Adrien and Plagg were there too. “Did I miss something?”

Plagg floated over and give her a tired hug. “Hey you. You’re actually just in time for dinner.” He glanced at Marinette. “Can you get us some food? We’ll stay back to make sure blondie here doesn’t get us all caught by your parents in the meantime.”

“But I don’t have any camembert for you,” Marinette admitted, heart heavy. “And I don’t know how to get you any without us ending getting found out.”

“Oh.” Plagg paused for a moment, looking like he was deep in thought, then he shrugged. “If it’s just going to be this one time, I think I can try making do with something else for now. What other cheeses do you have?”

“…Are you sure?” Despite how Plagg was nodding, she was still feeling guilty.

“This is kind of an emergency, so I’ll manage.” Plagg replied.

“And may I ask why is it you’re being so uncharacteristically agreeable?” Not that Adrien didn’t appreciate the gesture his kwami was making, but from the years they had been partners, he knew Plagg was an extremely picky eater and never ate anything but his usual food. “Despite many, many, many repeated requests on my behalf for you to expand your palette to less stinky options, you’ve always refused.”

The black cat kwami folded his arms across his chest. “That’s simple, I’m not doing it for you. I’m doing this for Tikki and Marinette.”

“Well then if that’s the case, then it all makes perfect sense.” Adrien conceded jokingly with a disbelieving shake of his head.

“Me?” Marinette had been caught off guard by his answer. “Tikki I understand, but…”

“Not like it’s a big deal or anything, but maybe it’s because the two of you being together has started growing on me a bit.” Plagg tried to make it sound casual, but the small smile he was wearing was definitely genuine.

Touched, Marinette returned his smile with one of her own. “Thank you.”

“Don’t sweat it.” Plagg said. “Just so long as I get to have real camembert next time.”

“Trust me, from now on,” Marinette began as she started climbing down the ladder from her bed. “I promise that I’m going to keep some in the house at all times.”

After unlocking her door and carefully pulling it open a crack, she was relieved to find that the coast
clear below, for now. She crept down the stairs and hurried to the fridge, pulling it open and rummaging through the contents. Marinette found some cheddar, mozzarella and a few slices of some smoked gouda leftover from the sandwiches the other day. Since the smoked gouda was precut, that was the one she grabbed before shutting the fridge again and racing back up to her room.

“What did you find?” Tikki asked once her bonded had returned.

Closing her bedroom door and locking it once more, she peeled off the plastic wrap off the package and held it above her head. “How’s this?”

Flying down by her, Plagg sniffed at the cheese below him. “It’ll do,” He conceded eventually, picking up the package and floating over to the chaise lounge to eat.

“Wait for me!” Tikki zipped over to where she had left the mostly empty box of store-bought cookies from before and took it before going over to eat with Plagg.

Climbing back up onto her bed, Marinette sat next to Adrien as they waited for their kwamis to chow down. Well, it was more like hesitant nibbling on Plagg’s part, complete with lots of plenty of wrinkled-nosed faces, but to his credit he was eating, slowly but surely. “So how much do you think we’re going to owe him for actually doing this?” Adrien joked, slipping an arm around his girlfriend.

“Probably a lot, but at this point he could say we owe him for life and I’d be fine with that.” Marinette leaned against him. She was still a bit concerned about her parents possibly coming to the level below and hearing her talking to someone, but at the same time, getting cuddle time with Adrien was very tempting. Especially with how rather…passionately charged their last few encounters had been lately, it was nice to just relax with him like this. After all, any time with her love was always time well spent in her book. So while she kept one ear trained on listening for any movement beneath them to assuage her remaining worries, she would allow the rest of her focus to stay on enjoying the moment at hand. “From what you’ve said before, I’ve gathered that this is a pretty big thing for him to actually do.”

“It is. He’s never eaten anything different for me before.”

“Seriously?”

“Not even once.”

“Wow.”

“So this is definitely a big deal for him.” Adrien used his free hand to take one of hers and lace their fingers together. “It’s about damn time we finally grew on him.”

Marinette chuckled. “To be fair, in Plagg’s defense, our relationship has only gotten this close in the last month and a half or so.”

“That doesn’t really change anything, that means he’s still a month and a half overdue.” Adrien then cocked his head to the side and arched an eyebrow. “Has it really only been a month and a half?”

“I found out who you were on a Thursday night, so two days from now it’ll officially be six weeks since then.” Marinette blushed a little at the half surprised, half amused look on his face as she quietly added, “I may or may not have been keeping track…”

“Ah yes, how could I forget. Finally getting to be with the man you were infatuated with for all these years must be a dream come true for you.” Adrien teased.
“Oh please, like you aren’t over the moon to be with your beloved Ladybug at long last.” Marinette shot back at him with a grin.

The laughter the young couple shared warmed the air around them. “I think it’s safe to say that both of us are at least mildly pleased with the current situation.” Adrien’s grandiose deduction made her giggle more, as was his intention, but he still feigned innocence to the reason behind her mirth all the same. “What?”

“Nothing. You just amuse me.” Marinette kissed his cheek softly and snuggled closer to him. Her eyes then drifted back down to Tikki and Plagg on the chaise lounge. “I hope we can find more moments where the two of them can spend time together so they can be mildly pleased with the current situation that they’re in, too.”

Adrien smiled. Marinette’s thoughtfulness was just another one of the countless reasons why he loved her. “They’ll get to spend more time together as we do, and I know I certainly don’t have any plans on seeing you any less. To be honest, I know we see each other a lot already but I still wish we could see each other more.”

“Me too.” Marinette agreed. “It would be really great if we could start living together or something, but…”

“But we have to take things slow enough for my Father not to have a conniption fit, I know.” Adrien sighed as he squeezed her hand. “I’m sorry that it’s essentially my fault that things can’t go as fast as we would like them to.”

“Like I said, it’s only been a month and a half. So I think even my parents might be a little surprised if we went out and got ourselves a place all of a sudden.” She was glad to see the smile return to his face. “Although I imagine they would just help themselves adjust by casually inviting themselves over to see us all the time.”

“You know what, I can see that too.” Adrien agreed, grinning.

Suddenly Marinette gasped. “Wait a second! I should get you your croissant!” She remembered, feeling slightly embarrassed she nearly forgot about the whole reason he had come down here with her.

“Oh right.” Adrien seemed to just remember too, letting go of her hand as she sat up.

“Sorry about almost forgetting about it.” She apologized sheepishly while she went down the ladder to grab the container from her desk.

“Hey, we both got kind of distracted by the whole ‘transformations wearing off and needing to feed the kwamis’ thing.” As she climbed back up to the bed and sat next to him again, he immediately put his arm around her once more. “Besides, I know we’re on some borrowed time right now but I’m still enjoying being here with you.”

Heart feeling pleasantly warm, Marinette opened up the container of croissants and took one to pass to him. “So am I.”

While Adrien was happily digging in to his pastry, Tikki and Plagg came floating over. “Look, you survived!” Adrien mock-cheered in between bites, which left his kwami rolling his eyes.

“We really do appreciate you doing this for us, Plagg,” Marinette told him earnestly.

“I, for one, am very proud of you.” He was already smiling by now but when Tikki lightly kissed his
cheek, Plagg positively beamed.

Marinette and Adrien shared a grin while they weren’t looking. “Well, as much as I’d like to stay…” Stuffing the last bit of croissant into his mouth, Adrien brushed the crumbs off his hands. “We should probably get going.” Plagg nodded his agreement, so once Adrien had swallowed his last mouthful, he said a quick, “Claws out.”

She had to admit, she would never get tired of seeing him emerge out of the cloud of magic as Cat Noir either. “So I’ll see you tonight at the usual place?” Marinette asked while he stood up to open the trapdoor.

He paused as he thought that over. “What do you think about letting Tikki and Plagg have the night off tonight?” Adrien mused aloud. “Both of them have transformed us twice today, and it’s been a few years now since Hawk Moth has tried putting out more than once akuma a day. Hell, even since he put out once every other day.”

“I’m okay with that.” Marinette glanced over at Tikki though. “What do you think?”

“A break would be really nice.” Tikki admitted. “I would be fine with going on patrol tonight if you guys thought we should go, but the night after an akuma showing up is probably the best chance to have one quiet enough to stay home.”

“Then it’s settled.” Adrien declared. “See you tomorrow then, Marinette. I love you.”

“Love you too.” Blowing him a kiss, Marinette watched him slip out the trapdoor. He sent one back her way, then grabbed his staff and extended it to start vaulting home.

Tikki zipped over to hug her bonded’s shoulder. “Thanks for giving us a night off.”

“No problem. I’m actually thinking we should maybe start doing it this way from now on.” Because now that she thought about it, it did make sense to allow all of them to take a break from patrol whenever an akuma had showed up during the day. And after all they did, allowing themselves to take time for themselves once and a while seemed more than fair.

“That works for me. I’m certainly not going to argue against being told we can relax every once and a while.” Tikki joked.

Smiling, Marinette grabbed the croissants container to take with her back down the ladder from her bed once again. As she set them on her desk though, a bit of a frown found a home on her face. Since she wasn’t going to see Adrien tonight, that meant they wouldn’t be able to do anything more for their bet until tomorrow. Which was somewhat disappointing, especially with how hard it had been to get a lid on her hormones after last night. And with it now being the third day since she had made them, she didn’t want the croissants to start drying out before he got to eat them either. ‘Oh well,’ She thought after a while, her frown giving way to a smirk. ‘Guess that just means tomorrow night is definitely going to be fun.’
Chapter 90

Chapter Notes

MILESTONE NUMBER NINE!! =O

Look everyone! I made something! <3 http://the-rainbow-faerie.deviantart.com/art/Sometimes-675540811 I made it to be kinda like a cover for my story. It's very simple, and not the best, I know, but I'm really happy with how it turned out. =)

Anyway! Now I start laying some of my plans for Jam Fest. One I've very excited for. ^^ I'm happy to report I've actually been writing a lot lately - I have a separate document where I've got a list of ideas, head-canons, and the like stored, and I've been planning out a bunch of different scenarios. And I'm loving every minute of it!

WRITING. IS. FUN. AGAIN. =D

But as much as I would love to stay and all, I'm exhausted after two morning shifts in a row, so I'm off to bed. And I get to sleep in tomorrow, hallelujah! =P Good night guys! Enjoy!

A knock at her bedroom door made Marinette jump. “Yes?” She called, trying to still the startled staccato of her heartbeat.

“How’s your headache?” Tom’s voice came through the door. Her parents must have just come upstairs in the last few moments without her realizing, as she had stopped listening for them once Adrien had safely left.

“It’s feeling a lot better now, actually.” In fact it was almost like she never even had one to begin with…

“Should I set a place setting for you for supper then?” Tom asked.

“Yeah, I’ll be right down.” Marinette gave Tikki a small wave before going over to unlock her bedroom door and open it wide. As she was walking downstairs her phone started to ring, so she quickly pulled it out from her pocket. Nino’s name was on the screen, so she pressed the ‘answer’ button right away. “Hello?”

“Sup, Marinette!” Nino greeted warmly.

“Hi Nino.” Remembering her conversation with Alya, Marinette had a pretty good guess as to why he was calling her. He must’ve decided to phone her instead of Alya’s suggestion of texting her about the tickets. “How’s the Jam Fest set up going?”

“Going totally awesome. Trust me, this’ll be the best year ever.” Nino’s voice held such a level of certainty during the last sentence that it piqued Marinette’s interest.

“You think so?” She probed casually.
“I know so. I have something big planned.” Nino clearly didn’t want to give too much away just yet because that was all he said before changing the subject. “So will you be free tomorrow for me to drop off your ticket?”

“Well, I’ll be helping in the bakery during the day but you can still stop in to give it to me, sure.” Marinette sat down at the table, noting the nod Sabine was giving her as she went by to indicate that she was fine with Nino coming by.

“Could I come around noon? We get a break between rehearsals then.” He explained.

“The bakery can get kind of busy with customers around then since it’s lunchtime, so if you want to come for noon, maybe come to the side door.” She suggested. “Just text me when you’re on the way so I can come let you in.”

“Can do.” Nino was quiet a moment before he spoke again. “Do you think I could ask Adrien to meet us at your place for then too? His Father doesn’t let me over so it that would make it easier for me, and….” He hesitated before he spoke again. “If both of you can super promise to keep a secret, there’s something I want to show you guys.”

Now Marinette was extremely intrigued. “It’s fine with me if it works for him. And for the record, I’m very good at keeping secrets.”

“I’ll go call Adrien then. Thanks Marinette.” They said their goodbyes, then they each hung up the call.

“So how long will Nino be coming over for tomorrow?” Sabine queried once her daughter had set her phone down.

“He’s basically just coming over so he can give me my ticket for Jam Fest.” Marinette told her. “He also asked if we could try linking up with Adrien to come over here around then to so he can give us both out tickets at the same time. I figured that would be okay, since it won’t be for long.”

“Of course it is. That’s a very good idea actually.” Tom put the plates and cutlery he had been carrying down on the table so they could start setting places.

“And Nino said he wants to show us something too.” Marinette added. “I’m really curious what it’s going to be. I know he was working with some of the set up crew to learn how to do some special effects he could try using for his set, maybe it’s that.”

“Really?” Sabine looked genuinely interested by the idea. “Well if it is, take a video of it at the show for us so we can see it too.”

After promising to do so, Marinette took the plates and cutlery from the side of the table to pass around while Tom finished cooking the meal for the evening, which was fettuccine alfredo with grilled chicken slices. Once everything was done and he was bringing it all over to the table to serve, Marinette’s phone vibrated from where it sat beside her as a new email to her Spots account had arrived.

~I just got a phone call from Nino about the Jam Fest tickets, but he told me to meet him at your place tomorrow for noon.

She quickly typed out a reply in between dishing out herself some fettuccine.

~Yeah, that’s the plan. It’ll be easier for him if he can get them both to us tomorrow, and when I asked my parents they were cool with it.
~They’re cool with everything. I love them. ^^ Have I told you that lately?

Grinning, Marinette poured some alfredo sauce onto her plate, stirred her fettuccine and added the chicken slices to the top of her plate before replying again.

~You should tell that to them too. They already love you so they’d be really happy to hear it.

~Well that’s good to hear, since we’re eventually going to be in-laws someday. =3

A soft blush colored her face at those words.

~Talk to you more later, we just sat down to supper.

~I’ll be waiting. =*

_______________________________________________________________

Once they were finished eating, the dishes had been cleaned and put away, and her parents had sat themselves in front of the TV to watch a movie, Marinette climbed the stairs up to her room. Tikki was sitting perched on one of the windowsills, as people-watching was a pastime of hers. Sitting down at her computer, the bluenette turned it on while taking out her phone to email a certain Jaguar.

~All done supper. Hey, when he talked to you, did Nino mention anything about showing us something tomorrow?

Her computer was still humming to life when she already got a response.

~Yeah he did, he made me swear to keep whatever it is a secret or he’d kill me.

~He made me promise too, except he didn’t mention death.

~LOL, that must’ve been a bonus of being his best friend, I suppose. xD

~Do you have any idea what it is?

~Not a clue. I haven’t talked to him much since graduation, he’s been so busy setting up for Jam Fest. More then he has been most other years, now that I think about it. I wonder what he’s been up to.

Chewing her lower lip, Marinette tried to think of ideas as to what it might be. While she knew it was supposed to be a surprise, she also really wanted to know what it was. Unfortunately she really couldn’t think of anything, other then it possibly being the special effects idea, so she picked up her phone again.

~The only idea I had was that he had set up some sort of pyrotechnics for his set.

~Maybe…I don’t know why he would want that to be such a secret though.

~To wow the crowd?

~I think we’re grasping at straws, Spots.

~Yeah, I know, I just want to know what it is already.

~But yet somehow the saying goes curiosity killed the cat, not the bug. =P
He had a remarkable ability to make her roll her eyes even when he wasn’t there.

~Honestly Jaguar…

~Don’t blame me for that one, you left the door wide open, all I did was walk in!

Shaking her head but smiling just the same, Marinette turned her attention back to her computer, which had been sitting on the main screen waiting for her to use. She pulled up the Operation Romance & Seduce file, which by this point had gone through several changes from its original format. It now was where she kept a list of things she wanted to try out with Adrien when they were alone, things she liked, things she knew he liked, and so on. She was adding a line so she could write ‘bet to beg’ to the section of things that she liked. Because while being left hanging like she had been last night had been very frustrating to say the least, that didn’t change the fact that it had clearly been quite enjoyable.

And speaking of which, it couldn’t hurt to start laying the foundation for some tomorrow tonight, could it? By now she had gotten fairly confident in her ability to read Adrien and predict his responses to things, so she was pretty sure she could get the conversation to steer the way she wanted. Time to grab her phone again.

~I just realized, I never asked you how your croissant was earlier!

~Delectable as always. <3

~Good, I was worried they might have started drying out.

~Even if they were dry they would still be ones made by you, and therefore superior in every way to all others!

~Oh come on, dried out pastries of any kind aren’t tasty. And besides, I want you to be able to enjoy them when they’re fresh.

~If that’s the case, then I think I should be allowed to eat the rest of the croissants ASAP. Don’t you agree?

Exactly as planned. Marinette was pleased with herself as she typed her next email.

~Sure, if you can earn them.

~Hardly a problem. I have so many plans for you, love bug, honestly the hardest part of this is picking which one to use…

Heat had returned to her body once more. Not wanting him to get the upper hand again, Marinette dug into her well of daring as her thumbs tapped against her phone’s virtual keyboard.

~I hope you don’t think you’re the only one who has plans.

~Once I’m done with you I’d love for you to use them. ;3

~Before you’re done with me, I want to officially say winding me up and leaving me like that is officially off-limits for the rest of the bet.

~Fair point. It was pretty rough for me too to be honest.

~Really?
~I said you had to wait for me so it’s only fair I had to wait for you too.

So last night had had an effect on Adrien too. And not only that, he had been a gentleman since she had had to wait it out and did the same. Although it really shouldn’t have surprised her, now that she thought about it. Regardless, it still brought a smile to her face.

~Thanks. That was sweet of you. But you didn’t have to.

~Of course I had to! I may thoroughly enjoy driving my Lady wild with wanton desire for me but I wouldn’t make her suffer through waiting it out on her own. :P

Marinette found herself rolling her eyes again.

~I’ve got some things I need to buy tonight, so I think I should head out before too many stores close. Let me know when you’re on your way over here tomorrow.

~Sure thing! Bye beautiful. =)
Behold! My plans for Jam Fest are about to be revealed! =D I'm really excited for this. I've had this in my head for ages now so it's awesome to finally get it out there! ^^

This chapter took a little longer to make then it probably could've, but I'm a huge hockey nut and have been very wrapped up in watching the Stanley Cup playoffs whenever I'm home to do so, and therefore you have my apologies. But I hope the bit of fluff and spice below make up for it. =) Please enjoy!

The most important thing she wanted to check off her to-do list tonight was to buy camembert for Plagg. So she told Tikki she was heading out and grabbed a purse for her kwami to hang out in, and once she was inside, Marinette headed downstairs. A vague ‘I’m going to go shopping’ to her parents later and she went down to the main level to put on a pair of shoes and slip outside.

She wanted to make the grocery store the last stop on her way home so the malodorous cheese would stay cold. So she decided to stop at her favorite fabric store first on her journey. There wasn’t too much she needed, except for buttons, so after browsing the aisles and finding nothing particular catching her eye, she found herself an assortment of buttons she liked and made her way to the till.

That had been a fairly short stop, and the night was still rather young, so Marinette kept walking. She walked by several shops until she found herself by a local comic book and gaming store. In the past she had found a few good video games on their shelves, but she didn’t go into these kinds of shops as much as she used to. Mostly because of all the Ladybug and Cat Noir stuff that often abounded within. That was more Alya’s thing. But on a whim she decided to enter tonight, to help pass the time.

A young man with large glasses sent a welcoming wave her way from behind the till as she walked in, and she gave a small wave back. As she looked around the store there were lots of games and comics to look at, but the corner of memorabilia is what drew her in. It had offerings of classic characters on bags, sweaters, and so on, but the space they took up was small in comparison to the items dedicated to Paris’s local superheroes. A grin tugging at her lips as her eyes roved over the merchandise, Marinette was getting more and more tempted to bring Adrien here with her next time to see his reaction. So with that in mind, she returned to the front of the shop, returned the parting wave the man at the till gave her, and then she was off again.

Taking her phone out of her pocket to check the time, she decided she’d better get Plagg’s camembert so she would still have time to do things at home before taking the opportunity to turn in early for once. So she meandered her way to the grocery store and upon finding her prize, gathered all they had in stock and went straight to the check out. She received a high-eyebrow look from the cashier who rang her in, but she thankfully didn’t ask any questions as to the reason behind the wheels of otherwise unpopular cheese. The bluenette paid for her purchase and stuffed the grocery bag inside the one from the fabric store, then began the trek home.

Clouds were slowly starting to roll into the sky as the sun slunk ever lower to the horizon. Marinette’s pigtails bounced in a soft breeze as the wind started to pick up, and the bag hanging from her wrist swung to and fro as she walked. A peaceful night with calm weather was a wonderful way
to relax, for sure. She had a bounce to her step as she rounded the last corner to the Dupain-Cheng bakery, and it stayed with her through unlocking the door, heading inside and taking off her shoes, and through making her way upstairs. Her parents were watching the tail end of their movie when she came into the living room though, and that made her falter.

How was she going to put away the camembert?

“Was the shopping a success?” Sabine asked, breaking her from her thoughts.

Thinking fast, Marinette made the decision to go with a partial fib. “I found some nice buttons to add to my stash,” She began, casually going toward the fridge. “And I picked up something for Adrien while I was out too.”

“What was that?” Tom watched her set down her bag on the counter.

She paused for effect before continuing. “Don’t ever tell him I told you this, because he swore me to secrecy…” When she received two convincing nods, Marinette pulled out the grocery bag and grabbed one of the wheels of camembert from inside to show to them. Their surprised faces left her having to swallow a giggle. “I know, right? It’s a guilty pleasure of his. He’s worried people would make fun of him for having such weird tastes, so I told him his secret was safe with me. But since we’re going to have some in our fridge now so he can have some here whenever he comes over, I figured I should probably let you guys too so you know why it’s in there.”

“That was nice of you.” Sabine smiled. “We won’t tell anyone, don’t worry.”

“And we also promise that we won’t eat any of it up on him either,” Tom added, which earned him a withering look from his wife.

This time Marinette did giggle. “Thanks Mom, thanks Dad.” She grabbed the rest of the wheels and put the all camembert away in the fridge, then grabbed the bag with the buttons in it from the counter and walked over to the stairway to go up to her room. Once she was inside and had both closed and locked the door behind her, she breathed a small sigh of relief. “That could’ve gone a lot worse.” She murmured, partly to herself and partly to Tikki, since her kwami had already passed through of her purse. “So I’m glad it worked out okay.”

“I think it was a perfect cover story.” Tikki flew up to pat Marinette lightly on the shoulder. “Now you can buy some whenever without anyone asking why it’s there.”

“Back in the day it used to be a lot harder to come up with these kinds of things to cover up for all the superheroing, but with all the acting I’ve done over the years since becoming Ladybug,” Marinette was grinning as she set the bag of buttons on her desk. “I’m beginning to wonder if I’ve missed my true calling as an actress.”

Tikki laughed. “They say practice makes perfect for a reason.”

“Lord knows I have had a lot of practice. At acting, making up stories, keeping secrets, you name it.” Marinette stretched her arms above her head. “Which is why I will be an expert at keeping whatever Nino’s been up to a secret. I can’t wait to find out what it is tomorrow.”

“Could you tell what it is too? Kwamis are also very good at keeping secrets, you know.” Tikki said with a grin, getting a snort of laughter from her bonded.

“You got it.” Despite it still being pretty early, Marinette changed out of her clothes and got into her PJs. And as it felt like it had been a good month since she had been able to read for leisure, she went to grab the book she was currently working through. Noticing she was nearly finished it, she also
took the next one in the series and tucked both under her arm before going up to bed. Taking the book she was still reading, she opened it up to where her bookmark had been left, and started to read. After about an hour she was done the last page, so she started on the next one. And after another an hour and a half or so of that, her eyelids started to droop. She put her bookmark in and closed the book, took them down with her to put back on her desk and turned off the lights. It definitely felt nice to be going to bed early for a change. The bluenette bid good night to Tikki and climbed back into bed, snuggling under the covers once more and entering the warm embrace of sleep soon after.

When she awoke the next morning, she felt decidedly rested. Especially considering how not rested she had been yesterday morning, it was a refreshing feeling. She turned off her alarm and headed downstairs to grab a quick breakfast, then back up to her room to grab some clothes before going down to shower. Once she was washed and dried Marinette met up with her parents in the bakery and got to work.

Time passed by quickly through the morning, and before she knew it, it was already nearing noon. She finished garnishing the cake she had been decorating and brought it out to the shop area, then went to work on washing some of the dishes until Nino and Adrien would come by. Thankfully there weren’t many to do, because she could feel her phone vibrating in her apron when she was wrist-deep in bubbles. Finishing them quickly and setting them in the drying rack for now, she quickly rubbed a towel over her hands before taking out her phone to see a new email notification.

~I’m on my way over now. Yes I know I’m going to be early, and no I don’t care. =P

“Adrien’s on the way here Mom, so I’m going to go wait for him and Nino, okay?” She made it sound like a question but she was already heading towards the door.

“Sure. Say hello to them for us.” Sabine replied in between cracking eggs for the batter she was mixing.

Her apron was still covered with flour so she tried to dust it off as best she could while she went into the hallway to unlock the side door. She then went back to close the door to the bakery too, just in case there would be a need for privacy. Shortly thereafter there was an eager knock from behind her, making the corners of her mouth twitch upwards while she turned the handle to open the side door wide.

“Hi gorgeous.” Adrien wrapped her in his arms and kissed the top of her head.

When he let go of her and pulled back, Marinette shut the door behind him and saw some of the flour from her apron had gotten onto his shirt during their hug. “Sorry about that.” She gently wiped it off his shirt for him. “Sometimes I think flour is magnetized to me somehow.”

“That’s understandable, because I am too.” Adrien winked as she laughed.

“Why are your jokes so terrible?”

“Why do you keep laughing at them?”

Shaking her head, Marinette felt her phone vibrating again in her apron pocket, and upon taking it out she saw it was a text from Nino saying he was now heading over too. “Nino said he just left his rehearsal so he should be here soon.”

“Then in the mean time…” Adrien’s arms wound their way around her again, with his hands resting
on their favorite home on her hips this time. “I believe there are some details for tonight we need to discuss.”

It was definitely a good thing she had closed the door to the bakery. “Oh? Like what, kitty cat?” She crooned, leaning into him and brushing against his pelvis while draping her arms around his shoulders. Though she wanted him to eventually win their bet for the obvious enjoyable reasons, she wasn’t going to let him do it without putting up a fight.

Although the gentle, fleeting contact between them was trying to distract him, the confident air about her was so worth it. The nervousness she had had around him at first seemed to be making less and less appearances lately, which made him very happy. In more ways then one. But two could play at this game. “Like where am I going to make you moan my name, your place or mine?” He breathed into her ear, his hands drifting down to caress her firm backside.

Her soft sigh of pleasure slipped past her lips before Marinette could stop it. “Here would be best, so I don’t have to bring the croissants with me on patrol.” She let her hands begin to move as well, dragging slowly down his back. “Plus I bought some food for Plagg last night so we won’t have to worry about any problems for you getting back home.”

“Maybe I should stay the night this time,” Adrien suggested between placing kisses along her neck. “We could set an alarm to get us up for early tomorrow morning so no one will notice I was gone. And I can’t get enough of waking up next to you.”

“I don’t see any problems with that.” Marinette gasped a little when his fingers cupped the top of her thighs beneath her rear. “None at all…”

The knock at the door brought them both crashing back to reality in a hurry. They jumped apart instantly, and after they had each taken a breath to try and hastily collect themselves, Marinette went over to the side door and pulled it open. “Hey guys!” Nino held up a hand to high-five Marinette as he walked inside, and after she had given him one he went to do the same to his best friend. “Feels like I haven’t seen you in forever!”

“You’ve been busy with all the Jam Fest prep, don’t worry about it.” Adrien gave him his high-five too, then reached into the pocket of his jeans. “And speaking of which, I have the money for my ticket with me.”

“So do I.” Marinette grabbed the corresponding amount of euro she had put into one of her apron pockets this morning to hand to Nino.

“Thanks guys.” Opening his bag to put away the euro they handed to him, Nino then grabbed the two tickets to give them in return. After they took their tickets and put them away in their respective pockets, he reached back into his bag, taking a deep breath. “Now before I show you this to you, you have to solemnly swear not to tell anyone about this. Like, seriously. I really mean it.”

