# The Muse

**by** [khywa](http://archiveofourown.org/users/khywa)

## Summary

As an exchange art student in Paris, you expected things to be different from what you were used to. What you didn't expect was a flirty cat boy to be your source of inspiration, as well as of constant embarrassment.

## Notes

Basically the Chat feels were too much, my do-s side took over and... this happened. There will probably be sin and some sort of sub!Chat Noir at some point. You have been warned.

Also, I have to apologize in advance if there are any errors since this first chapter wasn't beta'd. I'm fairly used to writing in English, but it still isn't my first language, so some errors can appear. Bear with me, please.
You breathed deeply, inhaling the smell of freshly baked croissants. After months of preparation you were finally in Paris for your student exchange. It’d be strange to be away from everything you knew, but you hoped it’d be worth it. Eyes darting to the bakery at your side, you contemplated buying something, but quickly dismissed the idea. You couldn’t be late for your first day at the Arts and Design University.

Making your way through the front gate, you admired the sculptures that decorated the vast garden ahead of you. Some modern, some classical, it was a nice atmosphere. And since it was summer, many students were laying around on the grass, some drawing, others chatting and smoking. Readjusting your backpack, you headed for the main building.

Your mouth opened in wonder as you walked inside. The place was gorgeous: the old architecture elements side by side with modern furniture, creating a beautiful combination. You were so engrossed by it that you almost jumped when someone touched your arm.

“Oh, I’m sorry! I didn’t mean to startle you.” A girl said, retreating her hand quickly. “Are you one of the new exchange students?” She had short, black hair and her blue eyes were kind as she smiled at you.

You nodded and she extended her hand. “Nice to meet you, I’m Marinette.”

After you said your name and from where you were from, Marinette began showing you around the campus, since she was one of the responsible for welcoming the new exchange students. And she was really good at it; answering all your questions and making you feel less nervous about being in a completely new place all by yourself. Her cheerfulness was contagious.

You were now laughing at her comment about a modern sculpture as you both walked in front of the design building when someone shouted her name. Turning around you saw a girl walking in your direction. She had reddish-brown hair and black glasses that matched the headphones around her neck.

“Hey Mari, found a new student already?” The girl said to Marinette as she got close.

Marinette smiled and introduced you to the girl. “This is my best friend, Alya. She studies Design and Multimedia.”

“Nice to meet you and welcome to Paris!” Alya said shaking your hand.

“Thank you.” You said, chuckling as she was still shaking your hand.

Marinette then looked at her watch and gasped. “Wow, it’s almost lunch time! Why don’t we go to the cafeteria for lunch?”

You quickly agree, your stomach more than ready for a bit of food.
At the cafeteria, the three of you sat in one of the tables after getting your meals. The place was full of students, all chatting between themselves.

“Oh, look who’s there.” Alya said, a mischievous smile on her face as she pointed to a table with her head. You looked to where she was pointing and saw a blonde boy talking with his friends. “Isn’t he cute, Marinette?” She put her hand under her chin and batted her eyelashes at her friend.

Marinette rolled her eyes. “You’re never letting this go, are you?” She huffed. “That was years ago.”

You had no idea what was going on as you looked at them. Alya saw your expression of complete loss and laughed. “She used to have a huge crush on him, right Mari?” She nudged her friend, who only looked to the side, annoyed. “But now she only has eyes to those Japanese boys of her.”

“They’re Koreans, Alya.” Marinette sighed like she had said this many, many times.

Alya laughed once again and put an arm over her friend’s shoulders. “C’mon, don’t be like that! I’m just teasing you.”

“In front of the new student.” Marinette deadpanned.

You quickly shook your head. “I promise I won’t say anything!” The two friends smiled.

Alya then waved her hand. “I promise I won’t say anything!” The two friends smiled.

Alya laughed once again and put an arm over her friend’s shoulders. “C’mon, don’t be like that! I’m just teasing you.”

“Don’t worry about it, she never tried to hide it anyway.”

Marinette rolled her eyes but you saw her smile, and soon they changed the subject, talking mainly about the difference between Korea and Japan.

You smiled at their antics as you ate your food, but soon your eyes wandered a few tables ahead of you, where the blonde guy was sitting. He was fairly handsome you had to admit it, especially with the light from the window reflecting on his hair. Maybe he was a model? You tried to imagine Marinette gawking over him and laughed quietly to yourself. You couldn’t picture that. The boy then turned and looked in your direction and you quickly looked at your food, cursing inwardly. Damn, you must have been staring for some time. After a moment, you looked up tentatively but he had gone back to talking to his friends. Sighing in relief, you hoped he didn’t think much about it.

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It had been two weeks since Marinette gave you that tour around the campus. She still talked to you, always helping if you needed something and since you had some classes with her, you had lunch together sometimes.

Time passed quickly as you got used to your life in Paris. The city was basically an open-air museum, with many things to see and places to be. And things were getting better: you were getting less lost at the metro station (a huge improvement, you must say) and was getting used to living in your apartment. The place wasn’t big, but it had a cozy feeling, and you loved sitting on the windowsill on your bedroom to feel the sun on your face or to look at the lights of the city when it got dark.

Now it was the weekend, but you had to hand over some landscape sketches to one of your classes on Monday, so in the afternoon you left your place with some papers and a pencil case.

You decided to go to a calm park a few blocks from your apartment and sitting on a bench in a more secluded area so you could concentrate, you began to draw. The weather was nice. Birds were singing and a soft breeze swayed your hair as your pencil flew across the paper.
The sunlight was then blocked and you looked up, seeing the sky completely grey. “What the…”
You put your pencil down. It was blue a few seconds ago!

You heard a noise and saw something flying past above the trees. A car.

A car?!

Your eyes widened as you heard an evil laugh – like those from the movies, followed by the sound of the car crashing as it hit the ground somewhere. Before you could stand up you saw a masked girl wearing a red suit with black dots run past. Your face was probably priceless at this point, having no idea of what the hell was going on. Were you in the middle of a filming set?

“Chat!” You heard her shout from the limits of the park. She was outside your field of view now.

“Coming.” A male voice said. Your eyes widened even more as a - also masked - blonde boy landed a few meters in front of you, dressed in a black skin-tight catsuit, with cat ears and everything. Yep, you probably shouldn’t be there, this was some serious anime shit. You were sure a movie director would appear at any second and kick you out of there.

You tried to get up slowly without the boy noticing, but with so many papers to hold, your pencil slipped from your hand and fell to the ground. You winced as you saw the boy’s cat ears stand up. Goddammit. Although you had to admit that was a really cool mechanism, making it possible for him to move the fake cat ears like that. What was the-

Your thoughts were cut short when he turned his head to you. That was it, now you would be sued for messing up the recording. You expected to hear a ‘Cut!’ shouted from somewhere, but not the boy turning his head to the side as he saw the drawings on your hands. He began to walk in your direction, grinning.

You stood there watching as he made his way over to you, walking in what you could only describe as a sinful way. Who was this guy?

He grabbed your pencil from the ground and extended it to you with a flourish. You grabbed it, but he didn’t let go, making you look up.

“Can you draw me, ma chérie?” He gave you a half smile, his green eyes locked on yours. You looked at the fang that was visible from his smile and swallowed dry.

“Chat!” You heard the girl shout once again after another crash sound, reminding you of the current situation. Maybe they were still recording? Was this a live thing? Perhaps a promotion of the show? You had too many questions.

The boy turned his head to where the girl was calling and let go of the pencil.

“Sure.” You blurted out. He turned to you again, eyebrows raised. You sat down on the bench and grabbed a blank sheet of paper.

“Err…” the startled cat boy looked between you and the girl. “Really?”

“Yeah,” you said, already beginning to sketch. “Now stay still.”

He blinked at you, his cool attitude gone for a moment as you made the quickest sketch you could - praying that it didn’t look like total garbage, and handed it over to him. “Here. You can keep it.”

His eyes lit up as he saw the drawing. He opened his mouth to say something but you heard a noise
and a flying car crashed a few meters to your side, scaring you shitless.

“Chat!!” The girl sounded much more urgent now.

The cat boy made a hissing sound. “What’s your name?” He asked as he walked backwards. You said it as if you were on a daze. He repeated the name again, a smile on his lips. “I’ll see you later!” He shouted to you as he ran off in the girl’s direction.

You stood there for some time after they left, blinking as your heart calmed down. After gathering your things, you went back home. You would have to watch the TV to find out which show this was, because you would watch the heck out of it.

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It turned out that they weren’t actors, but actually some kind of super heroes that defended Paris from evil forces. When you first read about it you laughed for some good minutes, but then you found a blog about Ladybug, the girl in the red suit, that had been going on for years and realized that it wasn’t a joke. Apparently the boy was called Chat Noir and helped Ladybug in fighting bad guys and akumatized villains. They were famous in the city, being active for some time now.

It didn’t seem like it had been a week since that incident happened. With all the projects you had to do, time went by quickly. Right now you were stuck with a figure drawing one. No matter how hard you tried, you just couldn’t get it right. You sighed as you walked back home. Your classes finished earlier that day, so you decided to buy something at the little cafe near your house and eat at the park.

Sitting on the same bench from that fateful day, you closed your eyes as you savored your new bought treat. Bless France for its sweets.

“Finally.” The hairs on your neck stood up as someone whispered on your ear.

You almost choked on your food as you turned around and saw the cat guy, Chat Noir.

“I’ve been looking for you for quite some time, my lady.” He said as he leaned on the bench from behind and looked at his claws.

“Is that so?” You turned back and pretended to be very interested in your food. You read many times about how flirty he was, and you said to yourself that you wouldn’t let it get to you.

“Yes.” He whispered on your ear again and an involuntary shiver ran down your spine. What the-!

You turned to him and his face was right in front of you. He chuckled at your shocked expression and backed up a bit.

“You see,” he jumped over the bench like a damn gymnast and sat by your side. “I didn’t thank you that day.”

You blinked at him, still shocked about his dramatic jump, before it dawned on you. “Oh, about the drawing?” You waved a hand dismissively. “You don’t have to thank me. It was nothing.”

“I insist.” He said, bowing his head and then leaned closer. “Tell me what you want.”

You looked at him with a raised eyebrow, an idea coming to mind. “Anything?”

He leaned even closer until you could feel his body heat. “Anything.”

“Be my muse.”
He blinked. “What.”

You turned to him fully and clasped your hands together, making him jump. “I’m stuck with figure drawing, but that day I was able to draw you so quickly and with some quality, so maybe I can do it again.” Pleading eyes looked at surprised green ones. “What do you say?”

He looked at you with an unreadable expression but then a grin spread widely on his face. “It’ll be a pleasure, my lady.”

Chapter End Notes

Here we go, down the path of sin and embarrassment.

So, I posted this chapter as a sort of test. I really need someone to help me with this so I can post more, but finding a beta has proven to be a tough task. So, if anyone is willing to be a kind soul and beta this story, it'd mean the world to me. If you're interested comment here or just message me on my tumblr!

And thanks for reading!
You didn’t have a studio, and making Chat Noir appear at the University was risky, so, albeit a little reluctantly, you gave him your address and asked him to meet you at your apartment on the weekend. He didn’t seem to mind.

It was Saturday afternoon and you were working on your computer in the living room when you heard a knock from your window. Of course he would come from there. You wondered just how much of a cat he actually was.

Opening the curtain, you saw him leaning over the window frame in what he thought was a seductive pose. You rolled your eyes and unlocked the window.

“Bonjour, ma chérie.” He jumped inside the room and kissed your hand. You raised an eyebrow.

“You read about me?” He looked smug, too smug for your liking. You just ignored him and ducked under his arm.

“How long can you stay transformed?” You asked as you made your way to the living room.

He looked at his ring and then back at you. “For about one hour.”

You nodded. Sitting on a chair you put in the middle of the room, you asked him to pose for you. “You’re going to stay in that pose for at least 20 minutes, so make yourself comfortable.”

“Alright,” he said and then sprawled himself dramatically on the wooden floor. “Draw me like one of your French girls.”

You snorted, trying to contain your laughter, but you couldn’t hold it back, so you just put your hand on your face and laughed quietly. Oh, this was going to be difficult.

After 20 minutes of flirty remarks and some cat puns, you were finished. It wasn’t the best drawing, but it was far better than the others you had made, so you were happy. You stretched your arms and
Chat got up from the pose, stretching his body.

“Do you want water or anything?” You said to him as you made your way to the kitchen.

“Are you an option?” He said, making you roll your eyes.

“No.” You heard him chuckle.

Coming back after refreshing yourself, you saw he was already sitting on the floor. “Are you ready?” You asked.

“Yes.”

“Alright then.” You sat down again and grabbed your paper and pencil. When you looked back at him, he was looking directly at you. You furrowed your brows. “Are you really going to keep staring at me?”

He smirked. “Yes.”

You sighed and began to draw. “You suck,” you muttered. His smirk only grew.

After some uncomfortable moments, you got into the drawing and forgot he was watching you. This time you focused more on his face, and you saw the little details of it. The way his bottom lip was a bit fuller than the upper one, how his nose looked like a kitty nose with the mask covering part of it – which made you smile – and how he had a little beauty mark on his neck.

Your alarm went off and you blinked. Was the time up already? You didn’t even notice. Rubbing your eyes, you looked up at the cat boy and saw him looking back at you with a strange expression.

“Time’s up,” you said and he blinked, the expression being replaced by his usual flirty one.

“Let me see.” He got up and stretched again. Making sure to do it right in front of you so you could see his body.

You fidgeted a little. “Sure.”

He got behind you, leaning on the chair and looked at the drawing from over your shoulder. You could feel his breathing on your cheek. “It looks great,” he whispered.

“Thank you,” you whispered back, your heart speeding up a bit.

After some seconds of silence he leaned back and walked to the window. “Well, I must be off, my lady.” You let out a breath you didn’t know you were holding. “See you next week.”

You nodded and began to get up, gathering the drawings. “Thank you for the help- ouch.” You hissed as a paper cut your finger. “Tsk.” You went to stick the little injury into your mouth when Chat grabbed your wrist and licked your finger.

“What the-“ You looked at him, feeling blood rush to your face. He looked at you through half lidded eyes and sucked on the digit, releasing it with a popping sound.

He licked his lips. “Cat saliva has healing properties.” You pulled your hand back hastily.

“Don’t you say.” You narrowed your eyes at him, holding your hand to your chest. The boy winked as he opened the window. The sun was almost setting and the orange sunset light outlined his body.
“Au revoir, my lady.” He bowed and in a matter of seconds, he was gone.

You closed the window and put a hand on your head, sighing. This boy was too much for you. Looking at the streets bathed in the glow of the sunset, you clenched your fist. You had to put up with his flirting, for the sake of art! Your injured finger then throbbed and you hissed, putting it into your mouth.

Your eyes widened when you realized what you had done and you screamed internally. Chat!

Chapter End Notes

Buckle up, this is gonna be a long ride...

EDIT: this chapter now has a fanart! It has been my plan since the beginning to draw random parts of the fic in first pov, so let's all hope I can keep doing it, amen
The next week was a mess, full of projects and little sleep. However, you did have time to go out with Marinette to a cafe and had a nice time chatting with her and Alya. They never ceased to amaze you with their talks. You didn’t tell them about the whole Chat Noir situation, as it would create more drama in your life, and the cat boy was enough as it was.

When the weekend finally arrived you were exhausted. You yawned as you read a text for your Art History class, the orange afternoon light illuminating your papers. A knock on your window told you your muse had arrived. Your teacher had been happy with your previous drawings, so you just needed a couple more. Standing before the curtain, the memory of that day with the paper cut came back to you and you shook your head. It had haunted you all week.

You opened the curtain and the window with another yawn, your eyes almost closed. You said, well, tried to say ‘bonjour’ through your yawn, but it just came out as a mumble. “Tired, are we?” He said with a smirk. You waved a hand at him as you turned around, still yawning, and went inside to grab your drawing tools.

Coming back to the living room you finally got a good look at him. He didn’t seem so good. His outfit was dirty as well as his face, and he had some deep scratches on his cheeks. The cat boy looked like a mess. “Wow, what happened to you?” You approached him, getting a better look at his injuries. “A crazy villain as usual, nothing new, my lady,” he said with a smug smile, but you could see in his eyes that he was tired. “You didn’t have to come,” you said softly, looking at him. “Well, I’m your muse, am I not?” He said and continued to smile. “Of course I had to.” You smiled back weakly at him.

“But what about your time?” You pointed to the ring on his finger that, as you had researched after the other day, showed how long the transformation would last. He looked at it. It still had two dots. He waved a hand dismissively. “Don’t worry, ma chérie. I didn’t use my special power, so it’ll take a while.”

“Alright, then let’s clean you up,” you said, rolling your eyes when he wriggled his eyebrows at you. Leading him to the bathroom, you waited as he cleaned his face, hearing him hiss a couple of times and then you put two band-aids over two of the bigger scratches he had. You didn’t have the proper medical supplies since you had planned on living here temporarily, but you hoped it would help a bit. Chat was quiet the entire time you touched his face. No flirting, no snarky remarks. He must have been feeling really bad, you thought sadly to yourself.

Walking back to the living room, you made him sit on the sofa in the middle of the room. He tried to complain, but you were having none of that. You put your chair in front of him and began to draw quickly, cutting the time down from 20 minutes to 10. Chat began telling you about the fight with the villain, who was an akumatized old cat lady, which explained the scratches.
By the second drawing you felt your eyes get heavy and that was when you realized Chat had stopped talking. Looking up at him, you saw him dozing off while sitting up. Guilt filled your heart. Getting up slowly, you went to your bedroom and grabbed a blanket, putting it over him. You then sat by his side with your drawings, trying to improve them a little bit. Glancing at Chat, you wondered if he’d go back to normal anytime soon. Sure, you were curious to know who he was, but you wanted to respect his privacy. Looking at his ring, it showed one dot. Maybe you should wake him? Your eyes went to his face. He seemed to be in deep sleep, his breathing even. His blonde hair fell over part of his mask, covering it like a curtain of gold. Beautiful, you thought. Shaking your head, you went back to your drawing. If he transformed back, you’d just cover your eyes.

Said eyes were getting heavier again when you felt something warm on your shoulder. Looking down, you saw Chat leaning on you. He looked so calm, his expression relaxed without that ever-present grin on his face. You smiled. *I’ll let this pass this one time*, you said to yourself. Just this once…

You woke up with something moving under your head. You groaned, it was so warm and cozy and you wanted it to stay that way. Your hand grabbed at what was moving, making it stop. Hearing a chuckle you opened your eyes a little bit, your vision foggy with sleep. You saw a blonde figure, but no black suit.

“Go back to sleep, *ma chérie.*” You heard a familiar voice whisper and your eyes obeyed, closing and taking you back to your dreams.

You woke up completely lost. Apparently it was the middle of the night. Looking at your phone, you saw it: 4 a.m. Yep, you were right.

Stretching, you saw that the light from the kitchen was on, so you got up. There was no one there. You felt a bit disappointed for some reason, but then found a post-it note.

“Sorry to leave like this,
I’ll see you next week.
Sleep tight, *ma chérie.*”

A tired smile tugged at the corners of your lips. What a dork. You saw a little arrow pointing to the side and turned the note over.

“P.S.: You look adorable when you sleep. Check your phone.”

Your eyes widened a bit at this and you ran back to the living room, quickly grabbing your phone on the sofa. You cursed inwardly for disabling the locking option as you went through your pictures. And there it was, a picture of you sleeping that Chat had edited with cat ears and a lot of sparkles. You sighed to yourself as you laid down on the sofa, putting your phone down. Looking up at the ceiling, you could feel your heart beating fast in your chest. You put an arm over your eyes and smiled to yourself. What a dork.
Thank you to everyone that took the time to read and to leave comments and kudos, it really makes my day!

The next chapter should be up soon, since it's almost ready, and the drawing as well (I hope hah).

EDIT: Drawing is ready :)
Chapter Notes

Sorry it took so long to upload the chapter! I promise the next one will come sooner and will be longer :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Through the next week you kept chiding yourself for not having taken a picture of Chat as he slept. The memory of his sleeping face was still fresh on your mind though, so you decided to sketch it during an Art History class that had soon turned into chaos when one student said religious paintings were just a form of fanart.

When the class was finally finished, you were almost done with shading your drawing.

“Wow, it looks just like him.” A voice said by your side. You turned and saw Marinette. Although she studied Fashion Design, Art History was common for many courses, so she was your classmate.

“You think so?” You smiled at her.

She smiled back and nodded. “Just don’t let Alya see this or she’ll want to post it on her blog.”

“Her blog?” You tilted your head to the side.

“Yeah,” She chuckled. “Her Ladybug blog.”

“Oh.” Was all you said, as you remembered that blog you first saw when searching for the two heroes, still thinking they were actors. It seemed so long ago.

“Do you like him?” You snapped your head back to Marinette.

“Err… Yes? I guess?” You rubbed your neck as you tried really hard not to think about the feel of his head on your shoulder while he slept or the way he licked your finger. No success. “He does a great job defending Paris and all, right? Hah…” You laughed, the sound a bit forced.

Marinette narrowed her eyes a bit, but soon smiled again. “You’re right.” You almost sighed in relief. “But it’s alright if you’re one of those hardcore fans of his, you know?” You looked at her, horrified, and she winked. “I won’t judge you.”

“See you!” She waved at you as she exited the room, leaving you there, wordlessly watching as she disappeared down the corridor.

You slumped in your chair and looked at your drawing in shock. He was just your muse, but why did you have a feeling you were in too deep?

When the weekend came you were a nervous mess. You had searched for Chat Noir’s hardcore fans and boy, were they something. You didn’t dare to read the fanfictions, but just the fanart had your cheeks heating up. It was a mistake.
You jumped when you heard the knock on your window. The sun was almost setting once again, and the dim light illuminated your living room. You could do this. You said his flirting wouldn’t get to you, didn’t you? With this on mind, you breathed deeply.

Pushing open the curtain, you didn’t see anyone. Furrowing your brows, you opened the window. You almost looked outside, but hesitated for a second. What was the cat boy thinking? Did he want to surprise you? You narrowed your eyes.

“Chat?” You called, giving a step back with caution.

“Yes?” You heard a voice whisper in your ear as your back collided with a hard chest. You turned around quickly, goosebumps travelling up your arm.

“Stop doing this!” You said as you pushed his shoulder. He didn’t budge and just laughed at you.

Chat looked down at the goosebumps on your arms and smirked. “But it’s so much fun.”

You threw your hands up. Whatever. You had already put your chair in place along with your drawing tools, so you just gestured for him to pose. He was still smirking at you. You wanted to slap him.

“I’ll be doing quick one minute sketches,” you sat down and got ready, “so think of a series of poses and change when the alarm go off. Ready?”

He turned his head to the side, cracking his neck. “Yeah.”

You set the alarm. “Go.”

Chat made a dramatic pose, showing off his biceps. You snorted as you sketched. “Really?”

He flashed you a grin. “Especially for you, my lady.” You smiled and shook your head.

As the alarm went off, he changed to another ridiculous pose, and so on, until you had fifteen sketches done. You told him to relax.

You looked through your sketchbook, a satisfied smile on your face before getting up and stretching. You moaned as your back cracked.

“Well, my muse, you’re really an inspiration.” You grinned at the cat boy, who was watching you intently.

He shrugged, before flexing his biceps. “I’m awesome like that.”

You scoffed, going to your room to get a softer pencil. Rummaging through your things, you cursed silently. How could a pencil be so hard to find?

“I like this one.” You heard him say from the living room. What.

You peeked through the doorway. He was holding one of your sketchbooks, the one with the sleeping drawing. Oh shit.

“Did you watch me sleep?” He asked as he looked up, a smug look on his face.

You shrugged, going back to the living room. Fuck that pencil. “You took a picture of me sleeping. We’re even.”
He chuckled and opened his mouth to say something. You held your hand up. “And you’re my muse, so even if I drew you naked, it’d be for the sake of art.”

You realized your mistake when his grin grew impossibly large. “You want to draw me naked?”

You felt every drop of blood in your body rush to your face. You breathed deeply and got the sketchbook from him. You pointed to the ground. “Sit.”

He opened his mouth and you gritted your teeth. “Sit.” Chat widened his eyes and sat down.

“Good,” you said, sitting on your chair and calming your heart.

“Now, pose,” you said firmly. He looked at you for a few seconds and you swallowed, but maintained your gaze locked on his.

Chat licked his bottom lip, half lidded eyes boring into yours. “As you wish, my lady.” And he dropped to his back, leaning on his elbows and opened his legs to you.

Well, god freaking dammit. You breathed in and out slowly as he stared at you. Ok, you had to admit you asked for this. You bit your lip as all those fanarts came flooding back to you. No. You wouldn’t let it get to you. The cat boy wasn’t winning. You could do this, you’ve drawn naked models before, so this shouldn’t be a chall– and now you were thinking about Chat Noir naked. You wanted to slap yourself.

Putting your guard up, you began to draw, jaw locked tight. As you sketched, you had to pay attention to the little details. You tried your best to see his tights just as shapes with light and shadow, but it was difficult. Especially with Chat staring at you like that. Not to mention his crotch was right in front of you. You closed your eyes for a moment and breathed. You could do this. He was just an art subject with some really good muscles and– No. You stopped yourself and went back to drawing.

The alarm went off. You sighed for what must have been the tenth time and put your pencil down. 20 minutes. 20 minutes of looking at that X-rated pose. You hated that cat boy.

You looked at your drawing. How would you show this to your teacher? You could never. Or probably you could, since people from Fine Arts didn’t care much about this, but you’d die from embarrassment either way.

“So?” Chat said, walking to your side. You showed the drawing to him, looking away. He smiled and patted your hair. “Awesome as always, ma chérie.”

You scoffed, trying to dodge his hand and mumbled, “Can’t show it to my teacher though.”

He laughed and went in the direction of the window. Was he already leaving? You felt a bit sad as you watched him walk, his tail swaying behind him. You already had the drawings you needed for your class, and even if his antics and constant flirting grew on you, you couldn’t keep him coming here forever. You sighed as you got up from your chair and got close to the window. You never really asked him about his powers, how his ears worked or anything. You wished you had talked more with him.

Rubbing your neck, you watched as he climbed up the windowsill. That was it. “Well, thank you for your help.” You smiled up at him. “Couldn’t have done it without you.”

He turned his head to the side. “Was that all you needed?”
“Yeah.”

Chat furrowed his brows. “Oh.”

You analyzed his face. Didn’t he want to leave? You felt a smile tugging at the corners of your mouth. “You’ll always be my muse though.” You could swear you saw his cheeks dust a light shade of red, but it was gone in a second.

He waved his hand at you dismissively. “Maybe I can stop by sometime…” He crouched on the windowsill, his face almost level with yours. “If you beg.”

You raised both of your eyebrows at him and tried to push him off the window.

Chat spluttered as he tried to gain his balance again. He grabbed your arm to stabilize himself. “Don’t do that.” He ran his other hand through his hair, brushing off some locks that had fallen on his face, his breathing a little ragged. “Ma chérie.”

You put your hands up, releasing his grip on you. “Don’t do what?” He narrowed his eyes and then smirked. You smirked back.

He then turned to leave, but stopped suddenly. “Wait. What did you say was the name of your university again?”

You looked to the sides, confused. “I didn’t.”

Chat blinked. “Oh.”

“But it’s the Art and Design University of Paris.” You shrugged and saw his green eyes widen. “Oh.” He seemed to think for a moment. “Oh.”

You smirked at his unusual behavior. “Cat got your tongue?”

He snapped his eyes back to yours and you saw his pupils dilate. He quickly leaned forward while holding on the window and stopped when your noses were almost touching. A gasp left your lips and you took a step back.

“No.” He smiled at you through half lidded eyes, “but one might get yours soon if you aren’t careful.” You looked at him in shock and he winked.

As you narrowed your eyes at him, Chat laughed, saying an ‘au revoir’ as he disappeared into the night.

Chapter End Notes

The drawing should be ready soon and I'm thinking about making two versions of it...

And as always, thanks for reading and all the support!!

EDIT: I finally finished the drawing OTL I had a terrible art block and just couldn't do it, sorry guys :(

I may do a second pose later if it gets better!
It had been some weeks since your last encounter with the cat boy. At first glance art courses may seem easy and full of happiness, but that was far from the truth. There was always something to do, something to finish, something to change. Since deadlines were coming up, you didn’t have much time to worry about the absence of your muse.

You imagined he was busy himself, as you saw him and Ladybug on the news fighting villains every now and then. And if besides that he went to college and had to deliver projects like you, his life was probably chaotic right now. But even without his presence, he was still on your thoughts, and sometimes you caught yourself sketching him when you weren’t paying attention. He was your muse after all, your source of inspiration, so you didn’t think much about it.

After Chat’s reaction to your university’s name, you began to pay attention to any blonde guys that appeared there. The problem was that there were many of them, so it was basically impossible to find out who he was. *And maybe he doesn’t even go here,* you told yourself one day while you walked to one of your morning classes, eyes scanning the campus. It wasn’t really a problem, since discovering the cat boy’s identity wasn’t really important to you and you wanted to respect his privacy, but still, you couldn’t help being curious. What if you had already seen him around?

Your eyes then stopped at a blonde figure walking a few meters ahead of you. It was that guy Marinette used to have a crush on. You didn’t really remember his name. Was it Adrian? Adriano? You had no idea. But you did discover that he was a model – Alya had told you, but it was quite obvious if you looked at his face and posture – and also you had seen him a few times at the library, absorbed in his studies.

You narrowed your eyes at his blonde hair, but then shook your head, a quiet chuckle leaving your mouth. It couldn’t be. His and Chat’s personalities were too different. Like, by a mile. But, maybe… You looked back at the Adriano guy and saw some girls around him, obviously trying to flirt with him, but he just waved politely at them and walked faster to the main building. A smile graced your lips. Yeah, definitely not.

After that day, you began to see him more often, especially at the library. Maybe you were just paying more attention to him, but either way, it didn’t bother you at all as the guy was a sight for sore eyes. And since his hair inevitably reminded you of your muse, you amused yourself comparing the differences between the two, the model boy being much quieter and less embarrassing. The only downside to that was that it made you miss the flirty cat.

While studying at the library, you sometimes caught him looking at you before he swiftly turned back to his sketchbook. You let him be. He was probably doing figure drawings to relax from his studies, and it was normal for art students to sketch random people they saw. But if he kept doing that, you’d have to ask to see the drawings one day. It was making you curious.
Then, one afternoon, you were finishing a painting in one of the university’s classrooms. The others students had left when the class ended, but before leaving themselves the teacher had said you could stay and continue if you wanted. As you were almost finished and the deadline was in five days, you decided to paint a bit more.

Concentrating on a difficult shade of blue, you heard a noise and looked up from the painting. Expecting to see a bird, you almost didn’t believe your eyes when you saw Ladybug standing on ones of the large open windows. *The* Ladybug.

“I need you to come with me.” She said, a little breathless. “Now.”

You looked to your sides. Maybe the smell of the paint was making you see things? You looked back at her and pointed to yourself. “Me?”

She nodded and urged you to come with her hands, a concerned look on her face. “It’s about Chat Noir.”

You went with her. Not wanting to waste time, she decided to tell you what happened along the way.

“So he just… broke down?” You asked from behind her back. She was carrying you piggyback style, since this you’d be much faster and also for the fact that you couldn’t jump from building to building like freaking Spider-Man. You gripped her shoulders tighter after another landing.

“Yes,” she said, not looking at you. “We were fighting some sort of nature villain when he got hit. Whatever it was, it made him go down with a lot of pain. He tried to keep going, but it got worse, until he couldn’t walk.” You almost gasped as concern washed over you. Ladybug made a turn and jumped over another building. You looked down at the street under you as you flied above it.

“That’s when he began calling your name,” she said after landing and you snapped your attention back at her.

“Me? Why me?” You furrowed your brows. “And wait, how did you find me?”

“About the last question, I have my ways.” You heard the smile in her voice as she shrugged, the movement a bit strange as she was carrying you. “And about the other one, hopefully we’ll find out now.” She then stopped on a flat terrace of a tall building and let you down.

You wobbled a little bit, your legs getting used to being up again.

“There.” She touched your shoulder and nodded to a corner.

Turning your head, you saw a figure lying down in fetal position. “Chat…” you whispered and began to walk over to him.

As you got closer, you could hear the boy whimpering quietly. It made your chest tighten.

“Chat?” You tried.

You saw his cat ears stand up and he quickly turned his head towards you.

“Hey, how are yo—” You didn’t have time to finish your sentence as he got up in a second and
hugged your waist. “Woah, easy there,” you said, chuckling as you put a hand on top his head. “I’m not going anywhere.” He hugged you tighter, making your heart do a little leap inside your chest. You glanced at Ladybug and saw her smiling softly at you, with a relieved, but thoughtful look on her eyes.

A loud crash sound made you both jump. It seemed to come from some blocks away. You slowly looked at Ladybug. “You… didn’t defeat the villain?”

“Not exactly.” She rubbed her neck, grimacing. “I’ve never seen Chat like that, and he was getting worse so–” Another crash interrupted her mid sentence.

You looked at the cat boy’s body and then back at Ladybug. “Go. It’s possible that when you purify the akuma, Chat will get better, right? I’ll keep him company until you come back.”

She seemed hesitant for a second, but another crash made her snap her neck to the source of the noise. She looked back at you. “Alright. I’ll be right back,” she said as she ran, jumping to another building. You followed her figure until she was out of sight, and then looked down at the cat boy, who was still holding you tightly.

You swallowed dryly and lowered yourself down until you were sitting, Chat not letting go of your waist. You crossed your legs and moved him a bit until he was half lying on your lap.

Looking down at him, you began wondering what the hell had happened to leave him like this. You felt a pang in your heart when you noticed he was shivering. You tentatively put a hand on his hair. He stilled for a moment, but then relaxed, leaning on your touch. You began to run your hand through his soft locks, attempting to calm him down. After two minutes or so, you felt some sort of vibration on your leg. What the hell. You looked down. It wasn’t possible… was it? You put your other hand on his back and a smile grew on your face.

“Are you… purring?” You asked, trying to hide the amusement on your voice.

Chat stilled and then let go of you, turning quickly to the other side – but not before you saw the red on his cheeks.

“No,” he said, sounding like a pouting child. Your smile grew wider with relief. He seemed to be getting better.

“Oh, okay then,” you said, running your fingers through his hair again. The purring began once more and you chuckled, moving your hand a little bit, going for one of his ears. “Are you sur-”

“Ah!” He gasped loudly and you stilled your hand.

Eyes wide, you tried to look at his face. “Did I hurt you?”

He hid his face on your leg and mumbled. “No.”

You sighed in relief, going back to touching his hair. But what in the heavens was that sound? You swallowed dryly. It was nice and… you had to admit a part of you wanted to hear more of- Tch. Stop it, you chided yourself. It’s not time for that.

“… again.” You heard Chat whisper.

You turned your head to the side, getting closer to him. “Again?”

“Can you do it again?” He repeated, the sound muffled as he was still hiding his face on your leg.
“Oh.” You bit your lip for a moment and then tentatively touched his ear once more. Chat gasped, making you jump a little. “Are you sure this doesn’t hurt?” You looked down at him, a bit exasperated.

“Yessss,” Chat hissed and you blinked. Well, that was another interesting sound. You cleared your throat. What had happened to this boy?

You heard him mumble something and turned your head to him again. “Sorry, what was that?”

He turned to face you, his cheeks a deep shade of red. “Please.” He swallowed, and you watched his Adam's apple move up and down. “Don’t stop.”

You felt your eyes widen and your throat go dry. You looked to the sides, but Ladybug was nowhere to be seen. You swallowed as you touched his ear again. He hid his face on your lap once more and you could hear his muffled gasps as you moved your hand. Well, shit.

Your face was getting hotter by the second. Why the hell were you doing this? To help him, your mind suggested. But you knew it wasn’t just for that. A particular loud sound coming from Chat made you grit your teeth. If Ladybug came back right now, what would she think? That you were a damn pervert, that’s what. The cat boy was downright moaning at the moment, his breathing ragged.

That was when you heard him say your name. You almost spluttered. He then let out a loud moan that went straight to your core and stilled. Only his back moved, reminding you he was still breathing.

You looked fixedly to a spot in front of you as you moved your hand to rest on his back. What have you done? What was necessary, a little voice in your head answered, but it didn’t help much.

The cat boy moved, mumbling something again and then he sighed happily. Well, at least he wasn’t in pain anymore, right? You tried to convince yourself, not wanting to think about the fact that you probably made him com— Nope. You shook your head. Not thinking about it. Nope.

A bright light then spread across the sky and touched Chat. He mumbled something, but continued to sleep.

“Is everything okay?” You jumped as you heard a voice behind you. You turned to look. It was Ladybug. She arrived a minute late. You didn’t know if that was good or not.

You swallowed as you looked down at the cat boy still on your lap and quickly averted your eyes. “Yeah, he’s fine.”

“He seems much better now.” The superhero kneeled down next to you and looked at him. “I guess defeating the villain really worked.” She smiled.

“Yeah…” You gave her a strained smile. You didn’t want to tell her what had really worked.

She turned to you. “What happened?”

Shit.

“Well, I…” You rubbed your neck. She was looking at you intently. “He kept hugging me and I managed to calm him down until he fell asleep.” You looked down at your now sinful hands. What you said wasn’t a lie. You just… omitted some parts. You felt the blood rushing to your face once more as the cat boy moved on your lap.
“Is that so?” Ladybug looked at him and tilted her head. “Well, I’m glad nothing weird happened then.” She said, getting up.

Your head snapped to her. “What?”

It was her turn to rub her neck. “Before I defeated the villain I made them tell me what they had done to Chat. They said he was in some kind of…” She moved her hands around before looking at you. “Heat.”

“What. You stared at Ladybug. She was looking back at you with an apologetic face.

“**Heat?**” You finally were able to say. But male cats don’t go into heat. That wasn’t possible, was it? You looked down at Chat Noir. Maybe he was a **magical** cat? You scrunched up your face. That didn’t make any sense.

“And apparently he chose you as his mate.” Your eyes widened at Ladybug’s words. “That’s why he was calling your name and probably why he only felt better when you touched him.” She nodded to herself and then chuckled. “I’m really glad nothing weird happened.”

You opened and closed your mouth as you kept staring at her, a million questions on your mind. She cleared her throat. “Well, I purified the akuma, so everything should be back to normal now. You don’t have to worry.” She smiled, trying to reassure you and began to kneel down. “But now I should probably take him with me–”

“Why me?” You blurted and she stopped on her tracks. You shook your head. “Sorry, I just… It doesn’t make any sense.”

“Magic never does,” She chuckled, but then put her hand on her chin, thoughtful. “But maybe you were on his mind when he was hit or… maybe you’re the unfortunate receiver of his attraction.” She laughed, but stopped when she saw your shocked face and smiled. “You should just ask him.”

You opened your mouth to protest but she laughed again, kneeling down to get the cat boy from your lap.

“Can you get down by yourself?” She asked as she picked him up bridal style. Wow, she was strong.

You blinked, realizing she was still waiting for your answer. “Yeah, I’ll be fine.”

She smiled. “Thanks for the help.”

You scoffed and said it was nothing, but Ladybug just shook her head. “If it wasn’t for you, Chat wouldn’t have gotten better and I wouldn’t have been able to focus on the villain.” She smiled and then turned to leave, but looked back at you. “Try to not overthink, ok?” And with a final wink she was gone.

You stayed there looking at the typical blue Parisian roofs of the other buildings as the wind swayed your clothes. She wouldn’t prank you, would she? No, she was the mighty Ladybug. So that meant that when the cat boy was hit, you were the one his instincts chose, but that would mean he was attracted to you and his flirting was actually serious and— Yep, you were already over thinking. You shook your head. You should probably go home.

Turning around, you headed for the only door on the terrace. It was locked. Looking down, the building was too high for you to jump without killing yourself. You almost screamed with frustration as you took your phone out and called the French police, thinking about how the hell you’d explain
your current situation to them.

Chapter End Notes

I'll be honest with you guys and say I began to write this whole fic just because of this scene with Chat. Heh. I still can't believe how much this story grew and keeps growing. I'm also learning so much from it, and it's all because of you, readers and Samantha. Thank you all for the support <3

And with this chapter I officially open the Doors of Sin. Welcome.

EDIT: Drawing is here :) Not really happy with how this one turned out tbh, but hopefully the others will be better!
The Seine at Dusk

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Five days after the incident, you were at the metro station. The police had taken your call surprisingly well. Apparently, finding yourself on top of a building was a common thing when Ladybug and Chat Noir fought villains. You shook your head as you entered the metro car. Your hand held on one of the bars as you put your backpack on the ground between your legs.

As the vehicle moved, you thought about how you hadn’t seen the superheroes after what happened. Chat hadn’t appeared at your place – maybe he was busy or just didn’t want to talk about what happened, but you saw him on the news, fighting another villain. He seemed ok. Maybe a bit spacey, but ok nonetheless.

You couldn’t say the same about yourself. Don’t overthink my ass. Your grip on the bar tightened as the memory of his moans haunted you once again. Goddammit that cat boy. You had prepared yourself for his flirting, but that was just too much. And what if Ladybug was right and he was attracted to you?

As the Parisian streets passed quickly in front of your eyes, you remembered the nights you had spent looking at your bedroom’s ceiling while thinking about it.

A sigh had passed you lips as you laid down on your bed. You knew the relationship between muse and artist was a delicate one. Sometimes when too much passion was involved or it went beyond the platonic, it could result in suffering for both parts, the connection between them being lost, or it could spark artistic creativity beyond expectations. But… You had turned your face to the side as a lonely car passed in the street under your window, your eyes following the lights that illuminated the walls momentarily. But some artists even produced the most beautiful artworks after having their heart torn apart.

A deeper sigh had left your lips. The point was: there was no saying what could happen. It was a wheel of possibilities, and you didn’t know if you were ready for it.

After some more thinking and rolling around on your bed, you had decided to do your best to ignore his moans echoing in your mind and still try the platonic relationship.

*Maybe Ladybug is wrong after all and all of this is just a misunderstanding,* you had thought hopefully, but you couldn’t know for sure.

Ladybug was right about something. You’d have to ask the cat boy to know the truth. It was the only way.

As the metro stopped in another station, you glanced down at your backpack, thinking about the sketchbook that was in it. Pages and pages were now filled with drawings of Chat, as drawing was the only way you found to silence your thoughts. You could never let Marinette see some of your sketches or you’d definitely be considered one of his hardcore fans. Not the number one, but close to it.

You scoffed and looked up. Whatever. He was your muse after all, even if you did your best not to think about him in *that* way, and it was normal for you to think about him with frequency.

Right?
Your question remained unanswered as the metro stopped once again and you got off. It was early in the evening, with the sun almost setting as you made your way through the busy streets to the Seine River. You weren’t going home today. You had finally delivered your projects at the University, and could relax a little. And as you needed to get your mind off of things, you accepted Marinette’s invitation to a picnic with other art students near the river. You weren’t sure if ‘picnic’ was the right word, as food was the least of the worries of the people there, alcohol and cigarettes being the main one, but you went anyway.

After arriving and greeting Marinette and Alya, you spent sometime near the river, watching the boats filled with tourists pass by and waving at them. A funny guy in one even yelled ‘Bonjour!’ at you. Your friends kept you company, but you also talked to other people, especially with exchange students like yourself, sharing your experiences and difficulties of living alone in the city.

With a look around the place, you saw that blonde boy was also there. You tried your best to remember his name, and almost ended up with a headache. You gave up, unaware that you’d finally get rid of your doubt in the strangest way.

It happened when you went to get another drink. Not seeing clearly because of the dim lights, you almost tripped on him and grabbed his arm to avoid falling on your face. After regaining your balance, you apologized, but when your eyes locked on his face, he was red as a tomato. You felt your own cheeks warm up from seeing his embarrassment and then realized you were still touching him. With another apologize, you quickly released his arm and then introduced yourself, trying to make the situation less awkward, but the guy just looked at you as if in a trance, and you wondered if he was already drunk, your eyes searching his green ones for a sign of sobriety.

Then, at that moment, Marinette appeared out of nowhere and said his name for him, a grin on her face. She said Adrien had participated in a photo-shoot that day and was a bit out of it. He blinked and then looked at her, a frown creasing his forehead. You felt an argument coming up, so you just got your drink and waved at them, an awkward smile on your face, as you quickly went back to the people you were talking to.

As you walked you heard them talking in hushed tones.

“I had everything under control, Marinette.”

“You froze, Adrien.”

The bickering continued and you smiled. They seemed like good friends. If one day Marinette had had that crush on him, she seemed over it now – or she just hid it pretty well. Well, none of your business. You sipped on your drink, the smile not leaving your lips. You just hoped she was happy.

Later, the setting sun was casting pink hues across the sky and people were beginning to get too drunk and loud, so you and Alya decided get away from the chatter for a bit. As Marinette was still talking with Adrien, you two ended up sitting near the edge of the sidewalk, looking at the lights of the boats pass by. Alya told you her boyfriend, Nino, wasn’t there since he still had to deliver some projects, and she sighed as she said he had forgotten to do them.

You kept smiling through the conversation with her, and it was all well until she mentioned Chat Noir. It happened that she was elated at a new footage she had done of the two Parisian heroes and her grin was bright as she grabbed her phone and showed you a video of them fighting an akumatized villain that transformed people into miniature dolls.
“Oh, they’re a lovely pair,” she sighed dreamily when the video ended, Ladybug purifying the akuma once again.

With a confused frown and a strange feeling that resembled disappointment, you threw a pebble in the river and watched it sink. “Are they together?”

Alya laughed and shook her head, putting away her phone. “Oh no, I meant it as partners!” She got closer to you, as if sharing a secret. You leaned in to hear her whisper. “Although Chat Noir used to try to win Lady’s heart, but he soon gave up.”

“Why?” You whispered back.

“No one knows!” She almost shouted and raised her arms, scaring the hell out of you. “But I do hope to ask that when I get a new interview with them.” She winked.

You put a hand over your poor heart and smiled. It seemed Alya was really passionate about this superhero stuff, even after many years of managing the Ladybug blog.

After some time you decided to leave. The sun had already set and the metro was about to close. You had to get home by yourself and since Paris wasn’t the safest place on Earth, walking home wouldn’t be the best idea.

Marinette was still engrossed on her talk with the blonde boy and you didn’t want to interrupt them. Perhaps they were finally confessing their undying love for each other? It looked more like she was lecturing him hard, but who knew. You sent her a message and said goodbye to Alya and the people you were talking to. It had been a nice evening.

You then walked off, unaware of a pair of green eyes that followed you.

The streets were dark as you made your way to the metro station. Tourists were going back to their hotels and workers to their homes. Young people passed by with bottles of alcohol. You chuckled to yourself. The city never stopped. The ride on the metro was uneventful and you made your way to your apartment. Since you lived a little bit further away from the tourist center, the streets were emptier. You walked faster.

To get to your place you had to pass through a narrow street, which happened to be without light at the moment. Great, you thought. Looking inside the passage you saw it was empty. You bit your lip. If you didn’t go through there you would have to make a really long turn.

Stopping at the entrance, you got your phone, turned the flashlight on and got ready to call the police. People could call you paranoid and say it was just a short walk. You didn’t care.

The echo of your steps was the only sound to be heard as you made your way into the alley. You were in the middle of the street when a rustling sound caught your attention. Turning around quickly, you didn’t see anyone. You heart was beating faster by the second and you got ready to call the police and run.

“Oh, they’re a lovely pair,” you heard a voice above you.

Your breath caught in your throat as you looked up and saw two green eyes looking back at you a few meters up. Before you could move he landed in front of you. Chat.

You felt your blood boil. “What the hell! Do you want to kill me?” You pushed on his shoulder,
trying to walk past him. He didn’t bulge. What an ass.

“No,” he smirked as he blocked your way, but then turned serious. “but it seems like you want to kill yourself, walking alone like that.”

Your eyes narrowed. “Were you following me?”

“Just saw you passing by.” He shrugged, but then his gaze hardened. “through a dark and empty alley.” You could see the disapproval in his eyes.

It was your turn to shrug. “I was prepared.”

He arched his brows, skeptic. “Oh, really?”

You crossed your arms. “Yes.” He began to smirk and back you into the wall, but you held your hand up. It was your chance to ask him. “Now, about that day on the terrace–”

You jumped when his hand collided with the wall behind of you, trapping you in one side.

“What day?” He looked at you through half-lidded eyes, the green shade of them almost glowing in the dark, the only source of light coming from your phone’s flashlight.

Furrowing your eyebrows, you tried to step to the other side. He blocked you with his other arm, claws scratching the surface. You gave him a deadpan look, your heartbeat beginning to speed up. It wasn’t possible that he didn’t remember, was it? “The day you were hurt and Ladybug had to get me to help your ass.”

His face got closer and before you could see if that darker shade on his cheeks was a blush, he headed for your neck, his nose lightly brushing on it. “I don’t know what you’re talking about, ma chérie.”

You shivered as his warm breath touched your skin. No, he remembered it. You were sure of it, as he was obviously hiding his face and trying to distract you. You knew he was. But why?

“Is that so?” You asked.

You heard him chuckle as you carefully raised your free hand, the other still holding your phone. If that’s how he wanted to play… You sucked in a breath when you felt a fang lightly scratch your neck and then you touched his ear.

Chat gasped loudly and jumped back, face flushed.

You smirked as you leaned on the wall behind you. “Remember it now?”

He bit his lip, narrowing his eyes at you, but then he mirrored your smirk. “My lady–” You went to touch his ear again but he dodged your hand. “Stop it!”

You laughed at his flushed face, but then smiled and took a step forward, your noses almost touching. “Admit you remember what happened,” you whispered.

He stared back at you and licked his lips, smiling as he saw you follow the movement with your eyes. “Admit you think of me as more than your muse,” he whispered back. Your eyes widened a fraction before narrowing.

You stared at each other for a moment and you saw his eyes flicker to your lips briefly.
“Thief! Help!” A desperate scream sounded nearby, startling you both and making you grab his arm as you looked around quickly.

Chat then took your hand that was gripping him into his and held it, making you look at him. He was smiling, his teeth glinting in the dim light your phone provided. “Someone needs me.”

Wanting to slap the little voice in your head that said ‘yeah, me’, you cleared your throat and stepped away from him, putting your arms behind your back and nodding.

A pair of lips pressing onto your forehead made you look up hastily. Chat smirked and then licked your nose.

“Hey!” You rubbed his saliva off with your hand, ready to punch the cat boy, but he was already running, his laugh echoing in the alley.

You followed his silhouette with your eyes until he disappeared. Fine. If he didn’t want to talk about that day, you wouldn’t talk about it. Maybe he was embarrassed, your mind suggested. You pondered for one second, and then scoffed. As if.

Chapter End Notes

Now we’re finally getting somewhere...

And I have to say the next chapter is one of my favorites. Stay tuned!

EDIT: Drawing is here!
Inspiration of the Artist

Chapter Summary

(°_°) (°_°) (°_°)

Chapter Notes

Samantha and I had so much fun with this one, I hope you guys like it too hah

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You were doomed.

That day near the Seine you had felt bad for Nino for still having projects to do, but after getting home and finding a forgotten post-it note in a sketchbook that said in bright red letters ‘PROJECT DEADLINE COMING SOON DO IT’, you realized your situation wasn’t any better than his. Maybe worse. The project would decide your future in Paris and you didn’t have a single idea about what to do. Yeah, definitely worse.

And so you began to think frantically. You had two weeks. The first one passed by too quickly and many crumpled papers with discarded ideas filled your apartment. You were on the verge of tears.

Being at the University wasn’t much help, as you saw everyone from your class finishing their projects and talking about it. Marinette was one of them and her painting already looked amazing. It was driving you insane.

The encounter with Chat had been almost a week ago and you were counting on him appearing at your place on the weekend, like he had been doing before… that day on the terrace. There were still two days to go and you almost couldn’t wait. How long had it been since he last posed for you? A month? It had been too long. You had tried to draw your muse by memory, the way his hair covered part of his eyes, how you could see the outline of his clavicle through the black suit – you know, important stuff, but nothing seemed to work and you were getting more frustrated by the second. A little part of your brain insisted it was also because you missed him, but you ignored it.

You had to get a good grade on this project’s subject. The end of the semester was getting closer, as well as the cold autumn winds, and if you wanted to prolong your stay in Paris, the only way to get your university to allow you to stay was to get good grades in all subjects in the first semester. You were doing well in Human Figure I – thanks to Chat –, Musings on Still Life, and Art History, but this subject only had one project and it was worth all the points, so if you didn’t get a good grade on it you could kiss Paris goodbye.

With that and the fact that you only had one week left on your mind, you were at the cafeteria eating your lunch with one hand as you tried to draw ideas with the other, when someone tapped your shoulder, making you almost choke on your food.

“Oh, désolé! Désolé!” A male voice said. You drank a bit of water and looked up. It was Adrien.
You tried not to stare at his pretty face and waved a hand dismissively. “It’s ok.”

He handed you an eraser. “It was on the ground.”

“Oh,” You furrowed your brows, getting the object from him. You didn’t even notice you had dropped it. “Thank you.”

He nodded and then handed you a pen. “Also this.”

You chuckled tiredly and got the pen. “Thank you.”

“It was nothing,” He said, a gentle smile on his face. He seemed different from that day at the Seine, forming coherent sentences and not staring at your face in shock. You didn’t blame him though, going to college and modeling afterwards must be hard, especially if you were a well-known model like him.

“Hey,” he began, cutting you from your thoughts. You saw him scratch his neck a bit nervously. “I’m sorry for that day near the river. I had a long day and I also shouldn’t have drunk so much.” He gave an embarrassed chuckle.

Well, it seemed like you both were thinking about the same thing. You shrugged, smiling up at him. “It happens.”

He smiled back, his face lighting up. “I want to try that introduction again, if you don’t mind.” He then extended his hand to you. “I’m Adrien Agreste, sculpture student.”

Your eyebrows raised a fraction. Sculpture? You wouldn’t have guessed it from his looks. It was difficult to imagine him all covered in dust or clay, as he was always so tidy, but with a glance at his extended palm, you saw it was beautifully shaped, yet strong. Yeah, definitely sculpture. With a smile you shook his hand, saying your own name. You felt a tingle run through your body as your skin touched his, but you didn’t have time to dwell on it as a big yawn made you release his hand to cover your mouth.

Tears pooled at the corners of your eyes. It seemed like the tiredness of many sleepless nights was getting to you. You were a mess.

“Are you ok?” You heard Adrien say as you rubbed your watery eyes.

“I’m fine,” You smiled at his concerned expression. What a kind guy. “Just having a bit of trouble with inspiration for a project. Thanks for asking though.”

He opened his mouth to say something when someone called his name and he turned to look. One of his classmates was tapping the watch on her arm. Class time, Adrien had to go. He turned back to you and smiled, a genuine and bright smile that made your stomach do an anxious little flip. “I’m sure you can do it.” And with that he waved and turned around, leaving you to your half-finished lunch and messy scribbles.

You accompanied him with your eyes, his kind words still resonating in your mind. You were beginning to understand why Marinette used to have that crush on him.

In the evening, after your classes were over, you walked back to your apartment almost dragging your feet. You were spent and still didn’t have any ideas for the project. All you wanted was to curl under your blankets and cry.
As you were in front of your building you saw a light coming from your apartment. You furrowed your brows. You could've sworn you didn't leave any light on when you left. Grabbing your keys, you quickly went up the stairs and stopped at your door. No noise could be heard, but you were still on edge. You cautiously unlocked and opened the door, and then looked inside.

Lit candles decorated your living room, making shadows dance on the walls.

“What on earth…” You whispered as you walked inside and left your backpack on a chair.

“Welcome back, my lady.” You heard a voice from the sofa. Turning around, you saw the cat boy sprawled on it in a seductive pose.

“Chat!” You said, grinning, but then cleared your throat to try and stop your excitement from showing too much. “What are you doing here?”

You were genuinely confused, as he had never appeared on a weekday before.

He got up and bowed to you. “I thought I was being a really neglectful muse, leaving my artist without inspiration like that.” He looked up at you, still bowing.

“You were.” You feigned hurt, looking to the side. You heard him chuckle, and then saw him approaching with your peripheral vision.

He turned your face to him, a soft look in his eyes. “I’ll make it up to you.”

You couldn’t fight the smile on your face as you stared at his face, at his blonde locks that seemed to do whatever they wanted and the intensity of his green orbs.

Dammit. You had missed him.

Without thinking twice, you enveloped him with your arms. “Thank you, Chat.” You squeezed him tightly and then quickly let go to grab your pencil and papers from your backpack, a grin stretching across your face. Now you could finally have an idea for your project! And of course you liked having the cat boy near you, but you wouldn’t tell him that. He’d never let you live it down.

When you came back he was still standing where you left him, his eyes locked on you as you walked. It was difficult to be sure with only the lights coming from the candles, but he seemed different. Was he still thinking about that night in the alley?

You chuckled and poked his nose – hearing him tsk, and walked past him to get your usual chair. “And how did you get in here?”

You returned with the chair and saw him shrug. “Your window locks aren’t exactly hard to open, you know.” He looked at his claws. “You should be more careful.”

You chuckled, looking around the simple apartment. It didn’t even have a TV. “You’re the only crazy person that would want to break in here.” Sitting down on your chair, you waited for him to be in front of you. Drawing with only the lights from the candles would be a challenge, but maybe it would boost your creativity.

He got near you and leaned closer to your face. “Did you like the candles, ma chérie?”

You leaned in, your noses almost touching. “I loved it, kitty.” You grinned at his shocked expression and then pushed him away with a chuckle. He blinked a few times and you smiled to yourself. You’d use pet names more often if that cute expression was your reward.
Then, sketchbook on your leg, you rubbed your hands together. “Now, my dearest muse…” You wiggled your eyebrows at the cat boy, who grinned as he passed a hand through his blonde locks, making a hot mess. You smirked. “Let’s begin.”

You filled pages and pages with drawings of Chat, but it was no use. After almost an hour, you gave up, the candles nearly at the end of their lives. Sighing, you put your sketchbook down and looked at your drawings. You ran a hand through your hair. You had an art block. You were screwed.

“My lady?” You looked up and saw Chat looking back at you with his eyebrows furrowed.

You smiled weakly at him. He had been posing for you non-stop until now. “Thank you, Chat. I’m sorry for making you do this.” A glance at his ring told you he’d have to leave soon.

He scoffed, stretching up. “I’d do much more for you, ma chérie.” You felt your cheeks heating up.

“I–” You looked down at your hands. “I still don’t have any ideas.” You sighed and got up to turn on the lights and blow out the candles.

Green eyes followed your figure as you walked around. When you were finished, you turned to him, smiled and pointed weakly to his ring. “It’s almost time.”

He followed your gaze to his finger and then looked back up, a grin on his face. “I’m not leaving my lady like that.”

You blinked. “What about your transformation?”

He pursed his lips and then started to head for the kitchen. “Do you have any cheese?”

“Cheese?” You followed him, eyebrows furrowed. “I have a bit of Camembert in the refrigerator. Why?”

Chat clasped his hands together. “Purrfect!” You groaned at the pun and he turned to you, throwing an arm across your shoulders and turning you around, leading you to the living room. “Now, my lady, I have to ask you to stay in your bedroom until I regain my strength and transform back. Could you do that for your favorite muse?” He leaned closer to your face, his green eyes half-lidded.

Oh, the transformation. It all made sense now. You began to nod, but then paused. “Wait. You’re my only muse.”

He hushed you to your room and you chuckled.

After five minutes, you were inside your bedroom, your back against the door. The only light illuminating the room came from the window on your right, and through it you could see the darkening sky. You heard Chat moving on the other side and then an insistent beeping sound. That was it. You could hear him transforming back. If you opened the door now, you could see who he was. But instead, you just closed your eyes, leaned your head against the door and waited. Chat, or better, his alter ego seemed to be talking in hushed tones with someone. Maybe he was on the phone? You just hoped he wasn’t leaving.

A thump from behind you made you open your eyes. Chat must have sat on the other side, his back also against the door.
You looked up at the flickering shadows that danced across the ceiling. “Hey Chat – or whoever you are now. It’s ok if you don’t say anything, with me hearing your voice and shockingly discovering who you are and all that.” A low chuckle came from the other side of the door. You smiled. “But I just wanted to say thank you.”

Not hearing any sound, you continued. “Thank you for coming here, ever since the beginning. You didn’t have to, just because of that crappy drawing.” You chuckled quietly to yourself as the memory of the day you met him passed through your mind.

You didn’t know why you were saying all of that now. Maybe because it was much easier to say things when you didn’t have to deal with the other person’s gaze. Also, you really were grateful for his help. You never expected to find yourself in a situation like this when you first arrived, with a superhero that was also your muse on the other side of your door, but now it just felt right to have the cat boy near you.

You closed your eyes, a smile making its way onto your lips. “Thanks to you, this city feels… more like home now.”

After a moment of silence you heard a sigh and then some quiet words. You could’ve sworn it was a muttered ‘here we go again’, but it didn’t sound like Chat, and right after it was followed by a shushing sound. You tried to press your ear closer to the door, and heard someone munching on something.

The cheese. You wondered why he needed cheese of all things.

The munching then stopped. You strained your ears to try and listen to what was happening.

“Transform me!” What sounded like Chat’s voice echoed loudly in your ears, startling you and making you move away from the door.

“Do you really have to say that?” You said as you pressed a hand over your rapidly beating heart.

The door opened and Chat appeared, grinning. “Yes.” He extended his hand out to you and you took it, skin touching the magical material of his gloves.

With one movement he pulled you close to him and interlaced his fingers with yours. A smirk decorated his face as he batted his eyelashes at you.

You arched a brow at him and smiled, taking a step back, but keeping your hand in his. “Yep. You’re back.” Before he could say something you pulled him to the middle of the room.

You then let go of him and began to think, a hand on your chin. You still needed an idea for the project. Drawing Chat posing didn’t work, so what could you do? You groaned as nothing came to mind.

The cat boy looked as you then paced around your apartment anxiously. You only had one week to hand in the project. One week! And you still had no freaking idea-

You almost bumped into Chat’s hard chest as he stepped right in front of you. You looked at his unusually serious face.

“Touch me.” He said.

You blinked. “What?”
He grabbed your hand and put it on his chest. You looked at your fingers on his black suit and then back at him with an arched brow, a sly expression making its way to your face.

“Well…”

Chat rolled his eyes and you chuckled, your mood lightening a little.

He then gazed at you and squeezed your hand. “I’m serious.” You looked at him in growing disbelief. Wasn’t he going to make a suggestive remark or anything? “I’m your muse. It’s my job to be your inspiration.” His eyes were intense as he continued, and you were at a loss for words. “You tried to look at me, it didn’t work. Now,” he grabbed your other hand and also put it on his chest. “Touch me”

You stared at him. He was really serious about this.

You took a deep breath and glanced at your hands. It was embarrassing, you had to admit it, but you couldn’t say a part of you wasn’t excited about it. And he had a good point.

Or so you thought.

“Okay,” you said, and removed your hands from his chest, moving them to his masked face. “Tell me if you want me to stop.”

He scoffed at you, but you saw a bit of red on his cheeks when you cupped his face. You smiled.

You traced his mask with your thumbs, feeling the texture of the unfamiliar material and got to his nose. It really looked like a kitty nose and you had to refrain yourself from laughing. You bopped it, of course, which earned you a tsk from the cat boy, and then touched his lips and defined jaw. All the while avoiding his burning gaze.

Your hand went to his soft blonde hair and you passed your fingers through his locks, touching his scalp. He closed his eyes and you bit your lip. You were having too much fun with this. All for the sake of art, you reminded yourself. He sighed as your hands continued moving and you swallowed. Art. Yeah.

Looking at him, it seemed like the cat boy would sleep at any minute now. He must be tired, you thought to yourself. You removed your hands from his hair and he opened his eyes, blinking a few times, a questioning look on his face. Taking one of his hands, you guided him to your couch and motioned him to sit, which he did without question. You then put your hand on his chest and pushed him down until he was lying on the sofa. That way he could relax while you… tried to get inspired. By touching his body.

“This is crazy,” you said to yourself.

But you aren’t stopping, a little voice in your mind replied. You shook your head.

Looking down, you saw the sofa was too small for you to sit by his side. You pursed your lips and began to look around for your chair when you felt a pull on your hand, making you turn. Chat was patting his stomach.

You arched your brows, incredulous, and he rolled his eyes, pulling on your hand more insistently.

“All right, all right!” You sighed and climbed on top of him, face burning. Chat was smirking at you with his arms behind his head as you sat on his stomach. You narrowed your eyes. The cat boy was
too smug for your liking.

You put one hand on the sofa near his shoulder and with the other traced his clavicle through his suit until you got to the bell around his neck. You smiled as you touched it. It only made a little sound, which was kind of disappointing, but made sense since every villain would hear him approaching otherwise. You gave it a tentative pull and Chat hissed.

“Sorry, sorry.” You chuckled and released the bell. Then your eyes widened a fraction as his hiss made you remember his moans on the terrace. You glanced at his ears and then looked back at the cat boy. He had closed his eyes again. You bit your lip and reached for his hair, brushing it away from his eyes. He didn’t move. Would he react the same way? Maybe it’d take that cocky smile off his face. Well, you only had one way of knowing, so you leaned in closer and lightly touched one of his cat ears.

Chat opened his eyes as a loud gasp left his mouth. He looked at you with wide eyes, his smugness gone.

You felt a smile tug at the corners of your mouth as you looked down at him. “Do you want me to stop?”

He clenched his jaw and looked away, a blush making its way to his face. “No…” he said through gritted teeth.

You hummed and touched his ear more firmly. He bit his lip, hard. With a mischievous smile and renewed confidence, you began to caress his ear just like you’d do with a cat. You saw his face get redder by the second and the beginning of a purr could be heard coming from him. With a grin, you touched both of his ears at the same time. He sucked in a breath and arched his body, almost making you lose your balance. He collapsed back as a low growl left his chest.

“Hey Chat,” You said as you readjusted yourself over his abdomen. He gave you a groan in response, which made you grin. “Can you really hear with these?” You touched his ears to make your point.

He closed his eyes firmly and wet his lips. “Yes.”

You hummed and leaned closer to his head. You then sucked in a breath and blew lightly in one of his ears.

He moved quickly and in one second you were on your back, eyes wide. Chat was hovering over you, his torso between your bent legs.

“That’s… enough.” His breathing was ragged and his cheeks were as red as a tomato. “My turn now, ma chérie.”

You blinked and then tried to get up. “What? That wasn’t what–”

Chat stopped you, making you lay down again. “Did you have any ideas?” You looked at him, his chest going up and down as he tried to control his breathing. You swallowed and shook your head.

He smirked. You had a bad feeling about this. “Then I, your dearest muse, shall try to inspire you.” He made a solemn face. You narrowed your eyes at him, but he ignored you.

“Tell me if you have an idea,” he whispered before getting closer to your neck. “Or if you want me to stop.” He chuckled at this last part, as if he knew you wouldn’t want him to. Smug little shit.
You jolted when he bit your neck lightly and then you grabbed his hair, making him hiss. “How will this help, my dearest muse?” The sarcasm was evident in your voice.

You felt him smile on your skin. “Stimulation.”

You scoffed and muttered. “Lies.”

He raised his head and gave you a neutral look. “Do you want me to stop?”

You bit your lip and turned your head to the side, avoiding his judging eyes. “No.”

He gave an approving hum and began to lick your exposed neck. You sucked in a breath and bit your lip harder. The situation was getting out of control. At this rate, the chances of having a platonic muse/artist relationship with him would decrease to none.

Chat grazed his fangs on your neck, making a shiver run down your spine. You felt him chuckle against your skin. You then raised your hand and grabbed his hair again, his hiss making you smirk. The smirk gave way to a sharp inhale when you felt his sharp claws on your tights.

“Anything yet, ma chérie?” Chat said against your neck, his warm breath tickling your – now probably red – skin.

“No,” you said, pulling on his blonde locks a bit.

He groaned and his claws dug deeper on your skin as he wrapped your legs around his narrow hips. You gasped when he lowered his weight into you. Where were you planning to go with this? Rather, how far, because the cat boy was showing no signs of discomfort with taking this as far as necessary. Your mind was blank, no ideas whatsoever, the feeling of his touch on your skin taking over anything else. This could probably go on for a while. You swallowed dry.

Your apartment was then filled with your surprised moan when Chat roughly attacked the underside of your jaw with his mouth, his hand moving to cup the other side of your head. Despite his weight being now completely on you, you arched into him, grabbing one of his biceps with your free hand, and then collapsed, another moan leaving your lips.

Panting, you raised the other hand that was still in his hair and gripped one of his cat ears. A smirk appeared on your lips as his loud moan echoed in the room. He shifted to lick the shell of your ear, a deep growl resonating from his chest before he planted various kisses along your jawline. You could feel and hear him purring fervently.

“What about now, my lady?” He said between kisses, his rough voice barely above a whisper.

You opened your mouth to answer when your eyes widened and you froze. “That’s it.”

Chat stopped, lips on your jaw as he panted. “Hm?”