What on Earth could be such a huge secret? Though it still could possibly be a video of a special effects display on his phone, it was looking less and less likely. Which just raised more questions, as if it wasn’t that, Marinette had no idea what it could honestly be. “We promise Nino.” She assured him, hoping it wasn’t obvious how high her level of curiosity was. Adrien nodded his agreement from beside her.

“Then turn around.” Nino instructed. “And close your eyes.”

“All right.” Though Marinette felt somewhat silly for having to both turn around and close her eyes, clearly this was very important to Nino, so she dutifully did as she was told and Adrien soon
followed suit as well.

They could hear some movement from behind them and the sound of Nino taking another slow, deep breath. “Okay. You can look now.” When they opened their eyes and turned back around, Marinette and Adrien’s jaws dropped in near unison. In Nino’s hand was a velvet jewelry box that held a ring inside, a bright golden band with a small shimmering diamond at the center. “I’m going to ask Alya to marry me.”
Chapter 92

Chapter Notes

Hey guys! I'm uploading this a little earlier then usual because I have an early shift tomorrow. HOWEVER! I have good news because I'm taking some time off this week, so that means I can write!! =D I'm planning something special (and steamy!) that I want to upload for the one year anniversary of my story, which believe it or not is only like two weeks away! =O So I'm planning to get lots of writing done in the next little bit so be prepared to be spoiled with uploads between now and then. ;P Anyway, thanks so much to all of you for the positive feedback on the last chapter, I'm glad you all liked it as much as I do! And I hope you all enjoy today's installment! ^^

“Oh wow, Nino!” Marinette gave him a celebratory hug. “Congratulations!”

Nino tightened his grip on the ring box so it wouldn’t fall from his hand before he returned her hug with his other arm. “Congratulate me later, she hasn’t said yes yet.”

“She definitely will, I know it.” Letting go of him, Marinette’s face held an excited smile. “Do you think I could look at the ring?”

“Yeah. Just be careful with it.” Nino set the box in her outstretched hands gingerly.

While Marinette took a closer look at the ring, Adrien walked over to pat his best friend on the back. “Congrats. And for the record, I agree with Marinette, I know Alya is going to say yes too.”

“Thanks.” Nino still looked a little nervous at the thought though.

“This is really pretty, she’s going to love it.” Marinette handed the box back to Nino.

“Man, I hope so.” His expression softened as he thought about his love while looking at the ring. “I know the diamond is tiny but she had told me a couple times before that she thought cut of a jewel was more important then the size. And she looks totally awesome in the color gold, so that’s why I picked out that band.”

Something seemed to click in Adrien’s mind at that last statement. “Wait a second, is this the ‘gold stereo system’ you told me you were saving up for back in the spring?”

“Maybe…” Nino smiled a little. “I’ve actually been saving up to buy this since the end of last summer. Remember when Alan and the other guys at the music shop helped all of us make demo CDs?”

After Jam Fest last year, a few of the regular performers had pooled their funds to rent some time at a recording studio in the city. They each made a couple of songs to play and put on to their own CDs, and the owner of the music shop offered to sell them as thanks for all the work they had put in with Jam Fest over the years. He gave all the proceeds to each of the artists, which is why once their former classmates caught wind of it in the fall when their final school year had began, almost everyone had bought one to support him. And by the sounds of it, Nino had put every last cent of his earnings from his CD into buying this engagement ring for Alya.
“So you’ve been planning this out for almost a year?” Marinette’s eyes widened when Nino nodded.

“And if she says yes, we’ll probably have to be engaged for at least two more years before we can afford to actually get married.” Nino closed the ring box back up and put it into his bag again. “But that’s okay, because I know…I know she’s the one.”

“Is there anything you want us to do to help you? Now that we’re in on it, we can be some extra pairs of hands if you need them.” Adrien offered.

“Thanks dude, but I think I have everything covered. Since I was using my CD to save up for this, a lot of the other performers know about it, so the tech guys are going to set me up with some sweet lighting when I give them the signal during my set.” Nino adjusted the strap of his bag over his shoulder before he turned towards the door. “I should probably be heading back to the rehearsal though. Don’t want to keep them waiting. See you guys next Friday!” He gave them a wave then he opened the door and walked through, letting it swing itself shut lightly behind him.

“Makes sense now why this was so top secret.” Adrien mused aloud.

“I wish next Friday was today.” Marinette sighed happily, an eager smile firmly affixed to her cheeks. “This is amazing! I’m so excited for him! For both of them!”

“Me too.” Slipping his arm around her shoulders, he pressed a gentle kiss to the top of her head. “And as much as I would like to stay I should probably be going too. I have a photo shoot to go to this afternoon and considering Father still hasn’t said anything to me about restarting the lessons, I don’t want to push my luck by being late for the things I agreed to still do.”

“See? I told you working hard and getting the marks he wanted would be better for you in the long run.” She gave him a hug and pecked him lightly on the lips.

“That you did.” Adrien grinned. “I’m still waiting for him to start them up on me out of no where, but seeing as it’s been several days since school finished, I’m allowing myself to be more and more cautiously optimistic.”

“I’ll keep my fingers crossed for you.” They separated from their embrace and Marinette watched Adrien head for the door. “See you later.” She said casually, and though she managed to keep herself from smirking, all the multiple meanings that phrase held for today was captured by the playful twinkle in her eyes.

“See you later.” He echoed, winking at her and blowing her a kiss. Marinette mimed catching it and slipping it into her apron pocket, and Adrien was still chuckling about it as he stepped outside.

Walking over to the door so she could lock it behind him, she leaned against the door and allowed herself the excited squeal she had been holding in since Nino had showed them the ring. He was going to propose to Alya! No question about it, like Nino had told her on the phone last night, this truly was going to be the best Jam Fest ever.

After allowing herself a moment to try and put a lid on her glee for now, she went over to the entrance to the bakery and opened the door wide. Tom was at the register ringing in a woman and a few more customers milled about the shop area, and Sabine was just coming out of the kitchen with a tray of macarons. “How was Nino?” She queried as she passed her daughter by.

“Good, very good.” Marinette replied cryptically, though her large smile from before had already made a swift return.

“So what was the surprise?” Tom queried once he had finished the transaction he had been doing.
“I’ll tell you at supper.” She promised, receiving a pair of nods before she made her way into the bakery kitchen.

The rest of the afternoon went by uneventfully. After Marinette, Tom and Sabine each took turns having short lunch breaks, time melted away steadily until it was time to close for the day. While her parents closed the shop area, Marinette took a few macarons while they weren’t looking to bring up to Tikki later tonight. If the news she was to share with her kwami was this special, an equally special snack was required to tell her over it, after all.

When the three of them finally came upstairs, it was time to decide on what they would be eating. “Anyone have an idea what they want to have?” Sabine posed the question while looking through the fridge.

“To be honest, I’m actually craving blueberry pancakes.” Tom walked over to his wife and peered into the fridge. “Do we have any blueberries?”

“A few.” Sabine grabbed the container from within and held it out to her husband. “I think there should be enough in there.”

“Well then unless someone has any objections otherwise, I say we should have breakfast for supper tonight.” Tom declared.

His suggestion was met with approval from the female members of his family, so they quickly set to work. It didn’t take long with all of them working together to get the table set and a respectable stack of pancakes cooked, and soon enough they were sitting around the table to fill up their plates. “So tell us, what was Nino’s surprise?” Sabine posed the question that was still hanging in the air.

“Promise not to tell, especially to Alya if she happens to come over here to see me sometime in the next week or so?” Marinette prefaced the divulging of the secret with this guarantee, and got a nod from her mother and her father pretended to lock his mouth closed and throw away the key. “He’s going to propose to her.”

Both of her parents’ faces lit up at the news. “That’s wonderful!” Tom exclaimed. “I happen to know for a fact that that is something takes a lot of courage to do. But it’ll be so worth it.”

“Yeah, he seemed really nervous,” Marinette told them. “But Adrien and I reassured him everything will be fine.”

“He might be anxious now but he’ll be glad he did it once she says yes. And if I know Alya, which I like to think I do after all the years you two have been best friends, she is going say yes, and she’s going to be a very happy girl.” Sabine conquered.

“I’m glad you tried to encourage him, Marinette. Because while it’s easy for us to say she’ll say yes, even though we’re likely right, I know first hand the stress he’s probably going through right now.” Tom glanced at his wife with a small smile. “I’m sure it was obvious to everyone around us when I was about to propose to you that you would say yes too, but I was sweating buckets thinking about the possibility you might say no for months beforehand.”

Sabine chuckled. “I know.”

Her mother and father continued chatting more about the early years of their relationship, and Marinette listened contentedly while she ate. Their ease and strength of their relationship was something she had always looked up to, and now she hoped to one day achieve something similar with Adrien.
And speaking of her wonderful and equally frustrating boyfriend…

Despite her best efforts to the contrary, Marinette’s mind began to wander to the menagerie of magnificent things that could happen after patrol tonight. Even though it had only been a few days since their last passionate encounter, with how tightly wound Adrien had gotten her since then, it felt like it had been weeks since she had felt his touch. Just the thought alone made her shiver pleasantly. She could hardly wait for it to finally be time to finish their bet.

She couldn’t wait to *lose* their bet.

The pancakes on each of their plates made a steady disappearance, at least. Once everyone had finished, Marinette offered to do the dishes, mostly to try and help make the time go by faster. Tom and Sabine took the opportunity to go for a walk, as the weather was lovely tonight, leaving Marinette alone in the house.

Well, alone expect for Tikki of course, who zipped downstairs once she had seen Marinette’s parents leave from the window upstairs. “Tell me Nino’s surprise!” The eager anticipation in her voice and on her face made the bluenette grin.

After pausing for effect while rinsing off a plate, Marinette took one of Tikki’s arms with two of her soapy fingers before dramatically dropping to one knee. “How about you guess?”

“He’s going to ask Alya to marry him?!” When she received a nod of confirmation, Tikki squealed in an identical fashion to how Marinette herself had hours earlier. “I knew it! I knew it! I knew it!”

“Oh you did, did you?” Marinette’s grin widened as she stood back up.

“I sure did. I’m a proud messenger of love, remember? I can tell these things.” Tikki said knowingly.

That left her bonded giggling. “Well you were the only one, then.” She grabbed a glass from the sink to start to wash next. “Adrien and I had no idea.”

“It all comes with experience, don’t worry.” Tikki wore a grin herself now. “I mean, I *am* a little bit older then you two.”

And the laughter they shared effortlessly filled the room around them.
Once they had settled down and caught their breath, Marinette went back to washing the dishes in earnest, and Tikki found a towel to start drying some of the cutlery. Once all the dishes were clean, Marinette found herself a towel as well and worked on drying the bigger items, and within minutes everything had been dried off and put away. The two then made their way up to Marinette’s room, and the macarons that had still been hiding in her apron pocket went straight to Tikki’s plate. A delighted hug from her kwami before she dove in to her delicious bounty, she then took off her apron and hung it off the side of her mirror until she would need it again tomorrow.

Next she took her Jam Fest ticket from the pocket of her pants and realized her phone was still in her apron when it started to ring. She walked over and quickly fished it out from the pocket of her apron, and upon seeing that it was Alya, pressed the answer button. “Hello?”

“Hey Marinette. Did Nino see you and Adrien about the tickets today?” Alya’s voice drifted through the speaker.

“Yeah, he came by around noon today. He asked me if I could have Adrien come by here at the same time so he could give us both our tickets at once to save himself some time.” Marinette told her, being vague with the practiced ease of a professional secret-identity-hiding superhero.

“Oh good, I was worried he would have forgotten to get them to you.” She let out a soft sigh of relief. “To be honest he’s been kind of absent-minded lately, like he’s distracted or something. I’ve been chalkling it up to Jam Fest prep. He did say he gave them to you today, but I thought I would check in with you just to be sure.”

So she clearly knew that something was somewhat off with Nino, but thankfully she was unsuspecting as to the true reason why. “No worries. I actually have my ticket in my hand right now.”

“Great.” There was the sound of a shutting door in the background from Alya’s end, and from the telltale squeak it made that she had come to recognize after several trips over there, Marinette knew it to be the sound of her closing her bedroom door.

This meant she was likely alone there. And therefore, no one would hear her give the answers to some of the questions that were still floating around the bluenette’s mind about Alya’s aforementioned pleasurable dos and don’ts. Especially with another romantic rendezvous imminent tonight. So despite the fact voicing these queries still made her heart race nervously, Marinette
decided to take the plunge and took a deep breath before she opened her mouth. “Hey, Alya?”

“Yeah?”

“Do you have some time to talk?”

“With my BFF? Always.”

“Remember how you said that you would share with me all about the pleasurable dos and don’ts when I was ready back at our last picnic?”

There was an excited gasp from Alya’s end. “Yes! Definitely! I take it you’re ready to hear them now?”

“More like I had some questions I wanted to ask you, and we can go from there.” She wasn’t sure she was completely ready to hear all the things she imagined Alya would have in her repertoire, so she wanted to start small with some of the things she had been wanting answers to first.

“Sure! What do you want to know?” Alya’s voice was relaxed and calm.

Marinette was sure hers would sound nervous and hesitant. “Is there such a thing as ‘too much’? I-I…can’t get enough of being with him. But I don’t want to be pushy or sound desperate or anything.”

Alya just chuckled. “Girl, you seriously worry way too much. That’s totally normal, especially when your relationship is still new like it is right now. Not to mention how long you waited for him, too. I would honestly be more surprised if you had said you didn’t want to ‘be with him’, to use your adorably innocent phrasing.”

Cheeks warming with an embarrassed blush, Marinette set down her Jam Fest ticket on her desk before going to sit on the chaise lounge. “Are you sure?”

“I’m positive.” Alya assured her. “Besides, if he didn’t want to, you would be able to tell. Has he shown you any signs of not enjoying it?”

Now her cheeks were warm with memories of the things she and Adrien had done recently. “Uh…more like the opposite…”

“See? Adrien enjoys it, you enjoy it, so I don’t see any problems here.” Alya said matter-of-factly. Though she had no problem with using a lot more descriptive lingo, she toned down her use of such words for Marinette’s sake. “I will say that you just need to watch out for getting sore if the two of you do a lot in one day or even in a two day stretch, though. But still, as long as neither of you are tender and both of you want to, then I say go for it! Every time you can!”

“That reminds me,” Marinette began, starting to nervously fiddle with one of her pigtails. “I know that you have to keep yourself clean to avoid getting any infections, especially for women, but when you’re being together a lot, how do you deal with all the showers? Because I know that washing too much can be bad for the body too, and…why are you laughing at me?” She had to stop because Alya was snorting from her end of the line.

“Oh Marinette, you’re so cute!” Her best friend managed in between her laughter.

“But I’m being serious…” Marinette muttered, feeling embarrassed again.

“I know, I know. I’m sorry I’m laughing, it’s not at you.” Alya took a breath to settle herself down.
“And in answer to your question, you don’t actually have to shower after every time you’re together. Unless it makes you all sweaty, then of course you should have a shower, but for the most part all you really have to make sure you do is go to the bathroom afterward. It helps flush everything out and keeps you from getting any UTIs. Because every lady knows how awful those are.”

That was good to hear. She should probably tell Adrien that too, as it seemed like he was under the similar impression that she’d been about showering afterward. “One last thing. Do you know of any nice campgrounds that aren’t too far away from the city, but are also sort of secluded so there’s still some privacy from anyone nearby?”

“Hmm…I might know of a couple spots that match that description.” Marinette could practically hear the large grin that was undoubtedly sitting over Alya’s face right now in the sound of her voice. “Why, are you planning on going on a trip?”

“Maybe.” She replied quietly, face starting to heat up again. “Not for right away, but some time this summer, I hope.”

“I’ll text you details of the best places I know later.” Alya promised. “I think it would be a great idea for you to take Adrien camping, for the record. He doesn’t sound like he gets much time to just relax, knowing his super-hyper-ultra strict father.”

Even though it sounded like Gabriel Agreste might actually be easing up to some degree, at least with Adrien’s lessons, it was definitely a small step forward compared to the regimen he was known to put his son through. And it would still likely take some very gentle persuading to even get him to consider letting Adrien come camping with her, at least she knew she was on his good side, which would help her case. To Alya however, all she said was, “Yeah, that’s for sure.”

“And if you two do go camping this summer, I can also recommend a great brand of bug lotion to use. Because it totally kills the mood if you’re too busy getting bitten by things that aren’t your boyfriend.” Alya knew that last statement likely sent her best friend’s face down at least another six shades of red, but she couldn’t help it. It was way too much fun.

She was right of course, as Marinette’s blush was quite vivid at this point. But she didn’t want her to know that, so she cleared her throat to keep her voice from squeaking before she spoke next. “How thoughtful of you. You’re so generous.”

“Damn straight. I’m just such a giver.” Alya sighed dramatically, soon falling into another giggling fit.

It wasn’t long before Marinette started laughing too. It was nice after how anxious she had been the last few minutes to just let the tension go, and soon she was feeling much more relaxed then she had been. “Thank you.” She murmured once the two of them had fallen silent again. “I needed that.”

“Anytime, girl. If you ever have any other questions for me, ask away. And when you’re finally ready to hear my list of pleasurable dos and don’ts, if I were you, I would make sure you have popcorn.” Alya advised, and the tone of her voice left Marinette wondering if she was joking about the popcorn or not.

“Okay, dually noted.” Standing up from the chaise lounge, Marinette’s eyes drifted around her room as she looked for Tikki, as her plate looked like it had been emptied several minutes ago. She eventually spied her kwami hovering over her fabric stash, holding two small pieces of fabric and looking deep in thought. What was she up to?

“I should probably let you go soon, though.” Alya was saying, bringing Marinette’s focus back to
the conversation at hand. “I haven’t done any laundry in forever and I swear the basket totally
growled at me this afternoon.”

That brought an amused grin onto Marinette’s lips. “All right. Bye Alya.” Once Alya has said her
good-byes as well, the bluenette took the phone from her ear and pressed the button to end the call.
Slipping her phone into the pocket of her pants, she began walking over to where Tikki still floated
above her fabric stash. “Getting an idea for something?”

“Possibly.” Tikki looked over the designs of the fabric pieces she was holding. “Do you think I
could take a couple of these if I find some patterns I like? If we’re going to go camping soon, I was
thinking some of the bigger pieces would make a nice blanket for Plagg and I if it gets cold
overnight.”

“Of course you can have some.” Marinette told her with a smile. “Go ahead and take as many pieces
as you like.”

“Thank you!” Now that she had the go ahead, Tikki dove into the bin of fabric pieces, digging
through the pile with exuberance.

Very entertained, Marinette watched for a moment or two before she wandered back over to her
desk. It was still a while before it would be time for patrol, so she needed to find something to do to
help fill in the time that remained. Spotting the buttons she had bought last night, she realized not
only had she not put them away yet, but also that her desk could use some tidying. At this point she
would take anything to help make the time go by faster, so even though her desk wasn’t truly messy
by any means, she sat down her chair and started to reorganize the items over its surface.

Slowly.

Because the longer it took her to do, the closer she would be to the sinful reward she already felt like
she had been waiting ages to receive.
Hey everyone! So I'm hoping this chapter shows up in everyone's inbox or whatever, I don't know what happened with the last one. ^^; Anyway! The time is almost here for tea, so I hope you all have your tea cups prepared! I for one am quite looking forward to it! =P This chapter even has things heating up in it already, so everyone judge thyself accordingly. ;) Please enjoy!

At long last, after she had rearranged the shelves on her desk three times, it was close enough to patrol time that she wouldn't be getting there ridiculously early. By now Tikki had found several rectangular pieces of fabric that she had claimed as perfect blanket material, and had set them aside on top of the cat pillow for safekeeping. So once she finished stacking them in a nice pile and had given her bonded the confirmation that she was ready, it was time to transform.

Closing her eyes and letting the magic envelope her, when she opened her eyes back up again it was Ladybug looking back at her from her mirror. She made the trek up to the roof swifter that perhaps she normally would have, and was soon yo-yoing off into the night to get to the apartment building. Because after all, if she got there first, Adrien would be the one owing her kisses, and that would mean she was in charge.

She wasn’t the only one that had this idea, however, as she and Adrien were landing on the rooftop at almost exactly the same time. “Too bad,” He sighed loudly while resting his staff against his shoulder. “I was looking forward to getting some free kisses from you and making you beg for me.”

Purposefully keeping herself turned toward the horizon so he wouldn’t see the deep crimson hue on her face, Marinette pointed out at the skyline. “I’ll take the north half, so you take the south. And even though the city was clearly fine with us taking a night off last night, I think we should be extra thorough with our routes anyway, just to be safe.”

“Ignoring me isn’t going help you any, my Lady.” Adrien hummed by her ear, snaking an arm around her waist and placing a kiss on her now burgundy cheeks. Feeling her small shiver triumphantly, he released her from his grasp and walked toward the edge of the rooftop. “But I agree. I won’t let anything go by unchecked on my watch, don’t worry.” He looked back at her and winked. “Then the real fun will be able to begin.” And with that, he extended his staff and vaulted off into the distance.

Damn it all. Why oh why did he have to have such a potent effect on her? Marinette’s heart was already racing and Adrien hadn’t even really done anything to her yet. She would have to put all her effort into resisting his allure if she wanted this game to last as long as she wanted it too. Shaking her head to clear it and taking a calming breath, she unhooked her yo-yo and swung off, hoping her patrol would keep her busy enough to keep her mind from wandering any more.

Thankfully there was something to keep her occupied with tonight. There was a minor car accident that had stopped traffic enough to cause a few of the impatient motorists to lean on their horns. She was able to get it sorted out quickly, especially once she used her yo-yo to pull the cars out of the middle of the street to let traffic continue to flow until the tow trucks would arrive. The young woman and older man who had been driving the two cars thanked her for her help, and once she was
sure that they weren’t hurt, it was time for her to get back to her route.

Other then that car accident, there wasn’t much else of note on her half of the city, which meant she could make her way back to the meeting place. And with each swing of her yo-yo, Marinette could feel her heartbeat start to quick again. ‘Be strong!’ She told herself as she drew closer to the apartment building. ‘You know he’ll never let you live it down if you give in right away! Make him work for it!’

She could see him making his way over when she was touching down, so she strode over to the middle of the rooftop and laid down, gazing up at the stars expectantly as she waited for him to arrive. It wasn’t long before she heard the familiar sound of his landing and his footsteps coming toward her, and soon saw his face peering down at her. “Are you going to join me or what?” Marinette asked him, patting the spot beside her deliberately, like this was just another regular old night.

His lips twitched with the beginnings of a smirk but to go along with her façade of innocence, Adrien let it fade so he could keep a straight face as he nodded. “Always.”

As soon as he was laying next to her, she turned so her head was now laying on his stomach. She saw him lift his head to look at her and raise an eyebrow, and now it was her turn to smirk. “I never said I would make it easy for you.”

“It wouldn’t be any fun if you did.” Adrien agreed, setting his head back down. His hand settled on her arm and he began to rub it affectionately as he often did during their star gazing sessions, and Marinette allowed herself to sigh contentedly. At least for right now, she was the one in control. And if this was the only time tonight that she was, as it likely would be, she could be okay with that.

Because whatever he would do to her tonight, returning the favor to him sometime in the (hopefully very) near future would be extra rewarding.

She soon decided it couldn’t hurt to strike up a conversation with him either. “I was talking to Alya tonight.”

“Yeah? She doesn’t suspect anything about Nino’s plan, does she?” Adrien didn’t mind playing along, as he was content to let her feel like the one in charge for now.

“All she told me is she’s noticed he’s been absent-minded lately but she thinks it’s all because of getting ready for Jam Fest.” Marinette told him.

“Oh good.”

“And on an unrelated note, I did find out something new from her.”

“What was that?”

“I thought every time someone was…intimate, they always had to have a shower or bath afterward.” Though the subject matter still embarrassed her somewhat, she really did want to share her new knowledge with him, so Marinette pressed on. “But according to Alya, you actually don’t always have to every time.”

“Really?” The surprised tone his voice held confirmed her suspicions that he had been under the same impression she had been.

“Just if you get sweaty, she says. But that’s pretty self-explanatory. Other then that, all you need to do is use the washroom and you’ll be fine.” Marinette said. “I didn’t know that, so I was glad I asked
“Neither did I. But I guess that’s what happens when two very inexperienced virgins finally get together.” Adrien chuckled, and even Marinette couldn’t help but giggle. But what he said next brought a blush storming back to her face. “That’s definitely good to know. Mostly because while I certainly adore showering with you, we don’t exactly have a good track record of only using them to get ourselves clean.”

They settled into a comfortable silence, and the minutes started to tick away. First fifteen went by, then twenty. Then his fingers moved over to her shoulder, and it wasn’t overly long after that they found their way down to her breast. Slowly massaging it and letting his thumb run circles around her nipple through her suit, it was clear the time for the charade was officially over now. “Do you want to get going?” She turned to look at Adrien only to see him shake his head. “No, not yet.” His voice was soft, yet she could still feel the level of intent carried behind his words. “Sit up.” She did, and he followed suit so he could move in behind her, meaning she was now sitting between his knees. Adrien let his hands wrap around her and trail over her body slowly, all while gently laying kisses along the back of her neck.

The sigh that escaped her lips this time was breathy and low. His fingers drifted past her belly toward her core and she arched her back, but she could feel his lips smirk against her skin as he moved them higher again. Biting her lip as she refused to make any sound for such a teasing move, she leaned back against him instead, and now she got a better feeling of the certain something pressing against her tailbone more and more. She toyed with the idea of using that to her advantage to try to turn the tables on him, but decided there would be plenty of other times for that later.

By now the material of her suit felt altogether too warm already, and she imagined his was probably feeling the same. “Now…?” She let the word hang questioningly in the air, and could hear Adrien’s quiet chuckle from behind her. “If you insist.” They got to their feet fast, and wordlessly took yo-yos and staffs out to make the journey back to the Dupain-Cheng bakery.

When they arrived, Marinette opened the trapdoor and slipped inside first, with Adrien following right behind. They called off their transformations as soon as the trapdoor was closed again, and upon their reappearance, their kwamis dutifully floated straight through the floor to the kitchen. And for once, there wasn’t even a disparaging word from Plagg this time. “It sure is nice to see him less grumpy about all of this,” Marinette said with as much of an air of calm as she could.

“It is.” Adrien replied simply while reaching behind her, near the head of her bed. At first she couldn’t understand why, but when he pulled back she immediately understood as she saw him slip a familiar golden package into the pocket of his jeans before climbing down the ladder from her bed. “Are you going to join me or what?” He purposefully repeated her phrase from earlier as he started heading toward the chaise lounge.

And in spite of herself, Marinette laughed. She went down the ladder and walked over to him, wearing a coy smile. Adrien took her hands in his and smiled back at her before he moved in to kiss her gently. He wanted the moment to build, and starting slow would be the best way to make every action, every movement mean more. It didn’t take long until he could feel her hands trying to release his to be able to move on their own, as he had predicted she would try to do, but he just tightened his grip. She broke the kiss to look at him, her expression visibly perplexed, and even more so when she noticed the amused expression that he was currently wearing. “What, am I not allowed to use hands
“You know what, that’s a wonderful idea.” Adrien pretended like the idea hadn’t even crossed his mind before she had said something, which made her roll her eyes and grin. Then a wicked thought suddenly occurred to him, and now he did have a definitively wonderful idea. “That reminds me, didn’t you say before that you wanted to try using some of your leftover pieces of fabric like a rope?”

Marinette’s eyes widened and her heart skipped an excited beat. “I-I did…”

“Where do you keep them?” Letting go of her hands so she could point it out to him, Adrien immediately went off in the direction Marinette pointed to find the box of leftover fabric. He dug through the contents within to try and find the longest piece he could, and eventually was rewarded with a particularly lengthy strip of vaguely familiar pink satiny-feeling material. Cocking his head to the side as he studied it, he made his way back over to where his girlfriend still stood waiting for him by the side of the chaise lounge. “I feel like I recognize this.”

“That’s because you do, that was what I used for my graduation dress,” Marinette told him quietly, watching his fingers run over the fabric and swallowing the lump that was forming in her throat. Heat was already surging through her body, and nothing had even really begun yet; just the sight of him holding it and knowing exactly what it was to be used for was more than enough. Letting him use one of her fantasies against her like this for their bet could quite likely be considered cheating, but at this point she didn’t care in the slightest.

“No wonder I like it so much.” Adrien was smirking again, making her burn for him all the more. “Well then, let’s make some more sinful memories with this to join with that dress then, shall we?”

He loved how dark with desire her eyes were as she gave him a little nod. Adrien draped the fabric over his shoulder for now, stepping close to her and sliding his hands over waist. Once her hands would be tied it would be a lot trickier to undress her torso (especially since this particular shirt was sadly devoid of any buttons he could seductively undo), so he wanted to get that taken care of first. Letting his fingers grasp the hem of her shirt, he slowly coaxed it up over her form and casually tossed it aside. Next Adrien let his hands drift down her back, and could feel her tremble at his touch. When he found the clasp of her bra, he met her gaze as he undid it and pulled it ever so slowly down her arms. It then immediately joined her shirt down on the floor, and he captured her lips in another searing kiss.

She resisted the urge to thread her fingers into his hair and managed to keep her arms at her sides despite how desperately she wanted to do otherwise. When they finally parted they were equally short of breath, and even being half-undressed did nothing to remedy how hot Marinette was feeling already. Adrien took hold of her hips and gently nudged her back, and she quickly took the hint to sit on the chaise lounge. He then stood over her rather expectantly, and with all the lust-driven haze in her brain she couldn’t quite understand why at first. “What?” She eventually found her voice enough to ask.

Instead of answering her right away, he reached for the strip of fabric and pulled it down from his shoulder. Adrien then knelt before her and held it out with a look in his eyes that nearly unraveled her right then and there, even before he spoke his next words. “Hold out your hands. It’s about time I truss up my prize.”

Was it ever proven possible that a person could physically burst into flame? Because right about now, Marinette felt like she was going to.
Chapter Notes

HAPPY ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY TO MY STORY!! =D

As of today it has officially been one year since Marinette had her 'unexpected revelation'. At least in real time, anyway. In-story time is moved way slower. =P But I'm still very happy with how far things have come! Especially with this chapter...BECAUSE THERE IS SOME VERY WONDERFUL (if I do say so myself!) SMUT DOWN BELOW. xD RUN AND HIDE IF YOU STILL INSIST YOU MUST!

I, however, we be enjoying some well-brewed celebratory tea with my fellow smut lovers. ;) Hope you all enjoy too! <3

Eyes locked on the fabric in her boyfriend’s hands, Marinette did as she was asked and held out her hands to him. Gently, carefully, Adrien wrapped the strip around her wrists and tied a knot, one that was secure but still loose enough that it would in no way constrict her uncomfortably. Placing a soft kiss atop the knot, he got back to his feet and held on to the leftover length as he moved to be standing at the end of the chaise lounge. He motioned for her to lay on her back and she quickly complied, her heartbeat thumping wildly as her excitement kept rising.

Once she was settled and laying straight, he climbed onto the chaise lounge too and crawled over her, noticing that she was watching his every movement with rapt attention. Adrien tied the remaining fabric to the stem of the parasol affixed to the cushion of the chaise lounge, and heard Marinette take a shuddering breath. He gazed down at her and despite thinking this several times before now, once again he found himself thinking that she had never looked so beautiful. It was an amazing feeling to see the love of his life this way, so visibly aroused already.

And speaking of arousal…

Making it look like he was bending down to kiss her, he instead moved himself in such a way he could press his growing bulge between her thighs. This drew an unabashed moan from each of them at the heated contact, even with the fact that both of them were still fully clothed below the waist. But that wasn’t the only thing to be heard. “Adrien…!” Though it was quiet, he caught the sound of his name fall from her lips and couldn’t keep himself from smirking triumphantly.

“Yes?” He murmured, wanting to hear her say more. Not just for the sake of officially clinching their bet, but because he had been fantasizing about hearing her begging for him for several days now.

Suddenly realizing she was skating on thin ice to losing already, Marinette blushed and shook her head. “N-Nothing.”

“Really?” Leaning back so he sat on his knees over her, Adrien let his hands slide lazily down her body to settle at the waistline of her pants. “Are you sure?” She just nodded distractedly, as her attention was mostly focused on how his fingers were starting to pull her pants down inch by slow inch. “Could it be, possibly, that you want more? *Need* more?”
She did, oh she most certainly did, but she was also stubborn. “I’m fine.” That short sentence was a lie of course, and they both knew that, but they both also knew that the more she resisted…

The more fun it would be for them both.

“It doesn’t seem like you’re being very honest with yourself.” Finally pulling her pants off her feet and dropping them to the floor, Adrien moved in for her panties next. Both for her enjoyment and his own, he removed them faster than he had done her pants, and after letting himself a moment to drink in the mesmerizing visual of Marinette – his Marinette – bound and naked before him, gently eased her legs apart to allow himself access to her treasure. “So I guess that means I’m going to have to ask your body directly…”

The way her eyes grew wide was exactly the reaction he had been wanting. Dipping his head down, it was easy for Adrien to see how much she did truly need him by now. And when he let his tongue slip up and down her drenched slit, it was easy for him to taste as well.

A squeal tore from her throat instantly and her whole body trembled. She bucked beneath him, making the stem of the parasol squeak as the fabric that bound her wrists pulled at it. Marinette’s brain was losing all semblance of coherent thought as Adrien moved to start sucking on her nub, not that she cared. She was climbing forward so fast already. And then, all of a sudden, he just stopped. Trying to catch her breath and opening her eyes to look up at him, she saw Adrien yanking off his shirt. It was clear from his actions he needed her as much as she needed him, let alone the tantalizing look of the large tent in his jeans. So she watched, transfixed, as he got off the end of the chaise lounge to undress.

First went his belt, being undone hastily, then the button and fly. Now that they were undone, his jeans were removed quickly. Then he moved to his boxers, and she caught the relieved sigh he made when his length was out of the clearly confining garment. Now she understood why when she had stripped for him, Adrien had had such a hard time not wanting to touch her. And why he had said he had always wanted her to do that for him. Getting a full strip tease from him was definitely something she was going to have to add on to the Operation Romance & Seduce file the next time she was on her computer.

Finally he was as naked as she was. Their eyes met, and both she and he paused to drink in the equally erotic visual that was before them. After enjoying a moment of that, Adrien bent down to grab his jeans and take the condom package he had put his pocket out. He didn’t open it up yet, however; he just held it in his hand while he climbed back over top of her. Moving in to kiss her, for real this time, their lips met again in another passionate fever. Once he was sure she was sufficiently distracted again, he brought his free hand down to her core to slide a finger within her channel with ease.

And the way she moaned desperately into his mouth was music to his ears.

Until they had to part for air, he brought his finger back and slid it inside again, to start a languid pace. And his intention was not to tease her this time, but he had to bring back his hand to adjust himself above her to a more comfortable position when they broke the kiss to breathe. But it was that lack of contact that seemed to be the last straw that broke through her willpower. “No, don’t stop!” Marinette whispered, her voice hushed and filled with palpable need. “P-Please…”

Despite knowing that he had obviously won the bet already, Adrien decided that there was at least one more bit of teasing that was still necessary, so after running his tongue over his drying lips, he asked, “Please what?”

Luckily her face was already very flushed with desire, so the normal deep blush that would’ve
appeared there at such a request was unnoticed. But words wouldn’t form at first, or at least, they
wouldn’t until his thumb found its way her pearl again. A sharp gasp later and Marinette was much
more forthcoming. “Please, I can’t wait anymore! I-I need you, Adrien! I need you now!”

Adrien’s smirk eased into a smile. “That’s what I wanted to hear.” He leaned back onto his knees
again and finally adjusted his hold the gold wrapper in his hand to rip it open. Slipping it on quickly,
he then did something that surprised Marinette, by reaching above her to untie the fabric around her
wrists. Noticing her puzzled look, his smile grew and he kissed her forehead. “I like it when you
have your arms around me and hold on to me when we’re together like this. I think it makes it more
special, more romantic that way.”

Marinette managed a soft giggle while obliging his subtle request to hook her arms behind his
shoulders. “Right, because you’re such a sap…” She joked, but stopped to let a contented sigh
escape as he pushed his length into her chasm at long last. Her smile mirrored his as she set a small
kiss on the end of his nose. Even during something as lewd as this, which was easily the kinkiest of
encounters they had shared together, he never ceased to wow her with how much he loved her and
the depth of his sentimental side. Not only that, she had to admit, she enjoyed it more this way too.
“How could I forget.”

“A sap who can make you beg, thank you very much.” The only reply he received from her was
getting her tongue cheekily stuck out at him, then the slow thrusts to build the pace for their love
making began.

But the speed quickened almost immediately though, because by now any and all restraint from
either party was already long, long gone. She had been so close earlier and entering her perfect heat
had nearly done him in, so the culmination of this night’s events wouldn’t last long. Racing up and
over the precipice within minutes, they were spiraling into ecstasy one after another. They held each
other close as their breathing calmed and their grasp on reality slowly returned, and when they had
regained their senses, it was Marinette who spoke first, albeit only one word. “Damn.”

A tired chuckle came from above her. “You can say that again.”

Brushing her bangs aside, Marinette looked up at her lover with a bit of a grin. “Can’t wait to try
doing that to you now.”

There was a delightful little shiver that rolled down Adrien’s spine as he carefully slid out of her and
climbed off the chaise lounge. But as much as such thoughts were irresistible, right now the thing he
wanted most was to get some very well earned sleep. “Agreed. But I’m going to go ahead and
assume you mean that for sometime soon but not tonight.”

It was her turn to laugh. “Oh no, you’ve got it all wrong, I meant that we have to do it right this
minute.” And now they were both reduced to giggling.

While Adrien removed the spent condom and went toward her vanity to toss it in the garbage can
that stood beside it, Marinette sat up and stretched. She got up and could hear him yawning while she
made her way to her trunk to fish out her bathrobe and put it on. “You planning on going
somewhere?” His question was made while turning on the faucet of her vanity, and while yawning
again.

“As much as I would love to just go straight up to bed too, yes, I am going somewhere.” She stepped
over the disarray of their discarded clothes to get to her bedroom door. “To the bathroom.”

“Oh, right.” Adrien remembered their conversation from earlier this evening now. “I can wait here
and go after you, then.”
“You should probably wait to go for a while after me. The main bathroom is right above my parents’ room and the more we space it out, the less chance there should be of waking them up.” Marinette noticed his sleepy nod with a smile. “You can go up to my bed to wait for me, if you want.”

“Thanks Princess.” Unlocking her bedroom door and opening it wide, Marinette quietly crept down the stairs to the level below. It was very dark but she knew her way around easily. Besides, it wasn’t furniture that she was currently looking around for. Soon her keen eye noticed Plagg and Tikki on top of the fridge, snuggled close to each other and already fast asleep. Satisfied that they looked content, she tiptoed across the floor and made her way to the living room door. Then she stealthily snuck through the hallway to finally make it into the bathroom, shutting the door and locking it safely behind her.

Flicking on the light, she breathed a sigh of relief. So far so good. Before she went to move she caught her reflection in the mirror and found herself grinning. Her hair was an absolute mess, coming out of her pigtails and splayed this way and that, but considering why it looked that way, she didn’t mind the look. Reminding herself that time was of the essence, Marinette quickly went to finish her business here and washed her hands, then it was time to make the trip back to her room.

As she was leaving the floor creaked beneath her feet and she froze, and waited for a good minute to pass before moving again. The rest of her trek went by without incident, and at last she was back in her room. She quietly closed the door behind her and locked it too, and when she turned around, she saw Adrien laying on her bed, still completely naked and already out cold. This didn’t surprise her at all though. Slipping off her bathrobe and draping it over the end of her chaise lounge, Marinette debated grabbing her PJs, but quickly decided to not to bother. The idea of sleeping together in the nude still made her blush shyly but the more that they did it, the more used to it she would become. Besides, she certainly did like the fact that getting to snooze next to her super model boyfriend sans clothes was a treat that was reserved for her eyes only.

So with that decided, she found her pants in the chaos on the floor to grab her phone and set the early alarm for tomorrow morning so he would be able to head home undetected, then set it on her desk. Then she climbed up the ladder to her bed as silently as she could so that she wouldn’t rouse Adrien. Marinette crawled up next to him and laid down, resting her head on his shoulder and curling her arm around his stomach. He stirred slightly though he didn’t wake, but in his sleep he instinctively wrapped a protective arm around her and cuddled closer to her. It brought a smile to her lips and a tender warmth to her heart.

Then she let her eyelids fall shut within a small yawn and within minutes, she had joined him in peaceful slumber.
Hey guys. Sorry about the three month disappearance. This summer was pretty rough for me, not gonna lie. Here are some of the major things that happened...

-Lost my Grandma (my Dad's step-Mom) in mid June. My Dad's family lives two provinces away from us (as that's where my Dad is from) and we couldn't afford to all go down for the funeral, so we missed it. We were going to try and have my Dad go, but since my Aunt (my Dad's older sister) had been diagnosed with cancer in the spring, he decided that he would go instead to spend time with his sister while she was still able.
-Lost my Aunt in mid July, exactly five weeks after my Grandma passed. This one hit my Dad even harder because it was so close together, and it was really tough to see him that broken, as he's always the one who supports me.
-My best friend lost her Mom at the beginning of August to cancer; while I wanted very much to go to the funeral to pay my respects and support my friend, the funeral was held on an acreage and due to my multiple severe animal allergies and asthma, I wasn't able to go. My best friend was completely understanding and very supportive of this but I still feel guilty about not being there.
-Had an incident happen at my main job a few weeks ago that still has me a little shaken up. Without going in to too much detail about what happened, I was verbally assaulted. And as someone with Anxiety Disorder, and who hates confrontation at the best of times, this has been haunting me for a while.

So I know I've been super inactive lately, but honestly I haven't even hardly been on my computer at all this summer. So I had the day off today and decided to write a little, and managed to finish off this chapter. It was nice to get back to, for sure, but I'll be honest I don't know when I'll be able to get the next one out after this one. At my main job we're preparing for inventory in a few weeks (which I'm in charge of this year), and one of my co-workers is getting married and going on her honeymoon right after at the exact same time my boss is going out of town to meetings, so for about a week and a half I'm going to be working crazy hours since we'll be short staffed. But hopefully it shouldn't be another three months in between chapters, at least! ^^; Anyway, please enjoy this chapter everyone!

When the alarm started blaring bright and early, there were two matching groans that sounded from Marinette’s bed. Adrien kept his eyes closed but could feel her start to move beside him, so he rolled over and covered her with his form. “Hey!”

“Five more minutes.” He cracked one eye open to look at her and noticed the look she was currently giving him with a sigh. “I know, I know.”

“Come on, you have to get going.” She insisted, though her heart wasn’t fully in it.

“Two more minutes then? Just to snuggle with you?” Both eyes open now, he summoned up his best puppy-dog look.

And of course there was no way for her to resist it, so she quickly caved. “All right, fine, but just for
two more minutes.”

“Hooray!” Adrien held her close to him, happy for getting any more time with her.

“You big goof.” Resting her forehead against his collarbone, Marinette could feel his breath tickle the hairs on top of her head. She let her hand rest on his hip and his did the same to hers, and she let herself shut her eyes for a moment to relish in the perfection of a moment like this. When she opened her eyes again she couldn’t stop herself from letting her gaze drift lower then where her hand was placed, and could feel her face start to heat up a bit already. Even at rest, he was a sight to behold.

Suddenly she felt Adrien shiver. “…Bugaboo?”

“What?” Marinette looked up at him.

“Not that I wouldn’t love to go another round with you again, but you might want to move your hand if you really want me to go home soon.” Adrien told her quietly with a bit of a grin.

When she looked back down she saw the hand that been on his hip had slid down to grasp his backside and her knee had drifted up between their legs. She hadn’t even noticed herself do it, so focused had she been in just enjoying the view. Blushing a rather dark hue, Marinette hastily scooted back from him. “Sorry, I didn’t mean to…”

“Hey, don’t be sorry.” Adrien put his arms around her again in a quick hug and kissed her forehead gently. “I don’t mind at all.” His grin soon made the change to a smirk though. “But I have to ask, were you staring?”

“I was not.” Marinette tried her best to deny, but her expression said otherwise.

“Uh huh, sure you weren’t.” Laughing, Adrien sat up and let his eyes wander over her body very obviously as he did. “And neither am I.”

Taking a playful swat at him, Marinette sat up herself while he just ducked and stuck his tongue out at her, then went for the ladder. Rubbing her eyes with a small yawn, she waited for him to get down before following his lead. She picked up her bathrobe from the chaise lounge and noticed Adrien pulling on his boxers. “Did you want to use my shower before you leave?”

“Nah, I can use mine when I get home. Less worry of waking someone up there.” He said while grabbing his jeans.

“Guess that’s the perks of living in a gigantic mansion and having your own private bathroom, huh?” Marinette teased, pulling on her bathrobe and going over toward her bedroom door.

“I happen to know for a fact that you like my shower, quite a bit actually, so I’m just going to pretend I didn’t hear that.” Adrien teased right back as he put on his shirt.

Rolling her eyes but grinning just the same, Marinette unlocked and opened the door and went downstairs quietly. She walked up to the fridge and lightly knocked against it to try and wake the kwamis still asleep on top of it. “Tikki!” In a half-whisper, half-shout, she called up to her bonded. “Time to get up!”

Tikki blinked her eyes open. “Good morning.” She said as she sat up, rubbing her eyes tiredly before patting Plagg where he lay beside her. “Wake up sleepyhead. We have to send Adrien home now.”

Plagg grumbled but did eventually get up, yawning loudly and floating down from the fridge to where Adrien stood behind Marinette, as he had now come downstairs as well. Tikki came down
soon after and took a seat on Marinette’s shoulder, and once Plagg had set himself on top of Adrien’s head, the four of them went back up to Marinette’s room.

“Are you awake enough yet to transform?” Adrien’s question received another incoherent muttering from his kwami, to which he just rolled his eyes. “Well you’d better wake up faster, we really have to get going home soon.”

“Before you go…” Marinette hesitated a moment, then followed through with her plan and went for her fabric stash. She sifted through the contents within to find another fairly long strip of graduation dress fabric, and then a shorter piece of brown material she had used for a sweater a couple years ago. One that would be a perfect blindfold size. Holding them tightly, she went back to Adrien and presented them to him while wearing a shy smile. “Here. Take these with you.”

The twinkle in his eye told Marinette he understood her intent exactly. “Sure.” He took the longest one first and tied it around his waist like a belt, then wrapped the shorter piece around his neck like a scarf. So now the magic of his transformation would consider them part of Adrien’s clothes and they would be hidden safely while he made the trip back home as Cat Noir. Marinette had originally had the idea of him putting them in the pockets of his suit, but since he had done this, she realized his plan and thought this was a much better idea.

“What are those for?” A still half-asleep Plagg peered down from Adrien’s head.

“Things.” Adrien replied simply, winking to a grinning Tikki and to Marinette, who was trying to keep herself from laughing.

But the black cat kwami still caught the meaning behind it and groaned. “Gross. I’m sorry I asked.”

“Sounds like someone’s awake enough now.” Adrien quipped, making Plagg sigh heavily and drift down from his former perch within his blonde locks. When he gave him a begrudging nod, Adrien held out his hand. “Claws out!”

As she had thought, the strips of fabric disappeared from view to be replaced by the black leather suit as the lights faded away from his form. He stepped close to her and Tikki respectfully floated off of Marinette’s shoulder as Adrien brought a clawed finger under her chin to tip his face up to his for a warm kiss. They allowed themselves a moment more of this before they forced themselves to separate. “I’ll see you later.” Marinette told him, smiling at his nod and two-finger salute, then watched him scurry up the ladder to her bed. He slipped out of the trapdoor with ease onto the terrace and she saw him grab for his staff, then he vaulted out of view.

“So I take that it you two had fun, then?” Tikki giggled at the soft blush that found it’s way to Marinette’s cheeks.

“Possibly.” Pulling out her hair elastics and shaking her head, Marinette ran her fingers through the still messy strands of her hair.

“I figured so.” Tikki flew up to Marinette’s bed and landed on the cat pillow. “I’m going to see if I can go back to sleep for a bit. Are you?”

“Nah, I think I’m awake for the day now.” The bluenette went to sit down at her computer and fire it up. “I’ll make sure I keep things quiet for you. It’s too early for breakfast and a shower just yet, so I’m just going to work on my computer until it gets closer to when I usually get up.”

She received an understanding nod from her kwami before she curled up on the cat pillow and closed her eyes. Turning back to her computer, the first thing she did was open up the Operation
Romance & Seduce file again. There were definitely some things she needed to add to it after last night.

After updating the file and browsing the Internet a while, Marinette decided to check the what the weather forecast was, and saw with some disappointment today and the next few days were supposed to be very hot and dry. Not only did she not personally like the heat, it often meant that the bakery was quiet as people went to cool off at swimming pools and get treats of the more frozen variety.

Checking the time, and deciding it was an acceptable time to start the day, she turned off her computer and went to grab some clothes. Tucking them under her arm and heading downstairs, Marinette slipped into the bathroom to have her shower. Once she had stepped inside and turned on the water, she shut her eyes and let it flow over her body. It was so relaxing to feel it run over her skin. After getting herself cleaned and both washing and conditioning her hair, she left the shower a short while later. She stood in front of the mirror to brush out her hair and found herself smiling as she watched her reflection.

It was true that it had been only a month and a half since everything had changed for her upon discovering Adrien’s secret identity as Cat Noir. But in that time, she knew she had changed quite a bit already. His patience with her shyness left her growing in confidence around him, and she could actually see a new spark in her eyes, with a self-assured ease behind her expression. It wasn’t only herself she could see the changes in either; Adrien had made several strides in communicating with his Father these last few weeks with the benefit of her support.

They really did complete each other. In so many ways. And she couldn’t be happier.
Chapter 97

Chapter Notes

Hey, at least it's only been two months since I uploaded a chapter and not three! ^^; I've been working crazy hours the last two months (a couple weeks were 40+) but I had this weekend off and I haven't left the house in two days AND I AM LOVING IT. xD I really needed the brain break. And not only that, now that season 2 has a few episodes out I've started watching and I'm really enjoying it so far! I've watched the first two, and I have something to say for each but I will do so as cryptically as I can so as to not give spoilers to anyone who hasn't seen them yet: episode one had me screaming "I KNEW IT!" and I have to admit Hawk Moth had such a great plan for that akuma; and episode two had me fan-girling so hard, it was epic!! <3

Needless to say, I had to take a break after the second one because I was feeling so inspired I wrote another chapter. And I decided to just upload it right now so I can get back to watching the next few episodes. =) But I do have lots of plans in the works so I'm glad getting new episodes has brought my muse lots of great material. Anyway, I hope you all enjoy!

Once she had finished her hair, gotten dressed and brushed her teeth, Marinette made her way upstairs. Her parents were already in the kitchen making breakfast, and looked pleasantly surprised to see her. “You’re up early today.” Tom observed as he held out a plate of toast while she walked by, to which his daughter grabbed a slice with a thankful nod.

“I told you I thought I heard the shower running before.” Sabine waved a spatula playfully at her husband with a grin in between stirring the eggs in the frying pan before her. “And you didn’t believe me.”

“Hey, I wasn’t blessed with super hearing like you obviously were. Instead I was gifted with an impeccable sense of taste, which makes me the greatest baker in all of France. But we all have our crosses to bear.” Tom sighed dramatically, making Sabine laugh.

Marinette smiled as she watched their exchange while nibbling on her toast. After grabbing herself some milk to drink and heading to the table, Tom and Sabine soon joined her with the rest of the toast and the omelets Sabine had been finishing. The family of three chatted jovially over their breakfast, which was something Marinette found to be quite the treat. Because of how late she was always up with patrol she never really got up with her parents anymore, so starting the day together like this was something she hadn’t gotten to do in a while. And it was a nice change.

Once all the food was gone and the dishes had all been brought to the sink to wash later, they all headed downstairs to the bakery together. Marinette set to work in the kitchen to help Tom start making some bread while Sabine got the shop area opened for business. As they were measuring ingredients, Marinette’s phone started vibrating with a new message. When she had finished cracking the eggs in her hands and poured them into the rest of the dough, she fished it out of her pocket.

~So remember that photo shoot I had to go to yesterday?

Apparently Adrien hadn’t gone back to sleep either. Marinette quickly typed out a short reply.
Yeah, what about it?

The photographer had a nasty cold, sneezing and coughing all day. He said he felt fine, that he was actually just getting over it now, but I still think he managed to infect me. o.- I slept for a bit when I came home but when I woke up again my nose won’t stop running. And of course I just found out from Father that I have to do some retakes with the same guy again later today, so that’s means I get to have another trip to be with the cesspool. X_x

~Uh oh. That’s not good. Do you think you’ll be okay?

~I hope so, because if I get too sick I won’t be able to help you with patrol.

That was all he was worried about? She couldn’t help but smile.

~Don’t worry about patrol, if you get sick I can handle it. Just get yourself some rest once you come back from the photographer’s.

~We probably won’t have to worry about it, I don’t feel that sick anyway. I’m not going to miss going on patrol just for a runny nose. I only wanted to give you a head’s up. Don’t think you can get rid of me that easily. =P

She clearly wasn’t the only one that was stubborn. Fine, if he wanted to insist on coming to patrol tonight then she would let him, but she would make sure she kept a close eye on him anyway.

~Okay. But keep me posted.

~Aye aye!

Slipping her phone back into her apron pocket and grabbing herself a measuring cup, Marinette got back to work on making the bread dough. But even as she worked, all through out the rest of the hot morning and sweltering afternoon that was (as she had predicted) quiet for sales, she kept thinking about Adrien. She idly thought that this was probably how he had felt back when she had had that terrible headache a couple of weeks ago.

The thing she was most worried about was him pushing himself too hard, much as she herself had done then. Just thinking about it made her stomach twists in little knots. Times in the past, when Adrien had gotten sick, she had always worried about him then too, but this wasn’t truly the same. In years previous, she was just quietly worrying about her crush from afar. Before it had been fretting and anxious awaiting for his recovery.

And of course, whenever she had heard from Cat Noir he needed to swap patrol days with her because he wasn’t feeling well, she had thought nothing of it. She felt bad for her crime-fighting partner, definitely, but at that time considered him a friend and nothing more, so the worry was of a different nature. It was more like some concern with an equal reassurance that everything would work out fine.

But she knew they were one and the same now, so all she wanted to do was go to him and be there for him. They were a couple now, and although this feeling still felt similar to what she had felt separately for Adrien and Cat Noir before, it also sort of didn’t. It was more pronounced, to say the least. And this was how she felt when he had the beginnings of a cold. Heaven help her if he came down with the flu.

Come to think of it, now that she thought back, the times Cat Noir was ill had lined up when Adrien was under the weather too, of course, but she had never made the connection then. It still blew her mind how completely unaware she had been all this time. But at least she had the consolation that
she hadn’t been the only one who hadn’t seen the blatantly obvious truth sitting right in front of her nose.

Finally the sales day was done, and Marinette told her parents to head up ahead of her and that she would take care of closing up. She snatched a few cookies for Tikki to put in her apron before she took care of all the closing tasks, then she made her way upstairs. She, Tom and Sabine were able to take longer (and therefore more filling) lunch breaks today since the customer flow had been less then steady, and with how hot the temperature still was, everyone opted for just relaxing for now and then each finding themselves something to eat once they were hungry.

So the bluenette grabbed herself a glass and filled it with ice before pouring in as much water as it would hold, then took it and an apple with her to her bedroom. It was fairly warm inside, so she set her snack onto her desk and cracked a window to get a bit of a breeze. “That feels nice.” Tikki said as she floated over, going to sit in front of the window and shutting her eyes with a contented sigh.

“Here.” Marinette grabbed Tikki’s plate and set it in front of her before filling it with the cookies from her apron so she would be able to eat there instead.

“Oh, thank you!” Her kwami zipped up to give her a little hug before sitting back down in front of her plate to nibble away at her cookies.

After slipping off her apron to hang on her mirror, she sat down at her desk chair and grabbing her sketchbook. She thumbed through the pages, admiring some of the earlier designs, until she finally came upon a blank one. Marinette grabbed herself a pencil and began to doodle, first a long coat and then a sundress, and continued on as several more pages became filled. In between this she easily finished off her apple and drained her water glass, and would have still continued drawing until her stomach gave a loud, impertinent growl.

Time to venture downstairs for a more filling option.

Upon arriving in the kitchen and opening the fridge to peer around at her options, she eventually settled on making heating up the leftover salmon and roasted potatoes from a couple nights ago. As she reheated them in the microwave she returned to her room to take her phone from her apron pocket, and noticed a new email from Jaguar, which she opened as she went back down the stairs.

~So guess what I just realized.

The microwave beeped to declare its reheating job to be complete, so Marinette took her plate from within and brought it over to the table before she went to make up her reply.

~What?

~Despite gloriously winning our bet, I never got my croissants. xD

Marinette groaned. She had completely forgotten. Her thumbs tapped nimbly across the screen while she got up to get herself something to drink.

~Shit. You’re totally right, I’m so sorry. I didn’t even think about them. I can bring them with me in my lunch box for patrol tonight.

~When you said yesterday that you wanted us to do things at your place so you didn’t have to worry about travelling with them? No way. I instead propose that this means I get to come home with you again tonight for snuggles and snacks. <3

A cup of iced tea in hand, Marinette was grinning as she sat back down in front of her food. She
allowed herself to take a few bites before making a new message.