You grinned. You couldn’t believe it.

The cat boy raised his face and looked at you, puzzled. “My lady?”

You laughed in pure happiness, startling him. “I know what to do, Chat!” You hugged him and laughed again. Pulling back, you grabbed his face and kissed his cheek. He blinked at you, his green eyes searching your face.

You then got up from under him – saying ‘sorry’ a bunch of times – and ran to get your sketchbook
from where you had left it on the chair. You were tempted to stay on that couch longer, but you couldn’t lose this opportunity. It was the first good idea you've had in days.

As you sketched and wrote down some things, you tried to control your breathing. You were elated that you finally got rid of your art block, but your cheeks were burning from what had just happened. It was an understatement that things escalated quickly, but you were glad that it worked when it did. Otherwise… Glancing up, you saw Chat stretching on the sofa, his muscles outlined by the dark suit. You bit your lip and looked back down. You decided to think about what could have happened later.

As you were lost in your thoughts and almost done outlining your idea, you heard a beep. Eyes shooting up from the paper, you saw Chat looking at his ring. He had to go.

He looked at you and you nodded, putting your sketchbook down and then following him to the window.

You smiled and hugged him quickly. “Thank you, Chat. I couldn’t have done it without you.” You pulled back and bowed dramatically. He looked at you for a second, his face still a bit flushed. You wondered if his mind was as dazed as yours.

He then chuckled and got on the windowsill. “I’m glad I could help, my lady.” He made a flourish with his arm. Glancing at your neck he smirked, his usual smugness back. “I’d be careful with going out tomorrow though.” With a final wink, he was off.

Your hand flew to your neck, and with wide eyes you ran to the bathroom. In the mirror you could see many bite marks scattered across your neck and under your jaw. You groaned loudly, then breathed deeply, fingers pinching the bridge of your nose. It was the price to be paid. Your eyes locked on a particularly dark mark and you furrowed your brows. But it wasn’t fair that Chat didn’t have any marks on him. You’d have to fix that next time.

Your eyes widened. You were already thinking about a next time. A sigh left your lips. You could scratch ‘platonic relationship’ off of your list.

Chapter End Notes

So, things are getting a little difficult for me with so many projects to do (and sadly I don't have a kitty cat to inspire me ;-;), and the chapters may take a like longer to come, but don't worry! They'll come eventually, in a week or a month at most.

Also if you liked the chapter, leave a comment! They make my day and inspire me to write more! (but if you don't want to that's fine hah don't feel pressured)

EDIT: Drawing (~ ̄▽ ̄)~
The following day went by with you working non-stop on your project. The time in between classes was spent sketching on your new bought canvas. Marinette and Alya were worried about you, but you dismissed their worries, claiming that you were fine. Your left eye may have been twitching from the lack of sleep because of the project and the events of last night, but you were fine.

To cover the marks Chat made, you had applied makeup to your neck and even used a light scarf to hide it. You didn’t care about it that much, but didn’t want anyone bothering you. People could be annoyingly noisy sometimes, like the strange old lady at the metro some days ago that had asked if you drew hot naked women when she saw you carrying your sketchbook. You chuckled to yourself as you remembered the shocked faces of the other passengers when she said you were living the good life and winked at you. Paris’ metro was surely a tourist attraction on its own.

So you wore the scarf and people didn’t bother you.

Well, some people since you didn’t have the same luck with the cat boy.

The same cat boy who suddenly decided to surprise you with a visit in the evening.

When he saw the scarf, his grin was so impossibly large that you wanted to throw something at him. Which you did.

He dodged the sofa cushion easily and laughed at you. “Désolé, ma chérie, désolé!” He said in between laughs. You readied yourself to throw another cushion at him, but then sighed, taking the scarf off. You didn’t have time for this. The project was far from finished; you still had a lot to do.

So you sat back down on your chair and went back to your painting. You were now applying the basic colors, and the figures were taking form. Looking at the wet paint, you just hoped it turned out alright.

Chat laid down on the sofa next to you, his arms behind his head.

You glanced at him. He was looking at the ceiling as the warm evening light fell across his features and his dark mask, contouring them with beautiful shadows. You wondered why he was here. To keep an eye on you?

“Do you need something, ma belle?” He said, eyes still on the ceiling and a smile now on his lips.

Your heart sped up from hearing the pet name. Well, that was a new one. He was certainly improving his repertoire.
You quickly looked back to your painting as you tried to think of something to say and then blurted out, “How was your day?”

For a moment all you could hear was your rapidly beating heart and the sound of the brush spreading paint over the canvas. As the silence stretched on, you wanted to ask Chat if he was okay, but as you were going to, he spoke.

“Nothing much. I just defeated a gym themed villain today,” he said, trying to sound nonchalant, but you noticed a bit of uncertainty in his voice.

You frowned at his odd behavior, but then a thought crossed your mind and your eyes widened a bit. Maybe he thought you wouldn’t be interested in what he had to say? You looked at him from the corner of your eyes. He seemed to be waiting for your reaction, but it couldn’t be… could it?

“Really?” You said and looked at him, hoping it’d encourage him to talk. “I bet you used those strong muscles of yours to do that,” you teased with a smirk. You wanted to show him that you were interested in what he had to say, that it was important to you.

He turned his head in your direction and smirked back, flexing his biceps the best he could with his arms still behind his head. “Of course, ma belle.”

You laughed and that seemed to do it. Chat’s confidence was back like it was never gone in the first place, and he talked about his day with a smile on his face while you painted. You glanced at him and mirrored his smile. It was strange to see Chat vulnerable like that, even if for a brief moment. It clashed with the image of complete confidence that was so characteristic of him.

You wondered why he had felt like that. Maybe someone had once ignored his attempts of sharing simple stuff about his day? If that were true, you wanted to punch that person in the face.

Chat kept telling you his stories and occasionally you wondered if some of the events had happened to his superhero or civilian self – as some of them were quite simple, like seeing a tourist fall into the Seine River, or a good cat joke he heard on the street – but you decided to just let him talk. He seemed happy with doing so, and that was enough for you.

The week went by like that. Chat would come in the evening when you returned from your classes, sit or lie down by your side and talk while you painted. He asked about you as well, but you would turn the conversation back to him, as he seemed to appreciate the attention and also because you liked the sound of his voice. It calmed you down, making you almost forget that the project was due in some days. Almost. And when his ring beeped, which always seemed too soon, he’d leave with a kiss on the back of your hand and the advice to not sleep too late, which you couldn’t afford to follow.

During the talks with him you tried not to get too personal, asking mainly about his powers and the akumas, and he answered what he could. Even if he didn’t tell you everything, you felt like you understood his crazy magical world a little better. Once you even tried to ask about how his ears worked, but with a clearing of his throat he quickly changed the subject. A smirk had crossed your lips. It seemed like it was a sensitive topic to him.

And although Chat mostly occupied himself with talking, he liked to remind you that his flirty nature was still very much present. Shoulder massages to alleviate the tension on your muscles were a thing now, and you had to do your best to ignore his lingering touches.

Whenever you stopped painting, unsure of what to do or just to take a break, he’d get close to you and whisper in your ear if you needed more ‘stimulation’. With goose bumps travelling up your arms
and a muttered ‘later’, you would push him away before you gave in. He’d step back with a chuckle, but something in his eyes told you he wasn’t kidding. And that didn’t help at all, since you knew if you accepted his invitation, you’d probably never finish the painting. Which was tempting, but you needed a good grade if you wanted to stay in Paris for the rest of the year, and if that happened, you’d have plenty of time with the cat boy, or so you thought. You were confident you could do it, and because of that, you preferred not to tell him that if you failed the subject you would be leaving in a few months. You tried not to think of it as a possibility.

Also, you noticed that during the week, everyday he’d have a different pet name to refer to you. *Ma belle, mon ange, my dear,* were some of them. Each one said when you were least expecting it and thus making your heart do an annoying leap inside your chest. Through all these days he didn’t call you ‘my lady’. Not even once. Something was up, and you’d have to ask him about it when you next saw him. And that happened to be on Monday, a day before the project’s deadline.

The evening breeze coming from outside of your apartment touched your skin, making you shiver and miss your scarf, which you didn’t need to use anymore, but you didn’t want to stand up and go to your room to get warmer clothes or close the window as you were almost finished with your painting. Just some more details and it’d be done. Finally! You’d treat yourself at a nice boulangerie when this had an end. You deserved it.

After some minutes and one last flicker of the fine brush on your hand, the artwork was done.

You sighed happily, putting the brush and your color palette down and getting up.

You looked at the canvas, where two figures that seemed to be made of light melded together in an embrace, their silhouettes becoming one in a frenzy of colors. Even if it had been made within a week, you were proud of it. Now you just had to get away from the painting, otherwise you’d keep adding stuff until you fucked up everything. Perfectionism was a curse sometimes.

“I guess that means you’re done?” Hearing the familiar voice made you look to the window, where Chat was leaning on as if he had been there for a long time. You weren’t even surprised anymore, you just accepted your fate of having him appear out of nowhere in the most unpredictable circumstances.

“Yes!” You exclaimed, untying your dirty painting apron and putting it on the chair you were seated. With closed eyes you stretched, feeling your sore muscles protest. You had been sitting there for a long time.

“So let’s go,” Chat said.

Opening your eyes, you saw he had extended a hand to you while still on the windowsill. You put your arms down. “Go where?”

“Somewhere.” He beckoned you with his hand and you narrowed your eyes, but took the extended palm anyway.

“Where,” you insisted.

You heard him tsk and then he was pulling you closer, until his face was right above yours. “Curiosity killed the cat. Didn’t you know, my dear?” His low voice touched your ears.

“But satisfaction brought it back.” You smirked before bopping his nose. He glared at you, but you just snickered. He fell for it every time.
You squeezed his hand and his gaze softened. “Let’s just go, my muse.”

The cat boy ended up not telling you where you were going. Your arms were tightly around his neck and your knees digging into his sides as the streetlights passed under you. Glancing down quickly as the superhero jumped from roof to roof, you were reminded of your encounter with Ladybug. You were beginning to see a pattern here.

The difference was that his claws were gripping your thighs, and if that alone wasn’t enough, memories from that fateful night – of neck kisses and panting – kept seeping back into your mind, making you thank the breeze on your face for cooling you down.

“Hold tight, princess,” Chat said, making your face feel even hotter, and before you could tell him you were already doing that, he began to climb a vine covered wall and you held on to him for dear life.

He jumped over a parapet and stopped. You looked around. It seemed like you were on a large balcony, but it was too dark to see anything else. You sighed and felt Chat shiver under you. Blinking, you then realized you had done it right on his neck. You smirked.

The cat boy cleared his throat. “You can get off now.”

Smiling, you slowly unclenched your knees from his sides. You kept your arms wrapped around his neck until your toes touched the floor, your cheek pressed to the strong line of his shoulders. You gulped as his hands lingered a bit too long on your thighs, but then he pulled away.

Your eyes then wandered around, trying to get familiar with the surroundings until you turned and stopped at the sight on the other side of the parapet. Hovering in the distance between the now dark roofs was the Eiffel Tower, its light standing out in the dusk. With widening eyes, you turned around to ask Chat what was this all about when you saw him with a lit candle in his hand.

He put the candle down on a little coffee table that had two chairs by its side, making it possible for you to see the food and bottles that were on it, along with two empty glasses.

Chat grabbed both of them and extended one to you, a bright smile on his face. “I thought you deserved to relax after all that.”

You didn’t know what to say, so you just stared at his face, the flickering candlelight dancing across his masked features.

He turned his head to the side, a smile on his lips. “If you don’t stop looking at me like that I might kiss you, you know.”

That made you snap out of your daze and you glared half-heartedly at him. “You—” seeing his growing smirk, you shook your head and reached for the glass, chuckling. “You are certainly something, cat boy.”

Your fingers slightly brushed and your eyes met. You opened your mouth to thank him, but he just put a hand up, silencing you. “It was nothing, my dear.”

You smiled softly and as he smiled back, you clicked your glass with his, the sound standing out in the quietness that surrounded you.

Chat quirked an eyebrow playfully at you. “Shouldn’t we do this after they are filled?”
You put on your best poker face and ignored him, turning around to let your eyes wander once more, now paying attention to the details. “How did you find this place?” You finally asked him.

It certainly wasn’t abandoned, since everything was well kept and tidy. And for being so close to the Eiffel Tower, it should cost a fortune. You eyes widened a fraction and you looked to large glass sliding door behind the coffee table. What if the owners found you? The last thing you wanted was to be fined for trespassing, especially if the person to call the cops on you was super rich.

You turned to Chat, your heartbeat peeking up. “Should we really be here?”

Chat laughed at your worried expression and you had the urge to shush him. What if the rich people heard him! “Don’t worry, ma chérie. The owners never use this balcony.” You quirked an eyebrow at him, unconvinced. He rolled his eyes, a smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. “If anything happens I’ll protect you.”

You were still far from convinced, but Chat only chuckled and gestured to the table. “Now, what do you want to drink, ma belle?” You blinked as you saw the many different bottles balanced precariously on the little coffee table. Really. “I didn’t know my dear’s preferences so I just got a bit of everything.”

You couldn’t believe it. Getting closer, you squinted your eyes as you tried to read the label of one of the beverages. Lactose free lowfat chocolate milk. Yep, he wasn’t kidding.

You decided not to question where he got all of that – including the food on the table – and enjoy the moment. You deserved it, the cat boy was there, and you had an amazing view. It was perfect.

So you got your drink, sat down and ate the baked goods Chat had brought. They were delicious and you asked where he had got them, but he only said they were from a little bakery near the Seine River. You’d have to go there one day.

After satiating your hunger and telling each other about your day – yours resuming to painting, painting and oh, more painting – you both sat at the parapet. It was large enough for a person not to feel uncomfortable or fear falling to their death, which was nice.

You looked at the Eiffel Tower in front of you as you sipped on your drink, your legs dangling over the open space in front of you. The air was getting colder, reminding you to prepare warm clothes for the future months, and you closed your eyes as the breeze touched your face. Chat was unusually quiet by your side, his tail swinging behind him, and looking at him from the corner of your eye, you wondered what was on his mind. When another gush of wind swept over you both, he got closer, his arm touching yours. You didn’t move. Looking at his ring, you knew you would have to part ways soon. You took a sip of your drink and wished you could stop time.

Enjoying the comfortable silence, you then remembered what you had wanted to ask him for many days now.

“Hey Chat?” You nudged him a little. He hummed in response. “Why did you stop calling me your lady?”

You felt him stiffen a little, but then he relaxed again and shrugged. “It was really overused, princess.”

You scoffed. “Maybe if you stopped flirting with every girl you saw, you wouldn’t have these issues.” You knew, thanks to some interviews in Alya’s blog, that the cat boy used that term with
almost every woman he met, and it was always accompanied by a dramatic gesture, like a low bow or an overly sexy wiggle of his brows. His fangirls simply loved it, but you had wondered if he had an ulterior motive or if it was just part of his flirtatious persona.

Chat lowered his head, chuckling quietly and then said in a small voice, “I don’t mean it though.”

You turned to look at him, a silent question in your eyes as you waited for him to elaborate.

“It’s basically my catchphrase now,” he took a sip of his drink and tilted his face to look at you. “And that’s why a need a different one for you. One that I won’t call anyone else.” You swallowed as he raised his head and leaned closer, his arm still touching yours. “But I just,” his green eyes searched your face, before they settled on your own. “Can’t seem to find the right one.”

You stared at him before leaning slightly closer, your noses almost touching. A whisper left your mouth. “Supreme Empress of the Universe.”

He slowly furrowed his brows as he processed the information. “…What?”

You said your name followed by the title you just created for yourself. “It sounds nice, you know.” You tried to keep a serious face as you stared at him.

Chat blinked a few times, but then he snickered and leaned back, a hand on his face as his body shook quietly with laughter.

A little voice on your head was scolding you for ruining the moment, but you didn’t care, a proud smile making its way to your face as you looked at him laughing at your feeble attempt at humor. You had never seen him laugh like that, the sound of it making happiness swell within you.

Soon you were chuckling along with him, but then your eyes glanced to a small shadow passing by in front of you. You squinted. Was that a butterfly? You heard Chat sigh deeply, and glanced at him for a second. When you looked back at the shadow, it was gone.

You furrowed your brows in confusion for a moment, but didn’t dwell on it much, as you noticed the cat boy was finally calming down, a smile on his lips as the last bits of laughter left his mouth. He turned to look at you, and his eyes were so full of warmth, it made your stomach do an annoying leap.

“You are certainly something, ma chérie.” You could swear he was about to lean in closer when a beep echoed in the silence. He gave a long sigh, shaking his head, but then smiled softly and looked at you. “Time to go.”

You made a little disappointed noise as he got down from the parapet. You knew this time would come, but you wished the ring had waited a little longer.

After following him back to the balcony and getting on his back once again, you asked if he needed help with cleaning the glasses and bottles but he said not to worry about it, which made you wonder even more where the hell had he gotten them from.

Your grip on his neck tightened as he prepared to jump from the parapet, but then you gasped as you looked up, which made him stop on his tracks and his claws dig into your thighs.

“What happen~” he tried to look back, but you grabbed his face and turned it forward, to where the Eiffel Tower was now sparkling. “Oh.”

For a moment only the rustling sounds of the leaves could be heard as you both looked ahead. You
leaned the side of your head on his and sighed. It was beautiful how the lights shined like little stars. It all seemed like a dream, and if it weren’t the warmth coming from Chat’s body, you wouldn’t believe it was real.

Chat’s ring then made another beep, snapping you both of your daze and you tightened your grip on him again.

He cleared his throat. “Ready?”

You sighed, a small smile on your face. “Ready.” And then he jumped.

Chat pushed your window open and got inside. For a moment you were confused, but then you remembered you hadn’t locked it when you left. Slowly, you came down from his back, shivering a bit as his hands lingered on your thighs once again.

He turned to you, but then his gaze went to your finished painting. “Why a couple?”

You were taken aback by the sudden question. Panicking for a few seconds, you tried to think of a non-embarrassing way of explaining to him the impression that inspirational night had on you. You found none.

As his questioning eyes searched yours, you decided to improvise. “You don’t question inspiration Chat Noir,” you said with a dramatic intonation. “You just feel it.”

You looked at him expectantly to see if he’d question you, but he just rolled his eyes playfully and then pointed his chin to the painting. “Then what’s its name?”

Your eyes widened a fraction and you answered quickly. “I still haven’t decided.”

It was a lie, a big fat one. You had thought of the perfect name, but Chat could never know about it. Never. So before he could see right through you, your arms wrapped around him, quickly enveloping him into a hug. After a moment, he hugged you back.

You buried your face into the crook of his neck, his blonde hair tickling your face, and muttered, “Thanks for tonight. I can’t thank you enough… for everything.”

You squeezed him and then tried to let go, but he didn’t let you. You stayed put, his strong arms holding you in place as you felt his heartbeat on your own chest.

As you wondered if he could feel your fast beating heart as well, he whispered in your ear. “I accept a wet kiss in return.”

You slowly pulled back and looked at his face. He was smirking. Of course.

Not giving him time to react, you licked your lips and kissed the corner of his mouth. His green eyes widened and he stared at you in shock. You bit the inside of your cheek as you tried hard not to smile. Cute, you thought as you saw a blush creeping up his exposed neck.

“Happy now?” you asked as you got away from him.

Chat blinked a couple of times then furrowed his eyebrows. “Well, y-yes, I mean,” he cleared his throat and you couldn’t fight the smile on your lips anymore. “Yeah. It was… Nice. I, um, I’ll see you around, princess. Good luck with your presentation.” He saluted you and then turned around to
leave, almost hitting his head on the side of the window.

“Careful!” You extended your hand to him, but he just waved at you and then he was off.

You watched him with a grin as he made his way through the streets. Maybe you had gone a bit too far with the element of surprise this time. You smirked as you remembered his blush and closed the window. But it was worth it.

Chapter End Notes

Hey guys! I have some good news, I guess? Since my country's government sucks, my college is basically closed for now, so that means maybe I'll have more time to write and draw?? Yay?? Hah

And as always, thanks for reading guys! You make my day with your comments and your support <3

EDIT: Drawing (!)
L'aurore

Chapter Notes

Hey guys! I know I said I'd try to upload more often, but yeah, it has been difficult to write. But anyways, long chapter ahead, I hope you enjoy it!

P.S.: In this chapter some characters from classical paintings are mentioned. If you want to check the paintings, I'll put the links here. Feel free to check them when and if you feel necessary!

Justice and Divine Vengeance, Jeanne D'Arc, Chiron and Achilles, Liberty, Prince of Hell

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Please. A familiar moan rang in your ears. You were sitting on Chat’s stomach, your hands on either side of his head. Please, he murmured quietly and you felt him moving under you, rolling his hips, and warmth began to consume your body. Then the scenario changed. You were lying down on a bed. Chat had your hands pinned as he hovered over you. Admit you think of me as more than your muse, he whispered and then smirked, getting his face closer to yours. Admit you want me. As he went to kiss you, the scenario changed again. Chat was pressing your palm to his chest. Just touch me, he whispered softly to you, inviting, and began to move your hand downwards. Please...

A phone alarm rang loudly in your ears and you woke up, breathing ragged. After scrambling around for the device, you disabled the alarm and laid back down, your eyes staring at the ceiling, blinking to adjust to the morning light as you tried to control your heartbeat.

The sensations of the dream slowly came back and you had a sudden stroke of inspiration. Dammit.

Cursing, you got up as quickly as you could with sleep still coating your mind, and began to search your bedroom for a paper. You couldn’t lose any ideas. Who knew when you might need one. You found a sketchbook and a pencil on the little desk you had in your room and went back to the bed, blinking hard when all the blood rushed to your head from getting up too quickly.

You sat down and made some sketches as you frantically tried to remember the dream before you forgot all of it, but all you got were fragments. Touches, the ghost of a kiss, purring… You felt your face heat up and sighed. You had already accepted that a platonic relationship with your muse wasn’t realistic giving the circumstances, but things were getting out of control.

Looking at the time on your phone, you noticed that you still had some minutes before you had to leave. You put your sketchbook down and stretched, feeling your muscles protest. Through the open door of your bedroom, you looked to the small living room, remembering the times Chat had posed for you.

Well, it had been great while it lasted. Now it seemed like your inner artist wasn’t satisfied with Chat just posing for you. Apparently these past few weeks had made your inspiration go to a point of no return. It wanted… more. You shivered at the images that popped into your mind. You didn’t know if Chat would like them.
He doesn’t have to know about it, a little voice said in your mind and you chuckled tiredly.

Your gaze drifted away from the living room to the body length mirror near you. It was one of the few pieces of furniture present in your bedroom besides your bed, the wardrobe and the little desk and chair near the corner. Your eyes scanned your still sleepy figure on the mirror and you rubbed your eyes in hopes it’d clear up your thoughts.

It didn’t help much. Some parts of the dream were still vivid in your mind. You pinched the bridge of your nose. You had to control yourself. These kind of dreams would just make things awkward between you and your muse. Right? You were almost a hundred percent sure it would, but you also couldn’t stop wondering what would happen if you tried something. What would Chat do, how would he react? Sure, he seemed interested in taking things further, but you didn’t know if he actually wanted it or if it was part of his personality and–

Your phone alarm went off again, interrupting your train of thought. It was time to leave and you had to get ready. A sigh left your lips. Why did you have to overthink everything? You disabled the alarm and got up to change your clothes, trying to shake off the haze of the dream. It was the day of the presentation of your project. For a moment you had almost forgotten about it, but you had to focus. You could think about what to do with Chat later.

You blinked as the double meaning of the sentence dawned on you and tsked. It was going to be a long day.

At the art classroom, you fidgeted as you looked around. The late-morning light coming from the large windows illuminated the many paintings on tripods spread around the room. Quiet chatter could be heard. There were many people present, even some that didn’t attend the class, that’s how important the presentation was. You breathed deeply as you adjusted for the tenth time your painting on its easel and tried not to think about it. Everything would be fine. Looking at the color palette on your hand, you contemplated making some minor changes on the project.

“Don’t you dare touch it.” You froze with your brush in midair as your heard the stern voice behind you. You turned around and saw Marinette grinning. “It already looks amazing.”

You grinned back and pointed with your chin to her painting that was a little away from yours. “What are you talking about? Yours is the amazing one here.” You put your color palette down on a table along with your things and looked at her canvas. “That red and black combination is outstanding!”

She chuckled and lightly punched you on the shoulder. “Thanks.”

*Ouch.* With a pained smile you rubbed your now throbbing arm. *Note to self: never get in a fight with Marinette.*

“I really like this one too.”

You both turned to the voice behind you.

Your felt your stomach flutter involuntarily when you saw Adrien standing really close to you with a friend by his side. You almost tsked. Models shouldn’t sneak on people like that. Rude.

He smiled at you both in greeting and then looked at his friend. “What do you think, Nino?”

Nino? The familiarity of the name made you look at the tall dark-skinned guy by Adrien’s side with
curiosity. Oh. He must be Alya’s boyfriend. Glancing around quickly, you wondered where she was, but she most likely had a class to attend.

Looking at Nino, you noticed he had a bright blue jacket and headphones on his neck. Just like in the pictures Alya had showed you. She had said he has been using this clothing combination since they’ve met. Yep, it was totally him.

You smiled. It was a shame you never really had an opportunity to hang out together. He had a nice happy aura about him.

Nino looked closer at your project and you bit inside your cheek. All this painting analysis was making you even more nervous.

After what seemed an eternity, he nodded and grinned. “I love the raw passion that’s behind it.”

You blinked as you felt your face get hotter. That wasn’t what you had expected. Sure, that night with Chat had been… something, but raw passion?!

Adrien was probably really surprised with his friend’s answer too, as he was staring at the painting with wide eyes. Marinette was trying hard to stiff a laugh. Your faces were probably priceless.

“I…had never thought about that.” You scratched your head bashfully as you forced away the images of Chat that wanted to pop into your head. “Thank you.” You gave Nino a big smile and he smiled back, asking if you had met before.

Marinette then introduced you to Nino and you saw his face lit up in realization.

“Oh, they always talk about you!” He laughed and you looked at Marinette, your brows quirking up in confusion. Seriously? Nino glanced at his blonde friend. “Also Adrien keeps bothering me—”

“Nino!” Marinette and Adrien exclaimed in unison, startling you. The other boy shrugged, a questioning look on his face.

Adrien smiled apologetically at you as he rubbed his neck. “What he meant to say,” he quickly glared at Nino and you looked between them, confused. “It’s that I was curious and wanted to ask what’s the name of your painting.” Adrien timidly gestured to your project.

You stared at him, eyebrows furrowed. What? You searched his face for a moment, but he seemed genuinely interested. You chewed on your lip as you pondered. Sure telling a fellow artist wouldn’t be a problem.

You then gave him a hesitant smile. “It’s called ‘Lovers’ Embrace’.”

His green eyes widened for a second and your chest tightened, the momentary fear of criticism washing over you, but he then gave you the sweetest smile and said in a soft voice, “That’s… wonderful.”

In your peripheral vision you saw Marinette turning to look at the both of you and then at the painting. Her face lit up in some sort of internal realization and she grinned. Besides her, Nino was watching the exchange with some sort of proud smile on his face. You, on the contrary, just wanted to hide inside a hole. Why did accepting compliments have to be so hard? It also didn’t help that Adrien was good-looking. No, it made it freaking worse.

You could feel your whole face getting hotter and hotter. Looking away from the green eyes that watched you, you scratched the back of your neck, resisting the urge to tsk. “Hmm, thank you,” you
said, stiff, but then relaxed and sighed, putting hand on your face, a smile making its way to your lips. “You guys seriously need to stop flattering me. My heart can’t take it.”

You heard laughter. Marinette gave you a pat on the back and smiled. “You should just get used to it.”

After some minutes the teacher entered the room. It was time for the evaluation of the projects and each student went to stay near their panting. You couldn’t keep your hands still as the teacher walked around, evaluating the projects.

As the time passed, you tried to control your breathing, but it didn’t seem to help much, so you just waited for your fate. The other students that already had their paintings graded were talking between themselves – Marinette amongst them – relief evident in their faces. You couldn’t wait to be one of them and have this be over with.

A movement to your right got your attention. You saw Adrien looking at you with a smile. He gave you a thumbs up, probably suggesting that everything would be ok. You gave him a nervous smile and nodded. For some reason you were glad he was here, his presence calming you somehow.

The teacher then approached you and your heart felt like it was going to jump out of your chest. You had put a lot of effort on this project and Chat… You smiled to yourself. You really had to do something to thank him properly.

After some time of looking at your painting, the teacher looked at you from behind his glasses. “You call this a painting?”

All the air seemed to rush out of your lungs. “Pardon me?”

The classroom went dead silent, with only the teacher’s cold voice echoing around it. “It lacks everything: creativity, color, technique, passion.” You stared at his face in shock. He refused to meet your eyes. “No. He couldn’t… “Zero.”

You felt the blood rush out of your face as the teacher wrote the grade down on his notebook. Looking around, you saw the stunned expressions of everyone else. Adrien gave a step forward, but Nino put a hand on his shoulder, stopping him from interfering.

Something was wrong, you knew it. Your painting wasn’t that different from the other students. It was ok if you didn’t deserve a twenty, but a zero? Only a person that didn’t do the project at all received that. No. It wasn’t right.

You turned to the teacher, who was already leaving to check another painting. “Excuse me teacher, I’m sorry, but that doesn’t make sense–”

“I will not change my mind.” His words cut through yours. He had stopped walking, but didn’t turn around. A hand was waved in your direction. “Now take this… thing out of my sight.”

Some gasps were heard from the students. You felt your blood boil. Now you were pissed. You opened you mouth to say something, but you felt a hand on your arm. It was Marinette. Your jaw tightened to the point of hurting, but you stopped. You had to get out of there before you said something that worsened your situation. Marinette helped you gather your things quickly and without looking back you rushed out of the door, feeling everyone’s eyes on you.

You marched through corridors as Marinette tried to keep up with you.
“Where are you going again?” She dodged a student as you rounded a corner and walked by your side.

“To the Administration’s Office.” You stared straight ahead, anger filling your veins. You wanted to solve things as quickly as possible. Things couldn’t stay like that. It wasn’t fair. The teacher’s judgment wasn’t fair. The painting had everything he had asked for the project, but he didn’t want to tell you what you had done wrong. It made no sense. Zero sense. You clenched your jaw and walked faster, the painting under your arm.

Fortunately, the line for the office wasn’t long, so you didn’t have to wait much. Marinette stayed by your side while you waited impatiently. She had another class, but happily decided to make you company, even when you said she didn’t have to. Her kindness made your anger subside a little. A little.

When it was your turn, Marinette put a hand on your shoulder. “Don’t get too upset over this, ok?” She smiled softly. “We’ll solve it together.”

You smiled back at her the best you could. She was such a nice friend; you were glad to have met her. “Thank you, Mari.” She patted your shoulder before going to her class.

Entering the office, you sat down on one of the chairs and explained the situation to the woman responsible for solving students’ problems.

“I can’t do anything,” she said while signing some papers, not bothering to look your way.

You clenched your fist on your lap and breathed deeply. Calm down, you told yourself. “All I’m asking for is an explanation—”

“It’s the teacher’s will. I cannot interfere.” She stamped a sheet of paper, still not looking up. Your eyes narrowed. “And please do not interrupt my work anymore with such petty matters.”

You had deep nails marks on your hands when you left the office. You carried your painting as you made your way out of the main building, crushing the grass under your feet. Angry tears were threatening to fall on your cheeks, but you wouldn’t cry. This place didn’t deserve it.

Your steps didn’t slow down as you made your way through the campus. The tension and tiredness of the week combined with the burning anger inside of you, you didn’t feel like yourself.

You looked down as you passed some students, not wanting to draw attention to you. With a zero you couldn’t stay in Paris longer, and Chat… With an angry sigh you found yourself in front of a big statue of a woman in the middle of the front yard. You slowed down and getting closer, you saw it had a quote.

‘Paris’ Art and Design University, since 1700 being loyal to students’

What a big, fat lie. You gripped the color palette in your other hand as you felt the bundle of negative emotions swirl in your chest.

You want to make them pay, an ominous voice said in your head. I can help you with that.

And then darkness consumed you.
The color drained from the man’s face before your eyes, and in a second, all the colors on him was gone, making him a mix of gray, just like yourself. You saw the colors pass through your hand and go to the color palette on your forearm as you released the man’s throat. He then walked away shuffling his feet on the grass, aimlessly and depressed, all passion stripped from him, just like the others that had crossed your path.

You smiled. Now you just needed a bit of purple.

Your steps made no sound on the grass as you made your way through the front yard of the campus, collecting colors from people and objects, making them lifeless, anger still running in your veins along with their energy. You didn’t have any colors on you, so the first thing you had done was drain the color from the buildings and the grass, making it easier to sneak up on unsuspecting students.

The strange voice in your head had been silent for a while, as if it was observing your progress. It had introduced itself as Hawkmoth and said he was a generous man who was giving you the chance to avenge yourself, which you had gladly accepted. He wanted you to do something in return for him, but hadn’t said what yet, and while that didn’t happen, you went through with your plan to destroy the entire university.

A sideways smile stretched your lips as you looked at the dull yard in front of you: people, statues, trees… all grey. You had drained the students’ color before they could scream, so no one had noticed you. Looking at the now full color palette on your forearm, you smirked. Until now.

Concentrating on the colors, you channeled your energy to the Louvre Museum, since it was closer, and felt it come back with much more force. The colors on the palette began to mix and with an explosion of light, six characters from classical paintings appeared in front of you. Jeanne D’Arc in her full armor, a lance and a shield; Liberty with her torn dress and a rifle with bayonet; the centaur Chiron with a younger – and pretty much naked – Achilles with an arch and bow by his side; and two winged goddesses from Greek mythology, Justice and Divine Vengeance, that gave your plan a nice ironic tone. All of them bowed to you and you gave a tired smirk, the effort of summoning them draining your forces.

Good, Hawkmoth finally said, pleased. Now you can commence your vengeance, and I can commence mine. His laugh echoed in your mind, making you shake your head in discomfort as you felt the beginning of a headache.

You looked down at your now empty palette and then at the two males and the goddesses, who gazed at you expectantly. You grinned and pointed to the main building. “Bring me more colors.”

Screams filled your ears as your servants created chaos in the university. They brought you many students and even paint tubes and paintings they found in the classrooms. You drained all their colors with glee. And with more power, you could now suck colors from a few meters away.

You had even asked your servants to remove the big statue in the middle of the front yard, which was now lying on the ground as you stood on top of its large base, waiting for more colors. The feeling of wanting to go inside the buildings and do the job yourself was enormous, but you had to be in an open space for your next summoning, and so you waited.