~I’m going to run out of all the camembert I bought Plagg at this rate.

~Not necessarily, I should be able to just stay in the suit tonight. I’ll be heading home once I’ve had my fill of delectable pastries and of time with my love bug. ^^

~You had all of this planned out already, didn’t you.

~Maaaaaaybe. ;3

Laughing, she rolled her eyes. Of course he had.

~And somehow I’m not surprised. I’ll see you in a couple hours. Love you Jaguar.

~Love you too Spots! ^^ But you knew that. =P

Setting her phone down on the table, Marinette turned her focus back to her food. It didn’t take long for the salmon and potatoes to make a swift disappearance, just like her iced tea. Once she set her dishes into the empty sink, she returned to the table to check the time on her phone. It was still fairly early, so what should she do to fill in the time until patrol now?

Well, Alya had sent her the list of campsites nearby this morning while she had been working in the bakery. She hadn’t taken a look at any of their websites yet, so that could at least fill in some time for her. With that decision made, she went over to sit on the couch in the living room comfortably and browse through the names.

There was a list of requirements that she had mentally jotted down that the perfect campsite would have to meet. It would have to be close enough to Paris that she and Adrien could make a hasty return if need be should an akuma show up. However, she also wanted it to be in an area away from too many prying eyes or ears, so they would have the freedom to do whatever they wanted. She knew that it might be impossible to have such opposite needs being met at the same time, but maybe they would find one that would work.

Unfortunately, at least from the list of places Alya had sent her, it didn’t look like there was one that met both those criteria. But she had been expecting that. She could still try looking through various tourist and travel websites for somewhere that might work out for them. She sighed a little as she leaned back against the couch and closed her eyes.

Of course, it would be a lot easier to find a campsite if they didn’t have to worry about the city getting attacked by Hawk Moth. But they were the only ones standing in his way of taking over the city and reeking havoc. And as much as it often put roadblocks in planning things, both now and over the years, she wouldn’t change being Ladybug for even a second. Especially now, with how she knew her Cat Noir was also the love of her life.

Speaking of her kitty cat…

If he was going to be coming over after patrol tonight for those croissants, why not have some fun with it? As an idea formed, she got up off the couch and went to the kitchen cupboards. When she finally found what she was looking for, she grinned.

Time to prove Adrien wasn’t the only one who could be heart-meltingly romantic.
So...hi. ^^;

The last six months have been a whirlwind of chaos for me. Right before Christmas my Dad had a heart attack, and thankfully he's doing fine now, but it really shook me up. Shortly after the new year I got a promotion at my main job, meaning I now work full time there. I decided to still keep working at my second job too, since I'm only there one day a week, only to find out in April that our head office will be closing it down next February. I'll be getting a retention bonus for staying on, which I'm going to, but it still came as a major shock. I found out the guy I've had a crush on for almost two years plans on moving to Sweden someday, where his parents are from, and since didn't want to move cities with my ex I certainly wouldn't want to move countries. Which means that I had kinda put my love life on hold for almost two years for a chance at someone who it'll never work out with. So that kinda stung. It's not his fault, he doesn't even know I like him, and it's almost better this way so I didn't end up finding that out in the middle of a relationship with him, but I'm still upset about it. My best friend at my main job is also leaving, just giving her notice last week, so we have to train someone else to replace her. And since she gave her notice, my boss and I have been under a lot of stress and my boss kind of taking it out on me. It sucks, a lot, but I'm going to try and keep the peace because hopefully once things go back to some sense of normal, that'll stop. At least, I really hope so.

But anyway, as you can imagine, with all this going on I haven't really had time to write. Today was a particularly hard day for me so I decided to sit down and watch all the Miraculous Ladybug I was behind on (RENA ROUGE OMFG) and start writing again to try and let out this stress. And to try and make up for being gone for so long, I made this chapter longer then usual and I heaped it chockfull of fluff! It's a peace offering, so all of you, my loyal and patient readers, can hopefully forgive my absence. =) I hope you all like it. I sure missed you guys. <3

Once she had gathered the few things she needed and gone back up to her room, Marinette informed Tikki of her plan, and received an excited endorsement from her kwami. So the two of them worked together on getting everything set up, and when they finished they were both very happy with their handiwork. But it had taken them longer to complete then either of them had realized, so when they noticed the current time, there was a hasty transformation call and hurried departure from the Dupain-Cheng bakery into the night.

She could see Adrien standing atop the rooftop of the apartment building as she neared it, which she had expected with how late for patrol she was. He mimed pointing to an invisible watch as she touched down, tapping his foot with an impatient air that clearly wasn’t at all serious by the wide grin on his face. “I know, I know.” Marinette walked over to him as he folded his arms accusingly across his chest although his grin remained. “How many do I owe you?”

“Who knows? I could say whatever I wanted. You weren’t here, so I could’ve just gotten here five minutes ago, or I could’ve been there really early and been here for an hour.” Adrien looked very
amused. “So you’re just going to have to believe whatever I tell you.”

“I highly doubt that you’ve been waiting here an hour already.” Marinette poked his nose. “I’m only twenty minutes late.”

“Like I said, maybe I happened to be early today.” Looking like the cat that had just caught the canary, Adrien slowly looked her up and down with a look in his eyes that was both playful and sultry at the same time. “You’ll never know.”

“Well if I have to give you a kiss for every five minutes, and you were waiting an hour, that’s twelve kisses.” His grin widened and she rolled her eyes, but was smiling herself just the same. “All right, fine. If that’s what you insist you’re owed, then that’s what you’ll get. But after we’ve finished patrol. We’re already behind.”

“And who’s fault is that, hmm?” Adrien purred as he walked by, grabbing his staff and extending it with ease.

“You keep pushing it like that and I’ll have to revoke the surprise I have waiting for you at my house.” Marinette unhooked her yo-yo and saw him look at her with an intrigued look, so she knew that her trap had been set.

“Surprise?” The cat ears atop his head seemed to flicker forward as his curiosity had been sufficiently piqued, and even more so at her confirmation nod. “So I get snacks and snuggles with you and a surprise? You spoil me.”

It was Marinette’s turn to grin. “That I do.” She then pointed out over the horizon. “I think I’ll take the east half tonight, so you take the west half.”

“As you command, my liege!” Adrien gave a grand bow, making her laugh and lightly smack at his shoulder. Then the two of them went to either corners of the rooftop and headed off.

It seemed that the hotness that still clung to the air from earlier in the day was keeping any nefarious activity to a minimum. She could see several people in various backyard pools and out in parks, relaxing away the heat. That brought a thought to her – did the Agreste Mansion have a pool? It easily could have an indoor one somewhere, and though she hadn’t seen one in previous visits, it wasn’t like she had seen Adrien’s whole house. So it was entirely possible he had one. In fact, considering how vastly wealthy Gabriel Agreste clearly was, she would be more surprised if they didn’t have a pool somewhere. This was definitely something she would have to ask Adrien.

Making her way back to the apartment building fairly quickly, she decided to sit along the edge of the rooftop and let her feet dangle over the side. Staring out over the twinkling lights of her home city, she thought about how lucky she was to live here. Paris was often considered to be the fashion capitol of the world, so as an aspiring fashion designer, she couldn’t ask for a better place to grow up in. Not to mention, this is where the love of her life lived too. So there really wasn’t anywhere more perfect for her then here.

She could hear footsteps crossing the surface of the rooftop behind her, and soon Adrien was sitting down next to her. “I can never get over this view.” He said, letting his arm slip around her and holding her close.

“Me either.” Resting her head against his shoulder, Marinette let her own arm curl around his waist. “Hey, I have a question I wanted to ask you.”

“Shoot.”
“Do you guys have a pool?”

“It’s in the basement.”

Hunch confirmed. “I figured so.”

“And should I assume that you want to see said pool at some point now?”

“Well I haven’t even gotten a proper tour of your house yet, so you could just add it to the list.” Marinette teased.

That made Adrien chuckle. “Well excuse me for having other things on my mind every other time you’ve come over to see me.”

“You make it sound like every time I’m at your house it’s for distracting reasons.”

“It has!”

“Has not, I’ve also had a very successful supper with you and your father.”

“Yeah, once, and that night you came back so I could thank you for what happened during that supper, again…and again…” Now Marinette was the one who was laughing. “Anyway, maybe the next time that Father officially lets you come over, I could finally give you a grand tour.” Adrien mused aloud.

“I’d like that.” Swinging her legs up back over the rooftop and getting to her feet, she reached down to take his hand as he followed suit, then together they walked to the center of the rooftop so they could lay down and watch the stars.

They laid together like that for a while, just enjoying each other’s company, until it was Adrien who eventually broke the silence. “So…what’s my surprise?”

Grinning, she looked over at him. “It wouldn’t be a surprise anymore if I told you.”

“Fine, be that way.” Adrien crawled over top of her. “If you aren’t going to talk about it, then your mouth clearly isn’t otherwise occupied, and therefore you can start giving me all the kisses you owe me instead.” Marinette snorted with laughter from beneath him and he just gave a shrug and a cheeky smile. “Hey, come on, that’s some flawless logic.”

“Sure it is.” Marinette leaned up and pressed a kiss to his nose. Then she rolled them so she could gaze down at her beloved, noting his slightly surprised look with amusement while she set another kiss onto his forehead.

“Hey! Wait a minute! Don’t I get to pick where they go?” Adrien stuck out his lower lip in a deep pout.

Rolling her eyes as another grin tugged at her lips, she gave a nod. “If you insist.”

“I do insist.”

“There’s still ten to go, so choose away.”

Her boyfriend paused as if he was deep in thought before he pointed to both his left and right cheeks without a word. Marinette giggled and pressed a kiss to each side, and when she pulled back it looked like he was thinking hard again. “Are you running out of ideas already?” She teased.
“Not a chance. There are so many other body parts we haven’t gotten to yet.” Adrien winked at her and she just rolled her eyes. “I’m kidding. It wouldn’t be nearly as fun to get kisses from you on such places with the suit on. I’m just trying to decide on what the order should be.”

“Uh huh.” Quite amused, Marinette rested her chin in her hand to wait. “Take all the time you want. Keep waiting for your surprise, that’s fine by me.”

“Oh what the Hell, just go ahead and put them wherever.” Adrien relented, bringing back the pout from before. Though it was hard to maintain with the way she was smiling at him because it kept making him want to do the same. “I concede defeat.”

“About time.” Allowing herself a second to enjoy her victory, Marinette moved in to place two kisses along his neck, then moved her head to place two more over his left ear. His soft sigh and feeling him shiver beneath her made the decision easy to place three on to his right one in short order.

With now only one kiss remaining, Marinette pulled her head back enough to gaze down at him fondly. His eyes soon met hers and when they did, she let her hand rest on his cheek as she brought her lips against his, tenderly and delicately. He was blushing when they parted, wearing a small smile. “Wow.”

“You’re welcome.” Marinette wanted him to be on the receiving end of being showered with romance tonight after all the times he had done so for her, and it looked like things were going well so far. She set a bonus kiss onto his forehead before climbing off of him and getting to her feet. Sitting up and looking up at his beloved for a moment, Adrien eventually stood next to her and held her close. “I know you said my surprise was back at your house, but that was a wonderful surprise in itself.”

“Aww, I’m glad.” She returned his hug before grasping her yo-yo. “Then I think we should get going because now for the real deal, don’t you?”

“Definitely, I can’t wait.” His staff was extended with a quick twist, and the two superheroes started making the journey back to the Dupain-Cheng bakery.

When they landed on the terrace, Marinette purposefully stood in front of the trapdoor so he wouldn’t be able to look through. “Now close your eyes,” She instructed, to which he immediately obliged. Using her foot to open the trapdoor, she took one of his hands and guided him over to it. Letting go once they were right in front of it, she jumped down first and moved aside. “You can come in now.” He did open his eyes a crack to make sure he would make it through the trapdoor cleanly, before closing them back up and did as he was told. Grabbing his hand again and threading her fingers through his, she was beaming in excited anticipation as she told him, “Okay, open your eyes.”

Eagerly doing as he was told, Adrien’s jaw dropped at what he saw. The lights in Marinette’s room were off so the glow of about a dozen tea-light candles cast dancing shadows on the walls. Her computer was in sleep mode but a gentle classical melody was playing from its speakers. She had pulled her chaise lounge into the middle of room and set the container of croissants on it, and there was even a little jug she had filled with some paper flowers she must’ve had made herself, most likely what was contributing to her lateness earlier. But that wasn’t the main thought on Adrien’s mind at all. “Y-You did all this…?” He breathed, looking over at his girlfriend with wide eyes.

“Yeah! Well, I mean, Tikki helped too,” Marinette admitted, her smile turning a little shy now as her cheeks became a bit rosy. “I got the idea super last minute, so I needed her to help get things ready. I got the candles from the stash we keep if the power goes out, and we kind of winged it from there
together. We were going to use little paper scraps from the flowers to be like rose petals on the floor, and then we decided it would be too messy to clean up later, but I think it still looks okay without them, and…” She knew she was rambling but she couldn’t stop until Adrien leaned in to silence her with a kiss. And although that just made her blush even more, she returned it happily.

After they had separated, Adrien hugged her tightly. “I love it. Thank you.”

“You’re most welcome.” Marinette moved around him to reach up and shut her trapdoor, then slid down along the railing of the stairs from her bed to the ground below. “Spots off.” Lights surrounded her body as she strode across her room to the chaise lounge before revealing her form again as she sat cross-legged on the floor, looking up expectantly at her boyfriend. “So are you coming down here or what?”

“Oh don’t mind me, I’m just committing this amazing scene to memory.” Adrien followed her lead with a similar slide down the railing. “And thank you for your help with this too, Tikki.” He made a slight bow to his beloved’s kwami as he walked by, and received a wink in return as she zipped down to her own feast of cookies at the desk. After he sat down across from Marinette at the chaise lounge and opened the croissant container, he paused. “Actually, hold on a second…” Getting up again, he moved to the other side where she sat and plopped down behind her, so she now was sitting between his legs. Adrien rested his head on her shoulder, wrapped one arm around her waist and the other to grab a croissant. “There, much better.” He said before happily taking a bite of the pastry.

Marinette grinned and leaned back against him, loving the way that her body seemed to perfectly mold against his. “You’re right, this is much better.” But she looked up at him over her shoulder and poked his nose. “Just try not to get a bunch of croissant flakes in my hair.”

“Can’t make any promises, Princess.” Adrien proclaimed mid-mouthful, making Marinette giggle as she shut her eyes and wove her fingers through his sitting above her waist. The pair sat in comfortable silence for a long time as Adrien ate. One he had finished he took a quick glance at her hair and shoulder, luckily finding none, and breathed a soft sigh of relief. Then he slid his newly freed hand to join his other around her belly, allowed her second set of fingers to entwine with his like the others, and closed his eyes as well to let this all soak in.

This, right here and now, was perfection. All that mattered in this moment was him and the incredible woman he loved. Though she tried not to take all the credit, she had set this up for him, and that meant the world. The warmth, the comfort, the pure bliss he felt right now, and any time he was with her, was everything. He had waited a long time for this, to be with his Lady, and it had absolutely been worth the wait.

“Adrien.” Marinette’s voice made him open his eyes, and he noticed her looking up at him with a gaze in her eyes he idly imagined mimicked his own current gaze. One of unending and profoundly felt adoration.

“Yes-” He was about to say her name in kind, but couldn’t as her lips were suddenly on his, and her fingers were soon in his hair as she turned to face him. The lovers both shut their eyes once more and tightened their embrace, the kisses they shared slow and deep. Not a passionate fever, as a lot of theirs often were, but more of a sincere attempt to properly express their feelings for each other as words could often fell short of properly doing. It was leaving each of them breathless, but neither one wanted to stop.

When they finally had to succumb to the need for air, Marinette rested her forehead against his. “I…I love you.” Her words were spoken softly but there was no denying the truth behind them. “I love you so much.”
His smile was tender as he freed one of his hands to caress her cheek. “And I love you, Marinette. More then anything.”

They didn’t move again for several minutes more. Neither wanted to let the magic both of them were feeling to go, but all too soon Adrien forced himself to reach back and grab his staff to check the time on its screen out of the corner of his eye. It was definitely getting late already. Marinette must’ve seen the staff’s clock too, because she brought his attention back to her with a light peck to his cheek before letting go of him and leaning back against the chaise lounge. Though it pained her to see him go, she knew it couldn’t be helped. “It’s okay. I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“And tomorrow can’t come soon enough.” Adrien tried not to be too unhappy as he got to his feet and held out a hand to her as she stood as well. He hugged her tight one last time, allowed himself to kiss her once more, then he dutifully made his way over to the stairs to her bed. Climbing up them and opening the trapdoor, he glanced back at her longingly. “Good night.”

“Good night,” She echoed, and watched as he crept through the trapdoor and start to make his way home over the rooftops of Paris. Marinette sighed and wiped at the tears that had started to sting her eyes, taking a deep breath to steady herself. She felt a reassuring pat on the shoulder come from Tikki, which came as a bit of a surprise as she hadn’t even noticed come over, so she held out her hand for her to float closer to hug her kwami tight.

“The reason it hurts is because it’s true love.” Seeing her bonded nod, Tikki gave her another quick hug.

“I know.” Marinette turned toward her trunk where she had left her PJs, and Tikki respectfully flew up to bed to give her space as she got undressed. “And I know eventually we won’t have to be separated anymore.” Having finished changing, she went up the stairs and climbed into bed while Tikki got comfortable on the cat pillow next to her head. “And I know he doesn’t like it either.” Her eyes drifted up through the trapdoor Adrien had exited through moments before to look out at the few clouds amongst the stars. “So yeah, it really sucks right now, but that’s just going to make it so when we do finally be together all the time, it’ll feel even better.”

“Yeah, that’s the spirit!” Tikki was relieved to see Marinette smile at her.

“Thanks Tikki. I’ll see you in the morning.” Rolling over onto her side, the bluenette curled up under the covers and tried to fall asleep. It took a while though, as her mind kept drifting back to how wonderful tonight had been. She made a decision to definitely plan lots more romantic encounters like this in the future.

Operation Romance & Seduce was an ongoing mission, after all.
When morning came around and her alarm roused her from her slumber, Marinette realized that she’d forgotten to put away any of last night’s decorations. The playlist on her computer had long since ended, too. And, much to her horror, she had completely forgotten to put out any of the tea-lights, which had luckily burned out on their own with no issues. Silently thanking her lucky stars that she hadn’t managed to burn the whole house down, she got out of bed and went to work cleaning everything up before heading downstairs.

After her shower was finished and she had eaten some breakfast, she returned to her room to get dressed and grabbed her phone. When she checked it for messages, Marinette noticed a new email from Jaguar sent two hours earlier, making her arch an eyebrow. What was Adrien doing up so early?

~So it’s official…I caught the photographer’s cold. xP

Marinette started typing a reply as she headed back downstairs to the bakery.

~How bad is it?

~Right now it’s not too bad, since I took some cold medicine a while ago. I’ll be fine, it’s more annoying then anything else.

She had slipped on her apron and tied it around her waist before slipping her phone into the pocket. Waving to her Mom as she breezed by with an empty tray while Marinette started measuring out some ingredients, she could feel her phone vibrate again before she had even had a chance to make a reply to Adrien’s last message.

~But a good remedy for a sore throat is going for ice cream, wouldn’t you think?^^

~A rather weak excuse to go on another date to that ice cream parlor, but I’ll take it.

“So how’s Adrien today?” Sabine asked as she noticed Marinette had paused in her ingredient measuring to focus all her concentration on her phone.
Her mother knew her so well. She didn’t ask if that was Adrien, she just asked how he was. Marinette couldn’t help but smile. “He’s got a bit of a cold actually, so we were thinking of going for ice cream later to help his sore throat.”

“Aww, well tell him to feel better.” Sabine finished laying out the buns on her tray and picked it back up. “And feel free to go out for ice cream whenever you two want…but only if you bring some back for your father and I.”

Giggling, Marinette nodded. “Okay Mom. I think I remember seeing that they sell some of their ice cream by the tub, any preference on the flavor?”

“Surprise us.” Sabine called back over her shoulder as she walked back out into the shop area of the bakery.

Her phone had vibrated while she had been talking with her Mom but she had waited until Sabine had left to take it out of her apron pocket again.

~Come on, that’s our special place! It was our very first official date together! I’ll go there with you for any reason or no reason at all. <3

‘Such a romantic.’ Marinette grinned and set her phone down to get back to work.

It was another scorcher outside, and as such, another slow day for business. Though Sabine had given her the go-ahead to leave whenever she wanted, Marinette not only wanted to help out in the bakery as long as she could, but she also hoped that if Adrien wasn’t busy today, he would use this time to rest and try and get ahead of his cold. When it came time to close up shop for the day, the family of three retired upstairs to make a filling meal of pasta with a tasty cream sauce Sabine made from scratch. As she ate, Marinette noticed some dark clouds were starting to dot the sky, so if they wanted to go to the ice cream parlor tonight, they had better do it soon.

Tom offered to do the dishes, so Marinette made her way up to her room to take off her apron and give the cookies she had stashed in her pockets to a grateful Tikki. A quick wardrobe change later to get out of her floury clothes, and she was grabbing her phone again to open up her Inbox.

~I think the clouds are telling us we should get going on our date.

~Smart clouds. xD I’ll be there soon!

Once Tikki had polished off a couple cookies and had taken a comfy spot inside of her bonded’s purse, Marinette made her way downstairs and bid her parents a quick goodbye before heading down to the side entrance to the Dupain-Cheng abode to await Adrien’s arrival. She didn’t have to wait long, unsurprisingly, until there was an upbeat series of knocks, and a grin slid its way over her face as she answered the door. “So were you just waiting in your foyer the whole time?”

“I was not.” Adrien feigned innocence for only a moment before adding, “I sat outside on the front stairs once supper was over.”

Laughing and shaking her head, Marinette put her hands on her hips and tried to look as stern as possible. “You need to take it easy if you want that cold to keep from getting any worse.”

“Hey, I was just taking a moment to enjoy the nice weather. And besides, fresh air is good for you.” Adrien pressed a kiss to her forehead and pulled one of her hands from her side so he could use it to start lightly tugging her along. “Now stop stalling bugaboo, I’ve been looking forward to this all day!”
There was no resistance from his girlfriend of course, so once the door was shut behind them, the couple left the bakery behind them and started the leisurely walk towards the ice cream parlor. Though his usual playfulness had not changed in the slightest, Marinette could definitely pick up on the slight rasp that had developed in his voice since last night. She knew he didn’t want her to worry about it, and she was trying, but she would definitely be keeping tabs.

About an hour later and they had arrived, seeing lots of people milling about outside already enjoying various frozen treats. The inside of the parlor was full of people as well, though thankfully the line was moving fairly steadily. Adrien bought himself a strawberry milkshake while Marinette bought took a double scoop of cookie dough in a waffle cone, as well as buying tub labeled ‘lemon meringue pie’. When the cashier asked if she would like to purchase an insulated reusable bag to take it home in, she realized it quite likely melt before they were halfway home without one, so she added that to her order as well. They each paid their respective bills, let Marinette take a moment to slip the tub into her new bag, then they headed outside once again to start the trek back.

“I think I might have to try some of this once Mom and Dad crack it open,” Marinette decided aloud once she was mid-way through her cone.

“Lemon meringue pie definitely sounds good.” Adrien agreed after polishing off the last of his milkshake. “And if it is, can I come over and share some?”

“Oh, probably, I don’t think they’d mind.”

“And if for some reason it’s not, can I still come over anyway?”

He would never get tired of hearing her laughter. “At this point I probably should’ve seen that one coming.”

“Is that a yes?”

She was still giggling as they came up to another street corner and stopped to wait for the light to change so they could cross. Adrien dropped his empty cup into a nearby trashcan and hooked his newly freed hand around her waist, setting a kiss to the top of her head. Marinette leaned up to return the favor and peck his cheek, when an abrupt low rumble of thunder in the distance made her glance skyward. “I hope we can beat that home.”

“It doesn’t sound too close yet so I think we should be fine.” The crossing light changed and they quickly crossed the street, though they both started walking a little faster over the sidewalk as well.

Luck seemed to be on their side for now however, and they managed to make it back to Marinette’s before any of the imminent rain had started to fall. Eating up the last of her waffle cone as she shut the door behind them, the bluette mimicked the dragging motion that had been done to her here earlier. “Here, how about you come upstairs with me so I can get this ice cream in the freezer right away?” It wasn’t like she had to ask, of course, but the way his face lit up and the eagerness of his nodding warmed her heart.

Tom and Sabine weren’t in the family room, so Marinette went straight to the kitchen to put away the ice cream. “Aww, I wanted to say hi to your parents,” Adrien sighed a little. “I love talking to them.”

“They must have gone out somewhere, Dad’s shoes and Mom’s sandals weren’t by the door anymore.” Marinette finished rearranging the inside of the freezer to make room for the ice cream and glanced back at him with a smile. “That’s really sweet of you though. And they love talking to you too, by the way.”
Once it was inside and she had set the now empty reusable bag on a counter, a quick flash of light across the sky from out the windows was followed by another ominous booming. “I wonder if the weather gets too bad if I could stay the night…” Adrien mused aloud, casually setting his hands over her hips. “That way I would be able see your parents when they got back and I’d get more time with you. Preferably, more time with you in your bed.” He added casually, smirking like a Cheshire cat.

“You and I both know that your father would never let you knowingly stay overnight at my house.” Marinette was beginning to smirk too now, though. “Besides, you only live like a block away.”

“But what if it starts pouring rain?”

“Nathalie probably would send out a ride to come and get you.”

“Do you always have to be the voice of reason?”

“One of us has to be.”

Suddenly, a loud crashing sound split the air both outside and in, and it definitely was not the sound of thunder. Sharing a knowing glance, they ran to the nearest window to look for the source of the noise and easily spotted what they had both suspected to be the cause. A cloaked figure hovered in mid air, a black butterfly emblazoned on the billowing cape, and with a simple lift of a hand was causing the surrounding cars to crush in on themselves like soda cans.

Plagg had floated already out from Adrien’s shirt pocket and groaned at what he saw. “Right now? Really?” He wailed. “You know the second we go out there that’s when the storm’s going to start and I hate getting wet!”

“Sorry buddy, but we’ve got no choice here.” Adrien held up his hand toward his pouting kwami as Marinette was shutting her purse up after Tikki, who had just flown out from inside it. “Duty calls.” Knowing that his bonded was right, of course, Plagg just sighed heavily and answered with a short nod.

“Tikki, spots on!”

“Plagg, claws out!”

The two superheroes sped up the stairs to Marinette’s room and slipped inside, then dashed up to her trapdoor. Poking her head out first to make sure the akuma victim wouldn’t see them come out together, it was with a bit of surprise Marinette saw the figure had already floated a fair distance away. “Hurry, before they get too far,” She whispered, offering Adrien her hand to help him through the trapdoor before closing it up behind him. “With that kind of power, we can’t afford to lose them.”

“Way ahead of you, lovebug.” Adrien had his staff extended in an instant and started vaulting onto the nearest rooftop.

Marinette unhooked her yo-yo and was about to follow his lead when a droplet of water splashed down onto her nose. Looking up, she saw that the heavens had at last started to open with more and more raindrops beginning to fall, just as Plagg had predicted. And not only that, the skyline flashed again and the thunder that followed sounded unsettlingly close.

So they were going to need to finish this fast.
HAPPY SECOND BIRTHDAY TO MY FANFIC! =D AND HAPPY CHAPTER 100!!

Man, this was a whale of a chapter to write. I tried super hard to write a more high-stakes akuma battle, and it came out extra long (my longest chapter of the story to date!), so I really hope it came out well. <3 I'm off to bed now though, so I hope you all enjoy, and thanks to all of you for supporting me this far! Here's to another 100! ^^

Thankfully the rain wasn’t falling too hard so far, and it didn’t take her long to catch up with Adrien. When she found him, he was standing atop the roof of a restaurant, with the akuma victim standing at the other end.

“There she is,” Came the low, soft voice of the cloaked figure once she stepped down onto the rooftop. “Glad you could make it.” The voice, definitely masculine, sent an unpleasant chill over her spine. “Now that you’re both here, the real show can start.”

Marinette could get a better look at him now. Beneath his deep purple cloak he wore a charcoal grey shirt with black pants and shoes. As he pulled the hood away from his face, she saw he had safety goggles on and his hands were enveloped in sturdy-looking gloves with metallic bracers that went from his wrists to elbows. Which was awfully plain for an akuma, she noticed. Usually their designs were much more flashy. So why did these lack of details make her so nervous? There was something about this guy did not give her a good feeling. “Well then, what’s your story?” She asked casually, trying to see if she could get him to lower his guard.

“I know what you’re trying to do, you know.” The man folded his arms across his chest. “So sure, I’ll give you my name: it’s Chaos. But I’m sorry, other then that I’m not really much of a talker.”

“Come on, you’ve got to have some sort of reason to be joining up with Hawk Moth like this, right?” Marinette stepped forward, which made Chaos tense. When he did, the rooftop beneath their feet trembled and made the puddles forming around them ripple with the vibrations. The levels of power his akumatization had given him was obviously extremely strong – stronger then most others they had faced over the years. If those previous battles were any indication, it would be imperative they get him away from densely populated areas to keep anyone from getting hurt.

When she went to try and take another step forward though, Adrien held out his staff to stop her. “Be careful, LB,” Adrien warned.

“It’s all right, I’m sure we can talk about this rationally and find some common ground,” Marinette said as calmly and confidently as she could to Adrien, who still looked worried, before turning her attention back to Chaos. “I promise, whatever it is you’re struggling with, we can help you.”

Holding out a hand to the side, Chaos raised his fingers and suddenly Adrien rose about a foot into the air with a surprised yelp. “Cat Noir!” Marinette tried desperately to reach up to grab her partner’s staff but out of the corner of her eye she saw Chaos move again. His other hand had followed suit and just like that, she became airborne now as well, with a wall of magic enveloping every inch of
her form and knocking the air from her lungs.

“You want to talk so bad?” Chaos looked up at them with a wicked grin. “Then let’s go somewhere with a better view, shall we?”

Their captor’s feet lifted off and he started to fly away, and with a lurch Marinette and Adrien began following behind him, like they were being dragged along by invisible ropes. The rain whipped against their bodies as they flew upward, the higher elevation not only increasing the wind speeds around them but putting them closer to the angry clouds and the dangers they themselves held. Soon it was apparent that Chaos was heading for the Eiffel Tower, which in this weather would be a giant lightning rod. The crime fighters locked eyes and Adrien mouthed, ‘What are we going to do?’ But Marinette, at least for right now, had no answer to give him.

Chaos touched down on the uppermost deck of the tower and forced his hostages to sit side by side against the metal before warping some of it around them to serve as unmoving restraints. At this height the metal against their backs felt ice cold, with the winds still blowing hard so the rain pelted over them all like the beating of a drum. Not seeming the least bit fazed by the weather, however, Chaos leaned against the railing and looked out at Paris around them. “This city that you try so hard to protect? I want to see it burn. I want to see everything burn around me.” He gazed back at Marinette and Adrien who immediately stopped struggling against their bonds when he did. “So when he offered to give me the power to destroy anything and everything I want, I said sure. Now how about you ask me why.”

There was a deliberate pause so when they didn’t answer he frowned, and the metal surrounding Marinette and Adrien started tightening. “Okay, okay! Why?” Adrien responded quickly, grimacing under the level of pressure being pressed against him.

Another pause, then Chaos knelt in front of Adrien. He held his gaze for a painfully long second, then another, until the akuma’s wicked grin from earlier returned and Adrien had to swallow a lump that started to form in his throat. Then Chaos reached out and cupped his hand under Adrien’s chin, making him freeze. “Why what?”

“Don’t touch him!” Marinette shouted, struggling all the harder to free herself, which earned her another tightening of the metal around her.

Marinette managed to reach her hand over enough to tap Adrien’s hand, and did it again when she felt his ring, praying he would know what she was implying. She knew he would have to say the incantation for his Cataclysm without Chaos noticing him do it somehow, so he was going to have to get him to keep focusing his attention on the conversation more then the words being spoken in it. As much as the thought made her skin crawl. “Why do you want to do this?” Keeping his voice as even as possible, Adrien’s fingers curled around hers for a brief moment, and Marinette could only hope that it meant that he had understood her silent message.

“Better.” Chaos crooned, clearly enjoying this. “I want to do this because the world has screwed me over one too many times.” Releasing his hand from Adrien’s chin, he started holding out his fingers to count things off as he listed them. “In the last month, I’ve lost my job, because the company I worked for went bankrupt. And when I tried asking my landlord for an extension on my rent since I don’t have a steady income for the time being, he kicked me out of my apartment. And, to top it all off, I just found out my mother was in a car accident this afternoon and is in critical condition…in Dublin, where she was on vacation. Which, if you’ve been following along, means I don’t have enough money to be able to buy a plane ticket and go to see her.” The sneer from before disappeared with a look that was raw pain. “I’d be nothing without all the things she sacrificed for me over the years. If she doesn’t make it and I don’t get say goodbye, I don’t know what I’ll do.”
Though her heart ached for this poor man, it now made sense why he seemed to have no care for anything around him, or even for himself. He probably felt like he had nothing left to lose. And his akumatization was a reflection of that – a plain costume but seemingly limitless powers to obliterate as a release for the anger, betrayal and suffering he was feeling. “But will causing all that damage change anything?” Marinette asked, her heart skipping a beat as a streak of lightning lit up the clouds to her left. They really had to get out of here, and soon.

“Change anything? No.” Chaos tightened his hand into a fist and the Eiffel Tower shuddered. “Make me feel better? Hell yes.”

“I don’t think it will actually.” Adrien’s words diverted Chaos’s attention to him and the deck beneath them stopped shaking, making him suppress a sigh of relief. “Trust me, I know all about the allure of powers of destruction. I have them too. And I can say from experience that it’s a big burden.”

“What do you know?” Chaos scoffed.

Deciding to take a chance, Adrien hoped this would work. “There’s been times over the years I’ve thought about how easy it would be to just make all my problems magically disappear. I know it would be abusing my ability, but when you have moments where it feels like nothing’s ever going to change, it can seem awfully tempting.” He made a nod past the railing toward the city below them. “Look at all those buildings.” Chaos turned his head, and Adrien knew this would be his best shot. “A lot of those are homes, filled with innocent people. Families. I would have no right to tear my way through Paris and ruin their lives because I was having issues in mine. Sure, it would be easy. One Cataclysm—” Because he was turned, Chaos didn’t notice the black light that flashed behind the blonde at his words, and Marinette silently thanked their lucky stars for Adrien’s quick thinking. “And I could make anything I wanted turn to dust in an instant. But for what?”

His gaze still fixed on the expanse of Paris in the distance, Chaos stood once more and rested against the railing again as if he was deep in thought. Marinette had been expecting the metal around Adrien to crumble on cue, so she was surprised when it was the piece surrounding her that disintegrated instead. ‘Why?’ She mouthed at him, though she still got up as silently as she could to start making an escape.

‘Go!’ Adrien mouthed back before starting to speak to Chaos again to try and buy her more time. “Those people deserve better. That’s why I decided to use my powers, even though they could so easily be used to hurt them, to protect them. I know Hawk Moth wants you to take my Miraculous, and Ladybug’s too. So if giving over them to you is what it’s going to take to keep all the families down there safe, then we can work something out.”

“Honestly I don’t really care that much about getting them to Hawk Moth.” Chaos admitted with a bit of a shrug. “I’ll get them when I get them. It’s not a top priority.”

When she managed to sneak away far enough away to hopefully not be heard, only then did Marinette dare to whisper, “Lucky Charm!” When the magic had dissipated, a long red and black industrial-strength magnet dropped into her outstretched hands. How was this supposed to help her? The magnet was powerful, yes, but it definitely wouldn’t be enough to move the metal that still trapped Adrien. Her heart sank and her mind was racing. She still didn’t even know where the akuma was hiding yet. Not only that, Adrien’s transformation was now on a narrow time frame. What on Earth was she supposed to do?

Meanwhile, Adrien had been keeping the conversation going as best he could. “Okay, forget that for now then. Look at what you can do! You can fly! What about using your powers to get you to your
A dry, humorless laugh. “Fly across the ocean to Ireland? You’re crazier then I thought you were.” Chaos reached into the pocket of his pants and pulled something out that Adrien couldn’t see with a bit of a sigh. Adrien started hoping this had begun to make a breakthrough when his blood ran cold as the first loud beep of his ring picked this moment to begin. Chaos stiffened at the sound. “Or desperate…” He turned, and when he saw that Marinette was gone, whatever had been in his hand was quickly returned to his pocket so he could fold his arms across his chest. “You really shouldn’t have done that.”

“We can make things better for you, please just let us help.” Adrien pleaded as Chaos walked closer to where he was still trapped.

“All right, Ladybug!” Chaos bellowed as he raised a hand in the air. With a whine of warping metal, the pieces bent around Adrien snapped away and before he could move, the blonde was suspended in mid-air again. “You’d better come out!”

From where she was hidden, Marinette could see everything happening. She wanted so badly to help Adrien, but she still had no plan. The bluenette tucked the magnet under her yoyo string around her waist, wracking her brain for an idea while wiping her thoroughly soaked bangs away her face. As she did, at last the beginnings of a plan started to take shape, though she still had no clue what to use the magnet for.

“Don’t worry about me, I’m fine!” Adrien called out to wherever she was hiding.

“Not for long.” Chaos used his free hand to reach in his pocket again and pull out what he had been holding before: a pocket watch, which was currently a vivid shade of purple. With a click of the button at the top of the watch, the cover popped open and he glanced at the time. “You’ve got exactly ten seconds to get out here, or I’m going to throw your partner over that railing!”

Finally, she knew where the akuma was located now. And when another fork of lightning blazed across the clouds, Marinette noticed how the light bounced off the bracers on Chaos’s arms. Hoping they were at least partly made of real metal, she quickly pulled her hair elastics out of her pigtails so her hair hung around her face, then she moved out of her hiding spot to where she could easily be seen. “I’m right here.” Holding out her hand, her fist was closed tight around her hair elastics but since they couldn’t be seen under her fingers, this was where she needed to sound convincing. “If you put him down, you can have my Miraculous.”

Arching an eyebrow, Chaos studied her intently. With her hair down he couldn’t see her ears, so he couldn’t know for sure her earrings were truly out. But on the other hand, he didn’t think that Ladybug would be the type to possibly gamble Cat Noir’s life on a bluff. Would she? Thunder boomed all around them as Chaos put his pocket watch away and held out his hand to her. “Give them to me.”

Taking a deep breath, Marinette started walking slowly. Her eyes drifted up to Adrien for a split second, and she could see the concern on his face. When she was about a foot away from them, with a quick motion she grabbed the magnet from her waist and she jumped toward Chaos. She barrelled into him with such force, it knocked both of them back into the railing, and over the edge.

“Ladybug!” Marinette could hear Adrien scream as he dropped to the deck when Chaos’s power left him. But she couldn’t focus on that right now. She slammed the magnet on top of one of Chaos’s bracers and his other arm snapped against it. And though he struggled hard against them, he couldn’t get his arms apart. It seemed to be the source of his powers too, because they were freefalling now and he was making no moves to fly away. Next Marinette dug into his pocket and grabbed his
pocket watch. Once she had taken it, she unhooked her yoyo and tossed it to swing around the nearest beam of the Eiffel Tower, held on to Chaos’s waist and when her yoyo string went taut, she swung the two of them to safety on the observation deck.

The second they landed, she dropped the pocket watch and stomped it to pieces under her heel, and purified the akuma the second it emerged. She plopped down with a relieved sigh as purple magic hid Chaos from view before disappearing to leave the man he truly was behind. The magnet dropped to the ground as the man spluttered against the rain, wiping water from his face. “What’s happening?”

“Hold that thought.” Marinette picked up the magnet and got back to her feet to toss it into the air. “Miraculous Ladybug!” The pink and red lights flew off into the night to fix everything Chaos had broken and she held out a hand to the confused man sitting before her. “What’s your name?”

“Samuel,” He answered, taking her hand and standing as well.

Picking up the now repaired pocket watch, Marinette noticed the engraving on the back. ‘Happy 30th, Sam! Love, Mom’. She held it out to him. “I think this is yours.”

“My watch…” Samuel took it from her and held it close to his heart, a look of anguish crossing his face. “My mother, she…”

“Come on, let’s get you down.” Marinette grabbed Samuel’s free hand and used her yoyo to swing them all the way to the ground. “Look, I know things seem really bad right now but I swear they’ll get better.” He gave her a half-hearted nod, so although she wanted to get back up to Adrien as soon as she could, she decided to say one more thing. “I’ll talk to some friends of mine. If you stop by the Tom & Sabine Boulangerie Patisserie tomorrow, they can get you something to eat. Okay?”

“I don’t deserve your kindness.” Samuel mumbled, his gaze focused on his shoes.

“Wrong. Everyone deserves kindness.” Her words must’ve struck a chord in him because it made him look back up at her with a bit of awe. “Now promise me you’ll go there tomorrow.” This time the nod he gave her was a firm one. “Good. Do you have somewhere to stay tonight?”

“My friend Denis has been letting me stay over at his place.” Samuel replied.

“Then you should probably get going. I bet he's worried about you being out in this storm.” Marinette waved goodbye to Samuel, then at last she was able to start swinging her way back up the Eiffel Tower to Adrien.

When she arrived, his transformation had already timed out but with the height they were at, he didn’t have to worry about anyone seeing them. So he wasted no time in enveloping her in the tightest of hugs. Smiling a little, Marinette knew her very well that own transformation wasn’t going to last much longer either, but she returned his hug anyway. “You have got to stop scaring me like that.” He murmured into her neck.

“Sorry.” Marinette was a little surprised when he moved to kiss her deeply, and as much as she wanted to continue, her earrings let out what she believed to be their second or third beep. “We really need to get going.” She said once they separated.

“I know.” Adrien moved around her to hook his arms around her shoulders like she had after their battle with Maestro. Marinette grabbed her yoyo again, and once she was sure he was secure, she began the slow trek back to the Agreste Mansion.

By the time they arrived it seemed like the storm was slowing down a bit, as the winds were calming
and the rain wasn’t hammering against them nearly as hard as it had been before. She let Adrien reach around her to push open one of his windows, then she swung them inside. Plagg immediately flew out from Adrien’s shirt pocket and shook himself off in a manner that was akin to a dog. “What did I tell you guys about that rain?” He wailed, diving towards Adrien’s couch and rolling around on the cushions to try and get himself as dry as possible.

Adrien rolled his eyes. “Here, I’ll get us some towels.” He said as he made his way to his bathroom while Marinette shut the window back up so no more rain could fly in.

Gazing out at the gradually weakening storm, she soon felt a fluffy towel against her arm so she took it to start rubbing her hair dry. When she heard Adrien start to cough behind her, however, she moved the towel from her head and looked back at him worriedly. He had a large towel draped around his shoulders, but even from here she could see that he was shivering. If he caught a chill like this, his cold was only going to get worse. “You need to get yourself warmed up.”

“Yes doctor.” Adrien gave her a small smile. “A warm shower should do the trick.”

“Which you can take by yourself!” Plagg immediately piped up from the couch, making the Humans around him laugh.

There was another loud beep from Marinette’s earrings, and Adrien glanced at her ears. “You’ve still got one spot left.” He told her. “That should be enough to get you back home.”

She wanted to stay longer but she knew that she couldn’t risk it. Tossing him her towel, Marinette pushed the window back open again. “I love you.”

“Love you too.” Adrien blew her a kiss and watched her unhook her yoyo and swing off. He took their towels back into his bathroom and peeled off his soaked clothes, then stepped into the shower and turned on the warm water. He hadn’t wanted to let on around Marinette too much, but ever since his transformation had ended, he had felt chilled to the bone and everything ached. So he hoped that standing under the running shower would help, although he wasn’t too sure it would at this point.

But he didn’t want to make his Lady worry, so he did as he promised. Besides, even if his cold did end up getting worse, Paris was still safe for another day. So was Marinette. And for right now, that was all that mattered.
Managing to land by the side door before the last dot on her earrings vanished and her transformation melted away, Marinette was glad no one was out in this storm to see her. Shielding a tuckered Tikki with one hand and digging around her purse for her keys with the other, the bluenette was finally able to unlock the door and hurried them inside. Closing the door right behind her and locking it behind her, she leaned back against the wood for a second to catch her breath.

“Your parents are home,” The soft voice of her kwami brought Marinette’s gaze toward the shoes to her left.

“Here’s hoping they don’t notice me come in.” Dropping her keys into her purse and letting Tikki float inside before shutting it back up, she kicked off her own (rather soggy) footwear before making the climb up the stairs.

The door to the bathroom was closed when she went by and she could hear the tub running, so she would have to take a new one from the linen closet instead. She opened up the closet and grabbed one large and one small towel, then tucked them under her arm to carry with her up the next flight of stairs. When she entered the family room, Sabine was sitting at the kitchen table idly reading a magazine, in a chair that faced the doorway of course, so there was no way Marinette was going to be sneaking past and up to her room undetected.

It was easy for Sabine to tell the steps of her husband and her daughter apart, so she knew who walked in without having to look at the door. “There you are!” Setting down her magazine and gazing up, Sabine’s eyes widened when she saw how soaked her daughter was and she rushed to her side as mothering instincts kicked in. “You’re drenched! What happened?”

“Got caught in the storm, that’s all.” Marinette’s response was muffled as her mother had taken one of the towels she’d been carrying and had tossed it over her head to start rubbing her hair dry. “I’m fine Mom, really.”

“You didn’t take an umbrella with you?” Wrapping the towel around Marinette’s shoulders now, Sabine looked at her in mild confusion. “We saw the ice cream in the freezer when we got home so you two must have gotten back before it started.”

Well, she was right about their arrival time, but Marinette couldn’t elaborate on any details that came afterward, so her brain went into overdrive for a believable explanation. “We did, but I wanted to walk Adrien home for all the times he has for me. It wasn’t raining then so I didn’t think to grab one.” Seeing there were more questions on her mother’s face, she went on. “It started to once we got
to Adrien’s and we tried waiting it out but it didn’t seem to be stopping, so I decided to come home now before his father might have noticed me there without his permission.”

Sabine pursed her lips in a slight frown. “You really should’ve borrowed an umbrella from Adrien, then. You could get really sick if you end up getting a chill from ending up being so soaked like this.”

“I know. You’re right, I’m sorry.” She hated making her worry, but there wasn’t much more Marinette could tell her beyond this. “I promise I’ll go get changed right away and finish getting all dried off, okay?”

“Take an extra blanket with you.” When she and Tom had watched their movie the other night, they had brought a fleecy one up from their room to snuggle under while it played, so Sabine took it from where it was still hanging over the back of the couch to give to Marinette. “And if at any point you feel like you can’t get warmed up, feel free to make yourself some of my ginger tea. I just bought some more when we went shopping last so we have lots now.”

“I will. Thank you.” She honestly didn’t feel even cold right now, just rather wet, but Marinette knew her Mom was only being overprotective like this because she was concerned. So she took the blanket and once she gave her a brief appreciative hug, she then went straight up to her bedroom at long last.

Dropping the blanket to the floor, Marinette opened her purse and handed the small towel to Tikki as she flew out. “Sorry about all of that.” She said as she began getting undressed. “You didn’t get too cold having to wait in my purse like that, did you?”

“Nah, I’m all right.” Tikki told her while getting herself snuggled into the fuzzy towel.

After she had gotten into her PJs and deposited her sodden clothes into her laundry basket, she pulled out from her pigtails to finally properly dry her hair. When she felt it was sufficiently dried, she draped the towel over the back of her chaise lounge and sat down in her desk chair as Tikki floated alongside to plop down in front of her cookie plate. Her kwami was still bundled in the towel so reaching for a cookie was a bit of a challenge, making her bonded chuckle and pass one to her. Glancing out the window and seeing the rain still fell against the glass but at a much slower pace, she hoped that meant the worst of the storm had officially passed Paris by.

She turned on her computer and after browsing several different websites, decided to slip in a DVD to watch until it was time for bed. Originally she had only planned to watch two episodes of the show’s new season she had chosen, but a thrilling plot arc became unearthed that captured her attention and before she knew it, the next time Marinette looked at the computer’s clock it was after 2 AM and Tikki had long since curled up fast asleep in the towel beside her cookie plate.

Cursing under her breath, she shut down her computer and carefully picked Tikki up to carry her kwami with her as she climbed the stairs to bed. After she had carefully set Tikki down onto the cat pillow, Marinette climbed under the blankets and closed her eyes. It took her a while to fall asleep, but eventually the light tapping of the rain against the trapdoor above her helped her to nod off.

That was, of course, until a second storm rolled into town and the bouncing cadence made by dozens of hail pellets against the glass woke her sometime after 4 AM. A frustrated groan and an irritated yank of the covers over her head later, she had bunched them around her ears as best she could and tried desperately to fall asleep again. It took some time, but the hail thankfully didn’t last too long so Marinette was able to doze off within about half an hour of Mother Nature’s rude awakening.

Another few hours was all she was able to achieve though, as all too soon, her alarm was going off
to prepare her to help in the bakery. Thoroughly frustrated and more then a little bit grouchy by now, the bluenette threw off her blankets in a huff and went down to turn off her phone’s innocently yet infuriatingly cheerful beeping with a heavy sigh. It was certainly not a restful night’s sleep but it would have to do.

Especially once she remembered the promise she had Samuel make to her last night at the Eiffel Tower. If she was lucky, he would follow through and come in to the bakery some time today, so she put her fatigue on the back burner for now and went downstairs to start getting ready for the day. Marinette showered and ate breakfast quickly, as she wanted to be in the bakery as soon as she could in case he did come.

When she got dressed and grabbed her phone she noticed that she didn’t have anything new in her Inbox. Hoping this meant Adrien had had a better night sleep then she had, Marinette decided it would be a nice change for her to email him first for once so she unlocked her phone to start an email as she left her bedroom behind.

~Morning, kitty cat! Just so you have a head’s up, I tried to convince last night’s akuma to stop by the bakery today so I can get him set up with some good food. I hope I don’t sound too crazy, but the poor guy seemed like he really needed a break.

The first thing she did when she got into the bakery kitchen was get started on a hearty batch of oatmeal raisin muffins. If Samuel did come by today, she wanted to have something both filling and healthy to give to him. And if he didn’t, muffins were something they sold everyday anyway so they wouldn’t end up going to waste.

Her first two trays of muffins were cooking in the oven when she felt her phone vibrate. She brought it out and turned it on, and when she unlocked it and read the message in her Inbox, her eyebrows arched in surprise.

~Okay

That was it? Adrien had never sent her anything that wasn’t a full sentence. Concern creasing lines across her forehead, her thumbs tapped over the screen.

~Is everything all right?

Instead of returning it to her pocket, Marinette kept her phone in her hands so she could anxiously await for any new notifications. Her heart skipped a beat when it vibrated in her fingers, and then again a second later. She opened the new messages immediately to read what her Jaguar had written.

~Sorry

~Feeling really sick

Considering how he had completely brushed off how he was feeling only a little sick the last few days, saying it was nothing to worry about, Marinette knew this wasn’t like him. So he must’ve been feeling significantly worse then before if this was what he was telling her now. Chewing her lower lip, she started typing out another email.

~Could your father take you to see a doctor?

~He’s gone for meetings today

~Your driver?
Jumping when the timer buzzed to say her muffins were done, she had to set her phone down to grab some oven mitts to taken them out of the oven. Marinette could hear her phone vibrate against the table again as she did, so as soon as she had placed them on the counter she quickly picked her back up phone again.

This actually just made her worry more. He shouldn’t be trying to make her feel better when he was clearly feeling so poorly himself. Making a decision, she sent him one last message before stowing her phone away in her apron.

Concentrating on keeping her mind on working for now, Marinette set about finishing her batch of muffins. Once they had all been cooked and cooled, she placed a dozen inside a box to keep set aside, then brought the rest out to the shop area. As she was placing them in one of the display cases, the door opened and when she looked over, her shoulders drooped a little when it wasn’t Samuel. Tom went over to help the new customer and a somewhat despondent Marinette returned to the kitchen to start making something else.

The hours dragged by, partly because she was hoping upon hoping that Samuel would visit, and partly because of how much she wanted the day to be over. As soon as she would be able to do so, she was planning on going to see Adrien. Last night Sabine had mentioned she could borrow some of her ginger tea, and she was hoping that offer would still stand so she could bring some with her when she went to the Agreste Mansion. She knew there were probably lots of different kinds of teas in a kitchen as large as theirs, but this was something she wanted to do for him herself.

It wasn’t until early afternoon when her parents were taking a late lunch break and Marinette was running the shop area herself that her visitor arrived. She was ringing in a woman’s macarons when she saw him walk in the door, looking a little nervous and unsure of himself. Thankfully the woman’s transaction was mostly finished so Marinette was able to go over to Samuel shortly after he arrived. But when his eyes met hers, she hesitated for a second. In all the years she had been Ladybug, no one had ever recognized her after an akuma battle – Hell, even Adrien hadn’t recognized her under the protection of the magic of the Miraculous, and neither had she recognized him – but that didn’t stop her from holding her breath any time she saw someone after they had been purified in case they were the first.

Luck was on her side once again though, and no recognition dawned in his eyes as Samuel cleared his throat. “Um, hello,” He said, hastily looking around to make sure they were alone before continuing to speak. “I-I…uh…I was told to come here…by…”

“Our mutual friend?” Marinette offered when he seemed to be struggling for words, and had to keep herself from smiling as he gave a relieved nod. “She phoned me last night to tell me someone would be stopping in today.’” The lie rolled off her tongue with the ease as she motioned for him to follow her while she started walking towards the entrance to the bakery kitchen.

“Do you do this for her often?” Samuel asked, following behind her dutifully.
“Not often, no.” Ducking into the bakery kitchen, she grabbed the box of muffins and came back out to where he had respectfully stopped walking to avoid leaving the shop area to wait for her. This time she did allow herself to smile. “Only when she sees someone who’s really in need.”

“Then if you know her phone number, please tell her something for me the next time you talk to her.” Samuel paused a moment, but eventually took the box she was holding out to him and took a peek inside. His eyes widened a little at all the muffins inside. “I don’t know how much she told you about me, or what happened, but tell her she was right about my friend being worried about me. When I got back to his house he had a bunch of our other friends there too, they were about to go out and look for me in the storm. And…” Tears started to fill his eyes now. “They actually pooled some money together so I could get a plane ticket.”

“So you can go see your mother?” Marinette’s heart filled with warmth as he gave her another nod. “That’s so amazing! I’ll definitely tell her, she’s going to be so happy for you!”

Wiping his eyes, Samuel reached his free hand into his pocket and pulled out some crumpled bills of euro. “And I have a little leftover, so I can pay for these.”

“You keep that for yourself. I insist.” Marinette assured him. “Besides, I don’t think Ladybug would be too happy with me if I did take that.”

Now Samuel was chuckling. “You’re probably right.” He turned and went to start walking so he could leave, then decided against it and instead, to Marinette’s surprise, leaned over to give her a tight hug. “Thank you so much. To both of you.”

Initially caught off guard by this sudden gesture, she soon relaxed and returned his hug. He released her soon after, then made his way to the door, gave her a wave, then walked outside and soon left the bakery behind. And now that that was taken care of, Marinette could focus all of her attention on going to see Adrien. As if on cue, her parents had just came downstairs and returned to the shop area now that they were finished eating. “Okay, now it’s your turn for lunch.” Tom patted her shoulder.

“Actually, I was wondering, would it be all right with you if I went out to go over to visit Adrien for a while?” Marinette asked. “He said this morning his cold has gotten a lot worse and that his father’s gone for the day, so I wanted to go over to surprise him…” She glanced at her mother. “With some tea? To make him feel better?”

Sabine just smiled. “Of course you can. There’s some honey in the cupboard upstairs and we should have a couple extra lemons in the bakery fridge.”

“I’ll see if I can find you a thermos to take it in.” Tom added. “And feel free go there for the rest of the afternoon if you want, we can handle things here.”

“Thanks guys.” Marinette gave each of her parents an grateful hug, then she popped into the bakery kitchen to grab herself a lemon before zipping her way upstairs.

She was hoping she would be able to be to get in to see Adrien for a bit and be out safely before whenever Gabriel Agreste was going to be getting back home from his meetings. However, Marinette couldn’t know it now, of course, but that wasn’t going to be the case.
Chapter 102

Chapter Notes

I know it's been almost a year since I last updated this. So if no one reads this anymore, it's my own fault. However, in case anyone is still waiting for updates, I honestly am sorry about how long this took me. And I know I've said this before, but when I say things have been insane on my end, I really mean it. Here's a quick breakdown of major events...

-Just days after my last upload my main job held this event that was on national-news-levels of chaos. I, as well as the three other managers, worked TWELVE hours that day. And that day started off a summer of madness at that job, so I was super busy with work for July and August.

-End of August my family and I went on our annual family vacation for a week, and I didn't bring my laptop with me to write because I really needed time to unwind.

-At the beginning of September I found out my boss and one of the other managers were both going to be quitting at the end of the month. And although they gave lots of notice, a replacement for my boss wasn't found in time so the role of running the store fell to me for the month of October. It was the most stressful thing I've honestly ever done.

-By the last week of October we got our new boss, who thankfully was super nice, and had promoted another new manager, however they both required a lot of training, so that was more work for me to do. I had been trying to take a week staycation since July, but it wasn't finally until the end of November I had the time or felt comfortable enough to leave the store unattended to do so.