The sound of police sirens in the distance made you glance over your shoulder, and with a smile you
prepared yourself for a fight. The press was also getting closer. And if they wanted a show, that’s what they’d get. Jeanne D’Arc and Liberty were at your sides, guarding you, their weapons shining in the midday sun. When the police arrived, you ordered the winged goddesses to lure them to you, and as the distracted men and women got close enough, you drained their colors, the blue from their uniforms more than welcome. With the press now terrified, it wasn’t hard to make them go away with Chiron and Achilles on their heels.

Excellent. Hawkmoth’s cold voice ringed in your head. With the police gone, soon the heroes Chat Noir and Ladybug are going to appear, and for my part of the deal I want you to get their miraculous and then destroy them. He laughed manically.

You shook your head as his words made your headache worsen. This guy wouldn’t leave you alone and it was beginning to piss you off. You preferred when he wasn’t saying anything, but the sound of a certain cat hero name piqued your interest and made something inside of you stir.

A smirk crossed your face. I want to play a little with the cat before taking his miraculous. You sent the thought to the man.

Hawkmoth seemed to hesitate, but you pushed your thought to him more fiercely until you heard him give an annoyed sigh. Do not take long or I’ll rip your powers away from you.

Despite the threat, your smirk widened. Kitty would have a surprise.

As Hawkmoth went silent again, you heard one of your servants approaching the base of the statue with someone in their grip and turned to see Achilles carrying a boy, who was thrashing around, cursing. “Let me go, you naked pervert!”

You crooked your head, recognizing him. Nino? You bit the inside of your cheek. He had complimented your painting this morning.

A feeling of doubt troubled you for a moment but then your eyes locked on his jacket: a bright blue color. Just what you needed for your next summon.

Making your decision, you raised your hand in his direction and saw the colors begin to leave him.

A metallic baton then hit Achilles, making him release Nino, who stumbled and then ran away quickly. You furrowed your brows as the demigod cursed in Greek and prepared his bow.

“Why suck people’s colors when you can suck other things, lady?” You heard an ‘ohhh’ in the distance.

That voice. You turned your head quickly and saw Chat Noir in a relaxed fighting stand, that ever-present grin on his face. Of course.

You raised your hand to Achilles, stopping him from shooting the cat hero.

“Hello, kitty cat.” A big smile graced your lips as you fully turned to him with your arms open. “Finally decided to join me, I see.”

Looking down at him from your higher position, you saw Chat stop and stare at your face for a moment. He then whispered your old name in horror, which made you roll your eyes and wave a hand at him.

“That weakling is gone,” you said and saw his eyes widen a fraction. “Colormancer suits me more now.”
To prove your point you moved your hand to a student Chiron had just brought and drained their color. You sighed in happiness as the hues illuminated your skin for a moment and power ran through you before settling on your palette.

“Join me, kitty,” you extended your grey hand to Chat. “And let’s destroy this place, together.” He kept looking from your hand to your face, in shock.

Yes, Hawkmoth cheered, get him on your side and then turn him into a mindless corpse. His laugh rang in your head and you clenched your jaw, your extended hand faltering a bit. The pain was getting worse each time he spoke.

Your lips quirked up slightly. If Hawkmoth thought you’d suck the colors from Chat, he couldn’t be more wrong. It’d ruin the fun.

Something then collided with your stretched hand and you hissed, bringing it to your chest.

“Don’t let her touch you,” Ladybug said as she landed by Chat’s side on the grass and you narrowed your eyes at her.

Both are finally here. Hawkmoth laughed maniacally. Now destroy them!

You flinched a little, but then smiled down at the girl. “Hello to you too, Ladybug.”

“Stop this, it isn’t going to solve anything.” She looked at you, eyes full of concern.

“Aw, c’mon, I’m not doing much.” You shrugged. “I just want to completely obliterate this place.” You grinned and she narrowed her eyes, getting ready to fight.

You ignored her and turned to Chat Noir. “Last chance, kitty cat.” You extended your hand again. “We could have so much fun together.” You looked him up and down with a lustful gaze, licking your lips and you could swear his cheeks dusted a light red, his eyes widening a bit. You gave a sideways smirk, but then turned serious, staring at him with your grey eyes. “So who are you going to choose? Me,” you put the stretched hand on your chest, and then pointed your chin to the other superhero. “Or her?”

As the question left your mouth, you already knew he’d choose Ladybug. That didn’t make you exactly… happy, but you had the impression he’d do that because of how much of a goody two shoes he was. Chat Noir was Paris’ hero after all. But it didn’t really matter, as he’d be yours sooner or later. What you really wanted was to buy yourself more time. Your palette was almost ready for your big summoning and with the corner of your eyes you could see Justice and Vengeance bringing two goth students and some red objects so you could drain their color.

Chat said your old name like a plea, but still stayed by Ladybug’s side.

You laughed bitterly. “I knew it.”

When your servants got close enough, you extended your hand to the students and objects, sucking the dark and red colors from them. A shiver ran through your body as the hues went to your forearm.

Concentrating, you could feel the energy coming from the palette. A grinned formed on your lips as you closed your eyes. You finally had enough. Bright, blinding light began to shine as the colors mixed.

“Stop her!” Ladybug shouted, throwing her yo-yo at you, but Jeanne blocked it with her shield. Chat tried to get close, but was stopped by Liberty’s rifle.
The air crackled with energy and the light got more intense, until an explosion of color made it impossible to see for a moment. You blinked and when you finally opened your eyes, the Prince of Hell inspired by the epic poem of John Milton was in front of you, his body and cape a mix of red hues and his spear, shield and helmet a radiant gold. The grass around him was instantly gone and the ground turned a bright red, with lava threatening to spill out. He bowed to you and a laugh left your lips, the sound of it mixing with Hawkmoth’s inside your mind.

You looked at your newest creation and pointed to the university’s main building, where all of this had started and now would end. “Do it.”

The creature nodded and began to walk towards it, the ground cracking under his feet with each step he gave. You were proud.

Ladybug threw her yo-yo at a nearby gray tree. “The akuma must be in her palette.” She told Chat while readying herself. “Destroy it and I’ll stop the monster!” You watched her silhouette as she went after your servant.

You smiled. In theory it was simple enough, but to actually do it… You turned to Chat and saw him watching you, probably thinking of how he’d get past your two guards, but completely oblivious to Chiron and Achilles behind him.

“Finally alone.” You tilted your head and smirked slyly, looking at Chat with half-lidded eyes.

He stared at you for a second before shaking his head and getting into a fighting stance, his baton ready and alert eyes locked onto your grey ones. “I don’t want to hurt you.”

“Is that so?” You arched one eyebrow and chuckled. “So let’s play a game then.” He tilted his head, curious. You smiled. “A game where I pin you down and make you scream my name as you come.” Your smile didn’t falter as you imagined the scene in your head.

Chat’s eyes widened as he gaped at you, and you could almost feel Hawkmoth’s astonishment in your mind.

Chat regained his composure and gave you a sideways smirk. “Just give me the palette and we can play as much as you want, princess,” he said in a low voice that made a shiver run down your spine. His tone was suggestive, but he didn’t leave his fighting stance.

You put a hand on your chin, pretending to think. “That’s really tempting.” You discreetly nodded to Achilles and Chiron, and they began to approach the cat hero. “But I’m afraid I cannot accept it.”

Your two servants then tried to grab Chat, but he quickly jumped above them and used his baton to get to the other side of statue’s base, winking at you in mid air.

You narrowed your eyes at him when he landed perfectly on the other side, the outline of his muscles clearly visible from the tight suit. Oh that cat, he’d be yours soon.

As Chat began to approach the statue’s base, your eyes widened a fraction, an idea forming on your mind.

“You know, kitty cat,” you said, with a melancholic voice and he stopped on his tracks. “I’d love to play, but I’m afraid Hawkmoth won’t let me.” You gave him the saddest eyes you could muster and saw his brows furrow. “He desperately wants me to get your miraculous because he’s a big coward who is too weak to do the job himself.”

Chat and the voice in your head gasped in unison. You smiled and prepared yourself for what was
about to come.

*You insolent insect!* Hawkmoth’s voice raged in your mind. *How dare you speak of your creator like that!*

You felt an enormous pain in your head and a scream left your mouth as you fell to your knees.

You heard Chat call your old name, but you kept your head down, breathing slowly, only hearing his hurried steps towards you, and with a small hand gesture, you signalized to Jeanne and Liberty to let him get on the statue’s base.

When he got close enough, you raised your head a little to look at his face. He looked back at you with concerned eyes.

“Hawkmoth,” you chuckled and then hissed as the gesture made a wave of pain go through your body. “He didn’t like that.”

You heard Chat tsk. “Why would you even do that, _ma chérie_?” He asked, exasperated, and when his hand touched your shoulder, you smiled and whispered to your guards.

“Now.”

In one second the cat hero was on his back, with his arms being pinned beside his head by Jeanne and his feet pinned by Liberty.

“Don’t let him touch you, Jeanne,” You said to the warrior, and she nodded. “This kitty cat can be quite dangerous.” You smirked as you slowly got up and looked down at him, completely helpless, his chest going up and down quickly.

“Tsk, tsk, tsk.” You shook your head slowly as you crouched by his side. He tried to pull on the grasps, but your servants didn’t bulge.

“You deceived me,” He said, a little out of breath, but he didn’t seem really mad and even stopped thrashing around, trying to escape. “You did that on purpose.”

“You think so?” You smiled down at him and got up.

Hawkmoth was probably understanding the reason for your actions now and would be happy with you for trapping Chat, which would give you a bit more time to play with the hero while the University was destroyed. The plan had been a success.

You looked to the main building and saw Ladybug fighting. She was still struggling with the Prince of Hell, while Justice and Divine Vengeance terrorized the students and teachers. The Prince had destroyed part of the campus and the main building with his lava and the place was a mess. The building was partially melting and people were screaming as they tried to get away. But as your minion and Ladybug fought, you could see she was gaining advantage.

You had to give it to her, she was strong. Your servant also was, but you should never underestimate an opponent. You were still weak to summon another painting, so with a wave of your hand, you sent Achilles and Chiron to help defeat her and get her miraculous. It was just a precaution, but you had to admit that the more you looked at Chat Noir helpless at you mercy, the more destroying the campus didn’t seem like a priority anymore.

“Chat!” Ladybug shouted as she dodged a lava attack. She must have seen the reinforcements arriving. “A little quicker would be nice!”
Chat tried once again to get free from your servants’ grasps, the effort making his cheeks go red under the mask. “I’m trying, my lady!”

You arched one brow at him as he gave a weak pull. If he kept trying to escape with such feeble attempts, you’d begin to believe he actually liked being pinned to the ground like that.

“There’s no need for that kitty cat.” With a movement, you put one leg on each side of his body and then sat down on his stomach, making his breath get caught on his throat. Leaning down close to his face, you whispered. “You’re mine now.” A deep growl came from his chest and you smirked as he bit his lip, trying to control himself.

You didn’t know how much more time you had to play with the cat hero, Hawkmoth’s patience was probably on its end – you could feel his irritation in your head – and the next time he talked, you’d probably have no choice but to obey him.

So you had to make the most of your time.

You put one grey hand on Chat’s throat, the remaining hues on your color palette bright under the midday sun.

He licked his lips. “Getting kinky, are we?”

You looked unfazed at his smirk and then slowly rolled your hips into his in a circular motion. A surprised moan left his mouth.

You hummed in approval and kept moving your hips at a slow pace. “Moan for me kitty cat,” you whispered.

Chat closed his eyes tightly. “Merde,” he muttered and you could feel him swallowing under your palm.

He kept muttering profanities as you moved, your grey clothes contrasting with his black suit. You could almost laugh from how pleased you were. The cat hero was finally where you wanted him.

You then felt Hawkmoth’s anger in your mind.

*That’s enough of fooling around*, he said with a cold voice, despite the hatred emotions flowing from him. *Now, for my part of the deal. Take his miraculous or I’ll take your powers.*

You shook your head, trying to get rid of the headache and sighed, looking at the panting mess that the cat hero was becoming under you. *What a waste.* But you decided it was ok. He would still be yours after you took his miraculous. You wouldn’t let Hawkmoth hurt him.

You straightened up your back and looked at your servant in front of you. “Bring his right hand closer, Jeanne.” Chat tried to free himself once more, but Jeanne had a steel grip.

“Wait, princess!” Chat tried to protest, but it was futile. A deal was a deal. And looking up to where your minions and Ladybug were still fighting, you could see she was tired. This would be over soon. “Wait, ma belle, we can—”

You ground your hips into his and he groaned, throwing his head back, golden locks of hair falling on his face. A smirk spread across your lips. You could feel him already hard under you. If you kept doing this, he wouldn’t last long.

“You know,” you leaned down until your face was right next to Chat’s and whispered. “I could
make you come right here and now, in front of everyone.” You gave a tentative roll of your hips and he arched under you, a needy groan coming from his throat. “Even Hawkmoth would see you coming undone.” You touched his magical ring and saw his pupils were blow wide with lust while he stared at your face with red cheeks and parted lips. You leaned in, your noses almost touching, and ran your thumb over his bottom lip. “And you’d like it.”

In the distance you heard someone shout what sounded like ‘lucky’ something, but you were too occupied with the quiet, lewd sounds that were leaving Chat’s mouth.

He stared at your grey eyes and slowly sucked on your thumb that was still near his lips. “I’d love it, ma chérie,” he said after pulling away and then swallowed hard, his breath still a bit ragged. You began to slide the ring off his finger. “But what’s the point if you won’t remember anything?”

You stopped, eyebrows knitted together. What?

It all happened in a second. You saw a movement coming from your right and suddenly remembered you hadn’t checked on Ladybug for some time, but it was too late. Soon a red and black rubber hose was throwing oil all over you and your servants, which unfortunately were made of oil-based paint.

“No!” You and Hawkmoth shouted in unison as the paintings melted away in a mess of colors and released Chat’s arms and legs. Before you could react or even see what had happened to your other minions, the cat hero grabbed the now oily color palette from your forearm.

“Sorry, princess,” he said with an apologetic smile, oil dripping from his face and he then broke the palette. Intense vertigo consumed your mind and you felt darkness embrace you.

With the small threads of consciousness you had left, you heard a murmur.

*Useless.* Disgust filled the voice as the word echoed many times into your mind. *I don’t know why I chose you.* The sound was getting weaker with each second until it was barely a whisper. *He’ll always prefer her.*

Chapter End Notes

I think this was the longest chapter yet, wow. So let me know what you think! Which was your favorite part? (if you have a fave part lol) And which part would you like to see represented in a drawing? I have one that’d like to do, but if people prefer another part, I could change it :) 

EDIT: Drawing! This one is actually a gif (′▽′)/

Colormancer potential outfit
Your eyes fluttered open and the first thing you saw were tree leaves swaying in the wind. Blinking to clear your view, you tried to move.

A mixture of black and red appeared in your field of vision. “Oh, you’re awake.” The kind voice was closer than you expected and you realized you were lying down in someone’s arms.

“Ladybug?” Your voice came out a bit strangled, your throat dry. She hummed as you cleared out your throat. As she helped you to sit up on the grass, you noticed she was a little out of breath and her short hair was sticking up in some places.

With furrowing brows, you then looked around, seeing the university’s campus full of people getting up and rubbing their heads. “What happened?” You asked, noticing that near you were your things, your painting and the color palette.

“Well...” She scratched her neck while crouching near you. “You were akumatized.”

“What?” You said, louder than expected. With wide eyes, you stared at the hero, your heartbeat increasing. “Me?”

“Hey, relax.” She put a hand on your shoulder, trying to comfort you, but it was useless. How could you relax after hearing news like this? Ladybug continued, a reassuring smile on her face. “It’s over.”

“But how– What–” You stopped, your eyes widening even more at the thought that crossed your mind. “Where is Chat?”

You looked around, searching for the cat boy, but he was nowhere to be seen. You looked back at Ladybug, trying to remember your actions as a villain. “I didn’t… hurt any of you, did I?” You bit your lip and stared down at your hands, fiddling with them, a wave of insecurity washing over you. “I’m really sorry.”

“Hey.” She squeezed your shoulder lightly and you looked up. “We’ve been heroes for many years now. We’re used to this.” She smiled. “And it was a great fight.”

You put a hand over your face and sighed. How had it come to this?

“And Chat,” Ladybug continued and you looked at her through your fingers. “He’s okay, don’t worry.” She cleared her throat and looked away, almost like she was trying hard not to laugh. You were completely lost. She regained her composure and looked back at you. “He had to… take care of something.”
You opened your mouth to ask her the million questions on your mind, when Ladybug turned her head to the main building of the university as if she had heard a noise. “And talking about that…” Her eyes hardened. “There’s something I need to do before my transformation wears off.”

You followed her gaze, but didn’t see anything.

Ladybug looked back at you and smiled, her gaze warm again. “Your friends will explain everything to you, but try not to freak out, ok?” She got up and you kept looking at her with wide eyes. \textit{Freak out?} What had you done? Seeing your shocked face, she chuckled. “You’re okay, that’s what matters.”

“I have to hurry now.” She readied her yo-yo and with a farewell, she was off to the main building. You kept staring blankly at the place where she was a second ago, your emotions swirling within your chest and almost making your stomach hurt from all the anxiety bottling up inside you.

Someone then shouted your name and you snapped your head to the entrance of the building. Alya was running in your direction, dodging the other students that began to go back to their tasks. You tried to get up, but a sharp pain in your head made you hiss and stop.

“Oh, \textit{mon dieu}, don’t try to get up!” Alya got closer, crouching down, and then enveloped you into a tight hug. She quickly let go and began to search your face. “Are you okay?”

You almost gave her a little chuckle. She was acting just like a concerned parent.

“I’m fine.” You touched your temples, where the pain was subsiding a bit. “My head still hurts when I move, but I’m fine.”

Alya let out a relieved breath. “Ladybug’s spell always fixes everything after a fight, but sometimes there are some side effects.” She tilted her head to the side, curiosity filling her eyes. “So, do you remember anything?”

Once again you tried to recall what had happened, but you got nothing. Sighing, you shook your head no. “Ladybug told me I was akumatized and I’m afraid I might have done something to kitty ca– I mean, Chat Noir.”

You furrowed your brows at the name that first appeared in your mind. \textit{Kitty cat}?

Alya didn’t seem to notice your confusion as she nodded and searched for her phone in her backpack. “Yeah, it was pretty awesome.” You looked incredulously at her as she went through her videos and then handed you the phone. “Now that you’re okay we can discuss how amazing that was. See for yourself.”

Still a bit in shock with her reaction, you grabbed the phone. On the screen, a grey figure extended their hand to a person and sucked their color, basically turning them into some sort of zombie. You gasped and looked at Alya. “Is that…?”

Her grin was huge. “Yep.”

You looked back to the video. It seemed to have been recorded from the terrace of a building. You glanced at her. “I didn’t get you, right?”

She shook her head and winked. “I’m pretty good at hiding.” She then sighed and pointed to a person in the video being carried by what seemed to be a Greek warrior. “I can’t say the same about Nino.”
Guilt consumed you as you heard her calls to Nino in the video. You hit the pause button. “Alya, I’m–”

“Why did you stop? Look, it’s the best part!” She pushed play and you saw a baton hit the Greek, making him release Nino. Your mouth opened as you sucked in a breath. Chat. The video ended, but Alya was already gliding her finger on the screen to show you another one from some minutes before that.

The scene kept repeating itself. More and more people turning grey, and screams seemed to be the only sound in the campus. Alya explained to you how your powers worked as you listened in silence.

You soon returned her phone back to her. It was too much. “I’m sorry, Alya,” you said, rubbing your temple. “I shouldn’t have–”

“Hey,” Alya put a hand on your shoulder, much like Ladybug had done, and you looked up at her, seeing a smile on her face. “It wasn’t your fault. Hawkmoth does that every time. He even did it to me and Nino when we were younger.” You felt your eyes widen a little. She chuckled. “Actually, I think he may have transformed half of the people in this city. So we understand.”

You gave her a little smile. “Thanks, Alya.” You were glad that she was trying her best to lighten up your mood and make you feel better. Your head wasn’t hurting that much anymore, but… A sigh left your lips. “I still feel bad about it, though.”

“It’s okay. You just need a bit of time to process all of this, and lots of sleep.” She grinned and patted your shoulder, but then examined your face. “Although I think Hawkmoth keeps getting stronger as the years pass. Your headache is proof of that.”

She saw the concern in your eyes and smiled reassuringly. “But let’s not talk about this right now.” She got closer to you like she wanted to share a secret. “I need to ask you something before it’s too late–”

“Alya!”

You both turned to the source of the shout and saw Nino and Adrien briskly walking in your direction. You glanced at Adrien and your eyes met briefly before he averted his gaze. His face seemed flushed, and you wondered if it was because they were almost running.

“Where was he this time?” Alya half shouted, making you wince, your head throbbing for a moment. She whispered a quiet ‘sorry’ to you.

“I found him inside the bathroom,” Nino huffed. “Don’t ask me what he had been doing.” He looked at Adrien with an annoyed face. “Honestly Adrien, in the middle of a battle–”

Adrien gave him a warning punch on his arm. “Nino.”

Nino hissed and rubbed his arm. “What I can say is that it involved a lot of moanin– mfph “

Adrien put a hand over his friend’s mouth. “Shut it. You’re just jealous because you couldn’t find a good place to hide.”

You watched the exchange with raised brows. You preferred not to think about what Adrien could have been doing, but your mind insisted on giving you ideas. Very embarrassing ones.

“Well, that’s true,” Alya nodded and looked at you. “Adrien is good at hiding since he has to run
Nino took Adrien’s hand away from his mouth and pouted. “Alya,” he whined. “You should be on my side.”

She only shrugged and Nino began to complain. You were shocked to see how normally they were acting, like what happened was just part of their routine. As you watched their bickering with amusement, you felt Adrien get closer to you.

You turned your head to him and noticed his pupils were blown wide, his perfectly combed hair a little disheveled. Your mind wondered if it had to do with the bathroom thing. *Tsk,* you told yourself. *Not now.*

“You okay?” His voice made you snap your attention back to him.

“Yeah,” you looked at his concerned eyes and smiled. “I’m getting better.”

He smiled back, with a slight tiredness to it. Perhaps modeling was taking a toll on him again lately. You tried to apologize for what you had done, but he dismissed it with another smile, saying for you to not worry about that.

With a playful glint in his eyes, he said, “I heard you gave Chat Noir and Ladybug a hard time.”

“Hard indeed,” Alya chimed in and you both turned to her, a sly smirk on her face. Unfortunately, you didn’t get the reference. She must have noticed that, because she said, “Hey, that reminds me I still need to ask you something.” Alya grabbed her phone and got closer to you, sitting down on the grass by your side. “Adrien, go stay with Nino over there, this is of the most ultimate importance.”

The blonde boy arched a brow at this, but complied anyway and went to stay by Nino’s side, his friend still eyeing him skeptically.

“What is it?” You asked Alya, curiosity taking the best of you.

Alya cleared her throat before holding the phone to her mouth as if it was a recorder. “What do you think about Chat Noir?” She asked and turned the device over to you.

You looked at it and then at her, a frown on your face. “What?”

“Ah, _merde._” her eyes widened and she stopped recording, going to search something on her phone. “I forgot to show you.”

Adrien intervened quickly. “Alya, I don’t think now is the best time to—”

She put a hand up. “I need to ask this now Adrien, while her emotions are still connected to her akumatized self. It might not be the same later.” She handed you the phone, where a video of you as the Colormancer and Chat Noir was playing.

Your eyes stared at the screen. You were excited to finally know what had happened, but then you felt blood rush to your face at the video playing in front of you.

Your akumatized self was sitting on top of Chat, his arms and legs pinned by two characters that looked like they were from classical paintings.

You watched the recording in a trance as the Colormancer leaned closer to the cat boy. “Oh, wow.”
Alya smirked at you, a smug look on her face. “‘Wow’ indeed.”

Fortunately – or not –, a tall lady that looked at lot like Jeanne D’Ark blocked the view, making it impossible to see what was happening and the video ended with the sound of Alya cursing under her breath. You slowly looked up from the phone and saw the different expressions in front of you.

Alya was still smirking, like she knew a secret that you didn’t. Nino seemed really interested in his nails and Adrien was looking everywhere but at you.

“Alright, so now that you saw it. Let’s go to the facts.” Alya rubbed her hands together. You suddenly had a bad feeling about this. She continued. “You could have sucked Chat Noir’s color, but you didn’t.” She gave you a pointed look. “And he could have released himself, but he didn’t.”

“He was being held down by two warriors, Alya,” Adrien deadpanned, crossing his arms over his chest.

“But he could have at least tried. Right?” Nino suggested. “And you can clearly see that he wasn’t trying at all.” He smirked and Adrien frowned.

“That’s not important.” Alya interrupted before they began an argument. “The thing is,” she began to record again, holding the phone to herself. “You didn’t attack Chat Noir when you were the Colormancer, and I bet Hawkmoth was telling you to do exactly that.”

You stared at her face in astonishment, but she wasn’t finished yet.

“So, the Ladyblog wants to know.” She made a solemn face worthy of an experienced journalist. “How did you feel about him before being akumatized?” She turned the recorder to you. “It’s for scientific purposes, so please try to answer truthfully.”

You looked at the expectant eyes staring at you. Maybe it was because your head was still a bit dazed from what happened, or because it was for freaking science, but you just blurted out the first thing that came to your mind, like something inside of you compelled you to say it. “I think he’s pretty hot.”

Adrien made a strange sound in his throat and then quickly put a hand over his mouth. The shocked look on the boys’ faces was priceless, but Alya didn’t seem surprised at all.

“Well, that was pretty straight-forward,” Nino chuckled, an amused glint in his eyes. Alya slapped his arm, mentioning him to be silent and he hissed in pain.

“Interesting.” She turned the recorder to herself and continued. “So with that we can conclude that sexual desires can manifest in the akumatized form.”

“Alya!” Adrien turned to her in astonishment, but she just looked back with an expression that clearly said ‘what?’ while she stopped the recording. Nino began to laugh quietly.

The model boy kept staring at Alya and shaking his head in disbelief. He looked more embarrassed than you. You grinned. You didn’t know he was cute like that. But then your amusement was quickly transformed to dread as you imagined Chat hearing about this interview. You could almost see the huge grin stretching his face and the endless teasing that would follow.

“Alya,” you said, a bit hesitant. “You’re not going to put this on the blog, right?” A short anxious laugh left your lips.

She opened her mouth to answer when her phone ringed. She said it was Marinette and with a quick
look around, you wondered where your friend was.

“Mari, where are—” Alya stopped talking. “Really?!” She almost shouted, startling all of you. You turned to the boys, puzzled, but they just shrugged.

“Alright, I’m going right now!” Alya finished the call and got up from the grass, patting her pants to clean them. She turned to you. “Marinette’s inside the school and said Ladybug discovered something about the teacher who gave you that grade. Even the police are there right now,” she said excitedly and your eyes began to widen. With all that happened, you had almost forgotten about the class. But if you thought about it, that grade had been basically the last straw that led to you being akumatized.

Alya typed something on her phone and got ready to leave. “I’m going to discover what’s happening for you. So go home and rest, okay?” You furrowed your brows for a brief moment. You wanted to go and know what was happening too, but your body was getting heavier, like tiredness was pulling you down, so you just nodded.

“I can keep you company,” Adrien said and as you glanced up at him, he blinked and scratched his neck. “If that’s okay with you.” You smiled and thanked him.

Alya seemed satisfied and grabbed Nino by the arm. “We have to capture this on camera for the blog, Nino.” Without waiting for his response, she began to drag him away quickly. “See you guys later!” She shouted, making Nino flinch by her side. “Get well soon!”

They both waved and began to walk hurriedly to the main building. You and Adrien watched as their silhouettes got smaller and smaller until they got to the door.

“Well,” you began to get up from the grass. “I guess I’ll go home.” In the process, you felt a sharp pain in your temple and closed your eyes tightly, but kept going. As you were standing, you sighed. You really needed to sleep.

“Are you okay?” You opened your eyes to Adrien’s green ones. Why they had to be green? You almost sighed once again as the image of Chat appeared in your mind. You were obsessed – and obviously had to be stopped. Adrien continued, tilting his head to have a better look at your face. “Do you want me to get you an Uber or something?”

“It’s okay.” You gave him a tired smile. “I’ll take the metro.”

He looked at you for a moment before smiling, revealing his white and even teeth. You wondered if he even had any flaws at all. It didn’t look like it. “I’ll take you there then.”

You walked to the metro station together, making small talk along the way. Adrien insisted in helping you carry your things, so you let him take the painting. You actually didn’t want to look at it anymore.

The bustling sounds of the city reached your ears as you passed through Paris’ streets. Shops were beginning to sell Christmas decorations and the colored lights shined through the display windows.

As you walked, some gushes of cold wind passed through and you closed your eyes and breathed deeply as they touched your face, trying to calm your restless mind. So much had happened today. First your grade, and then being freaking akumatized. It was needless to say it hadn’t been a good day for you so far.
“Was that your only class of the day?”

Adrien’s voice took you from your thoughts and you glanced at him, his blonde hair being pushed away from his face by the wind. “Yeah, it was.”

He hummed and you couldn’t help but notice how people turned their heads to look at him while he passed. It was like he was a magnet for people’s attention, but he didn’t seem to care. Perhaps he was used to it.

Oblivious to people’s gaze, he continued, “I’m sure they’ll change your note on that project.” He smiled at you, but you only gave him a small one in return. You weren’t so sure that’d happen. He kept trying to cheer you up. “And besides, it’s just one subject, right? I’m sure your university will understand.”

“That’s not the problem.” You sighed and smiled sadly at him, thankful for his kindness. “If I don’t get good grades in all my subjects, I won’t be able to stay here for another semester and…” you looked ahead and as if on cue, your gaze locked on a poster with a black cat printed on it. You averted your eyes and shrugged half-heartedly. “Well, I wanted to stay a little longer.”

Adrien had followed your gaze and was looking at the poster with interest. “Chat Noir?” Your head snapped to him and his eyes widened. “Désolé, I just imagined from what you said earlier–”

You laughed softly, shaking your head. “It’s fine.”

He let out an embarrassed chuckle. “I’m sorry Alya asked you about that.” It took you a moment to understand he was referring to Alya’s little interview. He passed a hand through his hair and sighed. “She can be pretty straightforward sometimes.”

You shrugged, seeing the metro entrance a few meters away. “Well, she wasn’t exactly wrong.”

Adrien lifted an inquisitive brow at you.

You gave him an one sided smirk. “I’m kidding.”

“There is a grain of truth in every joke.” He replied in a heartbeat, a glint in his eyes. You just smiled at him. You couldn’t argue with that. He then got closer and your breath caught in your throat as he kissed your cheek. His lips lingered on your skin for a moment before he pulled back, a small smile forming on his mouth. “Take care.” He gave you the painting back and, with a wave, walked away, hands in his pockets.

You had to refrain from touching your cheek in awe with your hand. But more importantly, you had to remember it was a common custom in Paris to say goodbye like that and snap out of it.

Your feet made quiet sounds on the stairs as you went down to get to the metro, Adrien’s words still on your mind.

On the trip home, it was hard not to sleep in the metro seat with the sway of the wagon. As you listened to some music with your earphones, the events of the day passed through your mind much like the streets of Paris passed outside the windows.

You were tired of trying to remember what had happened. Would Chat be upset? The question kept repeating itself inside your head. From the little that you saw, it was like that dream you had in the morning about him came true just to haunt you. Maybe the dream had affected your akumatized self
and made you act like that?

Sexual desires can manifest in the akumatized form. Alya’s words came back to you and you almost groaned out loud, readjusting yourself briskly in your seat and earning some glances from the other passengers.

That was it. You wouldn’t think about it anymore or you’d lose the little bit of dignity you had left. Getting comfortable in your seat again, you increased the volume of the music, hoping it’d stop your thoughts.

When you finally arrived at your apartment, the first thing you did was to lay down face first on your bed for some minutes and then get ready to sleep, putting some more comfortable clothes on. Bundled up under the covers, you closed your eyes when the sound of a message arriving on your phone made you crack an eye open.

You squinted your eyes at the screen.

Mari: hey, are you ok? Ladybug found something out

She sent you a picture. It showed the teacher and the woman from the Administration’s Office arguing with the police in the middle of a crowd of curious students. You frowned, beginning to type, when another message arrived.

Mari: we are doing our best to know what really happened, but apparently the teacher had been bribed to give you a bad grade

Your fingers stopped as you read the message over and over. You quickly erased what you wrote and typed again, asking for more details. Your phone then vibrated, signalizing Marinette was calling you.

You accepted the call. “Mari?”

“Allô,” she answered, but it was difficult to hear her voice from all the noise in the background. “The police and the director of the university are going to interrogate the teacher and that woman now.”

You heard exalted voices arguing with each other. Marinette continued, talking a bit louder. “Ladybug found a huge amount of money in the teacher's office. He’s trying to explain he was threatened, but doesn’t want to say where the money came from.”

You tightened your jaw, staring at the wall in front of you. “What an asshole.”

Marinette sighed, the sound distorted through the speaker. “I know. We still don’t know why or how, but we’re pretty sure it was Hawkmoth’s doing.”

You felt your eyes widen and a cold shiver run down your spine. Hawkmoth did it?

“I–” Marinette began to say when another voice interrupted her. “Alya, wait–” You could hear Alya in the background and Marinette’s voice got muffled as she talked with her. “I’m already telling her. Yes. Now calm down, ok?”

Marinette sighed, her voice normal again. “Look, we’re going to discover more about it. I’ll keep you updated. Now try to rest, alright? Bises.”

After you said your goodbyes, you ended the call, putting your phone away. With a deep sigh, you pulled the covers over your head, creating a bubble of warmth as you thought about what Mari had
Why would Hawkmoth go to such lengths to make you get akumatized? Your brows furrowed as you tried to recollect what you had done these past weeks and then it hit you. Perhaps he had been observing the cat boy and saw your few interactions with him? That couldn’t be possible, could it? The guy had to be really obsessed. But, well, he was a villain that had been trying to catch the Parisian heroes for almost 10 years without success. It wasn’t a surprise he was desperate.

You yawned, feeling your eyes getting heavier, until they slowly closed. Your headache had become a nagging ache deep between your eyes, and you couldn’t wait for it to go away completely. Your body then began to relax for the first time since you woke up this morning, and you felt your consciousness slipping away.

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You were running through a dark alley, puffs of breath leaving your mouth as your feet made splashing sounds on the dirty water puddles on the ground. You wanted to look back, but you knew if you did that you were done for. A grim presence was getting closer and closer, no matter how fast you tried to run.