-Christmas was a whirlwind, both at both jobs and at home.

-If you'll recall from previous author's notes, I had said my second job was going to be closing out, and in January the closing sale for that finally began. I had to say goodbye to that job at the end of February.

-Days later, I found out that MY MAIN JOB WAS CLOSING TOO. I was absolutely devastated. The night I found out I didn't get to sleep until 4 AM. We were told in March that we would be closing in April. So within two months, I was going to go from having two jobs (for six years) to none.

-After two months of utter insanity, to put it mildly, my main job has closed down last week and we've officially packed everything up. I am currently unemployed for the first time in seven years.

And beyond that, not only have I not been writing, I haven't been keeping up with Miraculous itself. I haven't seen past the Rena Rouge episode. I know it's on to season three now, but I just didn't have time...and I was also putting it off. I get very engrossed in things very quickly, and I knew I would have to wait to start watching again until I had time to myself. Now I finally do, but I really wanted to put out this chapter before I did. Since my fanfic is canon-divergent, I don't technically need to see any new episodes to continue, and I really wanted to upload this chapter for you guys after how long you've already had to wait on me. So here you all go! Better late then never I guess? ^^;

I'm going with Nathalie having mellowed out over the years, mostly because I feel like at least someone needs to be outwardly supportive of Adrien in the Agreste Mansion. And I really do think Gabriel has Adrien's best interests at heart, and even if newer episodes have proved otherwise, I haven't seen them yet so no spoilers please! Plus I really just want our two favorite dorks to be happy, so above all else that's the main
Once she got upstairs, grabbed the tea and honey, and a large pot, Marinette set to work. She was waiting for the water to boil when Tom came up with a thermos for her to use, setting it on the counter beside her with a thumbs up before he headed back downstairs to the bakery.

Tikki came floating down next to her bonded as bubbles were starting to form at the bottom of the pot. “So what’s this all for?”

“Adrien. He told me earlier that he’s feeling a lot sicker so I’m going to go over and surprise him.” Marinette explained. “And don’t worry, his father’s out of the house right now so I can take a little visit over there without upsetting him.”

“I think Adrien will like that.” Tikki smiled as she sat down on Marinette’s shoulder.

Once the water had come to a full steady boil, Marinette carefully poured the water into the thermos before adding the tea. She next moved on to cut the lemon in half and squeezed some of the juice into a small bowl, then added some of the honey to the bowl as well. To allow the tea to have more time to steep, a quick trip up to her room was made to shed her apron and grab a purse for Tikki to hang out in. Upon her return to the lower level, Marinette took out the tea bag before she poured the contents of the bowl into the thermos, gave everything a good stir, then screwed on the lid. Making sure it was on securely, the bluenette grabbed the insulated reusable bag she had purchased last night to store it inside, slung it over her purse-free shoulder, then took the trip down to the main floor of the Dupain-Cheng home.

With a wave to her parents as she passed by the door to the bakery (which they returned), she stepped into her favorite pair of flats and headed outside. The heat outside was still a summer warm, but nothing like the last few days, which was a welcomed relief. Marinette walked purposefully but as she came upon the gate of the Agreste Mansion, she hesitated a moment. What had made her so sure she would even be allowed in? She hadn’t been invited so no one would be expecting her here. Even if someone did notice her, what if they didn’t let her in?

She was still second-guessing herself when she heard a crackly squeak from the intercom panel and a voice begin to speak. “You’re Marinette, correct?”

The voice was female, and it sounded somewhat familiar to her, so she assumed that meant it was Nathalie on the other end of the intercom. From what Adrien had mentioned previously it sounded like she had no issues with their relationship right from the beginning, so she hoped she would be okay with what she was about to ask her. “Yes, I am. I know I don’t have an appointment…” Her voice faltered temporarily when she heard what sounded like a light chuckle over the speaker. “But Adrien is sick and I wanted to cheer him up, so…”

“Marinette?” The voice interrupted her then.

“Y-Yes?”

“That’s more then enough.” Marinette’s shoulders sagged until she heard what came next. “You
don’t need to explain yourself to me. I’m just going to open the gate now.”

“Really?” The gate was already starting to open as the words left her lips, and her face lit up at the sight. “Thank you so much!”

“I’ll be at the door in a minute.” Marinette barely heard that last statement as, with a bounce in her step, she hurried through the gate.

Practically skipping up the steps to the front door, she took a breath to settle herself and smoothed down her hair with one hand as she waited for it to open. She didn’t have to wait long until she heard it unlock and it swung aside to reveal Nathalie, which confirmed her earlier suspicion. “Thank you again.” Marinette said as she moved past the older woman and slipped off her flats.

“Don’t worry about it.” Nathalie shut and locked the door behind her. “Here, I’ll show you the way to Adrien’s room.”

“I won’t stay too long, I promise.” Marinette knew better then to reveal that she already knew the way so she played along and walked alongside her guide.

Nathalie shrugged. “Honestly if it were up to me, you could come and go as you please. I’m aware of my employer’s wishes but that doesn’t necessarily mean I agree with them. Unofficially, anyway.” Marinette allowed herself to smile a little as she nodded. By now they had reached Adrien’s bedroom door, so they stopped in front of it and Nathalie gave it a short knock. “There’s a…delivery here for you.” She said with a single cocked eyebrow, and Marinette had to keep herself from giggling.

But her laughter ceased when she heard coughing come from behind the door and the raspy voice of her boyfriend croak out, “Oh, okay. You can come in, Nathalie.”

Her heart twisted in knots to hear Adrien sound so much worse then he had sounded yesterday. He must’ve gotten a chill from being out in the thunderstorm last night. So distracted was she by these thoughts that she jumped a little when Nathalie laid a hand on her shoulder, glancing up at the older woman to see her motioning her free hand toward the door before turning to leave. Giving her an appreciative smile, Marinette opened Adrien’s door and slipped inside before quietly closing the door back up again behind her. “Hello?”

When she rounded the corner she saw him laying in bed under several different blankets and looking rather pale, though his eyes lit up when he saw her. “Hey Princess!” He quickly sat up, though he winced upon doing so at the headache the sudden change in positions caused him.

“Whoa, slow down.” Marinette came over to sit down next to Adrien, pressing a gentle kiss to the top of his head. “Take it easy.”

“Yeah, I know. Drill sergeant.” Adrien joked. “So, a pretend delivery, huh? And you even got Nathalie in on it. I’m both touched and impressed.”

“It’s a real delivery.” Marinette slid the reusable bag off her shoulder and unzipped it so she could pull out the thermos. “I brought you tea.”

“Aww, thank you, love bug.” Adrien happily set his chin on her shoulder as she began to unscrew the lid of the thermos, which doubled as the cup.

“Did you maybe bring me something, too?” Came Plagg’s voice as he came floating over to them.

Before Marinette could even reply, Tikki popped out of her purse to give Plagg a large hug before flying off with him up to the second level of Adrien’s room to give both couples their space. The
bluenette and the blonde just grinned to each other over the amusing antics of their kwamis, then Marinette went back to pouring Adrien a cup of tea. “Careful, it’s still really hot.” She warned as she passed it over to him, steam rolling up from the surface.

Shutting his eyes and breathing in the inviting scent of ginger and honey and lemon, Adrien sighed contentedly before carefully blowing on the liquid. “You really do spoil me, you know that, right?”

“I don’t do anything that you don’t completely deserve.” Was that the fever bringing a flush to his cheeks or was it her words? She liked to think it was her. “And not to mention, I know that you would do the same for me.”

Adrien smiled at that. “In a heartbeat.” Taking a cautious sip of the tea to test the temperature before taking a markedly bigger gulp immediately after, it soothed the ache in his throat and gave his whole body a sense of warmth that had eluded him since before his cold took this turn for the worse. “Mm…it tastes wonderful.” He kissed the tip of his Lady’s nose. “This is just what I needed. Thanks again.”

“You’re welcome.” Marinette poured him another cup once he drained the first, and then a third he had made short work of the second as well. “Good thing I made a lot.”

When she turned to set the now equally empty thermos and cup, Adrien slipped his arms around her waist and pressed his forehead to the back of her neck. “Please stay for a while with me.” He murmured, making Marinette’s heart melt.

“But your father didn’t pre-approve of me coming today…” She warned somewhat half-heartedly, and the kisses he was feathering across her shoulders were certainly not helping her conviction.

“Please? Even for a little while?” Adrien snuggled closer to her. “Just having you here with me is making me feel loads better.”

Sighing a little but accepting her fate, Marinette relented with a nod. “Not too much longer though. I don’t want your father to get upset with me.”

Adrien was already pulling her along with him further onto his bed over top of the covers. Leaning against the wall behind the bed and moving the pillow to sit behind his back, he smiled when his girlfriend did the same. Once she had, Adrien rested his head on her shoulder and held her hand.

“I’m so glad that you came by to see me.”

“I am too.” Marinette wove their fingers together and rubbed her thumb along the back of his hand. Lifting his head momentarily to cough into his elbow, Adrien set it back down on her shoulder again and allowed himself to shut his eyes with a small yawn. His cold had kept waking him up most of the night so he was exhausted, and sitting next to Marinette always made him feel so safe and loved and warm. And now that the tea had made his throat feel somewhat better, the allure of sleep was too hard to ignore. He knew that this meant Marinette could likely be gone before he woke up, and he would have preferred to be able to properly say goodbye to her, but he was just so tired. Plus, he knew she wouldn’t hold it against him if he wasn’t awake when she had to leave. So with that, he allowed slumber to envelop him.

As his breathing slowed, Marinette was rubbing her own eyes with her free hand. It had been a very fitful night of sleep for her as well, and though she had managed to keep her lethargy at bay so far, but being snuggled up next to Adrien made sleep seem all the more tempting. She tried her best to resist its oh-so-inviting allure, as one of them really should stay up to make sure she didn’t stay too long, however it was a losing battle. Perhaps if she rested her eyes for a minute or two, that would
help keep herself alert. That’s what her intention was, anyway, though it wasn’t long until she was
dozing as well.

Gabriel Agreste was glad to be home after another long day of work. His rumbling stomach had him
thinking about supper while slipping his keys back into his pocket, when something caught his eye.
A pair of small, feminine shoes were sitting off to his right. His blood boiled and his hands tightened
into fists. Through clenched teeth he called out as evenly as he could, “Nathalie?”

“Yes sir?” His assistant came into view moments later.

“Would you care to explain what I’m seeing?” He asked in a low voice, gesturing towards the shoes.

Nathalie blinked and arched an eyebrow. It had been hours since Marinette had come over, and she
had honestly thought the girl had long since left by now. This was not likely going to go over well.

“Those are Mar-”

“I know what they are. I know who they belong to. What I want to know is why they are in my
home.” Gabriel stopped himself to take a steadying breath. “And without permission.”

“Sir, she only wanted to-”

“How long were you going to let her stay here?”

“I wasn’t planning on-”

“You know Adrien isn’t well!”

“Yes, that’s why she wanted to make him feel better, to-”

The fashion mogul’s ears burned at the thoughts the words ‘make him feel better’ brought to him.

“…Where are they right now?”

Nathalie sighed heavily. “I’m not sure, I haven’t seen them since I let Marinette in and brought her
up to Adrien’s room and-”

“You left them unattended in his room?!” Gabriel had to fight to keep his voice at a reasonable level.
“Two kids! Alone! In my son’s bedroom!” He threw his hands up in the air before he marched
forward towards the stairs.

“Technically being 18 means they’re adults, sir,” Nathalie reminded him as she hurriedly followed
his agitated pace up to Adrien’s room.

Stopping dead in his tracks and furrowing his brow at his assistant, Gabriel resumed walking.

“What ever his age,” He said sternly. “He will always be my child.”

His hand closed around the doorknob of his son’s room and he quickly threw it open and stormed
inside. Gabriel was about to start shouting until he looked over at the bed, and he froze. Adrien and
Marinette were sound asleep, with Adrien’s head on Marinette’s shoulder and their hands intertwined
between them. Both of them were laying on top of the blankets, and were fully clothed. Above all,
they looked so…peaceful. The sight of them awoke a stirring of faded memories of he and his
beloved wife doing the same themselves, and he had to take a step back as the sudden well of
emotions it brought within him threatened to spill over.
“Let’s go,” Nathalie whispered from beside him. He hadn’t even noticed her follow him in. Still stunned, he managed a nod and allowed her to guide himself back into the hallway, hearing her quietly click the door shut behind them.

Setting a hand on the nearby wall to steady himself, Gabriel tried to process his thoughts and gather his words. “They…”

“I do apologize for not getting your approval for it first.” Nathalie’s words brought his gaze to focus on her. “However, I do not apologize for doing what I thought was right.” She turned to leave, then stopped and looked back over her shoulder. “For the record, Adrien is like family to me too, sir. I wouldn’t allow anything negative to happen to him. Marinette brings him joy, and from what I’ve heard and personally observed from her, she would never do anything that would harm him either. Not to mention doing anything that would tarnish her reputation with you. She respects both of you too much.”

As her footsteps began and then slowly faded away, a heavy sigh fell from Gabriel’s lips while he rubbed a hand over his eyes. Moments ago he had been ready to storm off and make use of a certain special (or one could even say ‘miraculous’) item in his possession, but now all the rage had drained away. The warm, tender memories of his wife had erased it so swiftly it had nearly brought him to his knees. True, it brought heartache with it, and a deep loneliness, but his thoughts of her seemed to be getting more infrequent lately so he welcomed even those emotions if it meant momentarily feeling closer to her.

Not only that, the more that he thought about it rationally, the more he knew that Nathalie was right. He had come to the same conclusion of Marinette’s character the night they had shared dinner together. No matter how hard he tried to keep a lid on his emotions at all times, they did get the better of him every once and a while, but now that he was back in control of his thoughts, he would admit to himself that he had been wrong about her.

This time, anyway.

He would forever be on the look out for anyone or anything that could possibly hurt his son. After all, Adrien was all he had left of his beloved. But for now all did appear to be well, so he could let himself breathe. Gabriel would need to talk to Marinette seriously about how much he disliked surprises, but he supposed that he could let her off the hook this one time.

And so with that in mind, he straightened his tie and began to walk. Though he knew he should be going to the dinning room to eat, he instead allowed himself a break in routine by heading to his own bedroom to stop at the bookshelf that had been collecting a light layer of dust. Blowing it away, he grabbed a thick album labeled ‘Our Family’ in his wife’s loopy cursive, sat down on the bed, and let himself thumb fondly through its pages.
Chapter 103

Chapter Notes

So after a week to myself, consisting mostly of sleeping in, cleaning and doing laundry, I started getting caught up on some shows I was behind on and am finally working through Miraculous. I had just finished the Frozer episode (GODDAMN KAGAMI NEEDS TO STEP THE F BACK) and really wanted to write, so here we go! This chapter was a little challenging for me, as I don't usually write angst but to make the reactions feel the most believable, I felt that some was necessary here. But only the tiniest of smidgens! Because I'm all about that fluff train! =P And like Marinette here, I've had to talk myself out of panic attacks before, since I suffer from Anxiety Disorder, so I put that in for a touch of realism as well. Beyond that, I really do feel like everyone deserves to be happy, which is why I wanted to give even someone like Gabriel a chance to have a friend. It'll take a while, for sure, but it'll happen. ^^ And imagining the awkward hug was just too cute for me not to put in!! <3 Lastly, I also wanted to tell you all how truly touched I was to hear from so many of you on my last update. You guys are the absolute best, I hope you all know that.

♥ So please enjoy guys, and I'm off to watch some more episodes!

“Is he gone?” Tikki whispered anxiously.

Plagg was silent a moment more, his ear still pressed to the door and his brow furrowed, before he pulled back and nodded with relief. “He is now.”

When they had realized their bonded Humans had fallen asleep hours ago, they had agreed to leave them be for some much needed rest until it would be about time for a certain father figure to return home. However, the time seemed to have slipped away on the pair of kwamis as they enjoyed spending their own time together, and before they knew it they had heard the door opening from where they had been snuggling amongst the wall large of books on the second level of Adrien’s room. It was from even higher up they had watched Gabriel and Nathalie come in with baited breath, and they didn’t breathe again until they heard the door click shut behind the two adults. Immediately afterward they had flown down to hover behind the door, apprehensively awaiting for the coast to be officially clear so they could rouse Marinette safely.

Tikki zipped over first, while Plagg hung back by the door a little while longer, just in case. “Marinette!” She grabbed hold of her shoulder and lightly shook it until the bluenette stirred and opened her eyes. “You have to get going! Right now!”

Yawning and rubbing an eye tiredly, Marinette had been about to ask her kwami what time it was when she saw the worry on Tikki’s face. “It’s late, isn’t it?” She asked with a sneaking suspicion, and her heart dropped when she was answered with a slow, solemn nod. “How late is it?”

“It’s supper time,” Plagg told her as he floated over.

Marinette’s stomach dropped this time. “Is…Is Adrien’s father…?” Again Tikki nodded in reply, and now Marinette’s blood ran cold. “D-Did he…does he know?”

“Yes, he came in and saw you two.” Tikki could see the panic flooding in her bonded’s eyes. “We
swear we were going to wake you guys up, honest! But we just lost track of time until it was already too late. We’re really sorry, Marinette.”

Swallowing a lump in her throat and trying to steady her breathing, she looked over at Adrien still snuggled up next to her and still fast asleep. Not wanting to disturb him, she carefully moved away and gingerly laid him down against his pillow, tears prickling her eyes as he instinctively tried to reach for her in his sleep when she left his side. She allowed herself to press a heartfelt, lingering kiss to his forehead before she forced herself to get off the bed. Because after what had happened, this could very well be the last time she would ever let herself come to see him here, as herself or even as Ladybug.

Using every ounce of her willpower to keep herself from crying, Marinette hurriedly stuffed the thermos back into her reusable bag. Tikki obediently flew into her purse once she opened it, and she reached out to cup Plagg in her free hand. “Good bye Plagg.” She murmured, hugging him close to her cheek while sniffling back her well of emotions.

Initially surprised, Plagg gave her cheek a soft hug in return before floating aside when she went to wipe the tears that had started to fall. He watched her try and give him a smile, then she left Adrien’s room as silently as she could. Once alone with his bonded, Plagg went over to sit on his desk next to his charging phone. Plagg didn’t want to think about if this would mean he and Tikki couldn’t see each other anymore, and beyond that, if it would mean Marinette and Adrien couldn’t. Because despite the tough and cantankerous front he always put up, he truly was fond of Tikki’s newest Human. So he would keep watch, vigilantly this time, over the phone to see if there were messages from her until Adrien woke up.

Not wanting to dwell on what could possibly happen to the four of them after this, Plagg silently said a prayer to the heavens, and waited.

Pressing her free hand where her heart was hammering in her chest, Marinette took several deep breaths to try and calm the raging storm of feelings within her. She couldn’t believe she had blown everything already. While she knew her kwami would try to take some of the blame, it was solely her own fault for being so careless and putting Tikki (and Plagg) in that situation in the first place. But for now she needed to shake those thoughts from her mind and focus on getting herself home before she broke down, because this simply wasn’t the time or the place for a panic attack. Quickly wiping the few stray tears on her cheeks, once she felt she had a little bit better handle on emotions she her dashed down the stairs towards the front door. She had only just finished slipping on her flats when she suddenly heard a voice that made her freeze. “Hello, Marinette.”

She didn’t have to see him to know it was Gabriel. Too nervous to move, she kept her focus rooted to her shoes at the sound of footsteps come down the staircase she had just traversed, then heard them come to a stop just off to her right. After what felt like a full minute of silence between them, she finally looked up and noticed his eyes widen slightly at the sight of her face. She knew she must look blotchy and terrible from trying not to cry, but she didn’t care right now. If nothing else, she wanted to be able explain herself to him. “I-I’m so sorry,” She could hear her own voice cracking but pressed on. “I-I didn’t want to upset you, I only wanted to bring Adrien some tea…I was going to leave a lot earlier but we fell asleep, b-but that’s no excuse for what I did…I still came without permission and I broke your trust. You have every right to be angry with me. I’m just so, so sorry, Mr. Agreste.”

Gabriel watched her speak with unwavering attention. Though he could tell she was trying to veil her emotions for the most part, he could tell she was just barely holding things together. He liked to
think himself good at reading people with all his experience in the fashion industry, where people hid what they truly thought or felt on the regular. And while she was standing her ground before him, it was her eyes that betrayed her the most – it was obvious for him to see that this wasn’t easy for her. Which piqued his curiosity; if this was so difficult for her, why didn’t she continue to flee when he had alerted her to his presence?

Once he was sure that she had finished speaking, Gabriel folded his arms across his chest. “You are correct, you did come here without my permission.” The girl before him dropped her gaze again and her hand tightened its grip on the strap of the reusable bag she was carrying. “That being said, if I speak honestly, I know that you did it only because of how much you care for my son.” He saw her shoulders, which had been trembling with the amount of effort it took her trying to appear calm, grow still at these words. “Am I correct?”

“Yes.” Came the immediate, albeit quiet reply, though she didn’t move.

“That is something we share in common.” Gabriel cocked his head to the side as he continued to watch her. “And something in common with my assistant as well.”

“Please don’t be mad at her,” Marinette pleaded as she finally looked back up at him again. “It’s my fault, I’m the one who came here without asking, I-”

She was trying to take the blame and cover for Nathalie? Even when she was clearly hurting so much already, she was going out of her way to protect someone she barely even knew? Gabriel was beginning to see why it seemed like everyone around him had become so supportive of this young woman. She had a big heart, that much was for certain. He stopped her speaking by raising his hand. “Would you like to hear something interesting?” He asked. “My assistant spoke to me in a way today she never has before, not once in all the years she’s been in my employ. She defended you, not unlike how you’re trying to do for her now.”

Now Nathalie was in trouble for her too? Marinette dropped the reusable bag and pressed both her hands to her face. “I’m sorry.” She repeated again, voice hoarse. “I don’t want her to lose her job because of what I did, be mad at me all you want, but please not at her…”

“Lose her job?” Gabriel arched an eyebrow. “I said that she was my assistant, did I not? Or did I say former assistant?”

“Your assistant,” Marinette answered quickly, rubbing her eyes.

“Indeed. Although what she said to me today could quite easily be taken to be insubordinate behavior, I’m aware that she only acted that way due to what she felt was Adrien’s best interest. And I can’t dismiss someone for being concerned for his well-being, or I would have to dismiss myself. So knowing that, and being that this is a first offense, I have decided I will let it slide for his sake.” He could almost see the relief that swept through Marinette. It truly was hard to be mad at someone this selfless, someone this invested in the well-being of those around her. To be honest, she reminded him a little of her, and that made him think about how she would want him to handle this. So with an internal sigh, Gabriel unfolded his arms and set a hand down onto one of Marinette’s shoulders, making her return her gaze to him once more. “Now I want to be crystal clear, I do not appreciate or enjoy surprises at all.”

Marinette nodded, though he seemed like he was waiting for her to speak. So she quickly told him, “Yes sir.”

“And while I know that my son does appreciate getting surprises, I do not care for being surprised along with him.”
“Yes sir.”

“The more notice received ahead of time, the better.”

“Yes sir.”

“So if you are to surprise him by coming here again, I will want to know as far in advance as possible.” He saw the bluenette’s eyes widen now. “Understood?”

“…Again?” Marinette couldn’t believe her ears. “I’m still allowed to come back here?”

“If I am to let what Nathalie did slide today for Adrien’s sake,” Gabriel began, and could feel the ghost of a smile forming ever so slightly at the hope and happiness spreading so visibly over Marinette’s face. “Then I can only do the same for you.”

Stunned into silence, tears began to well within her again, though this time they were from unbridled joy. “Thank you…thank you very much, Mr. Agreste…I promise you I won’t let you down again.” After a moment’s hesitation she allowed herself to ask, “C-Can I hug you?”

Initially he flinched at the thought, but if he was truthfully going to try and handle this situation how his beloved would’ve wanted, Gabriel allowed himself to sigh audibly this time before finally relenting. “If you must.”

Pausing for only a second more, Marinette took a step forward and carefully let her arms wrap themselves around Gabriel and close around him lightly. He stiffened at the unfamiliar sensation at first before he placed the hand that wasn’t on her shoulder on top of her head, awkwardly trying to put it in a feeble attempt to be comforting. He heard her choke back a sob and could feel her body relax, so despite how very silly he felt, it must’ve been helping her. At last she stepped back, and there was a grateful smile on her face and a newfound brightness in her eyes. If she did end up making it into the world of fashion someday as she had told him she hoped to, those expressive eyes of hers would likely be either her greatest weakness, or her greatest strength. “Thank you again.”

“You’re welcome.” Gabriel watched her pick her reusable bag back up and turn back to head towards the door. “And, Marinette?”

“Yes?” She glanced back over her shoulder with her hand on the doorknob.

“…Good bye.” He said after a while.

“Good bye!” Marinette echoed before she opened the door and slipped outside, leaving him alone in the foyer.

Smoothing down his jacket, Gabriel shook his head in spite of himself. He definitely wasn’t used to being around youth and their wide-ranging emotions. Other then Adrien of course, but he knew full well about his dislike for anything others might label as ‘touchy feely’. However, the hug had seemed to mean a lot to Marinette, and he supposed that if she was to be a part of Adrien’s life now, he was going to have to get at least somewhat more used to it, and to her too. His wife would often tell him when they were younger not to be so uptight, as she would say, and he did used to try, but without her around he had let the opposite happen to his demeanor.

He knew it would probably please Adrien to see him loosen up too. He had said as much to him over the years, though before Gabriel had never let it phase him. But especially now that he was older, it might finally be safe to allow him a little more freedoms. Which is why he had never brought his lessons back up after he had truly surprised him by finishing so well at school, feeling that he had earned the ability to choose to go back to his lessons or not on his own. And, as he reminded himself,
Adrien’s final level of marks had had a lot to do with Marinette. So if she could be a good influence on Adrien, maybe she could be a good influence on both of them.

This didn’t mean Gabriel would ever stop his search for a way to bring back his beloved, as he had decided long ago that he would do whatever it takes to get her back. But perhaps until she could be returned to him, until any evidence to the contrary were to arise, he could let himself trust Marinette and could slowly start to ease up around both her and his son.

Not to mention, the girl did have a knack for fashion. After their initial dinner together, his curiosity had led him to check to see if she applied for his company’s internship. Though she had already been declined, he had viewed her portfolio and could see the talent there. Adrien had never had much interest in the designing side of things, content enough to model the Gabriel label. He often thought about how things would be whenever he passed the mantle of CEO over to Adrien when the time came, as that was the only one of his two titles he would allow him to have. His son was smart, and given time he could learn how to properly oversee and run a business. But artistic passion couldn’t be taught. And so head designer, Gabriel’s secondary title, was not one he was very willing to part with.

But what if the fates had finally smiled on him after so long, and provided him with the student he had always been waiting for? Stroking his chin thoughtfully, Gabriel started walking toward the dining room. If he started to take her under his wing now and guide her while she was young and easy to teach, and things continued to work out for her and Adrien, he wouldn’t be have to worry about leaving his company in the hands of people he didn’t feel like he could rely on. Sitting down to the plate of food awaiting him at the table, he rather did like the sound of that.

This was all for far off in the future, of course. Starting to lay the groundwork now couldn’t hurt, though. He could tell she was fiercely loyal to Adrien, and Nathalie had said Marinette respected Adrien a lot, as well as himself, which was something he had also picked up on. So he imagined if he allowed himself to befriend her (if he even remembered how to do so, he thought absently), she would be loyal to him as well. Besides, Gabriel had to admit, even though she had made a mistake today, he didn’t dislike her. And for him, that was really saying something.

When he had said caring for Adrien was something they had in common, he knew there were clearly other things he and Marinette shared in common as well. And to be honest, after so many years of deliberately not pursuing any sort of camaraderie with anyone, it might be nice to have someone he could one day call his friend.
Chapter 104

Chapter Notes

Okay. So. It's been quite a week and a half since the last upload.

First: I did get mostly caught up on Miraculous. I've seen like most of what's out for season three now, more or less. Can I just say that Thomas Astruc making a self-insert is the FUNNIEST THING EVER. xD I did want to ask you guys something, though: there have been two akumas over season two and three that are very similar to plans I had had for a few years now for upcoming akumas in my fanfic. Now, because they've come out, I don't know what to do with my plans, since because I've had these future characters floating around in my brain since 2016 I'm fond of them and what they'll bring to my story. So this is where I need your help. Since my fanfic is set only after season one and so those akumas would've never appeared here, is it still okay to bring my versions in? Or should I avoid it so they don't just appear to be knock-offs? That's my biggest fear, I don't want to look like I'm being lazy and copying something that's already out there. Maybe I'm worrying too much, I mean I probably am, but as I value your thoughts as my readers, I'd like your feedback.