You then saw a wall in front of you, blocking the way. The alley led to a dead-end.

You slowed down your steps until you reached the end and with trembling hands, tried to find a way to climb, but the wall didn’t have any crevices you could put your feet on. You were trapped.

You could feel the presence approaching slowly, like it already knew you didn’t have anywhere to run. With wide eyes, you turned around and looked up at the tall, dark buildings that stretched on either of your sides, trying to find an escape. You then saw two figures looking down at you from above, their silhouettes outlined by a bright light.

“Chat?” You called, a fragment of hope fluttering in your rapidly heaving chest. “Ladybug?”

But they didn’t answer, and just looked down at you with wide grins sickly stretching their faces.

A noise made you snap your head back to the alley and you saw two green eyes glowing in the darkness that surrounded you.

“Chat!” You tried again, getting the closest you could to the wall. Darkness began to spread, consuming everything on its way, and the eyes began to move. “Chat, please, help me!”

Your cries for help got lost in the alley as the heroes kept watching you. Chat wrapped an arm around Ladybug’s hips and she got closer to him, touching his chest.

“Please, do something!” You exclaimed, alternating your gaze between them and the frightening eyes.

The heroes began to laugh, the sound echoing in the silence.

“You aren’t her.” Chat’s cold voice reached your ears, and the small hope you had in your heart dissipated.

A growl that sounded like your name made you bring your attention back to the creature and you felt it was ready to attack.

“No!” You cried out and it lunged in your direction, grabbing your arm. “No!”
You opened your eyes and saw green eyes glowing in front of you. You screamed and tried to get away, but a hand on your arm stopped you from moving.

“Wait! Princess, it’s me!” You looked up and saw Chat staring at you with a concerned expression. You stopped thrashing around. “It’s me.” He repeated, his voice lower.

Your breath was ragged as you quickly scanned the place around you, seeing you were in your bed. A glance to the window showed it was already getting dark. The only light in your apartment was coming in from the open door to the hall and was casting long shadows inside your bedroom.

You sat up with a groan, put your hands over your face and breathed deeply as your heart calmed down. It had been a nightmare. Again. You heard Chat moving and then felt his arms around you. You flinched, the image of him from the dream still fresh in your mind.

Chat moved his hand on your back, soothing you. “It’s okay, you’re okay now.” You felt your muscles relax. You wanted to hug him back, but didn’t know if you should after what happened today.

You swallowed and raised your face.

Chat backed off, putting his hands on your forearms. “You were thrashing around and murmuring in your sleep, so I had to wake you.” He moved his thumbs over your skin. “I’m sorry.”

“It’s okay.” You looked down to where he was holding you, his touch calming your nerves. “Thank you.” You stayed in silence for a moment, accompanying his hand’s movements on your forearms. You wanted to ask him about something you saw on the dream, but didn’t know how he’d react. Or maybe you were just scared of the answer.

Breathing deeply, you mustered up courage, “Chat, about today,” you looked at his face and felt his hands still. “Did you somehow choose Ladybug over me while I was akumatized?”

He just gazed at you for a couple of seconds and you wondered what was going through his mind. He then looked down at your hands, beginning to massage your fingers slowly, careful not to scratch you with his claws. “You asked me to join you in your plan to destroy the university.” He gave a light chuckle and raised his head again, his blonde hair covering part of his masked face. “But I had to turn you down, ma chérie. I understood your point, but that plan was a tad bit crazy.” You chuckled. He smiled at your reaction and kept touching your fingers. “But why do you ask?”

You sighed and looked down at your joined hands. It was better to tell him the truth. “Apparently my akumatized self didn’t like your choice very much.” As you began to intertwine your fingers with his, you muttered, “This afternoon I already had three nightmares about you choosing her.” Raising your head, you smiled at him. “It’s getting ridiculous, so I had to know what was the reason.” His brows furrowed, but you just shrugged. “Maybe it’ll stop now.”

Chat then grabbed one of your hands and laid a light kiss on top of it. “There’s no need for that, princess. But if you really want to know, if you had asked me as your normal self, I wouldn’t even have to choose.” He winked, and gave you a mischievous smirk. You rolled your eyes, a smile making its way across your lips. “And besides, I’m here now.” He passed a hand through his hair, messing it up further. “You have me all for yourself.”

“Hmm.” You arched a brow, trying not to laugh. “That’s great. I don’t like competition.”

“I don’t see how that’s a problem, my dear, considering you don’t have any,” he promptly said, smirking.
“Oh, you smooth cat.” You finally let out a laugh and he laughed along with you, proud of himself.

You were so glad he showed up when he did. His presence cheered you up in an instant, making those nightmares seem like a forgotten memory. It was like he knew exactly what to do to make you feel better.

“Thank you, Chat.” You squeezed one of his hands, trying to convey the gratitude you were feeling in your touch. “And I’m sorry if I hurt you somehow while I was akumatized.”

“You didn’t hurt me, ma chérie, on the contraire.” He gave you a sly look and you felt your cheeks heat up as you remembered that one embarrassing video Alya had showed you.

“And,” his masked face then turned serious, a sign of melancholy in his eyes. “I’m the one who should apologize.” You felt your eyebrows furrow, a silent question in your gaze. Chat sighed and looked down. “If it wasn’t for me, Hawkmoth wouldn’t have suborned those people and none of that would have happened.” He caressed one of your hands with his thumb.

You were taken aback by his words. First because you wondered whether Ladybug had told him about the teacher or if the news had spread already, and second, you just couldn’t understand why would him blame himself for what had happened. It was Hawkmot’s fault, not his.

You opened your mouth to say what was on your mind when he muttered, “I guess what they say about black cats is really true, huh?” He laughed, but it didn’t have any happiness in it. Something squeezed a little in your chest at the sound of it. Bad luck. He thought he was bringing you bad luck.

You put one hand up before Chat could say anything else. “Before you tell me I shouldn’t be near you anymore,” you saw him raise his eyebrows and knew you had hit bull’s eye. “You should know that it won’t be some nightmares, nor a headache, nor a crazy evil villain that will keep me away from you.” His eyebrows rose even more and you grinned. “And if what they say about black cats is that they’re cute as hell, I agree.” You then proceeded to try to bop his nose, but he caught your wrist in midair.

“You keep trying to bop my nose?” He narrowed his green eyes in a playful manner, but it still made you swallow dry. “And I think you meant to say sexy as hell, ma belle.” His trademark smirk returned.

You almost snickered. “I’m pretty sure I meant cute.” He pursed his lips and it was your turn to smirk. “And I like bopping your nose, because as I said, it’s cute.” You then tried to touch his nose again with your free hand.

His other hand caught yours and he stared at you, his eyes narrowing even further. With a low voice, he said, “I’ll show you cute.”

He then held both of your wrists in one hand and with the other began to tickle your stomach.

You yelped and tried in vain to get away. “Stop it!” With a wicked grin, Chat ran his fingers against your waist, making you laugh against your will. “Chat!”

You tried to push his hand away with your leg, but he grabbed your calf. “See, ma chérie, this is—” he began to say, but then you pushed your leg harder and he lost his balance, falling backwards on the bed with a gasp and pulling you along with him.

You fell on top of him in an awkward position, with your hands still in his grasp, one leg on the side of his body and the other in the space between his legs.
The position made you feel some sort of déjà vu and you just stared at Chat’s wide eyes for a moment. He seemed really embarrassed, his cheeks rapidly turning a light shade of pink under the dim light entering the room. You slowly removed your hands from his grasp and, while still holding his gaze, bopped his nose, which he scrunched up a second later.

“Cute,” you muttered and tried to contain the smirk that began to stretch your lips, failing miserably.

Chat tsked, a furrow creasing his brows. “Oh, you…”

You laughed and got off of him quickly before he tried to do something. You were trying your best to ignore the feeling of his body against yours, but you could still feel your heart beating rapidly against your chest. You brushed it off as one of the side effects of being akumatized.

Chat sat up on the bed and chuckled, shaking his head, his golden locks falling over his face. “Well, glad to see you’re feeling better, princess.”

“You thanks to you, kitty cat.” You winked and he gave you a little bow while still sitting. Your eyes scanned his stretched arms, observing the way the suit outlined his muscles. You shook your head and decided you needed a glass of water. Your throat suddenly felt dry and your body was too warm for comfort. Also side effects, of course.

“I’m going to the kitchen to get some water,” you pointed to the kitchen’s direction with your thumb. “Do you want anything?”

“Oh,” he arched one brow. “Do you want me to say it?”

You narrowed your eyes at him, realizing what he was going to do, “Don’t you dare.”

He grinned, his pearl white fangs almost shining, “Are you an optio–”

“Ugh,” you groaned playfully and turned around, going to the kitchen.

You heard him laugh and smiled, filling a glass with water and drinking it. You were glad he was still acting the same way around you, that nothing seemed to have drastically changed after the fight. And fortunately, that ache between your eyes had disappeared after you slept, so you really were feeling better, and the cat boy’s presence had made your mood lighten. Things were finally falling into place again. Now you just needed that grade…

“You know, I guess it’s for the best if we keep seeing each other,” Chat said, his voice coming from your bedroom. You heard the sound of him getting up and walking over to the kitchen. “I mean, I can’t deprive you from all of this hotness, right, princess?” He leaned on the counter, half lidded eyes staring at you.

You almost choked on the water and put the cup down, a mix of coughing and laughter leaving your mouth. You swallowed and then looked at him, amused. “Someone’s narcissism levels are way over the top today, huh?”

“Hmm,” Chat only grinned, filling a glass of water for himself and slowly drinking from it. You tried your best not to stare at his Adam’s apple. He finished and licked his lips. “Let’s just say I learned some valuable information today.”

You raised one brow at him, “About what?”

His grin got bigger as he put the empty glass down and looked at you. “About your deepest desires.”
You gave him a half amused, half skeptical face. But then you felt a chill run down your spine. What if Alya had already uploaded the interview? You decided to play it cool and shrugged. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Chat looked at you smugly. That was never a good sign. “You really don’t remember, my dear?” The atmosphere in the room changed and you felt yourself swallowing hard at the low tone of his voice. You imagined what he was talking about had to do with when you were akumatized. And in that case, you actually didn’t remember.

You chose to ignore his question. “Did I say something?” He hummed and you chewed lightly on your bottom lip. “What did I say?”

He hummed again, longer this time and with a slight insinuative tone to it as he inspected his claws. “I’m afraid I can’t repeat it, ma chérie. It was quite graphic.”

You furrowed your brows at his teasing. “Just tell me already.”

With a smirk, he got closer to you, making your breath get caught in your throat, and whispered, “The lighter thing you said was that I was yours while I was pinned to the ground.”

Despite your speeding up heart, you gave him a devious smile before whispering back, “I bet you liked it.”

Something flashed in his eyes and he chuckled low in his throat, making a shiver run through your body. “You know me too well, my dear.” He then put a hand on the counter behind you, trapping you on one side. You could hear the beginning of a purr coming from his chest. “In fact, we could continue–” He then stopped on his tracks and blinked, like he was coming back to his senses. “No,” he got away from you, leaving you completely dumbfounded. “You need to rest.” He turned around and began walking to your small living room.

“What?” You stared at his back as he walked, his tail swaying slightly from one side to the other.

“Where are you going?”

“Away. I’m afraid I stayed for too long, ma belle.” He kept walking and didn’t look back. “And you need to rest.”

You glanced at his ring and saw it had three dots out of four. “You didn’t stay even 15 minutes!” With quick steps, you followed him to the other room. “And you still need to tell me what happened.” You had to know what you had said. Your curiosity had been awoken and was bubbling inside of you along with a warm feeling that you couldn’t exactly put a name to.

He sighed dramatically, now turning around to face you. “I know, ma chérie. But you still need to rest. And if I stay any longer,” you saw his gaze go up and down your body quickly, before settling into your eyes. “I’m afraid that won’t be possible,” he said while walking backwards to the window.

Your eyebrows furrowed at his insinuative words, your cheeks beginning to heat. Was he being serious? Maybe if– No. You had to know what happened. You had to focus.

“So you’re just going to be a tease and leave,” you deadpanned, crossing your arms over your chest. “Is that it?”

“Do you want me to stay?” He stopped walking and turned his head a little to the side.

You tried not to think about the implications of that and stared at him. “Do you want me to beg?”
You saw the corners of his mouth quirk up slightly. You imagined he wasn’t opposed to the idea. He then shrugged. “I’m just asking, ma belle.” With pursed lips, he pretended to think. “But if you have an important reason, I might change my mind.”

You tightened your jaw. You just wanted to say the reason was for him to freaking tell you what the hell had happened already – and to stay a little longer of course – but you knew that wouldn’t be enough for him, so you began to think frantically until you remembered something.

“Well,” you began and saw his ears twitch. You had his attention. “I have a project I need to do. I should start working on it as soon as possible, since it’s for…” You stopped. Dammit, you couldn’t remember the day.

“Monday.”

“Yeah, Monday. And I–” You stopped, eyeing him incredulously. Wait, how did he–

“So, you want me to stay because you need my help with inspiration again,” he said before you could even utter a word and began to get closer to you. “Are you sure you don’t want to rest?”

Narrowing your eyes at his suggestive smirk, you watched his steps on the wooden floor. “I’m sure.” You could feel your heartbeat begin to beat rapidly in your chest. “And if you could tell me what happened while I was akumatized, maybe that’d help spark an idea or something.”

“Hmm,” he narrowed his eyes for a second, but then made a nonchalant expression, stopping right in front of you. “So what do you want, princess? I was hoping you’d want to do it like last time.”

Flashbacks from that night on the couch made you swallow dry. “Well, I’m not opposed to using that day’s method,” you shrugged. “If you also tell me what happened.”

“Deal.” Chat chuckled, the sound making your knees weak. He put one hand on your neck, making you jolt, and began to caress your jawline with his clawed thumb.

“Let’s see…” he trailed off and you bit your lip, anticipating his words. “You deceived me, pretending to be hurt by Hawkmoth,” his face got closer to your neck, his warm breath fanning over your skin. “And then you ordered your servants to pin me down.” He nipped your neck lightly, as if reprimanding you and a surprised gasp left your mouth, your hand shooting up to grab his blonde locks. “You then sat on top of me, and put one hand on my throat.” He moved from your neck to your jawline, and then stopped, lips lightly grazing your skin. “Is this enough, ma chérie?”

“Not yet, my muse.” You ran your nails over his scalp and he growled, drawing back, something dark flaring in his eyes that made you feel a slow burn in your veins.

“Very well,” he gave a low chuckle, green eyes gazing at yours. “Then there’s something I’ve been wanting to try for some time,” he went back to your neck, leaving open mouthed kisses along it. You felt like you were melting under his touch. “You know, to see if it helps with your inspiration.”

“Hmm,” you put one hand on his chest, trying not to lose balance. You didn’t trust your knees anymore. “Go for it.” You muttered, trying to focus, but it was getting harder and harder as his kisses met your skin.

His face then got dangerously closer to yours, making your breath get caught in your throat and he whispered, “Gladly.”

His soft lips then met yours. Your eyes widened for a second as your mind went blank. It seemed like you were inside another dream, but– Chat pulled you closer by your waist and you let out a
groan, eyes fluttering shut. It felt real, it felt definitely real. And like hell you’d stop it. The cat boy smirked in the kiss and you pulled him closer by his neck, earning a pleased moan from him.

Chat kissed you harder, one hand fisting in the tangles of your hair. You didn’t know you needed the feel of his mouth on yours so badly, but now all that pent up want seemed to flow from you in waves. You felt like you were on fire, your fingers clutching on his locks, his hands gripping your waist, claws biting into your hip.

The cat boy also seemed to be enjoying himself. His mouth was fierce on yours, as he purred ardently, leaving you dazed, your heart hammering fit to burst.

When you thought your knees would give up, Chat drew back and leaned his forehead against yours, catching your breath on his own as the light coming from the lampposts outside outlined his flushed features. “What do you think, ma chérie?” He said in between pants, locks of blonde hair falling over his face. “Is it working?”

“I think so,” you said, ragged breath matching his. “Don’t stop.”

He smirked, lips brushing against yours. “Wasn’t going to.”

He kissed you again with as much promise as he could. You parted your lips slightly to slip against his and they fitted so perfectly it almost hurt. A muffled grunt came from his throat, but it settled into a purr when you slid your tongue into his mouth.

You couldn’t think straight as his hands roamed over your body, along your sides, the small of your back. Low groans rumbled in his throat at your every trembling response to his touch. You almost forgot you were supposed to have some kind of idea out of this.

Soon your lungs were screaming for air and you drew back, hoping to give yourself a moment to catch your breath, but Chat used this as an opportunity to press you up against the nearest wall, his leg in between yours. A surprised moan left your mouth, and he glanced down, before staring at you with hooded eyes. With a smirk, he raised his thigh, making you gasp at the sudden friction.

You then pulled him flush against you, making your thigh find its way in between his legs. He sucked in a shaky breath and you whispered in a moment of clarity, “Tell me what happened next.”

He blinked for a second, his chest heaving rapidly against yours. He then went for your ear, nibbling on your earlobe, “You began to roll your hips into mine,” as he finished the phrase, Chat began to rock his hips slowly. He then licked the shell of your ear and whispered, “And said you could make me come in front of everyone.”

You cursed under your breath. You really had said a lot.

He bucked his hips up roughly against yours and you gasped, feeling his hardened length against your core. You didn’t know if you should be happy or not that you changed into more comfortable clothes, because you could feel everything through the soft material.

You then gripped his hair, making a growl leave his parted mouth. “I can always do that later if you want.”

He licked his lips and gave you a lazy smirk, “I’m counting on it, princess.” His mouth then captured yours again, and you could almost feel the purr coming from his chest.

Time seemed to stop as you rutted against each other, mouths alternating between kissing and biting both necks and lips. You were sure your skin was red with bite marks and hiccies, but with a proud
smile, you knew this time Chat would be marked as well, even if his suit kept getting in the way.

An insistent beep blared in the mix of moans and kissing sounds that filled the room, and you both knew what that meant. You didn’t have much time left.

Chat raised one of your legs and put it around his hips, having better access at your throbbing core. You raised one hand to caress one of his ears and he let out a loud moan, throwing his head back.

His thrusts began to get more erratic and rough, so you began to kiss the cat boy’s neck while still massaging his ear. Something within you made you let out a soft whisper, “Come for me, kitty cat.”

That seemed to do it. The words made his eyes light up and he let out a groan as he buried his face into your neck, biting it hard, while his hips bucked into yours with shallow thrusts. The friction and the sounds leaving his mouth were too much for you and it didn’t take long before something snapped and a wave of pleasure made you arch your back. A relieved moan left your mouth as you closed your eyes, involuntarily clutching Chat’s hair in your grasp and making him groan against your neck.

You both stayed like that for a moment, heaving chests flush against one another, pulse beating wildly with the rush of adrenaline that was slowly decreasing.

“Did it work, ma belle?” Chat’s voice was muffled against your neck, his breath touching your skin and making you shiver involuntarily. While before you were too busy with what was happening to think about anything, now it felt like all your nerves were on fire. It wouldn’t be difficult to think about something, but… You put your leg down on the ground, touching Chat’s body while doing so. A soft noise left his mouth. But you weren’t worried about that now.

“Yeah. That was,” you said and swallowed, throat dry. “Really inspiring. We should definitely do it again sometime, my muse.”

He chuckled lightly. “Agreed.”

The beeping was almost blaring now and Chat raised his head, looking at you through half-lidded eyes, the green shade of them shining in contrast with the dark mask covering his features. “I wish I could stay.”

You licked your lips, which made him give you a slow chaste kiss, and hummed, stroking his hair. “I wish you could stay too.” You really didn’t want him to go, but you knew that wasn’t possible.

He gazed at you for a moment before giving you one final kiss. Jumping on the windowsill, he then looked back, and you must have been quite a sight, with heavy breathing, disheveled clothes, red lips… His own marked lips quirked up slightly and then he was gone, running through the streets like he had done many times before, only this time, it seemed to have a lighter feel to it.

You leaned on the windowsill and closed your eyes, listening to the sound of your own labored breathing in the stillness of nightfall. There was no denying that something had changed now, you could tell, as you looked at the few stars visible in the sky.

A deep content sigh left your lips and you smiled, the image of Chat’s flushed face etched into your mind, the touch of his lips on yours… You had to admit the day hadn’t been a complete waste after all.
Why first kisses have to be such a pain to write, whyyy, but it finally happened can I hear an hallelujah

also, for this chapter I'm open for suggestions about the drawing! Let me know what you think!

See you next year!! Happy 2017♡

EDIT: Drawing! This one looks like it's from an otome game hah
Hey guys, sorry for taking so long with this one. College is taking most of my time lately and I'm kind of constantly fighting a mental breakdown?? Anyway, this chapter is heavy on the fluff side, enjoy!

oh, and once again thanks for all the support, you guys are the best and brighten many difficult days with your words, thanks a lot.

The last autumn leaves were fighting against the wind as you watched through the class window. The Art History teacher was talking and talking. She was hurriedly trying to go over all the topics she had to before the semester was over, which wouldn’t take long. Over the last few months, many classes had been spent with students arguing with each other to see who knew more about the subject, and they wouldn’t let the teacher talk. Now the class was late in the schedule.

But even so, you couldn’t bring yourself to pay attention. Your mind was locked in a constant loop of thoughts consisting basically of Chat, your grade, Chat’s mouth, your grade again, other body parts of Chat, and sometimes what you’d eat for lunch. You couldn’t help it. You were hungry. For lunch, of course.

Outside, one leaf didn’t resist the wind and got carried away, now at the mercy of the air currents. You accompanied it until it was out of vision, now travelling over Paris.

That leaf could represent your situation with Chat Noir right now. Like the leaf, you had tried to just move along with the free spirit that was Chat, but it hadn’t been enough, and now you were throw in a dance with the wind, which you didn’t know how would end. Although you had to admit, contrary to the leaf, you hadn’t been blow away. You had gone willingly.

You blinked when a group of pigeons flew past, the haze you were in being broken. You were certainly inspired today. Well, it wasn’t really a surprise after yesterday’s events. You pulled your thick scarf tighter around your neck. It covered the marks Chat had left on you pretty well, along with the make up you had to put over it. Thankfully today was so cold that even inside the buildings you could use the accessory and not be stared at, but you’d have to talk with the cat boy about this. He’d have to control himself next time.

A hand touched your shoulder and you jumped, turning around. Marinette was looking at you with wide eyes.

“Oh mon dieu, désolé, you didn’t answer when I called.” She had a worried expression, but then gave you a pointed look. “Twice.”

You breathed deeply and straightened your posture in your seat, your heart slowing down from the scare. “Sorry Mari, I’m a little out of it today.”

“Oh,” she tilted her head, analyzing your face. “You’re also on cloud nine too, huh?” She chuckled.
You blinked. Who else was also on cloud nine? “What?”

You gave her a confused look, but she promptly changed the subject with an unreadable smile. “How are you feeling today? Better?”

You narrowed your eyes for a second as she dodged the question, but then focused on her new one. “Yeah, I’m feeling much better.” You tapped your temple and gave a small smile. “No headache.”

“I’m glad.” Mari grinned. “Oh, and also, the teacher said we can work on the project for next Monday in groups.” She pointed with her thumb to the teacher in front of the classroom, gathering her things. Apparently the class was over. You had been daydreaming for a long time. “And I was thinking if you wanted to be a part of our group.”

“Our?” You furrowed your brows as you tilted your head.

“Oh,” she looked behind her and grabbed a boy’s arm, bringing him to her side. “What are you hiding for?” She whispered and he made an ‘ow’ sound as she pushed him. Your eyes grew wide when your gazes locked and you saw locks of blonde hair and green eyes.

“This is Julien. He’s also from Fashion Design.” Marinette said, but you almost didn’t catch that, immersed in your thoughts. He looked so similar to Chat… Mari continued, patting him on the shoulder. “He’s responsible, so don’t worry. And if he doesn’t help with the project, we can just kick him out.”

The possibility of you meeting Chat’s civilian self like this was really low, but a small, hopeful, part of yourself wanted to believe in it. Could it be?

“Wow, what a way to introduce me Mari. Merci.” He glared at her and she smirked. His voice didn’t sound the same as your muse’s, but… Julien extended his hand to you. “Julien Lenoir. Nice to meet you.”

Le Noir. Le freaking Noir. This couldn’t be a coincidence. Pushing your astonishment to the side, you grabbed his hand and shook it, saying your own name.

Julien smiled and you felt yourself swallowing. His haircut was also different, but how much does that magic transformation changed Chat? It had to change him somehow, so that people didn’t recognize him off the bat. Actually, his civilian self could be a completely different person, with a different hair color and skin tone, but… You glanced at the boy once again. But that’s not how it worked in the comics, cartoons and movies. It was always the most obvious thing, but for some reason, no one could discover the hero’s identity.

So you’d trust those reliable entertainment sources and stick with the information that Chat’s civilian self had blonde hair and green eyes.

Like Julien.

Marinette waved a hand in front of your face and you blinked, realizing you had spaced out again. You smiled apologetically and muttered a quiet, “Sorry.”

Mari chuckled. “Alright. So, as I was saying,” she stretched the last word, giving you a quick look, “we should discuss more about the project during lunch, what do you guys think?”

“Sounds good to me,” Julien said, and you nodded. You didn’t have any more classes for the day, so you had plenty of time, especially to analyze the new boy’s reactions. You just wanted to grab his shoulders and ask ‘Are you Chat Noir?!’ and spare yourself of this ridiculous doubt that was
beginning to grow in you, but you’d have to do it the hard way. Which probably was going to end with you over analyzing everything.

Your detective side began to work when you were at the canteen table. Julien sat by your side and every time he moved slightly you could smell the strong perfume he used. It was like a constant reminder that he was right next to you. You tried telling yourself that Chat didn’t smell like that, but a part of your brain just told you he could use a different perfume to avoid suspicion. You sighed internally as you ate your meal.

When you were discussing the project and he spoke, you had an excuse to look at his face and you quickly tried to imagine him with a mask and cat ears, but it was difficult to do that without staring too much. And you also couldn’t check for any marks from yesterday on him since he was wearing a coat that covered his neck. You had made sure to leave a few marks on Chat this time, but he could have put makeup over it, like you did.

After all this fruitless analysis that only exhausted your mind, you felt like Sherlock Holmes would be completely disappointed in you and decided that enough was enough. If the guy was really Chat, you’d just wait and see what would happen. Even if it meant having your brain set off alarms every time you looked at him.

You talked about the project for sometime, until Marinette and Julien had to leave for their class. You were still finishing your meal, but they finished quickly to be able to leave.

Julien gave you a kiss on the cheek, and this time you remembered to reciprocate it, but it didn’t help to make you feel any less awkward. “It was a pleasure meeting you.” He lingered close for a second before smiling graciously and leaning back.

You mimicked his smile. “Yeah, you too.”

As they left, you went back to your food. You were in the middle of eating a forkful when someone sat on the chair by your side.

“Hey there, Chat Noir fan.” Alya grinned and you rolled your eyes. She chuckled. “Feeling better?” You gave her a thumbs up and nodded as you chewed your food.

“Hah, I knew it!” Her grin got bigger. “I told you sleeping would make everything right.” You smiled. Sleep was certainly one of the things that helped.

Nino then sat down in front of you and you waved at him. Looking around, you didn’t see Adrien. Maybe he had already left for his class too.

“Oh, right, about yesterday events,” Alya began as you drank a bit of water. “They’re investigating the teacher now. He’s about to have a talk with the director here at the university today.” You frowned lightly, just hearing about that man made you feel sick. “The woman was already interviewed and admitted that she was merely helping him because he pressured her.”

Alya’s words made you look back to when you had been called earlier today to the administration office. You had almost forgotten about it. They had apologized to you about what happened and told you they’d do their best to solve the problem. You had sighed in relief when they said another teacher would analyze your painting and give you a fair grade. You just wanted things to be solved as quickly as possible.
“The guy still doesn’t want to cooperate.” Alya shook her head, bringing your attention back to the conversation. “We tried to ask him some questions as he left yesterday, but he got really pissed for some reason.”

Nino turned to you with a deadpan face. “She asked him why he was being a stuck up arrogant prick.”

You looked at Alya with wide eyes, speechless.

She shrugged with one shoulder. “It was a legitimate question.”

“Oh my god, Alya.” You began to laugh, putting a hand over your mouth to try and contain the sound as you imagined the scene in your head.

Alya grinned and touched your shaking shoulder as you calmed down. “Glad you’re feeling better.”

After finishing your meal, you left the university alone. You decided to walk a bit around the city to clear up your head. Besides it being early noon, the sky was already getting darker, a sign that winter was approaching. Sauntering along the Seine for a moment, you watched as the trees were being striped of their orange and yellow leaves by the cold wind, which carried them away and sometimes dropped them in the water to be pushed by the current.

You soon turned on a little street and walked past many boulangeries and cafés. You bought some food to take to your apartment and grabbed a crêpe on the way, watching with fascination as the old lady put the ingredients together on her frying pan. She made it look so easy.

You ate the treat as you walked, enjoying the feeling of the cold wind blowing on your face and the warm food on your mouth. Soon it’d be too cold for you to enjoy little walks like this without freezing or having too many layers of clothing, so you had to make the most of your time.

As you passed by beautiful buildings, all with blue roofs, you realized you could stay in this city for a long time. One year definitely wouldn’t be enough. You passed by a singer on the street and left him some coins. You didn’t have much money to be giving out, with all your expenses, but the guy was really great and was singing a melody about Paris’ heroes, Chat Noir and Ladybug. You kept humming the song for quite a while, even when you got to the metro station.

Finally at home, you were sitting at your desk in your room as you browsed the internet, munching on slices of baguette with butter you had bought earlier from a little shop.

Your eyes searched one of the many tabs you had open in your browser. All of them consisting of information about the akumas. Alya’s blog said a lot about them, even giving data about the all the villains that had appeared in the city and their powers. Over almost ten years. The list was enormous.

Alya had already added your akumatized self, the Colormancer. She was really dedicated to the Ladyblog.

In some of those tabs, there were some pages that exalted the akumas, saying they were the future, and it shocked you to see that so many people commented that they wanted to be transformed. It was crazy. Sure, the power part was great, but you didn’t have almost any logical control over your body. Hawkmoth did. Why would someone ever want this?

You sighed as you closed the pages. Truth be told, this world has many different types of people in it. But, in a forum, it was interesting to see a discussion saying that the people who wanted to be
akumatized the most were exactly the ones that weren’t chosen. You wondered why.

In another forum people were talking about akuma cosplays. You had stopped eating your baguette slices for a moment when you saw that some were already planning to cosplay as the Colormancer in conventions. It was insane. For the Parisians, this magic stuff had become completely normal. But for you it was all new, you were still getting used to all of it.

When you were akumatized, you thought people would basically throw rocks at you for what you had done. Not only did that not happen, but also now they wanted to cosplay as your villain self? You shook your head as your teeth sank into another slice of bread. It was a lot to absorb.

It was already late and you were in your pajamas reading from a textbook for your class to get sleepy – it never failed – when you heard a sound coming from the hall and put the text down as you got up from your bed quietly. Peeking out of the door, you let out a relieved sigh when you saw Chat jumping over the parapet.

“Bonsoir, ma belle.” He smiled and you swallowed. Goddamnit. Your heart was already speeding up just from hearing his voice.

“Bonsoir…” You trailed off as your eyes locked on a bruise on his cheek, right under his mask. It was bleeding, the blood trickling down his face. With furrowing brows, you saw his suit was dirty and his hair a little disheveled. You turned around and began to head to the bathroom. “Come.”

Chat put his hands up. “Wait, ma chérie, I’m okay, I–”

You motioned him to follow you and he went silently.

As he washed his face, you grabbed your ‘first aid kit’ - which was actually just some band aids and an antiseptic to disinfect wounds - that you had bought after the day Chat appeared with scratches on his face because of an akumatized villain.

You handed him a towel for him to dry his face and clean his suit and waited for him to finish. You were leaning on the bathroom door’s frame, since the room was too small for two people to fit inside together. “Rough night, huh?”

Chat grinned at you as he finished cleaning himself. “You should have seen–”

“The other guy,” you said it along with him and rolled your eyes. His grin widened, but you just pursed your lips. You didn’t like seeing him hurt like this.

You then got closer and lightly grabbed his chin, turning his head to you as you took a good look at his wound. “This is a deep one.” He released a soft breath when you let him go. “But at least the bleeding stopped.” You grabbed the antiseptic and a cotton ball from your first aid, pouring a bit of the liquid over the soft material. “Do you want me to do it or…?”

“Go for it,” he smirked. “I’m always craving your touch, princess,” he said, wiggling his brows. You rolled your eyes in your mind. Even hurt, he was the same flamboyant cat as ever.

“Sure you are.” You grabbed his face with one hand to keep him in place and then passed the cotton
over the cut. Chat flinched a little and your eyes drifted to his. “You okay?” He nodded, and for a moment you couldn’t look away from his gaze. The last time you were this close to him his lips were on your’s as his hands roamed over your body.

You cleared your throat and finally looked away, concentrating on what you were doing. “So, do you heal faster? I mean, because of this,” you gestured to his suit and mask. “Magic stuff.”

He chuckled. If it was at your choice of words or abrupt change of subject – or something else entirely – you didn’t know. “I do, *chérie.*” He arched one brow, looking at you smugly. “Surprised?”

You scoffed. “Nothing surprises me in this city anymore, honestly.” Chat laughed, but you shushed him, as he was moving too much and you couldn’t finish cleaning the wound. “Stay still.” He stopped moving, but a grin was still present on his lips.

You dabbed the cut one more time, before putting a band-aid over it. You then gave a step back, admiring your work.

You had no idea if you had done it right.

You let out a long sigh, passing a hand over your face. “I’m not qualified to do this.”

“It was just a simple cut, don’t worry,” Chat chuckled as he looked at his reflection in the mirror. After fixing his hair, or rather, messing it up further, he turned to you, smiling. “And you did pretty good, *ma chérie.*” His gaze was warm as he got closer and gave you a kiss on the cheek. “*Merci.*”

You bit inside your cheek before mumbling a ‘you’re welcome’ as you turned around.

Chat chuckled and grabbed your arm, stopping you. “Are you mad?”

You closed your eyes for a moment. “I don’t like seeing you hurt.” You turned and looked at the band-aid right under his mask with a frown, before softening you gaze. “Please be more careful, alright?”

He gave you a sweet smile that met his eyes. “I’ll try, my dear.”

With a smile, you tried to leave again, but Chat’s hand tightened around your arm, making you halt.

“Wait,” he said and began to sniffle the air. His face got closer to yours and you froze, holding your breath. Did something happen? Chat stopped and almost a minute passed before he said, “You smell weird.”

You released a breath in a huff and gave him your best deadpan face. “Why, thank you. That’s a lovely thing to say to someone.” You shook your head and tried to release yourself.

Chat pulled you closer instead. “Wait, princess, what I mean is,” he then began to sniff your neck. You stilled again, beyond confused at this point. “It’s… a different smell.”

You tried to lean back to look at him. “Ok…?”

He then raised his face and looked at you with narrowed eyes that made a shiver run down your spine. “I don’t like it.”

You were sure you couldn’t furrow your brows anymore than you were at the moment. “What–”

One of his hands then held your nape and he buried his face on the crook of your neck, rubbing against it slowly.
You gasped, putting a hand on his head to stop him. “Chat, what the hell are you doing?” You felt him lick your skin and you grabbed his hair, pulling him back a little. “No licking!” Your skin was still sensitive from yesterday, so you wouldn’t let him make a mess again. On a side note, you were pretty sure he had an obsession with your neck.

Chat hummed against your skin and basically moaned the words, “Alright, ma belle, alright.” He switched sides and rubbed his face on the other side of your neck a few more times, before stopping. You heard him inhale deeply and then he let out a satisfied exhale.

Your face was probably priceless right now, with a mix of confusion, astonishment and awe going over in a loop in your brain. You had no idea of what had happened. You scanned your mind, trying to remember what you knew about cat behavior, because this had to be a cat thing, when it hit you like a truck. “Did you just mark me?”

Chat purred before leaning back, eyes dazed. He then blinked rapidly and you saw his now focused eyes widen slowly as realization dawned on him. “Ahn…” He swiftly looked to the side before looking back at you. “Maybe.”

“Can I know why?” You narrowed your eyes, rubbing your neck with one hand. Chat looked away from your stare and you sighed. “How much of a cat are you, really?”

He shrugged, his trademark smile making its way back to his lips. If he had felt guilty a moment before, that moment was already over. “You had this weird smell on you and I took care of it. Don’t worry about it too much, ma chérie.”

You had no idea what he was talking about. You didn’t even get in contact with a different smell today–

Your eyebrows rose a little as you remembered. Julien.

He used a strong perfume and he also had kissed your cheek earlier.

You looked at Chat. But if the cat boy thought the smell was weird then he couldn’t be Julien, right? Or maybe he’s pretending to confuse you, a little voice suggested in your head. You groaned internally.

“What?” Chat tilted his head as you kept staring at him. “Do you want me to do it again?”

“No, no.” You shook your head. “I’m fine.” You had to stop wondering about Chat’s identity before you got paranoid.

You then realized you still didn’t know why the cat boy was in your apartment. He surely didn’t come for you to clean his wound. You asked him that.

“Well, princess, I–” Chat stopped and put a hand over his mouth as he yawned. Oh, he was tired. You did your best not to yawn along with him. He then shook his head, his ears moving along and making you want to touch them. “I actually came here to see how you were doing, ma belle.” You snapped your attention back to his face. “Did you have more nightmares?”

You thought back to yesterday’s night. You had slept soundly after, well, after you had calmed down. “No, not at all.” You smiled. “You didn’t have to come all the way here for that. I’m good.” And even if you hadn’t slept well, you wouldn’t be able to tell him that, not after how worried he had been yesterday. He probably still felt responsible for what happened.

“Oh, what a shame,” Chat said, pursing his lips. You raised one brow at him, silently asking him to
elaborate. He complied. “I mean, if you still had those nightmares, I’ll keep you company today,” he said in a sly tone.

“That’s too bad then,” you said, as a matter of fact, and he blinked, before narrowing his eyes. You smirked and held his gaze.

Chat was almost pouting now. You chuckled before rolling your eyes.

“Oh,” you put the back of your hand over your forehead as you posed dramatically. “Actually, I feel like I’ll have a terrible nightmare today.” Still posing, you extended one arm to him in a plea and Chat raised one eyebrow. “Please don’t leave me, my hero.”

You bathed your lashes and Chat shook his head before smirking. “As you wish, my princess.”

He got closer to you and your eyes widened. “Wait a minute, Chat–”

He scooped you from the ground with his arms, making you yelp and cling to him. Smirking at your reaction, he began to walk to your bedroom. You could feel his arms’ muscles moving under you as he walked.

“Are you sure about this?” You looked up at him, wondering if he really wanted to sleep in your apartment just because you could have nightmares. That didn’t sound right. “You don’t have to–”

“I’m hundred purrcent sure, my dear,” he said, and you groaned. He only dropped those puns when you were least expecting it.

Chat yawned again and this time you couldn’t help but mimic him. He then turned off the hall lights and turned on your bedroom’s with one hand while still carrying you. Wow, he sure is strong, your thoughts pointed out helpfully.

He saw your awestruck face and gave you a knowing smirk, his ears twitching a little.

You narrowed your eyes at him and then went to touch one of his cat ears, like you wanted to do earlier.

“Don’t you dare.” He looked down at you and you stilled.

“Or what?” You felt a smirk begin to curl your lips.

“I’ll show you,” he said, voice low in his throat.

You made a mocking ‘ooo’ sound and raised your hand again, but before you could process what was happening you were falling from his arms and your back was hitting the bed mattress.

A second later, Chat was hovering over you, a little smirk on the corner of his mouth. “Now, ma chérie, I’ll–”

“Now you’ll sleep.” You put your arms behind his neck and pulled a surprised Chat down to your side. “You’re both tired and hurt.” He groaned, the sound muffled by him falling face first on the mattress, but you were having none of that. He was yawning since he had arrived.

You glanced at his ring and saw it had two dots. “Hey, seriously now,” he turned his head slightly to you, and his eyes almost shinned, “You’re really going to sleep here?”

He turned over, putting his arms behind his head. “I’m staying for some time to make sure you sleep well,” You felt something warm flutter in your chest. He glanced at you. “But I might doze off. Do
you want me to stay on the couch?"

“No.” You quickly shook your head, hating how fast you denied it as the cat boy smirked at you. “I mean, only if you want to.”

“No, I’m good.” He shuffled on the bed, getting more comfortable.

“But won’t your transformation end?” You pointed with your head to his ring. “I can open my eyes at night and see your face without meaning to.”

He smiled, a fang poking out from under his lips. “You’re so concerned with my secret identity. It’s so cute, chérie.” You gave him a poker face and he continued. “Alright, alright.” He looked around your room as he hummed. “Don’t you have a sleep mask?”

“Oh,” your eyes widened slightly. “I do!” You still had the one you received on the flight when you came to Paris. Getting up from the bed, you went to your wardrobe and opened a drawer, searching between some clothes. The mask was a great idea, why didn’t you think of it sooner?

Chat hummed again. “I could also blindfold you.” You froze as you went to grab the mask. The way he said it had definitely an insinuating tone to it. He chuckled, lowering his voice. “If you’re into that kind of thing.”

You grabbed the mask and turned around, hoping your face didn’t show your embarrassment. “Maybe another time.”

He gave you a lazy smirk and you wanted to scream. It was almost surreal seeing the cat boy sprawled on your bed. It was like a vision, a mirage. Maybe he would disappear when you got close enough and… Wait, he wasn’t using his boots.

“You can take your boots off!” You exclaimed in awe.

He gave you an amused smile. “Yes?” You grinned wide and he chuckled at your reaction. “I can take off separate parts of the suit if I want to.”

“I thought you couldn’t take it off,” you murmured as you looked fixedly at his bare feet. You were astonished. Everything you had believed in was a lie.

“Come, we can talk about it later.” He patted the empty space on the bed by his side and muttered, “Especially about the other parts I can take off.”

Your cheeks heated up at the insinuation, but you pretended not to hear. “What was that?”

“Nothing,” he grinned. “Now come to sleep.”

You bit your lip as you made your way back to the bed, going to turn the lights off. Chat got under the covers and was waiting for you. You silently thanked your landlord for giving you a spare pillow, which the cat boy was using now. At least Chat could be a little more comfortable.

A yawn made you close your eyes tightly for a second. Besides your rapidly beating heart, you could feel sleep taking over your mind already. You looked at Chat one last time, seeing his half lidded eyes coated with sleep and then turned the lights off.

The curtains were closed, so it was quite dark, but one small light beam entered the room from outside, making it possible to see where you were going and not hurt yourself on the bed frame.
You laid down next to Chat, finding his warmth under the covers. He seemed to shiver for a second. The bed wasn’t that large, so you had to stay really close to each other, but you weren’t complaining, and Chat also didn’t say anything.

You still couldn’t believe this was real. The cat boy probably trusted you a whole lot to be in this vulnerable state near you. And it wasn’t like last time, when he just fell asleep on your shoulder. No. This time he actually decided to sleep by your side, to make you company. It filled you with something so warm that you felt like you could combust.

“Bonne nuit, ma chérie.” You felt his lips touch your forehead and you sighed happily, gazing one last time at his shining green eyes before putting the sleep mask on.

“Bonne nuit, Chat,” you murmured and closed your eyes, feeling him turn to the other side.

You didn’t know for how long he’d stay, but you were already elated to have him by your side, to have him near you like this, relaxed. It made you feel safe, like you were home.

His hand touched your thigh under the covers and you tensed up a bit, but he soon moved, as if trying to find something. He touched your arm and then your hand. To your utter amusement, he grabbed it and put your arm around himself, still holding your palm with his clawed one.

You chuckled, but didn’t protest. Getting closer to him, your arm enveloped him in a hug as your face got close to his golden locks. You could feel his soothing smell. It was a soft fragrance that calmed you down. You sighed, a happy slumber beginning to take over you.

Chat mirrored your sigh and you smiled. Your thighs were touching the strange material of his suit, his warmth radiating through it. The covers made a bubble of heat that enveloped and protected you both from the cold of the room. Even with the heating on, the apartment still remained a bit chilly, like the cold air refused to be defeated and clung to the walls. The warmth was very much welcome.

You could stay like this forever. But unfortunately, like all good things, it’d come to an end. You were afraid sleeping in this bed wouldn’t feel the same after Chat left. It’d always feel like it was missing something. Breathing deeply, you snuggled closer to him, not wanting to think about it.

After some comfortable minutes, Chat was already fast asleep and when you were almost there when you felt something curl around your leg. You jumped a little and raised your sleep mask to look under the covers. After squinting really hard, and with the help of the light coming from outside, you discovered it was his tail that had involuntarily reached out to you. You smiled fondly as you put your mask back and began to drift off again. How many adorable traits did this cat really have?

Your mind finally dragged you into the oblivion of sleep. Besides your dramatic talk about having a terrible nightmare, the night went on uneventfully. Although you did have a weird sensation that made you feel like something little and warm was sleeping on your neck, snoring softly as it snuggled close to you.

A weak light beam coming from the window showed it was near dawn when you groggily woke up. Your sleep mask was covering only one of your eyes and you fixed it with a small groan. A whispered conversation and something moving on the bed caught your attention. It was probably the reason why you woke up. Half of your sleep coated brain tried to understand fragments of what was happening and the other half was trying to make you go back to sleep.

“Oh, this is bad,” a voice said.
“Shh Plagg,” another voice whispered harshly. “You’ll wake her.”

“Oh, mon dieu, we’re getting too attached.” The first voice kept talking as if it didn’t hear the second one.

“We?” The other voice inquired with a slightly amused tone.

“I meant you. Shh!” The first one replied in a hush.

You tried to listen to the rest, but soon the words mixed in a mess of sounds and the other half of your brain won you over, making sleep carry you away again.

Chapter End Notes

I don’t know about you guys, but every time I read Chat was yawning I had to force back a yawn. This is sorcery. Also I was quite hungry while writing this chapter, so that’s why there’s so much stuff about food in it lmao

Fun fact: all chapter titles are inspired in real paintings’ names (the more you know ★☆)

EDIT: Drawing! Tired kitty is tired.
Bright light and a blaring alarm woke you up the next day. You blinked several times, taking off the crooked sleep mask that covered your face. Looking around, you saw Chat wasn’t around anymore. You shouldn’t feel so disappointed by it, but a small part of you expected to see him still laying by your side, with his lovely blonde locks messy from sleep. You sighed, wondering if one day that could ever happen.

Scrubbing your eyes, you grabbed your phone from the little table near your bed to deactivate the insistent alarm when a note fell on the ground.

“Oh.” You quickly got up and grabbed the post it note, recognizing the calligraphy. Chat. A smile stretched your sleepy face.

Bonjour, my princess! I hope my amazing presence didn’t bother your sleep. It was a lovely night. You indulge me, chérie. And I guess I already told you that you look adorable when you sleep, right?

P.S.: Check your phone.

At the end there was a little drawing of a winky face with cat ears and by its side a small paw that seemed quite realistic.

You grinned, opening your phone’s gallery. The fact that he had taken the time to write another one of these notes to you warmed your heart.

Your pictures showed up and there it was, the last one. You were sleeping with your arm wrapped around Chat’s waist, your face in his neck. The cat boy was mostly cropped out of the photo, with only half of his body appearing. Like the last time, Chat edited the image with cat ears and– Wait.

You squinted at the screen. If Chat was laying right next to you, how did he take the picture? Your brows furrowed as you couldn’t find an explanation. How?

Your phone’s alarm went off again and you jumped, disabling it with a curse. You pursed your lips, knowing you had to leave for class.

As you got ready for the day, the mysterious photo occupied most of your thoughts. You’d have to ask Chat later how he managed to do that.

As you walked through the university corridors that morning, you noticed people were glancing at
you when you passed by. You began to worry when the looks didn’t stop; maybe you had something on your face or maybe a pigeon had given you a nasty gift – Paris was full of them, so it wouldn’t be a surprise.

You were trying to find the nearest bathroom when you saw Marinette sitting on the ground outside her classroom with other students, probably waiting for her class to begin. Her clothes were awesome as always, a stylish backpack by her side.

She spotted you, a big smile stretching her face and you waved at her, getting closer.

“Bonjour! Ça va?” She got up and kissed your cheek, which was more like touching her cheek against yours.

“Ça va.” You smiled and then noticed the other students were staring at you. You clenched your jaw and lowered your voice. “Is there something on my face?” You saw her eyebrows furrow. “Like bird poop or anything?”

She made a disgusted face. “Ew, no.” A wave of relief washed over you. Mari arched a brow. “Why?”

“Because people won’t stop staring at me.” You raised your voice slightly, looking pointedly at the students and they turned their faces away quickly.

“Oh.” Marinette watched the exchange with furrowed brows for a moment. “It must be because of the incident with the teacher yesterday.”

You felt your eyes widen. “What incident?” The words slowly left your mouth as if trying to postpone the information that was about to come.

It was Mari’s turn to look surprised. “You don’t know?” You only shook your head negative and she tsked, passing a hand through her short hair. “Merde, I thought Alya had told you.”

You swallowed as a chill went down your spine.

“The teacher had a talk with the director yesterday,” Mari began and you nodded. Alya had told you about that. “Apparently things didn’t work out, and on his way out he…” She stopped for a moment, analyzing your face. “Tried to attack a student.”

Your mouth opened in shock. “What.”

“Chat Noir appeared just in time, so the student didn’t get hurt,” Mari quickly added. “But the teacher vanished. The police are still looking for him.”

You leaned against the nearest wall for support and shook your head, muttering, “This is crazy.”

It felt like you were inside a movie. But you were probably that side character that appeared only to screw everything up and then leave or die. Due to people’s stares, you were feeling more and more like that.

“It is crazy.” Mari touched your shoulder. “But it’s Paris, right?” She chuckled, but you just stared at her, dread settling in your stomach. She glanced to the side as her teacher arrived.

Mari got her backpack from the ground as the teacher unlocked the classroom and went inside, the other students following.
“Look, please be careful, but I doubt he’ll try anything now that everyone is after him.” You shook your head slightly in disbelief, a shocked chuckle leaving your lips. You were screwed. Mari continued, “I’m sure Ladybug and Chat Noir won’t let anything happen to you.”

You stared at her. She said that with such strong conviction that it made you want to believe in it. You smiled, imagining the heroes magically appearing out of thin air after you called for help. You weren’t sure if that’s how it worked.

Marinette waved at you as she went to her class and you began to head to yours, walking faster when you saw it was about to begin. Hurried steps sounded behind you and you blinked when a mix of blonde locks and dark clothes ran by. It took you a moment to recognize who it was. Adrien. You chuckled as he turned around the corner, almost skidding on the stone floor. It looked like someone was late for class.

A quiet white noise of various conversations and tableware being moved filled the air along with the aroma of coffee as you sat down at a table inside a café with Marinette and Julien. Fading afternoon light filled the place through the large windows. After all of you had finished your classes, you decided to meet to talk about the Art History project. You didn’t want to stay at the campus as you kept thinking about the teacher, so Mari had suggested this place instead.

You sipped on your drink and drew in your sketchbook as the other two gave ideas for the assignment. The project consisted of two parts, a drawing and an essay. You kept your sketchbook really close to you since it had some compromising drawings of Chat. The last thing you wanted was for people from college to see them, since the place was filled with students.

You noticed Julien was acting a little weird for some time. At some point you tried to mention something about sleeping yesterday, hoping he’d say something compromising or give you a hint, but the guy didn’t have any special reaction. You pursed your lips and went back to sketching.

You could faintly see a drawing of Chat through the sheet you were drawing on. He was in a rather sensual pose. You turned the page and admired it for a second with a smile. It was then that you felt a presence by your side. You looked up slowly and saw a waitress staring down at you and your drawing with a smirk. You clenched your jaw and stared back defiantly, even as embarrassment filled your veins. She chuckled and turned around after leaving Julien’s order on the table.

Goddamnit. You sighed and passed a hand over your face, nudging the sketchbook with your elbow in the process. You watched helplessly as it fell to the floor facing up, showing the drawing for the world to see. Today wasn’t your day. Groaning, you quickly bent down to get it when another hand touched it first. Julien looked at you and then at the drawing with wide eyes. You could feel your cheeks heating up, but kept a straight face and put a finger over your lips. Mari didn’t have to know about this.

Julien smiled, mimicking the movement before winking at you. You couldn’t tell if he had recognized the drawing or not. You both went back to the table, and doubt filled your mind once more as you compared Julien to the masked hero for the millionth time.

Marinette finished her drink with a gulp. “Hey, why don’t we go to my house and keep talking?” She propped her elbows on the table. “This place will close in some minutes to prepare for the night.”

“Won’t we bother your parents?” You secured you sketchbook in your arms so it wouldn’t escape again.
“They went out to watch a Chinese play together,” Mari waved her hand. “It’ll take some time for
them to get back.” She smiled. “Not that they’d mind you guys being there. My dad would probably
appear with a bunch of food from his boulangerie for you.” She laughed, shaking her head as if this
had happened before.

“Alright.” You shrugged with a light chuckle. “Fine by me.”

Julien was distracted, looking to the side, so you nudged him.

“Oh, yeah, sure!” He said quickly. You and Mari exchanged looks.

“Alright…” Marinette trailed off and got up to pay as you both gave her your part of the bill. “Oh,
*mon dieu.*” She sighed when her eyes landed on the long line in front of her. “Keep talking about the
project while I’m gone. It might take a while.” She headed over to the counter and you were left
alone with the blonde guy slash potential Chat in front of you.

“So, I was thinking about the colors. We could make the middle a bright blue,” you began to speak,
but then you saw Julien looking to the sides and hitting his fingers on the table. “Julien.” You said,
but he didn’t listen, so you tried it a bit louder. “Julien.”

His head snapped to you and his face fell. “Oh, I’m sorry.” He put one hand on his face and sighed.
“I’m not being a good group member now, am I?” He chuckled, defeated, casting a quick glance to
his right.

You followed his line of sight with furrowed brows. “Is something wrong?”

His eyes widened a little, but then he chuckled nervously. “No, I just–” He then looked to the sides
and leaned a little over the table. “Look, can I tell you something?”

You felt your heartbeat begin to get quicker.

*Is he going to do it? *Your frenetic mind began to work.

*Is he going to reveal he’s Chat? *Your heart began to pound in your chest.

“Sure.” You nodded quickly, trying not to show your eagerness. You couldn’t believe it. Especially
since you were about to rule him out from being Chat’s potential civilian self.

He licked his lips, hands still tapping on the table. “You see that guy sitting near the window?” He
glanced to his right.

You slowly turned to where he was looking. A tanned guy was sitting alone at a table. “Yeah?” You
asked, unsure about where this conversation was going. “What about him?”

“He’s from Brazil. I met him in a nightclub at the beginning of the semester,” Julien bit his lip, as if
fighting a battle inside his head. “We’ve been stealing glances at each other for months, but I just
don’t know what to do.” He passed a hand through his blonde locks. “He’s going away at the end of
the semester.”

You blinked as you processed the new information in your head. This was not what you were
expecting. At all.

Julien tapped his fingers on the table again. “You’re also a foreign student, right?” You nodded, but
imagined it was a rhetorical question. “So maybe you have an idea about going out with locals?” He
gave a nervous laugh. “What do you think?”

“Hmm…” You scratched your neck. Of all things for him to ask you, it had to be romantic advice.
“Why don’t you go talk to him? He’s alone.”
You tried to give him a reassuring smile, but you weren’t sure if it worked. Giving romantic advice to a guy you thought until a minute ago was Chat Noir was definitely strange and anti-climatic to say the least.

“But he’s going away in a month, why would he want to– I–” Julien stopped talking, his nerves consuming him.

“Listen,” you put one hand up, getting his attention. “If you don’t talk to him, you’re going to keep reminding yourself of what could have happened if you had.” He sighed, looking at his hands.

In the corner of your eyes you saw the guy get up. “And, he’s leaving.”

Julien snapped his head up. “Oh, mon dieu.”

The guy glanced at Julien before heading to the exit, but the other didn’t see it in the nervous state he was in.

“It won’t hurt to try.” You smiled and touched Julien’s arm, making him look up. “If that’s what you really want, take the risk.”

He smiled, unsure at first, but you could see confidence building up in his eyes. “Alright,” Julien said firmly. He took a deep breath and got up, striding towards the exit.

You watched as he left the café and approached the guy on the street, who was almost disappearing around the corner. Julien had made his decision at the right time. You propped your head up on your chin and smiled as they talked.

You admired Julien’s decision. Even if it seemed simple from an outside point of view, only the person who was in the situation could tell how hard it was to gather up courage. You didn’t know if you’d be able to do it if it were you. But maybe it helped that Julien thought it was now or never, since the guy would be going back to his country soon. It was his last chance.

“So…” Marinette appeared by your side. “What on earth just happened here?” She glanced out of the glass window to where Julien was still talking with the guy, grinning from ear to ear.

“Paris’ charm is at work right now.” You chuckled. “Hopefully, it works.”

Julien and the guy began to walk away together, when the blonde turned and gave you an excited thumbs up.

You mirrored the gesture. “There we go.”

“He’s not going to do the project with us, is he?” Marinette said with a poker face as Julien shrugged apologetically to her as he left.

You chuckled while looking through the café’s window, Julien and the guy walking side by side with happy expressions on their faces. “I guess not.”

Soon you left the café, walking to Marinette’s house alongside her. It was right by the Seine, a beautiful, French-style building with four or five floors, you weren’t sure. Her parents’ famous boulangerie was on the ground level, with signs saying ‘Confiserie, Boulangerie, Patisserie’ on the entrance.
As you arrived at the side door, Mari said Julien had sent her a message, apologizing and asking if he could do the writing part of the project. You asked Mari if she was okay with that.

“It’s fine,” she sighed as she typed a response. “C’est l’amour, non?” She gave you a pointed look, as if you knew what she was talking about. “Love makes you arrive late to class, and have this dazed look in your green eyes all day…” She sighed dreamily, batting her lashes exaggeratedly.

“Green eyes? You mean Julien?” You arched an eyebrow, trying not to chuckle. “You think he’s in love with that guy?”

“Julien?” A furrow appeared on Mari’s face for a brief moment before a mysterious smile stretched her lips. “Oh, yeah.” She nodded as she opened the door. “I believe they both like each other, but it may take some time for them to realize that.”

As you got in, you noticed the whole building had a sweet scent because of the boulangerie. Mari opened the door to the shop to show you around and your mouth almost watered from seeing all that food. You both climbed the stairs to her apartment and then the ones leading to her bedroom in the attic, your mind still thinking about the many sweets on the shelves.

“I’m planning on moving out next year and having my own apartment.” She held the attic hatch open for you and you got through. “I have a part time job now, so I’m saving up the money.”

“That’s awesome, Mari.” You smiled at her excited expression, before looking around.

Her room was tidy, but there wasn’t a space that wasn’t occupied by something. Pieces of cloth and mannequins filled up every corner and the pink walls were covered with posters, mostly of Korean bands. Two windows made it possible for the last disappearing sunrays to find refuge in the corners of the place.

“I hope I can live without my parents though.” Marinette chuckled, setting her bag down on a table. “How is it for you? Being away from everything?”

You stilled, eyes widening a fraction. Since you came to Paris, you had tried not to think much about what you had left behind as it only made things worse.

“I miss it,” you gave Mari a small smile. “But Paris has been amazing to me so far. Especially because of you guys.”

“Aw,” Mari swooned and gave you a bear hug, making you laugh. “I wish you could stay longer.”

“We too.” You smiled with a hint of melancholy as she let you go.

“Oh, stop it before I begin to cry.” Mari sniffled. “Now, c’mon. Make yourself at home.” She motioned to a chair by her table. “I’m going to get another chair.”

You sat down as she climbed a ladder and opened a little trap door on the roof, going to her balcony. You looked around until your eyes were drawn to a book on her table. Inspecting it closer, you saw it was a photo album.

“Hey, Mari,” you called out to her. “Can I see this album?”

“Sure!” Her voice reached you, along with the sound of something metallic being dragged.

You opened the album and grinned when a teenage Marinette looked back at you. She had the same
sweet smile as always, but her hair was longer and in pigtails. *Cute.*

A thought then crossed your mind. You had seen that hairstyle before. With furrowed brows, you thought for a moment. Mari was already coming back with the chair.

“Oh!” You exclaimed and Mari shrieked, almost letting the chair tumble down the ladder. “You have the same hair as Ladybug when she was younger!” You remembered seeing some pictures of the super heroine from some years back on Alya’s blog.

Mari froze for a moment, before finally descending the rest of the ladder and chuckling. “Yeah?”

You grinned at her. “You were her fan?”

Mari blinked and then smiled. “Yes! That’s exactly what I was.”

You turned your attention back to the album, seeing her other pictures with her family and friends. Nino and Alya were always making funny faces or poses. There was a blonde girl in some pictures, and Marinette told you they used to fight a lot in high school, but the girl got friendlier with time. She was living in the north of France now.

“Oh my—” You turned the page and your eyes stopped on a blonde figure by Mari’s side in a fashion show. “Is this Adrien?”

Mari got closer to you. “Yes.” She made a model pose, as if mimicking him. “Quite the charmer since he was young, right?”

You laughed at her and closed the album, putting it on the table again. If you kept looking at the photos you would never finish the project for Monday.

After an hour and a half of discussing and researching on the internet, Mari got up from her chair, stretching. You turned your head to the side, hearing a crack. Hissing, you massaged your sore shoulders as you looked out of the window. It was already dark outside, even if it wasn’t that late.

“I’ll go down and get us some food.” Mari opened the hatch and began to go down, but then stopped on the first step, looking back at you. “Do you want anything in particular?”

“I’m sure everything will be delicious.” You grinned and she mirrored it, before closing the hatch with a ‘be right back’.

You got up and began to walk around the room, stretching your legs. The project was almost done. Mari had already made the sketch and you had to finish it with paint. Fortunately it was a simple design so it wouldn’t take more than two days.

A noise coming from the roof caught your attention and your brows furrowed. Your first thought was that it was a pigeon trying to find a place to spend the night, even if it was already way past the time those birds went to sleep.

But then you heard steps. It couldn’t be Mari, right? She went down, not up. A chill ran down your spine when you remembered what she had said earlier about the teacher. She had mentioned he wouldn’t try to go after you, but after hearing the steps, you weren’t so sure about that anymore.

Swallowing dryly, you slowly got closer to an empty clothes pole. If the teacher was here for you, you’d at least try and defend yourself. Neither Chat Noir nor Ladybug would hear your screams.
The steps got closer and you reached out to grab the clothes pole. The thing bumped against the wall as you touched it, making a noise, and the steps ceased. You cursed under your breath, grabbing the pole quickly and went to the corner of the room furthest away from the trap door.

You heard a voice calling from outside and bit your lip, your heart hammering in your chest. *What a way to die,* your thoughts offered, *in your friend’s room, clutching a clothes pole with all your might.*

The trap door began to open with a squeaky noise and your breath caught in your throat. You got prepared to hit the teacher as he got in.

Moonlight partially entered the room, as a shadow was blocking some of it. You gulped, holding the pole tightly and glanced at the hatch to your left. Now that you thought about it, why didn’t you try to leave? Slapping yourself mentally, you were contemplating making a run for it, when a mass of blonde hair appeared in the opening of the trap door.

“Marinette?” A familiar voice said in a hushed tone and your eyes widened as you stilled.

Chat Noir landed in the room, jumping over the ladder. “Mari, she’s not in her apartment, I–”

He then saw you in the corner and froze in place. His expression went from surprised mixed with relief to completely mortified. If you weren’t so astonished you would have laughed at the sudden change. He was definitely the last person you expected to see right now, especially in Marinette’s room.

The moonlight coming from outside contoured his features and his suit, creating some sort of halo behind him and making him look like something out of this world. He had a mark on his cheek where the cut from yesterday once was. The injury seemed to be getting better.

You heard him say your name, and blinked, realizing you were still holding the clothes pole tightly. You put it down.

“What are you doing here?” Chat inquired, searching your face with caution.

“I could ask you the same thing,” you answered, furrowing your brows. He had just called Marinette by her nickname. It wasn’t your imagination, right? That meant he knew her.

Chat looked away, but kept his lips shut. He wasn’t going to talk.

You rolled your eyes. “Alright, I’ll go first.” He looked back at you tentatively. “Mari’s my group partner and I’m here to work on a project with her.” You motioned with your head in his direction. “You?”

He opened his mouth to say something when the hatch on the floor opened and Marinette appeared, climbing the stairs with a tray full of food. “Sorry it took so long, but I found some macaroons that I’m sure you’ll love and–”

She finally looked up and froze when she saw the scene in front of her. The tray wobbled on her hand and began to fall, but she quickly grabbed it again. You raised your brows at her sharp reflexes.

“Wow, is that really Chat Noir?” Marinette exclaimed euphorically while climbing the rest of the stairs and putting the tray down on a desk.

You narrowed your eyes at her reaction. While she was great at grabbing trays in midair, she was terrible at acting.
She looked around quickly. “Oh, is an akuma nearby?”

“Mari.” You gave her a deadpan look and she stopped. “He arrived calling you by your nickname, you don’t have to pretend you aren’t familiar with him.”

She blinked and then turned to Chat, glaring at him. He took one step back, looking like a deer in the headlights.

The situation was beyond confusing to you, but you were glad it wasn’t the crazy teacher trying to break in. The two were still glaring at each other, mouthing words and having a silent discussion between them. You were able to understand the words ‘why’, ‘idiot’, and ‘panicked’, before you gave up. They needed space, that much was obvious.

You cleared your throat and they turned to you. “You guys need to talk and the cat boy over there doesn’t have much time, so…” You motioned to the hatch with your thumb, walking backwards. “I’ll be downstairs.”

“No!” They exclaimed in unison and you stopped, startled.

“I-I mean…” Marinette scratched her neck, looking for words. “Chat Noir is only here to help me.”

“Oh,” you said with an amused tone and then glanced at Chat, seeing him nodding at her words.

“Yeah, that’s right!” Marinette seemed encouraged by your response. “He’s here to help me with…” She trailed off, but then quickly added, “Inspiration!”

“Oh?” You raised an eyebrow. Flashbacks of the times Chat went to your apartment rolled in your mind. It seemed like you weren’t the only one to have him as your muse. You felt something flutter deep inside your chest that resembled jealousy, but you pushed it back and gave Chat a knowing look.

Chat’s green eyes grew wide as he saw your reaction. “No, not like that!” You gave him a skeptical, but amused look.

Marinette seemed lost, watching your interaction with furrowed brows. “What?”

“Well,” you chuckled, putting your hands up. “Let’s just say I’m really not staying here.” You turned around and said with what you hoped was a nonchalant tone, “I don’t want to be around when you guys start.” You almost added a ‘if you know what I mean’, but you thought you had already made your point.

“Wait!” Chat gave a step in your direction and you turned around slightly. “It’s not like that, I–”

“It’s okay, Chat Noir.” You interrupted, voice calm. It was strange saying his full hero name, but you had to so Marinette wouldn’t think you were close to him. You didn’t do it because you were mad, not at all. “Me and Mari can talk about the project another day. Even if you didn’t come here for the inspiration part,” you gave him a sly look, before shrugging. “It must be important either way.”

“Stay.” He said firmly, his eyes not leaving yours. “It’s not important anymore.”

You crossed your arms, now turning around fully. You were losing your patience. He came looking for Marinette and now he didn’t want to talk to her because of you. The last thing you wanted was to be a burden.

“Ahn…” Marinette trailed off, looking between the two of you and then putting a hand to her ear.
“Did you guys hear that? I think it’s the stove.” You strained your ears, but didn’t hear anything. “I should go check it.”

“Mari,” you said, watching her going to the hatch. You knew what she was doing.

“I have to check it before it blows up the whole house,” she said, not looking at you.

“You’re going to leave?” You asked, exasperated, but she was already opening the door. “He came to see you!” She didn’t answer. “Mari!”

“Be right back,” she said and then she was gone, closing the hatch behind her. You sighed, putting a hand on your face.

“Ma chérie–” Chat began, but you interrupted him.

“Why didn’t you want to talk to her?” Your voice was upset as you turned around to face your muse. Well, your and Marinette’s muse apparently. “That’s why you came, right?”

Chat shook his head. “I already said it wasn’t important.”

“It seemed pretty important to me when you arrived.” You pointed out, but your words were met with silence. You breathed deeply, walking across the room to lean on a wall. This could take a while. You crossed your arms once again. “Then why did you come? For the inspiration thing?”

That feeling you thought you had buried away bubbled up again and you faltered, your nails digging deep into your skin. It was definitely jealousy. And if you were feeling this way–

You closed your eyes tightly for a moment, forcing yourself to stop thinking about it. Feelings would just make everything difficult.

Breathing deeply, you opened your eyes and Chat’s stressed expression met you. Guilt sank in your stomach. Hurting him was the last thing you wanted to do when you asked him to be your muse.

You bit your lip hard, as if it’d help to control yourself. You had already failed trying to have a platonic relationship with the cat boy, you couldn’t ruin what you had now.