Second: Remember how two chapters ago I mentioned how I had been laid off due to my job shutting down? I was going to be getting a severance package, and I was told I was going to be getting a fairly hefty amount, due to my seven years with the company, my assistant manager status, my unused holiday time, etc. It would've been enough to pay off the remainder of my student loans (which I've been paying for over six years now and it's a long story but college was the worst mistake ever and I just couldn't wait for it to finally be behind me) and to do something I've wanted to do since I was little: go to Disneyland. It took a lot of finagling, but I managed to make it work with a friend of mine to agree to come with me, and we booked it for the end of June. I was on top of the world! ...For about three days.

Third: That's because today is the day I was going to get my severance package. And when I got the deposit, it was TAXED TO HELL. As in, I'm missing about 40% of the total I was told I was getting. I knew it was going to be taxed, but I was expecting to lose around $700 or so. I lost almost four times that. I'm now in full on panic mode. If I had known I was only getting the amount I got, I would've just paid my student loans and never booked that trip. But I didn't know, and now it's too late. I feel like I'm going to regret using this money for it, even though I've always wanted to go. I'm sure I'll still have fun, of course, but it's not going to be the same. So that really put a damper on things.

But anyway! Writing makes me feel better so that's what I did. For obvious reasons, more fluff was the order of the day today! Kwami fluff, parent fluff, our favorite dorks fluff...if I rot everyone's teeth out from the sugar, I'm sorry-not-sorry. =P Not then, I've really got to stop taking so damn long in these author's notes... ^^; Anyway, hope you all like it!

Meanwhile, Marinette had pretty much sprinted the entire way home. That way she could focus on
the sound of her footsteps against the ground instead of thinking about what had just occurred. She ran past the darkened bakery to the side door and fished around in her purse for her keys. Once she had unlocked the door and slipped inside, she shut the door behind her and flopped back against it. Covering her mouth with her hands to muffle her voice as she finally allowed herself to scream, she slid along the door to plop down on the floor.

Once she was sure the coast was clear, Tikki flew out of Marinette’s purse to sit on her shoulder and hug the side of her neck to reassure her. “What just happened, Tikki?” Marinette whispered, voice somewhat muddled from beneath her hands.

Even her kwami could barely believe what she had heard go on between her and Gabriel back at the Agreste Mansion. “Well, to start with, good fortune has been on your side for a long time now, Marinette.” Tikki began quietly. “But I think it also has a lot to do with the impression you made by taking responsibility for what you did.”

“It was so hard. I was terrified.” Dropping her hands to her lap, Marinette glanced up at the ceiling. “I just wanted him to know that I wasn’t going out of my way to go against his wishes. And that I didn’t want Nathalie to be fired because of me either.”

“Honesty is always the best policy. And he must’ve been able to tell you meant what you were saying.” Tikki said. “Just like he was able to tell when you told him about exactly how much you truly are in love Adrien.”

Marinette hugged her legs to her chest and set her chin on her knees. “I thought for sure he was never going to let me go back. I mean, he banished Nino for a lot less.”

“But that was several years ago. Maybe he’s starting to turn over a new leaf?” Her bonded didn’t look convinced, and Tikki didn’t feel swayed by that either. But her next thought did make a lot more sense. “Or maybe it’s because it was on his terms.”

“What do you mean?” The bluenette asked.

“Think about it. He didn’t invite Nino to come over back then, Adrien did. But he did invite you over himself for that supper, and you obviously made a great impression because he decided you could come over more.” Tikki flew over to hover in front of Marinette’s face. “And today, you apologized directly and went out of your way to be honest about your mistake. Even made sure he knew you didn’t want Nathalie to be blamed for what you had done. You didn’t try to make him forgive you, didn’t try to make him change his mind about you. But I think that’s actually why he did.”

“How?” Marinette still looked unsure.

The more Tikki thought about this the more things added up. “This gave him another example of your character, and so he was able to make his own decision himself. He came to the conclusion on his own that you were being genuine. That you just wanted to help, not to cause a problem. Which is the truth.” Marinette nodded in agreement. “See? It seems to me like he’s the type of person always wants to be the one in charge and making decisions without having people telling him what to do or how to think. And since you weren’t trying to force him to believe you, he was able to do that on his own. So you got through to him just by being you.”

It did seem to be the case. After all, Gabriel was giving her another chance despite it all. And she was eternally grateful for that. She did desperately want him to like her, or at least to approve of her, and it certainly appeared that he must not outright hate her. For now, that could be more than enough. Getting to her feet, Marinette held out a hand for Tikki to land in so she could snuggle her
close to her heart. “Thanks.”

“Anytime.” Tikki smiled at her before flying back down into her purse.

Marinette kicked off her flats and made her way in the bakery to grab some cookies to slip to her thankful kwami before heading upstairs. Though Tikki’s words had helped settle her down, she was still reeling a little over it all. When she entered the family room, her parents were at the table eating leftover pasta from the night before. “There you are!” Tom waved as she set the reusable bag by the sink to take out the thermos. “We were wondering when you’d be getting home.”

Sabine watched Marinette put the thermos into the sink and grab a plate from the cupboard to get herself some pasta from the pot they had reheated it in over the stove. Her daughter didn’t seem quite like herself. “Is everything all right?” She queried when Marinette came to sit down at the table with them.

“Yeah, I’m okay.” Marinette grabbed the cup that they must have had set at her place earlier and poured herself some juice.

Tom could tell that something was off as well about her too. “Are you sure?”

“There was…something that happened over there, not between me and Adrien, but thankfully it’s fine now. And it’s kind of a long story anyway.” She noticed that both of her parents still watching her expectantly with some visible concern, and Marinette couldn’t help the small grin that began to curl its way over her lips. They were always thinking about her. “It all got worked out. Really, everything’s good.”

“Even so, you know you can always talk to us, right?” Sabine offered.

“About anything?” Tom quickly added.

Her smile now in full bloom, Marinette allowed herself to laugh a little too. “I do know that. And I appreciate it, a lot.”

Now the she seemed to be starting to act more like her usual self, her parents let themselves relax. “Good, glad to hear it.” Patting his daughter’s hand before moving his to ruffle her hair affectionately, Tom beamed at the giggle and playful swat from her it earned him. His baby girl really was fine. All was well again.

Picking up her empty plate and setting her cup onto it, Sabine got up to walk to the kitchen but not without stopping to hug Marinette’s shoulder close to her side. “Now then, you’d better get eating before it get’s any colder.”

“Yes Mom.” Marinette obediently took the fork that had been left for out for her and began twirling some pasta over its tines.

Now Tom and Sabine exchanged a relieved glance before he rose from his seat to put away his dishes too. Once they had set everything in the sink, they went over to turn on the TV, curling up together on the sofa. Now that their backs were facing her, Marinette took her phone out of her pocket. She wanted to email Adrien to tell him not to worry, especially if he woke up and heard from Plagg what had happened. So in between bites she opened up her Spots account to type him out a short message.

~Whenever you get up, can you give me a call? Don’t freak out, I swear nothing bad happened. I repeat, nothing bad happened. It’ll just be easier to tell you this way.

Pressing ‘Send’ with her thumb, Marinette then finished her supper and drained her glass of juice in a
flash. Setting her dishes into the sink, she slipped upstairs to her room and shut the door behind her. For now she would just have to wait patiently for Adrien to phone her, though she hoped that it would be sooner rather than later.

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The telltale sound of metal buzzing against wood and the surprised yelp of his kwami started to rouse Adrien from his slumber. “Plagg?” Adrien sat up and rubbed his still tired eyes. “What time is it?”

“Finally, you’re awake!” Plagg dragged his bonded’s phone through the air and dropped it onto the blonde’s lap. “It’s took you long enough!”

When Adrien saw the timestamp glowing on his phone’s screen, he let out a low whistle. “Wow, that was one Hell of a nap.” Stretching out, he had to admit it he did feel better now because of it. Though he was definitely still feeling sick, the rest he had gotten had made it feel a lot less intense now then it had when Marinette had come by. And speaking of which… “When did Marinette head home?”

Plagg became uncharacteristically silent at this, making Adrien glance at him momentarily and arch an eyebrow slightly before he picked up his phone. Seeing the notification he had a new email, he opened his Inbox with a smile that seemed to fade slightly when he read what was inside. “What did she say?” Plagg asked as nonchalantly as he could, trying to peer over at the screen.

“That she wants me to phone her about something,” Adrien looked at his kwami in earnest now. “Do you know anything about this?”

When Plagg was able to read Marinette’s underlined sentence he breathed a big sigh of relief. “Not much, but it looks like its fine. Now get calling her already!”

Rolling his eyes, Adrien dialed the number he had immediately memorized when he discovered it was his Lady’s, and held his phone to his ear to listen to it ring until she picked up. “Hey.” Came her voice through the line of speaker holes. “That was fast. Sorry, did sending that wake you?”

“Don’t worry about it, I really should be getting up at this point anyway.” Adrien replied. “Plagg’s been acting weird since I got up though.” The kwami of destruction stuck his tongue out at his bonded, who returned the gesture.

“Yeah, about that,” Marinette paused, almost as if she seemed to be searching for the right words before going on. “So, um, I actually fell asleep with you too.”

“That did nothing to ease his fears. “Don’t tell me…”

“Adrien, please listen to me…”

“H-He saw us, didn’t he?”

“…Yes.”

He felt like all the air had been knocked from his lungs. Adrien dropped the phone in his shock. Knowing his luck, not only will his father forbid Marinette from ever coming over again, he would
forbid him from seeing her again too. This couldn’t be happening, not like this. Not so soon after he had finally gotten to be with his one true love at long, long last after waiting for her for so many years... just when they were finally together, finally happy...

“Earth to Adrien!” Plagg’s shouting in his ear made him jolt back to reality. Adrien looked at him with such a forlorn expression it made his kwami wince. “Look, I know it sounds bad but she said everything was okay, remember?”

That was true, her email had said that... but how could anything but the absolute worst outcome have come out of this? Still hesitant, Adrien picked his phone back up again to hear Marinette in mid-sentence. “Sorry, what were you saying?”

“I was saying it’s all right! I talked to him and he’s going to give me another chance! I can even still come to visit you!” These words shocked him just as much as the last ones had, although for completely different reasons. “You don’t have to worry!”

“Are we sure we’re talking about the same Gabriel Agreste?” Adrien laid back on his bed as his brain was still trying to process all the information he had just been given.

“To be honest, I was super surprised too.” Marinette admitted. “But Tikki thinks it’s because I wasn’t trying to change his mind about me. I just apologized and asked him not to blame Nathalie. And he said that because she was doing it for you, he couldn’t necessarily hold it against her for caring about you. Since he obviously does too. And he said that’s the same reason why he wasn’t holding it against me either.”

He was very glad it sounded like Nathalie wasn’t in trouble over what had happened either. Even though she didn’t often talk much, she was usually around more then his father was, and he truthfully would’ve missed her if she’d had to leave. Exhaling slowly, Adrien tucked his free hand behind his head as he thought this over. After a while he smiled. Marinette clearly had a gift for brightening up the lives of everyone around her. “You really are the most amazing person in the world, you know that?”

“I... that’s, uh... what makes you say that?” And he could practically hear her blush through the phone.

“You just are.” Adrien would’ve went on but had to stop to sneeze.

“Bless you. You know, you should go and take some cold medicine now that you’re up.” Marinette told him. “And you should probably get something to eat, too. Not to mention, drinking lots of fluids is really good at helping to kick out a cold.”

Adrien laughed. This reminded him of how he doted over her when she had had her migraine weeks ago. “Yes doctor.”

“I’m only being annoying because I love you.”

“I know. And I love you too.”

“You didn’t say I’m not being annoying.”

“I know. And I’m not going to.” Now they were both laughing. “I’ll see you at patrol?”

“Actually, I was thinking I should head out on my own, just for tonight,” Marinette said. “If you’re feeling better tomorrow you can come with me, I just want to make sure you get as much rest as possible to help you start getting better.”
Though he wanted to argue so he could see her again sooner, Adrien knew that she was right. “Sure. But unless I’m straight-up dying, I’ll be seeing you tomorrow night.”

Her giggle was a sound he would never tire of. “See you then, kitty cat.”

“See you then, Princess.” Adrien heard the line go dead and sat up so he could slip his phone into the pocket of his sleep pants. He noticed Plagg must’ve floated off while they had been talking because he couldn’t see him around anymore. Climbing off his bed and stretching again, he could feel his stomach rumbling. Deciding to take Marinette’s advice, he grabbed the bottle of cold medicine he had left on his desk to take with whatever food he found himself to eat. All the while, he silently thanked any cosmic force of the universe for her, and all the good she was bringing to his life.
It's almost time for my three year anniversary! I can't believe how the time has just melted away! =O I've gotten a bit behind in episodes again, as I've been helping my sister move and preparing for my trip in two weeks (my friend and I have been going on long strolls twice a week to prepare for all the standing and walking we'll be doing in Disneyland...we're not very athletic, so we kinda need it... ^^; ). But I kicked my own butt into gear so I can put together the plan I have for the chapter I want to post on June 14th. I think you'll all like it; hint - there's a tea party in our future. ;P Anyway, this chapter is oozing fluffiness, so I hope you all don't mind. I'm really addicted to fluff, what can I say? xD Enjoy everyone!

When she slipped out onto the terrace several hours later as Ladybug, Marinette paused. After how much time she and Adrien had been spending together lately, it certainly felt odd not to be heading out to their usual meeting spot. Letting him rest was important though, so despite the twinges of loneliness, she set out on her own to patrol the dark streets.

Beyond breaking up some neighbors shouting at each other loud enough to wake half the neighborhood over who truly had the best flowerbeds, the night was woefully uneventful. She had wished there had been more to do, because with the nap she had shared with her boyfriend this afternoon, she was wide awake and wanted something to fill in her time. Alas, it didn’t seem like that was in the cards for this evening, so with a sigh she made her way back home.

However, the nearer she got, the nearer she got to Agreste Mansion as well. Yes, she knew she had just seen him not too long ago. Yes, she knew that there were many other couples that had to go much further in between seeing each other. But there were also many that likely hadn’t had to wait as long for each other as she and Adrien had. And there certainly weren’t any other couples that could turn into superheroes, let alone use said powers to literally swing by for a quick check in. So with her mind made up, Marinette turned toward the large white house instead.

As she neared the wall of windows attached to Adrien’s room, she could see the light shining from inside and one of the windows open ajar to let in some fresh air. When she let herself dangle in front of them, she saw that Adrien was playing video games on his computer with headphones on while Plagg was sitting on the couch watching TV. When he saw her Plagg waved, but she held up a finger to her lips when he went to turn to alert his bonded. Curious, he floated over to the open windowpane. “Don’t bother him in the middle of his game,” She told him quietly, hoping that her voice wouldn’t disturb him either. “I just wanted to see how he was feeling.”

Plagg shrugged. “He seems like he’s doing better then he was this morning.”

“Oh good, I’m so glad.” Marinette smiled. “Thank you Plagg.”

“I didn’t really do anything, but you’re welcome.” He noticed her looking past him to watch Adrien so fondly it made him chuckle. She really did have it bad for him. “Are you sure you don’t want me to go get him?”

She was about to shake her head when an idea took hold. “Actually, does he have some paper
nearby? And a pen?”

Humans sure were odd. She wanted to write him something when she could easily just talk to him in person instead? Nonetheless, Plagg dutifully went to find the pen he’d noticed amongst the bookcase this afternoon and, as quietly as he could, tore a page from a notebook that had been left under the couch for a while now. Bringing them to her, he watched as Marinette put the pen in her mouth so she pin the piece of paper beneath the elbow of the arm she was using to hold on to her yo-yo string. Her hand free again, she grabbed the pen from between her lips and began to write.

When she was finished, she passed him the pen so she could fold the paper in half before handing it to him as well. “Anywhere you want me to put this?”

“Just somewhere he’ll see it.” Marinette reached in to cup him inside her hand and hug him against her cheek as she had hours before. “You’re the best! Thanks again!”

This time the hug didn’t surprise him. Plagg patted her cheek lightly before flying back into Adrien’s room, returned the quick wave she gave him before watching her use her yo-yo to swing off into the night. “What a dork.” He muttered to himself with a grin. “They really are made for each other, huh?” Casually floating his way over to Adrien’s bed, he dropped the note onto his pillow before going back to his former spot on the couch so he could continue watching TV.

It was over an hour and a half before Adrien saved his game and shut down his computer. This meant it was late, much later then he would normally be going to bed, but thanks to the long snooze earlier today, he was only just starting to feel tired. When he removed his headphones he could hear Plagg’s light snoring, making him smile as he got up to turn off his TV. He flicked off the lights and grabbed his phone from his desk so he could watch some videos in bed, but when he laid down he felt something against his head. Puzzled by this, he turned his phone’s flashlight on and sat up, and was surprised to find a piece of folded paper on his pillow.

What was that doing there? It wasn’t like Plagg to leave him notes – if he wanted him, he’d just make enough noise until he got the attention he wanted. Unfolding the paper with one hand while still holding his shining phone with the other, he was more surprised still to see Marinette’s handwriting within.

‘Came by to see if how you were feeling after patrol but you were busy so I didn’t want to interrupt you. I was just happy it meant you must be improving! But can you blame me? I mean, I am your knight in shining armor after all, aren’t I? It’s my duty to look out for my damsel in distress!’

She even drew in a heart with a curly capitalized M in the bottom corner. Adrien was smiling so wide his cheeks began to hurt but he didn’t care. Hugging the paper against his chest, he opened his Jaguar account to send her an email. She may not get it until the morning, considering what time it was, but he wanted to send something regardless. Once he had sent off his message, he started to watch his videos for a while, before finally folding the note back up and slipping it under his pillow before going to sleep.

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As Marinette had indeed already turned in for the evening and her phone had been on night mode, the email coming in didn’t wake her so she slept soundly through the night. Once morning came around and her alarm went off, she grabbed her phone to turn off the beeping, then she saw the new notification and opened her Spots email.

~I. Love. You. So. Much. <3
Smiling, she plugged her phone in to charge before waving to a still bleary-eyed and stretching Tikki, then headed downstairs for her morning shower. Once Marinette was squeaky clean, dressed, and had made short work of an orange and some yogurt for breakfast, she joined her parents already working down in the bakery.

Noon had come and gone before she remembered her phone was still back in her room. She stealthily swiped a few cookies for her kwami and slipped upstairs, making herself a quick sandwich for lunch. She ate it swiftly and once she was finished, she managed to just get inside her room as her phone was ringing. Setting the cookies down onto the plate she kept for Tikki, she unplugged her phone and answered the unfamiliar number that showed up on her screen. “Hello?”

“Good afternoon, Marinette.” She was genuinely shocked to hear Nathalie’s voice come from the other end of the line. “Thank you for answering. Do not be alarmed, I asked Adrien to give me your phone number.”

“Oh. Sure.” The bluenette was still beyond baffled. “So…what’s up?”

“Please program this number I’m using into your phone,” Nathalie said. “So in the future, if the need arises, you may use this number to get ahold of me regarding any surprises for Adrien so that I may prepare my employer for them. But do try to keep calls to a minimum, as this is my own work line.”

“…Are you sure that’s okay with Mr. Agreste?” Marinette asked.

“Of course it is. It was his idea.” Nathalie replied, and it took all Marinette had not to squeal at the thought.

“Wow! Okay! Thank you Nathalie! Wait, is it okay if I call you Nathalie? If not, that’s fine too, just tell me what I should call you instead and—” She knew she was babbling but it wasn’t until there was a sound of light laughter that she was able to stop.

“Nathalie is fine. Have a good day, Marinette.” And then the line went dead.

Marinette stared at her phone screen for several seconds before allowing herself the squeal she had been holding in. Tikki, who had been quietly hovering nearby to listen in as soon as her bonded had taken the call, was beaming as Marinette jumped up and down. “I told you.”

Grinning from ear to ear while she nodded ecstatically, Marinette programmed the number from her Recent Calls into her Contacts. Once it was officially saved in, she took a screen capture of the entry and went into her Spots email account.

~Look at this! She told me I can use this to call her if I want to surprise you!

Attaching the screenshot to the email and sending off, she excitedly skipped her way back to the bakery. Her phone was already vibrating before she could check on the pie she had left in the oven.

~So that’s why she wanted your number! Well, this damsel definitely approves. =)

Laughing and putting her phone back into her apron pocket, Marinette practically bounced her way around the bakery kitchen. Tom watched her from where he was glazing a cheesecake with a smile. Whatever had happened while she had been upstairs having lunch was clearly good, and with the way his daughter was glowing, it likely had something to do with Adrien. Which made him all the more glad, as it confirmed that Marinette hadn’t been putting up a brave façade last night, that everything was still good between them. He did truly love them together; he had always thought Adrien was a kind young man from all Marinette had done to describe him over the years, and from the few times he had interacted with the boy before they became a couple, but above all, Tom was
just happy at how much joy the boy brought his only child.

When he brought his cheesecake out he whispered to his wife to go into the kitchen, and once she had, Sabine could see Marinette dancing as she gathered ingredients while humming to herself. She and her husband shared a knowing glance once they crossed paths again, before silently going back to their respective tasks with some shared looks of amusement.

The rest of the afternoon went by fast and once the bakery had been shut down for the day, the trio headed back up to prepare dinner. After their meal, Tom and Sabine went out for a grocery run while Marinette got to work on her steadily growing pile of laundry. She spent the majority of the evening washing, drying, folding and putting away her clothes, and even had enough time to strip down her bed to put on some fresh sheets and covers. As she re-hid the box of condoms behind her cat pillow and regular pillow complete with new pillowcase, she could still feel a light flush rise to her cheeks. She presumed it would still probably be a while yet before she could look at them outside of the heat of the moment without doing so.

Once it was finally time to go out on patrol, she transformed and was out into the night in the blink of an eye. Marinette touched down on the apartment’s rooftop and was delighted to see Adrien already standing there waiting for her, throwing her arms around him in a tight hug. “How are you feeling?”

“A lot better then yesterday.” He kissed the top of her head and held her close. “Still a little stuffed up, but the fever’s gone and my throat doesn’t really hurt anymore.”

“I’m really glad.” Marinette rested her head on his chest and contentedly listened to his heartbeat beneath her ear. Call her a lovesick fool, but she had missed him last night, so she was beyond glad to be next to him again.

They stayed enveloped in each other’s arms for a while more before separating. “So, which ways should we go tonight?”

“Hmm…” Unhooking her yo-yo from around her waist while walking toward the right side of the building, Marinette shrugged. “I’ll go this way.”

“Roger that!” Adrien extended his staff in one fluid motion and took off from the left side of the apartment building as she leapt from the right.

Of course, since it was last night she had wanted more on her plate, it was tonight she found her hands full. Several attempted break-ins, some drunk and disorderly conduct outside a bar or two, a couple hot-heads attempting to drag race, a fire in an office tower…it started to feel like it was never going to end. Thankfully since it was a Sunday night, no one had been in the offices so the firefighters told her they could handle it, but she still waited around nearby to watch until they had got the flames more under control. When she finally got back to the apartment building, Marinette was beat. “What a night.” She muttered as she sat down next to Adrien heavily.

By now he had been waiting for her for a while, but he could tell how tired she was so he kept that to himself. Instead he just laid back and tugged her with him, which she allowed immediately. She curled close to him as they looked up at the stars together, and he rubbed his hand along her back. Adrien could feel the tense muscles beneath his palm start to relax slowly but surely as he did. This reminded him about how during their weekend tryst at his place weeks before, she had mentioned wanting to get a back massage from him if she had won their Ultimate Mecha Strike III contest, despite purposely throwing the last game thereafter. “Sit up for a second.”

Glancing up at him with a cocked eyebrow, Marinette did so but not without some confusion. Adrien moved in behind her and before she knew it, he had grabbed her by the waist to easily lift her up and
set her into his lap. She managed to swallow her squeak of surprise at the sudden movement, especially because she knew she could trust him implicitly, and soon understood when she could feel his fingers working into the tightness knotted in her shoulders. “Oh, thank you…” She breathed as she shut her eyes, practically melting against his touch.

Pressing a tender kiss to the back of her neck in response, Adrien loved hearing her pleased murmurs as he continued. It would be so easy to turn this event into something naughty, but for tonight all he wanted to do was to repay her sweet note from last night. “Feel better?” He asked after several minutes of doing his best to try and ease her tension. In no way an expert on actual massage technique, Adrien could only hope that what he had done had been helping.

He had nothing to worry about though, because it certainly had. Rolling her shoulders before leaning her head back to look up at him, Marinette couldn’t help but grin. “Much. Even though I feel like I just asked you the same thing.”

“Just returning the favor.” Adrien got to his feet and held out a hand for her to grab, which she took happily as she stood as well. “See you tomorrow.” He lightly kissed her fingers before setting her hand free.

Standing on her tiptoes to place a peck his forehead in return, Marinette unhooked her yo-yo with one hand and playfully ruffled his hair with the other. “You know it.”

The two superheroes took off into the night toward their respective homes. They crept inside their rooms undetected and transformed back, changed into their respective sleepwear and crawled into bed, to slip into peaceful slumber filled with pleasant dreams of each other.
Chapter 106

Chapter Notes

So this chapter is a bit on the shorter side so I could spend more time working on the next one for tomorrow's anniversary upload. Which will then officially be my new longest chapter to date, huzzah! Not to mention that most of that is tea party material, so... ;) Anyway! After seeing the episode of season 3 where Gigantitan reappears briefly and is beaten fairly fast, I decided it meant I could make at least one super easy akuma too. And therefore, here she is! Mostly so I could cut her battle short enough to fit in extra naughtiness next chapter, so there's a good reason for it! =P All she wants is friends, poor thing. Oh, and if you hadn't noticed yet I tend to make most, if not all, my akumatized items purple (which is even done sometimes in the show) to makes it easier to pick out. Because sometimes it doesn't make any sense in the show how easily Marinette is able to pick them out (except for plot armor, LOL), so I figured I'd do this to make it simpler. I probably don't need to, but that's my reasoning and I'm sticking to it. xD Please enjoy guys, and prepare your tea cups for tomorrow!!

Morning came to Paris with cloudy skies and gusty winds. When the sounds of her alarm started to fill the air, Marinette awoke with a start and groaned. She had been in the middle of a lovely dream where she and Adrien were lounging on a warm, sunny, white sand-covered beach. Sitting up, she thought about how she wasn't truly sure if they would actually be able to escape to somewhere like that until Hawk Moth was caught, as she didn’t want to leave Paris vulnerable to his attacks with their absence. That was a lot to do with why, as much as she wanted to, she hadn't much pursued the idea of them even taking a short camping trip together. Sighing, she climbed down the stairs from her bed to turn off her persistent alarm.

"Everything okay?" Tikki had a knack for sensing when her bonded was feeling off.

"I was just thinking about how going on a vacation isn’t something that’s part of the Ladybug or Cat Noir job description.” Marinette admitted.

"What about a stay-vacation? The kind where you book a hotel in your own city just to get away from things without really having to leave?” Tikki flew over and looked rather proud when she saw Marinette eye her with moderate surprise. "I’ve had years to start planning this out for the two of you, you know.”

Marinette laughed. “I guess. But you’ve got a good point. I hadn’t thought of that.”

“It’s simple. Hawk Moth only makes akumas every couple of days now, so you just have to wait for the day after one to go. And most hotels have rooms for same-day bookings. Lots have pools too so you can go swimming, and some have hot tubs!” It did seem like Tikki had spent a lot of time working on the details for this. Marinette idly wondered how much time on her computer her kwami had spent researching all this (likely when she was working in the bakery), but she sure was appreciative she had. “And now that you have Nathalie’s number, she can help you with it too!”

“What would I do without you?” Marinette smiled when Tikki beamed and did a little mid-air bow. Feeling much more hopeful with the idea of even a small getaway with Adrien, Marinette went off to have her daily shower. After she came back up to her room get dressed, she made sure not to forget
her phone like yesterday before going back downstairs to have a light breakfast and then got down into the bakery.

She was pleasantly surprised to see Alix stop by mid-morning to buy a few different pastries, and the two chatted for several minutes. Even though they had only been out of school for a few weeks, it had very been nice to see her. When she went to leave, Alix nonchalantly gave a passing, “And say hi to Adrien for me,” That made the bluenette blush a little but she promised she would give him the message.

Once Marinette had had a lunch break and gotten back to the bakery, she spent the better part of an hour helping a sweet elderly couple pick out a set of macarons to congratulate their grandson who had just found out he was going to be a father. It was imperative they picked out just the right flavors that both he and his now expectant wife could enjoy. After that the afternoon was a lot more uneventful, and soon enough it was time to close down for the day and go upstairs for supper.

Tom had left early to get some fresh tuna steaks to make for tonight and was just finishing cooking them when the women of the household got to the living room area. A simple batch of wild rice and kernel corn later, their meal was ready to eat and smelled delicious. Suddenly rather hungry, Marinette dug in and made short work of everything on her plate.