Chat was trying to find the words to say something, but you shook your head. “Listen, Chat, I don’t mind, ok? If that’s what you’re worried about.” You smiled at him, trying to be reassuring. “I don’t own you.”

This was so obvious that you didn’t even have to explain it, but you wanted it to be clear to him. You knew in the past artists used to fight because of the exclusivity of their muses, but you didn’t want your relationship with him to be like that.

You tried to keep smiling as you said, “You can do whatever you want. Inspire whoever you want.”

“But I don’t want to!” Chat exclaimed and the force in his voice took you aback. He let out a breath and looked away, passing a hand through his hair. You had never seen him get worked up like that.

He looked down at his clawed hands and chuckled, shaking his head, before looking into your eyes. “I just don’t want you to think I do this with anyone else.”

Your eyes widened a little and you bit your bottom lip, looking away from his burning gaze. “You can’t just drop this like that.” You were trying hard to fight the warm flutter that wanted to settle in your stomach, but it wasn’t working.
“Why?” He got closer to you, slowly closing the space between you two, before lowering his voice, “Does it make you feel something?”

You snapped your head up. It was like he had heard your inner struggle from a moment ago. *Maybe he had been thinking about the same thing?*

You tried not to glance at his lips as you replied, “Some feelings just complicate everything.”

Chat hummed, “True…” He extended his arm and you held your breath, but he just picked a strand of hair that was on your shoulder. He smiled as he dropped it on the ground. “But only if you think too hard about it.”

You huffed, shaking your head. “It’s not that simple.”

Chat gently touched your cheek this time, catching you off guard. He began to caress your skin, careful as to not let his claws hurt you. “Just follow the sensation, and forget about everything else.”

You sighed at his touch, glad you were leaning against the wall for support, and muttered, “Well, sensations are much easier than feelings.”

Chat nodded, smiling. “True.” His green eyes glanced at your lips quickly, before gazing at you. “So does that mean I can help you with the project right now?”

You blinked at him, breaking out of the haze his touch was causing you. This was definitely an unexpected turn of events.

Seeing your baffled expression, Chat shrugged. “I mean, since I’m here and all.”

You could tell him that this was the same project for Monday that he had already helped you with – expertly, you must say – two days ago, but you decided not to. Instead, you smirked. “The same way you were going to help Marinette?”

He narrowed his eyes and slid his hand down to the side of your neck. “Enough talking about Marinette.”

You realized it had been a while since she had gone to check on the stove. The house was awfully quiet.

You casted a glance to the hatch as you put a hand on his chest. “She might hear us.”

Chat gave you a sly smirk and whispered, his nose barely touching yours. “Then I suggest you keep your voice down, princess.”

You swallowed dryly, before mirroring his smirk. “I should be the one saying that,” you chuckled despite your heart hammering against your chest. “Last time you were the one almost screaming my nam–”

He silenced you with a kiss, and his hands pulled you closer until you were flush against each other. You smiled, eyes fluttering close at the feeling of his lips against yours. It was still new, but it now had a slight familiarity to it; the soft texture of his skin, the eagerness – as if he was trying to prove something –, and the way he licked at your lips before slipping his tongue past them.

Your lungs were soon on fire and you pulled away, leaning against the wall, chest heaving. Chat slid his thumb over his bottom lip as he smirked, obviously having fun with this. The pink walls contrasted with Chat’s dark suit, making him stand out in the room. As you looked him up and
down, an idea crossed your mind.

As he leaned in for more, you moved out of the way. With a fast movement, you turned a surprised Chat around and pressed him against the wall with a sly smile. “My turn.”

He gazed at you with hooded eyes and you leaned closer, raising one knee in between his legs as you kissed his neck. Chat moaned and threw his head back, hitting the wall hard. Something from the shelf above fell on the ground with a loud thud, making you both jump and tighten your grasps on each other.

“Guys?” Marinette’s muffled voice came from downstairs. “Are you fighting?”

You almost let out a hysterical laugh as you relaxed your hold on Chat before letting go of him. If only she knew what was happening. Feeling slightly guilty, you grabbed the object that fell on the ground, a heavy book titled *Heroes Throughout History*, and put it back in its place.

Looking back at Chat, he was still leaning against the wall, panting hard, and it was a great view. One you’d never get tired of. Disheveled blonde hair, cheeks dusted red where the mask didn’t cover them, bruised lips...

You captured his lips in a lazy kiss one last time. “Alright,” you swallowed, stepping away from him. You had to, or you wouldn’t be able to stop. “I think that’s enough for now.”

“Oh, ma chérie,” he said with half lidded eyes, a smirk on his face. “But I’m not done with you.” He then grabbed you by your waist, pulling you to him again and you gasped.

As you put your hands on his chest for support, the hatch opened and Marinette appeared with another tray in her hands, surveying the room.

“Is everything–” She stopped in her tracks as she saw the both of you.

You got away from Chat, clearing your throat and straightening your clothes. You felt his tail caress your arm as you backed off.

Marinette opened her mouth and then closed it, shaking her head. “I won’t even ask.”

Chat chuckled, walking to her and taking a biscuit from the tray. “We can talk later Marinette.” He then winked at you before climbing the ladder to the trap door on the roof. “See you, princess.” You got away from Chat, clearing your throat and straightening your clothes. You felt his tail caress your arm as you backed off.

Marinette opened her mouth and then closed it, shaking her head. “I won’t even ask.”

Chat chuckled, walking to her and taking a biscuit from the tray. “We can talk later Marinette.” He then winked at you before climbing the ladder to the trap door on the roof. “See you, princess.” You felt his tail caress your arm as you backed off.

She cleared her throat and you hesitated before looking at her. “So… I said I wasn’t going to ask, but…” She trailed off and raised her eyebrows, obviously fighting a smile back. “You and Chat Noir?”

You did your best to give a nonchalant shrug. “He’s pretty great.” You felt your face heat up even more as Mari gave you a sly look. “I mean, he agreed to help me with my projects.”

As the words replayed themselves in your head, you felt like this could describe your situation a few months back, but could it represent what was happening now? This was a question for another day.

“Now I understand your reaction when I said he was here to help me out.” Mari put a hand over her mouth as she gave a quiet laugh. “If that was the kind of help you were imagining…” She whistled, shaking her head, and you sighed. Did she want you to drown in embarrassment? Mari continued, “Well I guess you *did* say he was pretty hot, right?”
You looked at her with wide eyes. “How do you know that?” She grinned and you began to fret. “Did Alya upload the interview to the blog?”

Marinette laughed. “No, she didn’t. She wants to ask for your permission first.”

You let out a relieved sigh, but then furrowed your brows. “Wait, but how did you–”

“Alya told me on the same day. She was ecstatic.” Marinette explained and you nodded. It made sense that Alya would tell her best friend. “But she really wants to upload it. She’s really excited about her… discovery.”

You pursed your lips, and then shrugged. “Ah, whatever. My reputation in that college is already on the ground because of the teacher thing and I won’t be in Paris forever.” You grabbed your phone, even as the last sentence made your chest heavy with sorrow. “I’ll tell her to just upload it,” you muttered, “Before I change my mind.”

“She’ll love you forever.” Mari chuckled before giving you a sympathetic smile. “And the students will soon leave you alone, don’t worry.”

You sent the message to Alya, receiving her excited response full of heart emojis a second later, and then looked up at your friend. “Let’s hope so.”

“Oh, I almost forgot,” she blinked. “Adrien is organizing a end-of-the-year party. Well, not a party, more like a gathering. Nino and Alya will be there.” She smiled, and you had an idea of what would come next. “You should totally come!” There it was.

You scratched the back of your neck. “I don’t know, Mari. He didn’t invite me or anything, so…”

She looked at you with a disappointed face. “I don’t want to intrude on you and your friend’s party.” You had met them only six months ago.

“Oh, nonsense. You’re our friend too.” She waved her hand and you smiled. “I’m sure Adrien just forgot.” She made a pleading expression. “C’mon, it’s something simple. We bring food, trade home-made gifts, and talk. Nothing out of the ordinary.”

You let out a halfhearted sigh, your lips quirking up in a smile. “Alright. I’ll think about it.”

“Great!” She grinned. “Now let’s get back to the project, shall we?” She walked to her chair and sat down. “I was thinking about changing the idea and making something with cat ears and–”

“Marinette!” You punched her lightly in the arm, but she just laughed.

Chapter End Notes

So, the story now has 600 kudos, I'm speechless.

This deserves a fun fact: the reader character was supposed to be gender neutral, but since Chat uses a lot of pet names and in the French language, much like my language, they're mostly gendered, I sadly had to choose

And thank you guys a lot for all the sweet messages you sent me here and on tumblr. They mean a lot!
EDIT: Drawing!

Some sketches
Chapter Notes

And here we are with another chapter! Sorry this one took so long. I'm stuck with a 3D class right now and my teacher is... something. I have to sculpt a freaking Minion guys, help

Hope you like this one! /whistles in a totally not suspicious way

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The next three days, which you spent struggling to make progress with the painting, Chat didn’t pay you a real visit, but he made sure to appear at your window and ask you how you were doing, being really subtle the first time he did it.

You had just refilled a plastic bowl with clean water to dilute paint, and were in the process of carrying it to the living room when a loud voice boomed in your ears.

“Princess!”

In a second the plastic bowl was on the ground on the other side of the room and the water was on your shirt.

You sighed, a hand covering your face. Right when you decided not to use your painting apron. You glared through your wet fingers at Chat, who was on the window parapet, and he put a hand over his mouth, saying a muffled ‘sorry’. If he was indeed sorry or just trying hard not to laugh, you weren’t sure.

Grumbling, you were going to your room to change when you noticed he hadn’t moved. “Aren’t you going to come in?”

He glanced at your shirt, which was now stuck to your skin and then shook his head, clearing his throat. “I’m already leaving. I was just passing by and decided to greet my dearest one.”

“Oh,” you just looked at him with a blank stare for a moment, before your brain processed the information. “Wait, is that supposed to be me?”

A smirk stretched Chat’s lips, and he winked, “Of course.”

You snorted and looked away, fighting the urge to get flustered by his cheeky words. “Alright…”

Chat chuckled and you looked at him, seeing him gazing at you with a warm smile. As your eyes met, he quickly reversed back to his flirty attitude. “Well, it’s good to see you’re doing fine, ma belle.” He made a flourish with his hand, turning around. “Au revoir!”

“What?” Your eyes widened a fraction as you realized he was already leaving, and you gave a hesitant step forward. “Wait, stay for bit.”

He bit his lip, looking back at you. “I can’t.”
You pursed your lips and grabbed at your wet shirt with a dramatic sigh, muttering, “Just when I was going to change…”

Chat let out a low growl as he narrowed his eyes at you. “Don’t,” he glanced at your shirt before meeting your amused eyes again. “Don’t do this, chérie.”

You snickered and he glared at you, which only served to make you smirk. “Go, cat boy, Paris needs you.” You headed for your room and he grumbled something before saying a quick ‘au revoir’ as he left, still grumbling.

During the other three days he didn’t appear out of nowhere yelling like a madman, much to your heart and nerve’s content. But he always left too soon, and you made sure to always tease him, in hopes he’d stay longer. It didn’t work. But it made him flustered, so it was still a win.

----

A car stormed by, hitting a puddle of water the rain had formed, sending it flying onto the sidewalk. You shrieked as you jumped out of the way, and saw the other pedestrians do the same. They cursed at the driver, but you just chuckled, receiving some odd glances from them, and kept strolling down the street.

It wasn’t hard to see why people found it strange to see someone so happy. It was raining hard in Paris. The sky was a light grey and the wind wasn’t going easy on anyone. Apparently it wasn’t a day to feel happy about, but you were. You had taken your painting to college and they had given you another grade. A fair one this time.

So people could stare as much as they wanted, because you were brimming with happiness. It was one last thing to worry about. You were staying for another six months in Paris.

To celebrate, you went to the Dupain-Cheng’s boulangerie and brought some treats. Marinette wasn’t there, but you greeted her parents, who looked ecstatic to finally meet the exchange student she always talked about, and they even gave you some free samples.

Your grin was bigger than ever as you left the bakery, waving at them the best you could while carrying so many bags, a briefcase with your painting inside, and an umbrella.

A strong gush of wind hit you when you opened your umbrella outside the store, making you clutch it harder and protect your things from the heavy drops of water. You smiled, adjusting yourself again. It was going to be a difficult task to get everything intact to your apartment. But you hoped you could do it. You glanced at the bags with food. You had bought some things for Chat as well.

It was the weekend, and you had one day to finish the painting for Monday. You didn’t know if the cat boy was going to appear today, but you had a strange feeling he would.

As you walked on the wet streets trying to find the nearest metro entrance, you thought about Chat’s little visits.

They had been quite endearing and considerate of him, but it seemed like he was checking up on you. That day in Marinette’s room, he had said something about someone not being in their apartment. You had a feeling he was talking about you, but… It still wasn’t clear what he was worried about.

Or maybe you were overthinking once again. Thanks to Chat’s new inspiration method, you were having trouble focusing on anything properly these days.
You shook your head to get rid of the memories when you arrived at the metro stairs. As you were about to go down, a chill went down your spine, the sensation of being watched running through you. You stopped and looked around, receiving a few curses from the people who were trying to going down the steps in a hurry.

Your eyes stopped on a cloaked shadow standing near a lamp post on the other side of the street. The rain made it difficult to see their face and when you tried to get a better look, someone bumped into you, saying a swift ‘excusez moi’. You looked up again, but you knew the shadow would be gone. And as your eyes scanned the place, you saw that you were right.

The metro ride was difficult. With the rain, no one wanted to walk on the streets and every wagon was full, but you weren’t bothered. Nothing was going to bother you on this day. Not the stress of trying to balance yourself on the moving vehicle with many bags in your hands, and not even the odd shadow. Not today. You’d worry about it tomorrow. And with thoughts about what you could do in Paris for another six months, you soon got home, your mind moving away from the strange incident with each passing minute.

The sound of thunder invaded your apartment as you sat down on your sofa with a paper bag full of small tarts, taking a break from painting. The rain had finally stopped for a moment and the weak afternoon light filled the room through the window. You could see the trees fighting against the strong wind outside as you ate. In the middle of a bite, a knock sounded on your window.

You smiled, seeing Chat on the other side, “Oh, you knock now?”

The smile turned into a grin when you realized he was doing this probably because of the incident with the water bowl.

Chat rolled his eyes, opening the window and moving into the room, his hair sticking in various directions because of the strong wind outside. “Hello to you too, chérie.”

Your heart sped up as he entered the room. “Are you staying longer today?”

“Maybe,” Chat looked at your wet canvas as he passed a hand through his hair. “Are you busy?” He gazed at you. “Do you want me to leave?”

You shook your head, putting the paper bag down on the little coffee table and standing up. “It’s okay, I’m almost finished.”

“Good,” he grinned from ear to ear. “Because I wasn’t leaving.”

You chuckled, approaching him with slow steps.

“So…” You dragged out the word, trying to build suspense. “I need to tell you something.”

Chat arched a brow, and looking closer you could see that the scar on his cheek was now nothing more than a faint line on his fair skin.

“What is it, princess?” He looked at you suspiciously and you grinned at his apprehension. “Why are you looking at me like that?”

Your grin got wider and you tried to contain your excitement as you said, “I’m staying for another six months.”
“What?” His eyes widened and he took a tentative step forward. “Really?”

“Yes!” You exclaimed, no longer able to hold in your happiness.

Chat startled you with a surprise hug, but after the initial shock, you laughed, hugging him back with all your force.

“Now I just have to finish the project for Monday and I can finally have my winter holiday!” You sighed with happiness in his arms, his blonde hair tickling your face.

“I’m happy for you.” He released you, his hands travelling down your arms, sending a chill down your spine. You almost tsked at your reaction. It seemed like you’d never get used to his touch.

“Thank you, Chat.” You smiled, gazing at him and seeing a genuine smile on his lips. You were so glad you had more six months to see his bright smile from this close. He tilted his head slightly and you looked away, realizing you were staring for some time.

“Now they only have to resolve the situation with the teacher and I’ll be at peace.” You grabbed a package of macaroons from inside another paper bag and plopped down on the sofa, tapping the spot by your side.

Chat jumped on the sofa, making you move the macarons out of the way in a rush. You glared at him, but he just smirked and laid down, putting his head on your lap.

You munched on one of the sweets as he made himself comfortable. And as you were about to take another bite, Chat opened his mouth, a pleading look on his face.

“I can get a new one for you.” You motioned to the package, but Chat groaned, impatient.

You looked at your half eaten macaron before sighing and putting the rest in his open mouth.

Chat sucked on your fingers as you let the food go and you looked at him with a neutral face before wiping your hand on his chest.

“Hey!” He complained, munching on the food.

You smirked, grabbing another macaroon. This was the first time you could have a real conversation with him since you discovered his friendship with Marinette. You had been thinking about it for the past few days, and many questions had popped into your mind. Now was your chance to try and get some answers from him.

“Say, Chat,” you took a bite from the sweet and put it near his mouth for him to do the same. “That day when you knew about my project for Monday,” he hummed as he chewed. “Was it because of Marinette?”

He looked at his claws, “Yes.”

You hummed, eating the rest of the macaroon. “And those sweets from the balcony. You said they were from a little boulangerie near the Seine.”

He picked at one of his claws, refusing to look at you. “Yes, chérie. Marinette helped me out.”

You smiled down at him, touching his hair with your non-sugar coated hand. “You’re really good friends then.”

He finally looked up at you and shrugged. “She gives great advice.”
You nodded, scratching his scalp slowly and he let out a soft hum. “And how did you two meet?”
Chat kept his mouth shut and you already knew what it meant. “Confidential superhero stuff?”

He shrugged with an apologetic smile and you chuckled, “Alright, I get it.”

“Sorry, ma chérie.” He grabbed your hand and laid a soft kiss on it.

“Don’t sweat it, kitty.” You smiled at him and grabbed the last macaroon, pursing your lips. Why did they have to end so quickly? You’d buy more the next time.

As you lamented the last sweet, you kept running your hand through Chat’s soft blonde hair, noticing his body was relaxing with each second. “So, Mari wants me to go to an end of the year party.”

“Aren’t you going?” Chat glanced up and you offered the sweet to him, paying attention to how he licked his lips after taking a bite.

“I don’t know,” you looked at your window when a quiet sound began, seeing small rain droplets hit the glass. “The person organizing it didn’t invite me.”

Chat tensed up on your lap. “He didn’t?”

You eyed him suspiciously as you ate the rest of the macaroon. “How do you know it’s a he?”

Chat blurted out, “Marinette told me.”

You narrowed your eyes at him, not really convinced, and he looked away, not saying anything.

You rolled your eyes and licked your sticky fingers, trying to clean them. Chat looked up tentatively and watched you.

You felt the corner of your mouth curl up in an amused smile. “What?”

“Nothing, princess,” he shook his head. “Just observing a lost opportunity.”

You snorted, imagining the mess of him cleaning your fingers and feeling your face heat up involuntarily. You resumed playing with his hair to distract yourself from your thoughts, as thunder in the distant cracked through the stormy night.

“I brought more food from Mari’s boulangerie,” you motioned with your head to the paper bags on a little coffee table near the wall while your fingers massaged his scalp around his cat ears without touching them. “Do you want to eat anything else?”

Chat let out a distracted hum and you continued, listing the things you bought, “I got pain au chocolat, fresh strawberry tart…” You kept moving your fingers, noticing the cat boy was getting more and more antsy, chewing on his lip and shaking his feet. “Brioche, croissant aux amandes—”

Chat sat up rapidly and turned to you, who looked back at him with arched brows.

He bit his bottom lip, “Everything seems amazing, my dear, but,” he glanced at your almost finished painting before gazing at you, an unreadable smile on his lips. “I’d rather eat something else.”

You arched one brow before chuckling. “That sounded really dirty.”

He just smirked.
The chair creaked under you as you shifted your weight on the edge of the seat, trying to focus on the painting balanced on the easel in front of you. Your fingers were gripping the brush tightly as you made little strokes with caution. One wrong movement and you could ruin your progress, having to waste precious time fixing mistakes.

“Shit.” Pleasure coursed through your veins and you stopped painting before you made a mess. Maybe this wasn’t a good idea.

You closed your eyes for a moment and bit your lip. Chat’s claws were gripping your thighs, keeping them open as he knelt in front of you.

“How’s the painting going, chérie?” Chat’s muffled voice sent vibrations through you, making you open your eyes with a start.

“Dammit, don’t talk.” You grabbed his blond locks with your free hand and he chuckled, applying pressure with his tongue and making you hiss.

Breathing deeply, you dabbed your brush on the paint and went back to the canvas, thinking about how you had gotten yourself into this.

Oh, right. Chat had mentioned the idea and you had agreed with a smirk, saying you could try it out while you were painting. What you didn’t expect was him wanting to test it right now.

So you were trying your best to concentrate and try to transfer what you were feeling to the piece, but it wasn’t easy. Not when Chat kept looking up at you with those lewd eyes every time a quiet sound left your tightly pressed lips. But you had to finish the painting today, otherwise Marinette was probably going to skin you alive.

You cursed under your breath when he hummed and tightened his grip on your thighs, his claws biting into your skin. Damn this cat boy for wanting to do this today, and damn him for being so good at it.

Chat squeezed your thighs this time, getting your attention and making you look down at him. He was gazing at you through half lidded eyes, wet lips shining under the fluorescent light.

He raised his head, tongue darting out to lick his bottom lip and you had to fight back a moan that wanted to escape your throat.

He smirked and motioned with his chin to the sofa, “Your phone’s ringing, princess.” You looked at the device. Even though the ringtone was rather loud, you hadn’t heard it. Talk about concentration.

A sigh left your lips, as you didn’t want to answer anyone at the moment. But you didn’t have time to dwell on it as Chat got up and grabbed the phone.

The corner of his mouth lifted up in a lopsided grin when he looked at the screen. “It’s Marinette.”

You breathed deeply, knowing you had to take it. She was probably worried about the project. Extending your hand, you got the phone from Chat with a nervous ‘thanks’. He nodded and he sat on the ground again, hands already on your thighs.

“Wait, Chat,” you crossed your legs, making him blink a few times. “Let’s stop for a moment.”

He pouted, getting up and looking away with crossed arms.
You shook your head at his childish tantrum and breathed deeply, composing yourself, before finally answering the call. “Hey, Mari, what’s up?”

“Hey, ça va?” Her calm voice made you more relaxed. At least she wasn’t angry.

“Ça va—” You were almost interrupted when Chat began to climb onto your lap without saying anything. Frowning, you turned your head to the side, moving the phone away from him as he made himself comfortable. Fortunately he sat half on the chair and half on you, not crushing you. You asked and gave him a pointed look, but he ignored you and began to leave lazy kisses up your neck. You bit back a sigh, your eyes fluttering close for a moment.

“So, Mari’s voice made your snap your attention back to the phone. “I just wanted to know how the painting is going. The essay is ready, Julien just sent it to me.”

“That’s… great,” you swallowed. Chat kept kissing your neck, but his hands were now on your waist, rubbing circles with his thumb. “The painting is going…” You sighed as his fingers inched closer to your inner thighs and you put your free hand over his, stopping him. “Pretty good.”

Chat gazed at you with half-lidded, but daring eyes and you looked back with narrowed ones. ‘Wait a minute’ you mouthed to him, but he shrugged.

“Do you need any help?” Marinette’s voice had a tinge of worry in it. “I can drop by if you’re tired or need anything.”

You let go of Chat’s hand and gave him one last warning look before concentrating back on the call. He only smiled, leaving little bites on your neck, his fingers resting on your thighs.

“No, it’s alright,” you shook your head as if Mari would be able to see you. “I’m almost finished.”

Chat chuckled on your ear, whispering, “You sure are.”

You ignored him and swallowed, looking at the painting in front of you. “I’m just adding some details, it’d be ready in no ti—” Chat biting down on your neck hard and his fingers pressing down in between your legs cut off your words, turning them into something else, something you never wanted Marinette to hear.

Your eyes went wide with mortification and your whole body froze. Mari was silent for a moment before yelling, voice filled with static, “Is Chat Noir freaking there with you?!”

Before you could find your voice again and think about what to answer, Chat had snatched the phone from your hand.

Holding the speaker to his mouth, he gazed at you with sly eyes, a look of victory in his face. “She’s busy now, Marinette. Call later. Bye.” You could hear her mess of furious words on the other end before Chat hung up.

He sighed, throwing the phone on the sofa. “She can really be a pain sometimes.”

“Oh my god,” you hid your face on his shoulder, letting out a dry laugh filled with pure dread. “She’s never going to forgive me.”

“She’ll get over it soon,” Chat huffed, touching your hair. “Don’t worry about it.”

You raised your head and glared at him. “You couldn’t wait a minute, could you?”
He furrowed his brows. “You were ignoring me,” he stopped before adding hurriedly. “And you have a painting to finish.”

You gave him an exasperated look, “A minute, Chat.”

“I also don’t have much time, chérie.” He showed you his ring, but quickly hid it, before you could see how many dots it had. “And what’s done is done.” He smirked, not even a single tinge of guilt in his voice.

You shook your head. Unbelievable.

“So...” He squeezed your thighs, making you jump a little. “Where were we?”

You looked at him through slight narrowed eyes. Fine. If he wanted to play that game…

You fought the smile that wanted to quirk up your lips and deadpanned, “You were on your knees.”

The cat boy blinked a few times, and then to your surprise, he purred. “That’s right, mon ange.” He leaned in, until your noses were barely touching. “And you were a pretty moaning mess.”

You let out a low chuckle, gazing at his green eyes that seemed to call for you. “You wish.”

Chat got up from your lap, before kneeling on the ground with a smirk. “We’ll see, chérie.”

----

When you crossed the double doors to the big Art History classroom the next day, you recognized Marinette at the front of the class, in the middle of the other students and their paintings. She was in front of an empty easel, texting on her phone. With a deep breath, you tightened your grip on your briefcase and approached your friend.

You just hoped she wasn’t so angry at you for what happened yesterday with Chat. Because angry… She definitely was.

As you got close, Mari turned to you and narrowed her blue eyes. You gulped and gave her a sheepish smile, but she only crossed her arms.

She looked dead serious as she said, “I’m never calling you again.”

You nodded, biting your lip to prevent yourself from smiling. “Fair enough.”

She huffed. “Let me see the painting.”

You opened the briefcase and put the finished artwork on the easel. She stared at it with a hand on her chin, and you waited, shuffling from feet to feet.

After some seconds, Mari tsked, “Dammit, I can’t even criticize you,” She pursed her lips. “Whatever you pervs were doing, it worked. It looks amazing.”

She was trying her best to look angry and you grinned. At least she wasn’t going to stay mad at you for long.

“It does look good.”

You both turned around and saw Julien looking at the painting with a smile.
“There you are,” Mari furrowed her brows, putting a hand on her hips. “The presentations are about to start.” She motioned with her head to the teacher, who had just arrived. “Why didn’t you answer my messages?”

Julien let out an embarrassed laugh and rubbed his neck, which brought your attention to several hicckeys on his skin. You exchanged a look with Marinette, and by the expression on her face, she had noticed it too.

“Oh,” she gave you a little smirk before turning to Julien. “Did you also have a pawsome night?”

Julien arched a brow, completely lost. “Pawsome?” In the front of the classroom, the teacher told everyone to put their painting on the easels and take a seat, as the presentations would start.

You shook your head and went to sit down, feeling your face heat up. “Just ignore her.”

Mari grinned at you, walking by your side. “Mon dieu, what’s with this catitude?”

You let out a small groan and she snickered. Julien was watching the exchange with a little confused grin, probably relieved that Mari’s passive-aggressive teasing wasn’t aimed at him.

You slumped down in your seat and sighed, a small smile making its way to your lips. Well, at least Marinette wasn’t mad anymore.

The presentation went on smoothly, even if Marinette still dropped some cat innuendos here and there. The Art History teacher made some nice comments about your group’s work, which was a great change from your last presentation. You almost got goose bumps thinking about the latter. After it was over, you put the ‘meow-nificent painting’ – as Mari had named it – back in the briefcase and parted ways with her and Julien, who still had classes for the day.

As you were walking through the front yard, about to leave the university for your well-deserved winter break, the sound of a familiar voice calling your name made you stop. Turning around, you saw Adrien walking towards you in a hurry. For some odd reason, Nino was leaning on a tree a few meters away, just watching. He waved at you from afar and you waved back with amusement while Adrien got closer.

Focusing on the blonde boy, you waited for him to say something.

“Hey,” he smiled, but it had a slight nervousness to it. “How are you?”

You smiled back, “I’m finally on winter break, so I’d say I’m pretty good right now,” you let out a chuckle. “You?”

“Good, good…” Adrien trailed off, nodding. He was obviously distracted and you arched a brow. He looked away, clearing his throat. “Huh… So, I wanted to know if you, if you wanted…”

You glanced around, noticing that the people passing by were now looking at the interaction with interest.

“Just say it already!” Nino’s yell reached your ears. Adrien looked back at him with a scandalized face, but his friend just gestured at him with impatience. You soon got an idea of what this was all about.

“Adrien,” you smiled and he turned to you, cheeks reddening. You weren’t sure if it was of anger or
embarrassment. Maybe both. “This is about the end of the year party, right?” Seeing his eyes widen slightly, you knew that was it. “You don’t have to invite me just because your friends are pressuring you. It’s okay~”

“They’re not pressuring me.” He interrupted you, waving his hands in front of himself. He then let out a long sigh and rubbed his neck. “Look, I just didn’t know how to say that…” He took a deep breath before staring into your eyes with resolve. “That it’d make me really happy if you went.”

You blinked a few times. “Oh.”

His eyes widened at your reaction. “But you don’t have to go if you don’t want to~”

You chuckled and he stopped fidgeting. “I’d love to.” You grabbed your phone. “Just tell me the address.”

He tilted his head. “I can send it to you, but I don’t have your number.”

“Ahn…” You slowly looked up at him from your phone. “I meant it like you could tell me the address and I’d type it down.”

“Oh,” Adrien gave an embarrassed laugh. “Of course.”

“But you can send me the address too if you want.” You added quickly, trying to make the situation less awkward. “What’s your number?”

After a deep breath he told you, and you sent him a message saying it was you.

“There we go.” You wanted to add his contact as ‘flustered + cute model boy’, but it was too long so just ‘cute model boy’ would have to do. “See you in a few days then.”

“Yeah,” he gave you a warm smile, and for a moment the cold wind that touched your skin seemed like nothing more than a breeze. “See you.”

He walked off with his hands in his pockets and you turned away, a smile on your face. Why almost every conversation you had with him had to be embarrassing in some way, you didn’t know. But it was strangely amusing.

As you were walking, you heard Nino wheezing and looked back. He was doubled over from laughing, a fuming Adrien by his side.

“I-I don’t have… y-your number.” Nino mimicked Adrien in between his laughs. “Best pickup line… I’ve ever heard!”

“Oh, shut up.” Adrien began to walk away, leaving his friend behind, but Nino soon caught up and put an arm over the blonde’s shoulders, still laughing.

You grinned at them before going on your way. Watching their banter was priceless. It seemed like they always found a way to make Adrien flustered. You shook your head. You couldn’t wait to see what would happen at the party.

Chapter End Notes
There's actually a painting called 'Coming Rain' I'm dying, innuendos for days

And as always, thanks for being so supportive! I love reading your comments and your reactions (-ω-、)♡

EDIT: Drawing!
The wind was blowing strong, rustling the last fallen leaves through the streets as you made your way to the Agreste mansion. Clutching your bag with food and your friend’s presents in it, you crossed a street and kept walking, looking at the map on your phone from time to time.

But even though Adrien had sent you the address, you couldn’t find his house. A frown creased your forehead as you looked at the houses lined up on the street in front of you. None of them had the number he had sent you. A loud rumble of thunder rolled through the sky, making you flinch. You had to find the place as quick as possible before the storm began, and that wouldn’t take long.

You stopped in front of a building and looked at it. It was a beautiful three-story house, obviously owned by someone quite wealthy. But it didn’t have a number in front of it, so you couldn’t be sure if it was the right one.

Biting your lip, you looked around. The streets were almost empty, despite it being in the center of the town, but this was mostly a residential area so it was understandable.

A passerby walking with his Dalmatian caught your attention. Maybe he lived nearby and knew about the surroundings.

“Excuse me, monsieur!” With quick steps you approached the man, who turned in your direction with a raised brow. You smiled and pointed to the building. “Do you know if this is the Agreste manor?”

He stopped and looked at the house with furrowed brows, before he let out a chuckle. “I’m afraid not.” He pointed to the other side of the street. “It’s that one.”

You turned your head and felt your mouth open slightly in shock. The enormous propriety occupied most of the block, with its big front yard taking half of the space. On the other half was the building, an older looking manor with three floors. You didn’t know a place like this existed in the center of Paris, which consisted mostly of small apartments. How had you not seen it before?

The man was watching you with an amused face when you looked back at him, while his Dalmatian tried to pull on the leash. Your reaction to seeing the house must have been something.

You thanked the monsieur, smiling at his dog and wishing you could pet it, before crossing the street.

Getting closer to the entrance, you had to strain your neck to look up at the top of the gate.
guessed the size of it was fitting to the place. Your eyes travelled a little to the side and you saw the Eiffel Tower just a few blocks away. You gulped, clutching your bag closer to your body. This place was probably worth a fortune. After pressing the button on the intercom, you waited, shuffling from feet to feet.

“Yes?” A deep voice came from the receiver.

“Hel–,” your voice cracked and you cleared your throat, “H-Hello, I’m here for Adrien’s party.” You cursed internally at your stuttering. There was no need to be nervous.

There was only silence as you waited for an answer, feeling more anxious with each passing moment. Maybe you shouldn’t have come. Maybe the party had already started. You were contemplating heading back home when you heard a familiar voice coming from the intercom.

“Hello?”

“Adrien?” You asked, a wave of relief hitting you.

“Oh, it’s you! Wait a second.” The gate made a clicking sound as it began to open.

Well, that was easy, you thought as you made your way to the garden, grateful to be away from the imposing gate.

Perfectly kept grass covered the ground, and you made sure to stay on the path that led to the house. Sculptures were scattered across the yard, and you even recognized some famous ones. They seemed to accompany you as you made your way to the front door.

You were about to knock on the wood when it opened, making you jump a little. But the worry that was building up inside you since you arrived seemed to dissipate when you looked at Adrien’s smile. He seemed so happy to see you.

“I’m so glad you came.” He kissed your cheek and you did the same. You were finally getting the hang of this. “Was it difficult to find the house?” He was wearing a nice blazer and dark jeans that outlined his strong thighs. You slapped yourself mentally. Now wasn’t the time to focus on his physique.