Her parents announced they were going to go out to run some errands, so Marinette decided to take the opportunity to use the TV. She flipped through the channels until she found an animated movie on that she hadn’t seen since she was very young. It was great to re-watch now that she understood some of the jokes that would’ve gone way over her head back then. Once the movie was over though, there wasn’t anything on that really caught her eye anymore. So she turned off the TV, slipped down to the bakery to sneak some cookies for her kwami, then went up to her room.

Passing the rest of the evening with her sewing machine making a sundress to wear to Jam Fest this Friday, she wanted to hand-sew some flourishes to it to make it pop more, but that could be done tomorrow night. For now, it was time for patrol. With a call to Tikki, she was Ladybug again, and she set off to get to the usual meeting place.

She arrived at the apartment building’s rooftop and could see Adrien coming over too from just a few buildings away. “Nice timing.” She said when he landed. “By the way, Alix came by the bakery this morning. She told me to tell you she says hi.”

“Really? Alix wanted you to say hi to Cat Noir for her?” Adrien just grinned when Marinette rolled her eyes.


“Sounds good.” Adrien agreed, and with that the two of them were off.

With the weather still overcast and blustery, there weren’t a lot of people out. It was a much-appreciated reprieve from the night before. Unfortunately though, because of said weather, there wasn’t going to be any stargazing tonight. So when she got back to the apartment, Marinette sat down on the edge of the roof instead of the middle to wait for Adrien to return from his route.

It wasn’t long before she heard him touch down behind her and walk over to sit next to her. “I was meaning to ask, how’s your cold feeling?” She took his hand in hers.

“Pretty good. All the resting yesterday and today really helped. I think I’ll be back to normal by tomorrow.” Adrien told her. “Which is good, because I have a photo-shoot in the afternoon along the Seine.”
“At what time?” Marinette looked up at him hopefully.

“You want to come watch?” He could see the eager twinkle in her eyes. “Are you sure, bugaboo? It’s probably going to be pretty boring for you.”

“I’ve watched lots of your photo-shoots before. They aren’t boring at all.” Marinette blushed slightly when he cocked his head at her with a bit of a smirk. “Oh, stop it.”

“Sure, you can come if you want. It’ll be at 2 PM sharp.” Adrien spluttered then when a bug was blown into his face. “Okay, I’ve had just about enough of these winds.”

“Let’s turn in for the night then. We can spend more time together tomorrow now anyway.” She was met with an acquiescing nod, so they quickly stood to share a soft goodbye kiss before going off toward their respective homes.

Once she got back into her bedroom, Marinette transformed back and immediately went to get changed into her PJs. She climbed into bed soon after, wanting to get to sleep as fast as she could so it could be tomorrow. Watching Adrien’s photo-shoots had always been fun for her, and now she could do it without sneaking around!

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Soon enough, of course, it was morning. When her alarm went off today, Marinette got up with gusto. She knew she had to run the idea by her parents, but was sure that they wouldn’t mind. So she got ready for the day in a flash and was downstairs into the bakery shortly after. “Morning Mom,” She said to Sabine as she came in and tied on her apron. “Is it be okay if I went to a photo-shoot of Adrien’s today at two?”

“Absolutely not.” Despite this answer however, Sabine couldn’t keep a straight face.

“Got it. I definitely won’t leave at ten to two, then.” Marinette replied with a smile.

“I should think not.” Sabine shared her daughter’s smile and the two set to work.

The next few hours went by in a breeze. Marinette skipped taking a lunch break to instead grab something to eat on the way to the photo-shoot, which exact location Adrien had emailed her early this morning. When it was time to leave, she went up to her room to grab her purse and Tikki, stopped to take herself an apple and pack some almonds, then went down to step into her flats and head outside.

She ate her apple as she walked along and dropped the core into a public trashcan before reaching the bridge Adrien had to her to meet them at. It was shortly after two, and she could see the large truck of photography equipment parked just before the bridge. Soon she spied a familiar blonde head amongst two photographers and the veritable tower of a man Adrien always referred to as the Gorilla. Staying a respectable distance away as to not get underfoot, she waved when Adrien looked her way. His face lit up like a Christmas tree at the sight of her and he happily waved back, then went back to listening to the photographers. Content, Marinette opened her container of almonds and started to nibble on them as she watched them work.

And for the majority of the photo-shoot, everything went along smoothly. Just as they were starting to wrap things up, however, the sound of loud, feminine laughter could be heard. Marinette whirled and saw a young girl, looking no more then six, fly by to hover above the middle of the bridge. She was decked out in what looked like a classic superhero costume from cartoons or comics, in various shades of pink save for the black butterfly embellishment on her chest and deep violet watch on her
left wrist. “Wee! I’m a hero now!” She shouted. “Now everyone’s going to be my friend!”

Marinette looked over to Adrien and their eyes met briefly, before the Gorilla and the photographers got in the way to hide him from view. It would be hard for him to get away from them, so for now she was going to have to deal with this one on her own. Running behind the van and making sure the coast was clear, she opened up her purse to put away her almonds and let Tikki out. “Spots on!”

“Do you want my autograph?” Marinette heard the little girl asking once she came back out from behind the photographer’s van. She had floated down by Adrien and the others, as everyone else on the bridge had turned tail and run at the sight of a new akuma on the loose. “I’ll sign it, ‘Super Celeste is your pal’! What do you think?”

“We’re just a bunch of civilians, ma’am, we don’t want any trouble,” The taller photographer was saying nervously, with the other nodding emphatically. From behind the Gorilla, Marinette saw Adrien put his forehead in his hand at the words.

“It’s not very polite to bother people like that,” The bluenette called out to the little girl, making them all look at her. “Especially when they’re in the middle of work.”

“Ladybug!” Super Celeste flew over to take her hand, dragging her back to the group of four still on the bridge. “You two are photographers, right? Use those big cameras and take a picture of Ladybug with me! We’re going to be the best of best friends!”

Catching Adrien’s eye again, Marinette could tell how annoyed he was to be stuck without his powers. At least the girl seemed to be more interested in making friends then causing havoc or taking her Miraculous. Now she just had to figure out a way to get Super Celeste to take off her watch, which was her best bet as to where the akuma was hiding. Playing up this best friend angle would be the easiest way to do it. She gave a half-hearted smile when the photographer called for one, and felt the girl release her hand to go look at the picture on the camera’s screen. “So how does it look, new BFF?” She asked as evenly as she could, hearing Adrien groan to her left.

“I love it!” Super Celeste flew higher into the air. “I want one with Cat Noir too. You guys wait here, I’ll go find him!” And before Marinette could stop her, she flew off.

Sighing heavily, Marinette shook her head in frustration and unhooked her yo-yo from around her waist. “Should we really stay and wait here for her, Ladybug?” The shorter photographer asked as she hooked a streetlight with her yo-yo.

“No, all of you are free to go.” Marinette hoped that this opportunity would be taken.

And it was. “Oh yes, better head to safety!” Adrien was off and running in an instant, sending a grumbling Gorilla lumbering after him. Doing her utmost not to grin, Marinette swung off to find Super Celeste. Hopefully she wouldn’t be too far away.
Chapter 107

Chapter Notes

A BIG HAPPY THIRD ANNIVERSARY TO MY FANFICTION! =D

I can hardly believe it's been three whole years since I started this story. It boggles my mind that it's been so long! Sometimes it feels longer, sometimes it feels shorter. But anyway, I'm eternally glad I have so many wonderful readers who've always supported me no matter how long my absences can get from IRL craziness and offering such kind words to brighten my day. Honestly, the comments I get here have helped keep me positive through some tough times in my life the last three years. You guys are the absolute best. ♥♥♥

On to the chapter itself! As I mentioned last update, I'm making Super Celeste a really easy akuma partly because I was inspired by the short Gigantitan appearance in Weredad, and partly to make more time/chapter space for the sinful part. Because just with life getting in the way, it's been TWO ENTIRE YEARS since I've had a tea party chapter! =O And you all deserve one Hell of a cup of tea after that long of a wait! So hopefully the chapter here delivers and I haven't lost my touch. ^^; Oh, speaking of which...

THERE IS EXPLICIT SEXUAL CONTENT BELOW THE SAFETY OF THIS AUTHOR NOTE AND THIS IS YOUR LAST WARNING TO LEAVE IF YOU FEEL THE NEED TO.

And now with the obligatory warning out of the way, I have to say I'm quite happy with this installment. Horny!Marinette is really fun to write. =P It was always my plan to make her sex drive go way up before her monthly and blame it on hormones just to give myself an excuse to make her easily filled with wanton desire every once and a while. Because it's fun and this is fiction and I can, LOL. But I actually looked it up recently and apparently it is a real thing among some women. Yay for science! xD Plus I really wanted to do a Ladrien moment, since I've only gotten to do one of both it and Marichat waaaaay on back in chapters 22 and 25 respectively. So I figured it was about time! But without further ado, I think it's time to get on with the tea party, don't you? ;)

It was several blocks before Marinette saw some bright pink out of the corner of her eye. Super Celeste was sitting on the rooftop of library, and from what she could make out, it looked like she was pouting. Most likely, she assumed, this was from not being able to find Cat Noir. Not wanting to be unprepared this time, Marinette went around behind the library to land on its roof, safely out of view of the little girl, and quietly cried out, “Lucky Charm!” She caught a tiny red package of black circular batteries. At first she was perplexed, then an idea began to form. Tucking it along her yo-yo string behind her back, she walked over to Super Celeste. “No luck?”

Looking back up at the sound of her voice and scampering to her feet, Super Celeste threw her hands up in frustration and stamped her foot. “He isn’t anywhere! How am I supposed to take a picture with him and be his best friend if I can’t find him?”

“It’s okay, maybe he’ll come to us.” Marinette looked over Super Celeste’s costume very
deliberately. “I have to say, I really like your look. Especially that cool watch.”

“Thanks!” Super Celeste held up her left arm proudly. “My Daddy got it for me. It’s a really special watch! He said it’s to help me be brave and not as shy, so I can make new friends. And I was feeling so down earlier, but look at how far it’s got me now!”

Because of the akumatization, the watch no longer had the time across its face. Just a butterfly symbol. So this worked into Marinette’s plan perfectly. “Uh oh, I don’t think it’s working right anymore,” She said with (artificial) concern. “Isn’t it supposed to tell time?” Eyes wide, Super Celeste looked at her watch and gasped. “Don’t worry, I bet changing the batteries will fix it.” Marinette took out the batteries that had been sitting against her back to show to the girl. “And I just so happen to have some here.”

“Yay! Thank you!” Super Celeste took off her watch automatically and gave it to her.

“No problem. Here, you hold the batteries.” Passing them over and taking the watch, Marinette turned away and grabbed her yo-yo, then slammed it as hard as she could against the face of the watch. With a ‘crack’ the face broke, and out flew the akuma.

“Hey! What are you doing?” She heard the little girl yell behind her, but didn’t have the time to respond to her now. Catching the akuma with a long sweep of her yo-yo and setting the purified butterfly free, only then did Marinette turn back to see the little girl enveloped in purple magic. Soon reappearing in a much plainer outfit of a dress and sandals, she looked very baffled. “Where am I?” Noticing the scene in front of her, she shrieked in excitement. “It’s Ladybug! And wow, here comes Cat Noir!”

Surprised by this, Marinette glanced over her shoulder to see Adrien bolting across the rooftop to catch up to them. “Sorry I’m late,” He panted once he arrived, trying to catch his breath. “I couldn’t find you, and-” Having looked up, he was shocked to see Super Celeste (who was no longer super) holding the clearly Lucky Charm-made batteries, plus the still-broken watch in Marinette’s hand. “… You’re done already?”

“Well, not quite.” Holding her free hand out to the little girl who quickly gave her the package of batteries, Marinette tossed them into the sky. “Miraculous Ladybug!” The pink and red lights didn’t have far to go this time, just having to repair the watch as that was the only thing in this akuma’s awfully brief tenure that had been damaged, and not even by the akuma herself, before they vanished from view. “I believe this is yours.” She gave the watch back to its rightful owner.

Putting it on, the girl looked sheepish. “I hope I didn’t cause many problems.”

“It wasn’t bad.” Marinette replied honestly. It was truly the easiest akuma ‘battle’ in months. “And don’t worry about making new friends. You might make them when you least expect it.” The hopeful look on the little girl’s face made her smile, until her earrings began beeping. “Mind taking her home for me, partner? I need to get going.”

“Okay.” Adrien took the little girl’s already waiting hand, but Marinette sensed how dismayed he was over not being able to do more. She could try to reassure him later, but for now her top priority was to get somewhere safe to transform back at.

Swinging through Paris, she landed behind her school (her old school, chimed a passing thought), as thanks to summer, the area was deserted. “Spots off.” Tikki reappeared when her suit vanished and retreated to the awaiting open purse, which was promptly shut after her. Marinette went the long way around the school, then strolled casually to the bakery’s side door. She walked in and closed the door behind her, kicking off her shoes before poking her head into the bakery itself. “I’m home!”
“Welcome back!” Tom greeted her warmly as he walked by with a tray filled with delectable-smelling cupcakes. “Would you mind grabbing the other tray for me?”

Glad it appeared that they hadn’t heard about today’s short-lived akuma, Marinette got back to work. In between helping customers, she sent off an email to Adrien.

~You don’t have to worry, okay? Sometimes we get lucky and they’re easy to handle.

She received a response almost instantly.

~I know. I just feel bad you had to do it all yourself because I got trapped in the middle of it. PS, the Gorilla must’ve ratted me out as I got a lecture from Father when we got home about not running off in the middle of a ‘dangerous akuma attack’. X_x

Chuckling at the unintended irony at that last statement, Marinette returned her phone to her pocket to address the man who’d just walked into the bakery. Helping him was easy, and what remained of the afternoon was over swiftly, so she let her parents head upstairs ahead of her to close up shop for the day herself. By the time she got up to sit down at the kitchen table, tonight’s dinner was awaiting her.

Once they were finished, the family of three decided to try the lemon meringue pie ice cream Marinette had brought home days prior, and discovered it was indeed as tasty as it had sounded. After their dessert, Tom and Sabine brought out the checkers board and though she was invited to play too, Marinette politely declined so she could work on her sundress. So with that, she went up to her room, took out the cookies she had slipped into her pocket before supper to Tikki, and got to work.

When she completed it a few hours later, she was pleased with how the sundress turned out. Holding it against her body while standing in front of her mirror, she tried to imagine what Adrien would say when he saw her in it. That brought back thoughts of her sunset outfit and her prom dress, as well as the naughty memories tied to them. Draping her sundress over her chaise lounge for now, Marinette felt her pulse quicken and her body warming as images from both nights played in her mind’s eye. No matter how she tried to shake them or focus on anything else, they persisted, until there was no denying she was unequivocally both hot and bothered.

She knew from many years experience that more often then not, when her libido refused to be denied like this, it was from fluctuating hormones that meant her cycle was to follow in the next day or so. And it had been just over three weeks since her last – which only brought back the memories of how her wildly running motor had been what initiated her first time sucking Adrien off. While her hormonal influx had caught her off-guard last time, with no distractions now and time to think, she was more aware of it this time around. Also, until recently, she could only use her hands in moments like this; but now she had many more exquisite options available to her. She keenly wished she was seeing Adrien tonight, however, as they had just decided that they wouldn’t patrol on the nights of an akuma battle, it was simply not to be.

…But why not? What was really stopping her?

She doubted Tikki would protest to her suiting up as Ladybug to go see him. And that thought brought with it another: Adrien’s Ladybug fetish. Wouldn’t it be, in fact, the perfect time to go see him when he wouldn’t be expecting it? Not only to surprise him, but to indulge one of his fantasies? This was just too good an idea to pass up.

“Tikki?” Marinette’s soft call made her float down from where she had been relaxing snuggled up on the cat pillow. The kwami of creation could instantly recognize the certain look inside her bonded’s
eyes and her flushed skin. “Please?” She hadn’t even needed to ask however, since Tikki was already nodding, to which Marinette smiled with relief and got herself prepped for her plan. Then it was time for a, “Spots on!”

Adrien got undressed and put on his sleep pants, then he sat down on his couch with a loud sigh, letting his head fall back and running his fingers through his hair. He stared at the ceiling aimlessly for a moment or two before closing his eyes. What a day. Thank goodness Marinette had been there to take care of things until he could sneak away – he hated leaving her without any support, but being surrounded by the photographers and the Gorilla made it impossible to give them the slip and find somewhere he could transform, not until she had covertly intervened so he could.

He knew it wasn’t like she couldn’t take care of akumas on her own, obviously. She was as capable fighter, quick on her feet, and decidedly clever. And Hell, of the two of them, she was the only one who could purify them once they were defeated, so he was unable to take care of them completely without at least some assistance from her. But even so, he always wanted to be able to be by her side to support her.

The sound of a gentle knocking against glass brought him out of his reverie. Opening his eyes and sitting up, he was surprised to see Marinette hanging from outside his wall of windows and waving. Hadn’t they decided last week to take nights off from patrol any time there was an akuma during the day? He got up and strolled over to open the window she was directly in front of. “Hey there,” He began, still somewhat baffled as he watched her swing in. Shutting the window behind her, the grin he saw her wear didn’t make things any less confusing for him either. “What’s up?”

“Nothing,” Marinette shrugged nonchalantly. “I just figured I might as well come and check up on you after that akuma at your photo-shoot today.” Mischievous sparkles practically danced in her eyes. “Since I know it can get pretty scary for civilians.”

“Oh, ha ha, very funny.” Adrien rolled his eyes at her using the photographer’s line. “Though to be fair, I suppose that this isn’t the first time you’ve gotten yourself mixed up in one of these messes over the years.” Walking over to him slowly, almost deliberately it seemed, she let a hand brush lightly along his shoulder as her vision wandered over his physique. “And you certainly don’t look any worse for wear…”

While her actions seemed odd to him still, Adrien couldn’t help how his heartbeat quickened and heat colored his cheeks as she inspected him. “I’m fine, you know I’m fine,” He tried to keep his voice normal and not let his own eyes roam over how her suit hugged every inch of her skin. “Besides, we were emailing each other ages ago.”

“My, my!” Marinette feigned surprise. “You must be mistaking me for someone else. I don’t just give out my personal email to civilians!” She noticed his focus shift to her face so she visibly ran her tongue slowly over her lower lip. “Even if it happens to be the most handsome, most sexy, most eligible bachelor in all of Paris.”

Initially caught of guard at her last sentence, it was actually this line that finally made him understand. Now everything she was doing made sense. And all the more hot. “Really? I, uh…” Adrien swallowed over the lump in his throat as she let her hands drift across his arms. He wanted to play along (oh, did he ever!), but he did want to test the waters first. “Rumors say I’m no bachelor. That I have a girlfriend.”

Glad he finally got her game, when she made her way down to his hands, she pulled them over with
hers to set them onto her hips. “What a coincidence,” Marinette murmured, walking her fingers back up his arms and feeling him shiver beneath her touch. If this was how he was reacting to her advances now, then this was indeed going to be fun. “Because I just so happen to have a boyfriend, or at least, that’s what people have speculated. But I suppose you shouldn’t believe everything you hear.”

She let one arm drape over his shoulders as the other dragged slowly down his bare back. At this point he already had to bite his lip, but he did allow his grasp to tighten on her hips. “True. And plus, if I did have a girlfriend, I would never ever cheat on my perfect match, not in a million years, so it’s a bit of a good thing I’m single, huh?”

That made her giggle. Even amidst role-play, he wanted her to know he wouldn’t do anything like what it inferred behind her back. Which made total sense, because she wouldn’t dream of doing something similar to what this situation implied either. “Oh yes, I understand. Neither would I.” Marinette said aloud with a nod of agreement for emphasis. “And I can tell, an upstanding gentleman like yourself…” She paused before speaking her next deliberate choice of words. “Could never betray his Lady.”

Hearing her use his favorite phrase sounded so, so intoxicating. “R-Right.”

“And not to mention…” Hooking her thumb into the waistband of his sleep pants, Marinette was now wearing an impish grin. “I’ve heard from a very reliable source that you, Adrien Agreste, have got the wildest of crushes on me. Is that true?”

Cheeks scarlet, he didn’t have time to be a bit embarrassed because he was too busy being hopelessly turned on instead. So Adrien nodded and managed a quiet, “Yes.”

“Yes, what?” Marinette’s grin was now a smirk as the arm that had been slung over his shoulders moved so she could press the side of her hand to his cheek.

God, why was everything she did so effective? “Y-Yes Ma-” He was stopped abruptly by her finger over his lips. She shook her head before pulling her hand away to gesture to what she was wearing with a cheeky wink. Realizing what she meant, Adrien’s face was now the same shade as the garment in question. “Yes Ladybug…”

Her smirk growing, Marinette caught his lips in hers in a scorching kiss. The thumb she had in his waistband glided across his hip before the rest of her fingers joined it and then slid fully into his sleep pants. Taking hold of the ever-growing bulge still inside his boxers, she was rewarded by his muffled moan. He broke away to inhale sharply when she gave his length a gentle squeeze, then he moved with purpose this time to lavish kisses along her neck, both over the exposed skin and that which was covered up by the collar of her suit. “Mm…” She hummed contentedly. “I like that.”

Encouraged by her praise, Adrien brought his hands from her hips to cup her breasts and caress them the way he knew got the best response from her. Feeling her stiff nipples through the material and hearing her breathy sigh was always how he had imagined an intimate encounter with Ladybug like this would be. He wanted all of it to last as long as physically possible. As aroused as he already was, though, he was going to have to be careful, or he might unravel far sooner then he wanted to.

Like he nearly did when Marinette moved her hand inside his boxers to run her fingers slowly over his hardness and circle her thumb over his tip. “Ladybug…!” He breathed, mentally forcing himself back from the edge. His eyes met hers and Adrien felt himself shudder at how hungrily her blue gaze looked back at him. It appeared she was getting as turned on by him calling her Ladybug as he was by saying it.
Instead of directly replying, she kissed him hard again, using her free hand to tug down his sleep pants. They fell around his feet and he stepped out of them, moving backward slightly so she would follow. Still joined at the mouth, the couple soon found themselves at Adrien’s couch, which he summarily sat on and pulled her with him as he laid back on it next. She removed her hand from his boxers so she could grind against him instead, and in turn he rolled her nipples with his thumbs. Their tongues twirled together in an impassioned frenzy, completely lost in each other.

When they finally parted, panting for breath, Marinette gazed down at him with visible need. “Here,” She whispered, taking his hand and guiding it between her legs.

“I do want to touch you, I really do,” Adrien admitted, doing his best to massage her still-covered womanhood to show he meant it. “But as much as I hate to say it, your suit’s in the way.” In his fantasies, it had just magically disappeared around the parts of her body he wanted to access most, but he knew it didn’t work like that in reality.

Hesitating, Marinette had to think about that. She didn’t want this role-play to have to come to an end now, but how could it continue? Luckily a great idea came soon, and her earlier smirk returned.

“Since I can’t have you know my secret identity,” She shivered as he continued working his hand against her, as though the contact wasn’t as direct as she wanted, she still tried not to let it lose her focus. “I guess I’ll just have to make sure you can’t see me once I transform back.” Loving how his eyes widened, she made a show of looking over his room. “Got anything I can use as a blindfold?”

She genuinely was going to be the death of him.

Praying his voice wouldn’t squeak when he spoke, Adrien stammered, “I-I might.”

“Where?” Marinette looked triumphant as she climbed off from over him and waited patiently as he got to his feet with a bit of an uncomfortable grimace. He led her to his bed so he could pull the strips of fabric she had given him out from inside the lower half of his pillowcase against his mattress. “So you sleep with them?” Breaking ’character’ for just a moment was worth it by how he could only blush in reply. Her expression was most amused when he gave them over to her. “Kinky.”

“I think you’re enjoying this too much.” He pretended to pout unconvincingly.

“Like you aren’t.” Letting her fingers ghost teasingly over the front of his boxers as a means to prove her point, Marinette enjoyed how he gasped and jerked against her hand. “Now hold still.” She tossed the longer of the two fabric strips back over her shoulder onto his end-table to hold up the slightly shorter one near his face. Adrien obediently shut his eyes so she gently laid it over them and tied a careful knot behind his head. “There. Spots off!” This was then followed by, “And no peeking!”

“All right…” Adrien made himself say.

Of course, telling him not to peek only made him want to do so even more.

So, after waiting what felt like a minute, he dared to lift up the blindfold slightly and open one eye. Marinette had apparently moved because he couldn’t see her in his limited field of sight, but he did see Plagg (where had he been until now?) and Tikki floating nearby, then could hear his girlfriend whisper to Plagg, “Sorry.” To this the kwami of destruction waved an arm passively, before following Tikki as the two of them flew up and out of his view. Adrien quickly let go of the blindfold and shut his eye again, hoping he wouldn’t have to wait long for whatever could be coming next.

He heard the sound of cardboard being rustled, and then foil, so she must’ve moved to find the box
of condoms under his bed. Then he felt Marinette take one of his hands and press it against her breast – her very bare breast. He hadn’t heard her get undressed though, so how could this possibly be? This could only mean…that she had been already naked. That she had transformed like that! It seemed there was no end to her wealth of surprises. “Damn.” Adrien managed to say, and heard her laugh.

“This way.” Marinette moved his hand from her breast to lightly pull him along with her a short distance. She stopped and moved his hand again so he could feel the cool touch of the wall by his bed beneath his palm. So she wanted it to happen here? Yes, definitely no end to the surprises tonight. Next he felt her finally pull down his boxers while one of her legs curled around his waist. Then she brought his hand at last to her core, and the amount of wetness that met his skin there made him want to be inside her all the more desperately.

With her help Adrien slid a finger into her heat, relishing how she squirmed when he did. And thankfully because they had been together several times now, even blindfolded he managed to find her bud with his thumb. The way she moaned as he worked his finger up and down and his thumb back and forth nearly distracted him from the subtle sound of tearing foil. His hips bucked at her feather-light grip over his arousal, which she stroked only a few times before stopping to leisurely slide the condom over him. There was no way he could wait any longer. “Now? Please?” He begged, pressing against her bundle of nerves to try and help be more persuasive.

Not that he needed too, though, as Marinette was just as ready for him as he was for her. “Almost.” Once Adrien pulled back his hand and she directed his tip to her awaiting entrance, she moaned low in her throat as he pushed all the way into her. It felt so good to have him within her again. His hands were at either sides her ass and raising her with speed, making her grin a little at this enthusiastic response as she wrapped her other leg around him and held on to his broad shoulders. “Okay, now.”

Adrien didn’t need to be told twice. He brought her up and down slowly a couple times just to feel the way she trembled delightfully in his arms, before setting their pace in earnest. And despite how much each of them alike wanted this to never end, both he and she couldn’t last long until they were swept away into some of the fiercest orgasms either one of them had ever had. Her voice called out for him over and over as inner walls clamped down on him again and again, until Adrien was likewise hoarse from crying her name. For several minutes, their shaky breathing was the only movement between them until Marinette untied the knot to the blindfold and pulled it away from Adrien’s head. He blinked his eyes open to soon focus on her face and her tired smile, and he gave her one in return. “I love you.”

Marinette giggled. “I love you too.”

When she unwrapped her legs from his waist, he set her back down onto the floor and pulled out from inside her. “And that…that must happen again. Hopefully lots.”

Smirking now, Marinette moved aside so he could clean himself off. “Tikki?” Seconds later she saw her kwami phase through the shut door to Adrien’s bathroom where Plagg had been hiding previously, and clearly still was. She would have to buy him a ridiculous amount of camembert to be a suitable peace offering for this, but it had been beyond worth it. “Did you get something to eat?”

“Yup.” Tikki nodded. “We made a quick trip to the kitchen, so I’m all good to go.”

Looking back to Adrien to make sure he was watching, Marinette said, “Spots on.”

He could feel his softening member twitch in spite of himself. “You keep that up and I won’t be letting you go back home tonight.” Adrien warned when she had emerged from the cocoon of lights wearing her suit once more.


“You know, that’s not any deterrent.” Marinette walked back over to give him a kiss on the cheek, until he turned so he could kiss her more properly. A gentle kiss, filled with appreciation and love rather then desire and thirst. They separated shortly thereafter, both of their hearts feeling pleasantly warmed from it now. “Good night.”

“Good night.” Adrien echoed, watching her cross his room with a few long strides, carefully open up one of his many windows, unhook her yo-yo and use it to swing out of his room into the blackened nighttime sky. “Wow.” He said to himself with a bit of an impressed grin. Deciding to leave his various discarded articles of clothing to be dealt with tomorrow, he made his way to his bathroom to knock on the door, only to be greeted by the perturbed mutters of one complaining kwami. “I’m coming in regardless. You can stay or you can leave, it’s your choice.”

“All right, I’m leaving!”

“I thought so.”

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