“Just a little,” you shrugged. “But a place like this is hard to miss.” You chuckled, doing your best to hide the fact that you actually did miss it and had to ask for help.

The sky got brighter for a moment as lighting rippled through it, and you hissed at the loud thunder that followed after.

“C’mon, let’s get inside.” Adrien put a hand on your shoulder, urging you to come in. “The others are in the recreation room.”

You bit your lip as he closed the door. He had a recreation room. But as you made your way through the house, it wasn’t really a surprise after all, with all the rooms the place seemed to have. It was probably really easy to get lost in here.

The inside of the house was modern, despite the older aspect of the outside. There weren’t many decorations, and you guessed Adrien’s parents liked a more minimalistic style. But the few decorations that were there looked like they could pay your apartment rent for years.

Adrien led you to a warm room filled with sofas and puffs on the ground. Burning flames in the
fireplace casted shadows on the walls and a quiet beat filled the room. Nino, Alya and Mari turned around on their puffs at the sound of your footsteps on the wooden floor.

“Finally!” Alya smiled, throwing her arms up. “Now I have another person to beat at Uno!”

“What?” You chuckled, looking at where they were sitting and then seeing colored cards sprawled on the floor. “Oh.”

Marinette waved her hand, getting up. “Ignore her. She can get a little competitive over this.”

Adrien snorted, arching one brow. “You’re one to talk, Marinette.”

She stuck out her tongue at him and hugged you. Soon Alya and Nino did the same, she almost crushing you and the dark skinned boy being subtler about it, to your relief.

“So, is someone else coming?” You took the food you brought to share out of your bag and put it with the rest of the food on a coffee table near the empty puffs. “I thought this would be a huge party or something.”

Another flash of lightning crossed the sky and thunder went off in the distance as a quiet sound came from outside. It began to rain. You let out a relieved sigh, glad that you had made it in time to the house.

“Nah, it’s always just us.” Alya dropped herself on one of the puffs. “Our other friends are living in different cities.”

You hummed, siting as well. Something fluttered in your chest when Adrien sat on the puff by your side, but you couldn’t pinpoint the reason.

“Sometimes Marinette brings a date though.” The blonde boy grinned at you, grabbing a package of chips from the coffee table.

Mari groaned. “Adrien…” He shrugged apologetically, opening the package.

“Yeah, who was it last time, Mari?” Alya began to gather the Uno cards. “Anne?”

Nino sat down by her side, putting an arm around his girlfriend’s shoulders. “No, I’m pretty sure it was Luke. Anne was two years ago.”

“Oh, you’re right,” Alya shuffled the cards while looking at Mari. “Didn’t anyone catch your eye this year, Mari?”

“Oh really.” Marinette looked away at the window, crossing her arms. You glanced at Adrien with a worried face, unsure if Mari got upset or not, but he was busy watching the exchange.

Alya softened her tone. “Don’t worry, I’m sure there will be someone next year.”

Mari huffed and turned to her friend. “Just one?” You saw the corners of her mouth lift up slightly in a smirk.

Alya and Nino let out a simultaneous ‘woooo’ and you laughed.

“And Mari keeps breaking hearts!” Alya laughed, and Mari rolled her eyes. “Now, now, guys, let’s continue playing, alright? I want to beat all of you again.” She began to give out the cards.

“I’m gonna win this time.” Nino cracked his neck, getting ready. Alya just laughed mockingly at
him, and they began to bicker. You shook your head with a smile and looked over at Mari in front of you.

She was grinning at the two, but something on her smile didn’t feel right. Adrien muttered something to her, but she just shook her head, as if to say she was fine. You looked away, not wanting to intrude on the quiet conversation.

You played Uno for some time, while eating and drinking the food everyone had brought. The rain made soft sounds on the glass of the big windows, and through them you could see the grey clouds that consumed the late afternoon light that tried to go past them. Laughter and curses filled the room whenever someone hit the other with a special card. It was extraordinary and infuriating at the same time how Alya always got the +4 cards. She was like a magnet for them.

Time passed quickly and you got so immersed in the game that you didn’t notice outside getting darker and darker, or a pair of green eyes that kept casting glances in your direction.

You groaned and sprawled on your puff when Marinette won another time. “How can you be so good at this, Mari?”

She shrugged, a devilish smile on her lips.

You sighed, putting your cards down. “Alright, I need a break.” You got up, adjusting your clothes. “Where’s the bathroom?”

“It’s on the second floor.” Adrien pointed up. “You go up the stairs, turn left and it’s the third door.” You nodded, trying to memorize the directions.

Adrien tilted his head, a questioning look on his face. “Do you want me to come with you?”

You shook your head with a smile. “It’s okay, thanks.”

Alya nudged Nino, a smirk stretching her lips, before turning to the blonde boy. “Wow, Adrien. I didn’t think you were such a perv like this.” Her boyfriend snickered, putting a hand over his mouth. It took you a moment to understand what she was talking about.

It also took Adrien a few seconds, but soon he turned to Alya with a frown. “That’s not what I meant!”

“Right…” Alya wiggled her brows and Marinette put a hand over her face, laughing quietly. “How many girls have you said that to?”

Adrien groaned, passing a hand through his hair. “Oh, mon dieu.” The others laughed, their voices echoing in the room.

You raised your brows at Adrien, who looked completely affronted, and then chuckled, pointing to the door. “I’ll… be right back.”

He nodded with a sigh and you walked to the corridor, the fading laughter accompanying you as you got further away.

Your steps echoed in the big empty hall as you made your way to the bathroom. The only other
sound was coming from the recreation room, but soon all you heard was silence. It seemed like you were the only ones in this place. Where were Adrien’s parents? Or even the person who answered you on the intercom? You didn’t see anyone, and it was making you antsy.

A sudden light invaded the room followed by booming thunder. Your head snapped to the windows, where the lighting had illuminated the statues outside for a moment. You gulped. This house could be a great setting for a horror movie.

With your heart now in your throat, you walked faster.

After climbing the large marble staircase with quick steps, you turned left, like Adrien had told you. Taking a deep breath, you slowed down and looked at the paintings that hung on the walls of the long corridor. Each one waiting as if they wanted to tell a story of their own, but silence was the only thing they gave you.

A mix of loneliness and emptiness was beginning to set on your chest as you walked, and you imagined Adrien growing up in this place. You hoped he had a happy childhood.

Counting the doors, you stopped in front of the third one. Was it the third? Or fourth? You didn’t remember anymore. The door ahead of you had no sign that it was a bathroom, being exactly the same as the others. You opened it and were met with a large room. Peaking your head inside, you only saw some chairs, sofas and a big painting that was covered by a dusty white sheet. The figure of a blonde woman was poking out from under the sheet, but you didn’t recognize it.

This room definitely wasn’t the bathroom. You sighed, closing the door, when a bright light caught your attention and you stopped.

It was coming from a large glass sliding door, and your heart skipped a beat when you saw what was outside.

The Eiffel Tower was looming over in the distance, and there was a small coffee table on the balcony, the rain drops falling on it. It was just like the place Chat had brought you to some time ago.

Your eyes widened slightly. No, it was the place Chat had brought you to. You put a hand over your mouth in shock. So the rich people you were afraid of that day, were actually… Adrien and his family.

Biting your lip, you slowly closed the door. Adrien was never going to know about that. You imagined his face if one day he entered the room and saw a cat hero having a date on his balcony. A small chuckle left your lips as you tried the fourth door, finally finding the toilet.

Soon you began to head back after leaving the really-hard-to-find bathroom. You imagined that a mansion like this would have more of those dispersed in strategic places, but it didn’t seem to be like that.

As you walked down the corridor, a painting of a younger Adrien and his father at the end of the corridor caught your attention. The boy looked so upset, like he was lost in his thoughts and they weren’t good ones. His father on the other hand had an upright posture, looking ahead with a stern face. Adrien’s mother wasn’t present and you wondered why, a bad feeling in your chest. What had happened to her?

Turning around the corner, you bumped into someone and almost screamed.

“Oh, désole!” Adrien grabbed your arms as you stared at him with wide eyes, heart hammering in your chest. You hadn’t heard anyone approaching. “You were gone for some time and I was worried
you got lost.”

You breathed deeply and released the air with a chuckle as he let go of you. “It isn’t a hard thing to do here.” Adrien agreed with a smile, and you remembered you had to tell him what you found out. “Oh yeah, and the bathroom was on the fourth door, not third.”

“Seriously?” He sighed, rubbing his neck. “I can never get it right.” He motioned for you to follow him with his head. “C’mon, the others are waiting for you to begin exchanging presents.” You went after him, glad to have someone by your side as you walked through the place.

As you fell on step by his side, the paintings caught your attention once again, especially the portraits. “Are these your family members?” Adrien looked at you and you pointed to the artworks.

“Some of them, yes.” He stopped on the top of the staircase. “The others are here just so my father can show them to his,” he made air quotes. “Important guests.”

You smiled as you admired them once again, this time more relaxed since you weren’t alone. “They’re beautiful.” Adrien stared at you and if it were Chat, you were sure he’d smirk and say ‘but not as beautiful as you, chérie’.

Adrien opened his mouth, as if to say something, but then closed it before smiling. “I’m glad you think so, Nino thinks they’re terrifying.” You laughed and followed him down the stairs.

You were passing through the hall and silence had fallen between you, but it was a different silence than before. You didn’t feel empty or nervous. No words were being exchanged, but his presence was enough to soothe you. It was weird, since you didn’t know much about Adrien, but it felt like you did.

A small smile lifted the corners of your mouth. You liked the calmness of when it was just the two of you, when he talked with you normally without worrying about the others teasing him. You wondered if they always did that when there was someone different with the group.

In the middle of your thoughts, you heard a sigh followed by an almost imperceptible mutter, “I wish she’d just pin us against that wall right now.”

You stopped in your tracks and snapped your head to Adrien, who had wide eyes and was gripping the pocket of his blazer tightly. “What the hell was that?”

He looked away and resumed walking. “Nothing.”

You followed after him and looked around, but there was no one in the hall besides you two. “Who is pinning you against walls?”

You could swear you heard a whispered, ‘Not you, unfortunately’, before Adrien began to cough, his hand gripping his blazer tighter. “What the hell was that?”

He eyed you with concern as you both entered the recreation room, but didn’t press on the matter. Well, and if he wanted to be pressed against a wall so badly that he was daydreaming about it, he could have just asked.

“Finally!” Alya exclaimed from the couch, seeing you arriving. “You both were gone for ages!”

Nino tilted his head at you both from her side. “Adrien, man, why are you so flushed?”
“I’m not.” Adrien turned his face away, going to get a drink.

Marinette grinned. “Oh, yes, you are.”

“Oh,” Alya pressed her fingertips together, a small smirk on her lips. “So that’s why you guys were taking so long?”

You arched one brow at the brunette. “What?” Alya winked at you, making you even more confused.

“So you did accompany her to the bathroom after all, huh?” Mari wiggled her brows at Adrien, who rolled his eyes, but you could see his face reddening as the others snickered.

Adrien turned to the laughing couple, brows furrowed, “Why don’t you guys tease Marinette this time?”

Alya crossed her legs, grinning. “She doesn’t have a date.”

You blinked, noticing she was looking at you. “Wait,” Adrien passed a hand over his face as you turned to him, perplexed. “I’m your date?”

“You didn’t even tell her, Adrien?” Marinette was grinning from ear to ear.

“They’re just being assholes.” Adrien explained to you and took a big gulp of his drink. “I invited you because you’re our friend.” He glared at the others, gripping his glass so tightly it might have broken.

“Oh, alright then.” You ran your fingers through your hair, a bit flustered. You didn’t want him to be upset about this, so to try and make the situation better, you added, “But I wouldn’t mind if I was.” Everything seemed to stop for a moment as they all stared at you.

“And that was the sweetest thing ever.” Alya pretended to wipe a tear. “Just kiss her already, Adrien.”

“Wait!” You put your hands up, your face beginning to heat up and Alya, Nino and Mari laughed in unison. “I just meant that being his date wouldn’t be a bad thing!”

You looked at Adrien seeking help, but the blonde boy was looking away from you, biting his lip and trying not to smile.

With your face now burning up, you crossed your arms and muttered, “Oh, for fuck’s sake.” Now you knew how Adrien felt with the teasing.

“Alright!” Marinette cleared her throat, a trace of laughter still present in her voice. “Present time!”

“I’m going first!” Alya got up from the couch and grabbed her backpack while everyone sat down on the puffs again. You crossed your arms, avoiding Adrien’s eyes, since you were still a bit embarrassed.

“So,” she came back with four cards the size of her hand, and gave each one of you one. “I tried to design how your superhero identities would be.”

“Why is my animal a bird?” Nino asked after receiving his card, looking at it with confusion.

“Because you wake people up with your music.” She smirked and he gave her a poker face. “You have a beautiful voice, and make people really happy with your songs.” She sat down by his side
and kissed his cheek. “I know you make me happy.”


“Because you’re kind and beautiful, and you like freedom to fly and be yourself.” Alya’s words made Mari let out an embarrassed ‘aw’, as she put a hand on the side of her face. “And you also make anywhere you go a better, more beautiful place.”

“Oh mon dieu, that was so sweet,” Mari got up and hugged her friend, before going back to her place. “You didn’t warn us about this feels trip, Alya.”

Alya grinned, but she wasn’t done yet. She seemed to be really inspired, and the way she described each of her friends was so beautiful and poetic. She definitely had put some thought in it.

“Adrien would be a lion.” She continued.

“Is it because of the hair?” He grinned, ruffling his blonde locks.

“That too.” Alya laughed. “But also because a lion is elegant, admired by others,” Adrien rolled his eyes with a smile. “And will protect the ones he loves at all costs.”


“And last but not least…” Alya smiled at you, and you looked at the card on your hand. There was a design of a bird superhero, with its powers and weapon listed on the side. “Since you came to Paris for a period of time, I chose a migratory bird, that comes and goes with the seasons.” You nodded, and she continued. “And in the past people believed these birds brought the spring, the light, the life… They were a sign that the sun would shine bright again.”

Your mouth opened slightly and you felt a lump in your throat at her words. “That’s–” You swallowed, smiling at the brunette. “That’s so beautiful, Alya.” You hugged her like Mari did, trying to put your feelings into the hug. “Thank you.”

Alya gave you a kind smile as you sat down again. “Alright, now let’s continue with this before we all become an emotional crying mess.” You grinned, putting the card carefully by your side, and looking at your friends. You were so glad to have met them.

“My turn!” Nino exclaimed, grabbing some little packages.

You opened yours and saw a music tape with your name written on it. You thanked Nino, but you didn’t have a tape player. You looked at Mari and Adrien and saw they had the same lost expressions on their faces as they looked at their tapes.

“Thanks Nino, but we… don’t really have a tape player.” Adrien turned to you. “Do you?” You shook your head no. Tape players were really rare to find these days.

“That’s not a problem,” Nino grinned and looked at Alya. She was immersed in her tape, turning it around. Nino cleared his throat. “Alya.”

She looked up and stared at him for a moment, until her eyes widened. “Oh, right!” Nino gave her an expectant grin and she said in a really forced excited voice. “And how can we listen to the tape then, Nino?”
“That’s a great question, Alya!” Nino said, getting her tape with a dramatic gesture and making you snicker at their acting. “If you guys look at the back of the tape, there’s a QR code.” You turned yours around and saw a little black and white square with symbols. “If you scan it with your phone, it’ll take you to a playlist with all the songs.”

There was a collective impressed ‘oooh’.

It was then Mari’s turn. She had made accessories for each one of you. Red fingerless gloves with black dots for Alya to work on her computer without freezing her hands. Earmuffs with space for earphones for Nino, so he could listen to music without bothering with the cold. When it was your turn, she gave you a large black scarf, and whispered to you that it was to hide the ‘marks’. You gaped at her, but she just winked at you. Adrien also got a scarf, and it almost killed you with curiosity to know what she whispered to him.

You were next, and you were a bit unsure as you gave your friends stylized portraits of them as classical figures. You had tried to add some things that you associated with them in the drawings, so Alya had a ladybug and a black cat by her side, Nino was playing a harp, Marinette was working on a loom and Adrien was posing in front of a canvas.

But it turned out that you didn’t have to worry, as they seemed to really like the gifts, even getting up from the puffs to show each other the drawings and commenting about them with grins on their faces. It warmed up your heart to see their reactions.

While the others laughed and took pictures of Alya imitating her pose in the portrait, Adrien was standing a little further away staring at the drawing in his hands. You had to admit his was the one you liked the most. When you drew him, the pencil flew across the paper, as if it already knew the way.

You resisted shuffling from feet to feet. “Did you like it?”

He raised his head and his eyes locked on yours. “I love it.” He smiled and you almost sighed in happiness and relief, ignoring the butterflies in your stomach that were desperately trying to fly away.

Adrien extended his hand to you, and you smiled when you saw he was giving you a neatly wrapped present. “It’s quite fragile, be careful.” Your fingers brushed against his as you got it from him.

You bit your lip as you unwrapped the gift, feeling the others’ gazes on you. Your eyes widened when you saw a little sculpture the size of your palm of a black cat.

You let out a surprised laugh, “A chat noir?”

Adrien grinned, “You said you liked him, right?”

Alya and Nino swooned over the little sculpture, getting closer to have a better look.

“The details are so delicate and perfect, as always.” Alya observed, and the blonde rubbed his neck with a bashful smile. “You did a great job with this one, Adrien.”

“You have a gift, dude.” Nino patted his friend on the back. “Did you already send to charity the other figurines you made?”

Adrien nodded, smiling. “Yeah, the children should have their presents for Christmas now.”

You watched their conversation with interest. You didn’t know Adrien made sculptures for charity,
and you were in awe. That was really nice of him. You looked at your present. If the others were so intricate like yours, then he probably spent a lot of time making them for the children.

Marinette stepped closer to you, biting her lip as she looked at the little black cat in your hands. She was obviously trying hard not to laugh.

She shook her head, grinning. “I can’t believe this.” You gave her a pointed look, silently reminding her not to tell about you and the cat hero. She put her hands up, a chuckle escaping her lips. “I won’t say anything.”

“Everyone knows about her obsession already, Marinette.” Alya waved a hand at her friend.

“It’s not an obsession.” You rolled your eyes, cradling the small cat in your hands.

“What is it then?” Alya arched one brow, and you bit your lip.

“I like him. Just like Adrien said.” You turned to the blonde boy with a smile, realizing you still haven’t thanked him. “The sculpture is perfect, thank you so much.” You pulled him into a hug, careful not to let the little cat fall.

He put his arms around you and squeezed, whispering, “I’m glad you liked it.” A soft fragrance coming from him surrounded you and before you could stop yourself you breathed in hard. With wide eyes, you quickly stepped back before anyone saw what you were doing and teased the heck out of you, and smiled like nothing had happened.

Adrien gave sculptures to the others as well. A Colormancer figurine to Alya, that made you a little embarrassed as the memories flooded your mind, but she was in awe, already planning to put it with the rest of her collection of miraculous heroes and villains. Nino was grinning from ear to ear when he got his favorite DJ, a guy with a cookie helmet that covered his entire face. A rock ‘n roll idol figurine with purple hair and black and golden clothes was Marinette’s gift, and she squealed in delight when she saw it.

“I can’t believe you remembered!” She exclaimed, looking at the sculpture in her hands.

Adrien grinned, “How could I forget Jagged Stone’s years of glory?”

You tilted your head slightly. “Who’s that?” The name was familiar to you, but you couldn’t really recall who he was.

“My favorite rock star, he’s so awesome. He even had a crocodile as a pet.” Marinette smiled, her eyes fond with the memories. “But after it died, he took some time away from music to find himself. I’m still waiting for his comeback.”

“She forgot to mention she did the artwork for one of his albums.” Alya nudged Mari on the side, making the other nudge her too.

You gaped at them, and Mari began to tell you about Jagged Stone. Soon the night had fallen, the cold that came with it following suit. The rain had stopped for a moment, but it didn’t seem like it’d stay that way. So after you and the others cleaned the room, putting everything in its place – even if Adrien insisted you didn’t have to –, it was time to leave.

Nino and Alya said their goodbyes and left together hand in hand, warming each other up from the cold. Marinette was going to the same metro station as you, so you decided to go together.

You waited as she gave Adrien a goodbye hug by the front door, and then it was your turn to thank
the blonde for the day. Your embarrassment from before had vanished as the night went on, but you still felt a little awkward. And by the way he kept tapping his feet, it seemed that he wasn’t in a better state.

“Thank you for inviting me, it was one of the best parties I’ve ever went to.” You smiled, glad that Marinette was already at the gate, waiting for you, and you could talk at ease with the model boy. “And also thanks for the present.” You showed him your hand, where the little sculpture was secured in.

“I’m the one who should thank you. It wouldn’t have been the same without you.” Adrien smiled, and once again you couldn’t help the butterflies in your stomach. It seemed like a recurring thing now. “And sorry about the teasing. They can’t help themselves.”

You chuckled, “It’s okay, I had fun.”

“Have you guys finished flirting yet?” Marinette shouted from the gate. “I’m freezing here!”

You and Adrien sighed in unison, and then chuckled.

“À plus.” He gave you a quick hug, and you hugged him back, trying to get a bit of warmth before you had to go.

“See you,” You said before leaving, going to meet with Mari at the gate.

“Finally.” She sighed, adjusting the scarf around her neck. “I thought you guys were going to kiss there for a moment.”

You rolled your eyes and she snickered, as you both crossed the damp street and began your walk to the metro. Turning around, you casted a last glance at the Agreste manor before turning around the corner.

The movement of turning your head made you notice a smell on your shirt, and sniffing it, you realized it was Adrien’s fragrance. Goddammit, you cursed internally. Now you wouldn’t be able to use this shirt for at least two days without smelling Adrien’s perfume.

“It wasn’t so bad, was it?” Mari smiled as she walked by your side. “Are you glad you decided to come?”

“Yeah, it was pretty great.” You mirrored her smile, bringing your black cat figurine closer to your chest, like it was a small living thing that had to be protected. But even if the day had been enjoyable, there was something that was bothering you since you saw those paintings on the walls.

“Mari, can I ask you something?” She nodded and you continued. “What happened to Adrien’s mom?” It was a sensitive question, and that’s why you didn’t want to ask Adrien himself, but you were stuck in a mix of worry and curiosity.

Mari looked forward for a moment, silence stretching between you, before she said, “She disappeared one day when we were in high school.” Mari looked at back you, a hint of sadness in her eyes. “She never came back.”

“That’s terrible,” you muttered. You felt bad for asking such a personal thing, and now knowing what happened didn’t make it any easier to digest.

“I know,” she nodded, “His father is a great and powerful man, but he has been getting more and more recluse with time.”
You walked in silence for sometime, streetlamps illuminating your path, and the sound of cars passing by filling in for the unspoken words. Your mind was still trying to absorb what Mari told you. It mustn’t have been easy for Adrien, growing up without his mom, not knowing where she was. Your chest felt heavy with sorrow, and you wished that things were better for him now.

“Hey, what are you going to do with the figurine,” Mari broke the silence with a cheerful voice as you got to the metro entrance, and looking at her, you saw she was smirking. “Hide it?”

You knew what she meant. If Chat saw it, he’d tease the hell out of you for who knows how long.

You nodded. “For the sake of my sanity, most likely yes.” Mari snorted and you both laughed, going down the stairs.

A sudden idea crossed your mind as you arrived at the bottom and you turned to Marinette with a grin.

“What?” She arched one brow.

You looked at the little sculpture in your hands. “I need your help to buy a present for someone.”

Chapter End Notes

Fun Fact: This chapter was supposed to be posted last year before Christmas, but was finished only five months later, nice.

I promise I'll answer all your comments and asks when I have a little more time! Thanks for reading and the support, as always (⁎¬①⁎)

P.S.: My goodness this story's about to hit 1K, I'm honestly shocked. Say, would you guys want a special story with Chat's POV of one of the chapters as a celebration of some sort? If yes, comment the chapter you guys want!

EDIT: Guys, I know some of you already voted, but please vote on the link bellow for the POV chapter. The survey ends on the 16th of June!

☆ Click here to go to the survey! ☆

EDIT: Drawing is here :}

☆ Click here to go to the survey! ☆
His feet were tapping on the roof of the church, the sound dispersing in the early morning. The cold wind was stronger here, and his hair was pushed to the side, his locks getting messier than they already were. The city stretched out in front of him, and his eyes looked around, distracted, since his mind was far away, busy with the most essential thoughts.

What was he going to wear? Should he dress casually or something more formal? His eyes snapped to someone running some streets away, but realizing that it was just a kid, he retreated back into his thoughts.

“Chat.”

And the food. He told the cook he didn’t have to make a meal for them, but now he was questioning his decision. Would the snacks be enough?

“Chat Noir!”

The stern voice made him freeze and turn to the girl by his side with wide eyes. Ladybug was looking at him through annoyed eyes, her expression similar to the gargoyles that surrounded them. She glanced to his feet and he realized that in his anxious thoughts he had been disturbing the quiet around them.

“Sorry,” Chat muttered in a quiet voice, not trying to put up a happy façade in front of her. They had already gone past that point in their friendship.

She sighed, adjusting herself better on the steep roof. “You need to calm down.”

“I’m calm,” he said quickly.

“Yeah?” She pursed her lips, arching one brow at him. “Then why were you fidgeting all throughout patrol?”

He shrugged. She most likely knew the answer, so he didn’t have to say anything.

She sighed once more at his reaction, letting a tiny white cloud into the air and reminding him of how cold it was. It was difficult to remember when his suit protected him so well.

The sky was a light gray, with clouds covering every expanse of blue, a promise of rain clear in them.
“Everything is going to be fine, chaton.” Lady put a reassuring hand on his shoulder. “She’ll go to the party, we’ll have a good time, you won’t reveal your secret identity to her… Simple as that.”

Chat chuckled, shaking his head. “I’m not worried about that, Lady.” She kept looking at him, waiting for him to elaborate. He glanced at his finger, where his magic ring was. “She likes me as Chat, that much I can see, but…” He let a sigh finish his sentence, as he couldn’t bring himself to say the rest.

Ladybug seemed to understand the words that didn’t want to come out of his mouth. He didn’t know why he couldn’t say it.

*Probably because you don’t want to hear it,* his thoughts suggested.

“Just be yourself,” Lady squeezed his shoulder in a comforting manner. “You don’t need spandex clothes and some cat ears to impress someone. Although they’re pretty cool.”

She winked and Chat smiled at her. Lady always had a way with words.

A distant scream reached their ears, and they both turned to the source of it. That’s why they were on top of Notre Dame in a cold morning like this. They would be busy in the afternoon with the party, so they had to ensure things were okay in the city first. It was their duty as Paris’ heroes.

Ladybug nodded to him and he nodded back, following her as she ran on top of the roof. Adrenaline filled his veins as they jumped off in the air. He could worry about the party later.

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Adrien stared at the message on the cellphone in his hands, his fingers hovering over the “send” button.

“Adrien, it’s your turn.”

Nino’s voice made him lift his head, seeing his friends waiting for him to play.

“Oh, right.” He picked his cards from the ground with his other hand, choosing a red one and putting it on the pile.

“What are you doing?” Alya tried to peek at his phone.

He brought the device closer to his body. “Nothing.”

She tilted her head. “Are you worried that your date won’t come?”

“She’s not my–” Adrien sighed, knowing it was fruitless to argue with her. “I’m just worried she won’t find the way.”

“You sent her a map, didn’t you?” Marinette asked, putting a plus two card on the pile. Alya groaned, cursing under her breath as she grabbed two cards, and Adrien nodded. Mari smiled, saying in a reassuring voice, “Then there’s no reason to worry.”

The intercom buzzed faintly, making his eyes widen.

“And there we go.” Nino smiled at the girls, putting a card on top of the others.

Adrien got up from his puff with quick movements, but not too quick. He didn’t want to appear too eager.
“I’ll be right back,” he said, putting his phone away as he walked to the door.

“At least play a card first!” Alya cried out, but he was already leaving. “Adrien!”

He heard her sigh, but just smiled as he went to the security room, doing his best not to run.

Lucius, the security guard, was opening the door. He was probably going to call him, since his dad had already left today. “Master Adrien, there’s a girl outside—”

“I’ll talk to her,” the blonde said quickly, grabbing the intercom phone. “Hello?”

“Adrien?” Her voice made something within him stir, his heart beginning to beat faster.

“Oh, it’s you! Wait a second.” He pressed the button to open the gate, wondering with annoyance to why he said that. It was obviously her. He sighed before thanking Lucius and going to the front door.

He took a deep breath, his hand on the handle.

“Is she here?” The little voice made him almost jump out of his skin.

“Plagg, what are you doing?” He whispered harshly. The kwami had appeared out of nowhere. “Go back to the room. I already gave you cheese for the whole day.”

“I decided to stay,” Plagg said before hiding in his blazer pocket.

Adrien pinched the bridge of his nose, sighing.

“Fine,” he finally said, “But stay quiet.” The cat kwami nodded and the blonde boy let out one last deep breath before opening the door. This was going to be a long afternoon.

But at the sight of her, his apprehension was thrown to the wind and was replaced by a warm feeling in his chest. It seemed to grow despite the cold from outside that hit his skin.

“I’m so glad you came,” he greeted her. The proximity made him smile, her familiar smell and warmth soothing the yearning that was growing inside him since the last time they were together.

“Was it difficult to find the house?”

He was hoping she didn’t get lost, but she just shrugged. “Just a little.” He smiled, relieved at her response.

His eyes turned to the sky as lighting crossed it. Plagg shook in his pocket at the thunder that followed after, and they hurried inside before the storm began.

In the recreation room, the others greeted her. Adrien gave them a warning look, telling them with his eyes to behave, but he knew it wouldn’t last long.

“So, is someone else coming?” She put the food she brought on the table. “I thought this would be a huge party or something.”

Adrien’s smile was filled with nostalgia. It had been a while since they had big parties together. They used to do that when they were younger and their friends from school were in the city. His father didn’t like kids running around in his house but he wasn’t always home. So his assistant, Nathalie, sometimes turned a blind eye to the parties.

“Nah, it’s always just us.” Alya dropped herself on one of the puffs, Marinette doing the same. “Our
other friends are living in different cities.”

As Adrien went to his puff, he noticed there was an empty one by his artist’s side. He thanked Mari and Alya silently for this as he sat close to her.

He grabbed a package of chips from the coffee table and smiled, continuing the conversation. “Sometimes Marinette brings a date though.”

He soon realized the comment was a mistake as Mari groaned. “Adrien…”

He tried his best to smile apologetically at her, as his friends tried to remember who had been her date last year. Mari’s face got more and more upset, and guilt grew in his chest. He had forgotten that this subject was a delicate one.

After Alya and Nino had teased and at the same time encouraged Mari, making her face lift up a little, he leaned closer to her. “Are you okay?” She shook her head affirmative, but he knew her better than that. “Do you need sometime alone? You can stay in my room.”

Mari gave him a small, thankful smile. “I’m okay, don’t worry.” She looked over at the windows, watching the rain fall outside. “It’s my choice. I have to live with it.”

Adrien nodded and leaned back, giving her space. It always worried him to see her like this, but he knew she’d be smiling again soon, so he left her with her thoughts for now.

It was no surprise that Adrien didn’t win once in their Uno game marathon. Sitting by his artist’s side proved to be a mistake, as he couldn’t concentrate. She seemed fine, laughing with the others, and a pang of melancholy hit his heart.

He wished he could be closer to her right now and touch her, lay down on her lap like he did some days ago, but she didn’t like him as she liked Chat Noir. He usually tried to ignore thoughts like this, but it was hard to ignore the truth when it was right in front of him.

“Alright, I need a break.” She got up from his side, breaking him from his thoughts. “Where’s the bathroom?”

“It’s on the second floor,” he pointed up, trying to remember the right directions. “You go up the stairs, turn left and it’s the third door.” For a moment he wondered if she’d be able to find it, so he offered. “Do you want me to come with you?”

She shook her head, smiling. “It’s okay, thanks.”

“Wow, Adrien. I didn’t think you were such a perv like this.” Alya said, and he turned to her. What? He then frowned as the meaning dawned on him. “That’s not what I meant!”

The others began to laugh, and he groaned. “Oh, mon dieu.” Well, at least she wasn’t laughing.

He nodded as she said she’d be right back, and turned to his horrible friends, sitting innocently on their puffs.

“Really?” He crossed his arms over his chest, trying to look imposing.

But even with his pose, Alya snickered at him. “You get embarrassed so easily when she’s around. It’s amazing.” She turned to Nino. “Who would think that an internationally recognized supermodel
like Adrien Agreste would get flustered like this?”

Adrien rolled his eyes. It wasn’t like he could control it. He certainly didn’t enjoy that his body reacted so ridiculously when she was around. Sometimes he missed Chat’s carefree personality.

Nino, his best friend, mind you, who should be on his side, nodded at Alya’s words. “You should admit your crush already, Adrien. You still have time.”

Adrien felt his cheeks heat up and noticed this conversation was entering a dangerous path. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.” At his friends’ skeptic looks, he shrugged. “I only get embarrassed because you guys keep saying things like this.”

“She doesn’t get embarrassed,” Mari pointed out, and he gave her a poker face.

That was it.

Adrien got up. “I’m going to see if she found the way.” He didn’t mind their chuckles as he marched out of the room.

He was climbing up the marble staircase when Plagg popped his head out of his pocket. “They’re right, you know. If you confessed, w– you could be with her longer.”

“Wha– Plagg!” Adrien hissed and looked around, but thankfully he was alone in the hall. He let out a sigh. “It’s not that simple, and you, more than anyone, know that.”

It’s not like he hadn’t thought about that many times, of getting closer to her as Adrien. But that was how he and Marinette ended up discovering each other’s identity, so he knew the risk was real.

Plagg sighed, beginning to pout. “Yes, it’d be harder to keep your secret identity, well, secret.” Adrien resumed his walking, but Plagg wasn’t done talking. “And you don’t even know if she would agree to go out with you. Maybe she only likes Chat Noir and–”

“Plagg.” Adrien warned, and the cat kwami closed his mouth tightly, disappearing inside Adrien’s pocket again.

Plagg didn’t help at all with his words. The blonde passed a hand through his hair as he rounded the corner. He really didn’t need more depressing thoughts in his head.

Adrien almost bumped into his dear one, with how immersed he was in his mind.

“Oh, désolé!” He grabbed her arms, trying to balance himself as she stared at him with wide eyes. “You were gone for some time and I was worried you got lost.”

She was frozen in fright for a moment, but then she relaxed and chuckled. “It isn’t a hard thing to do here.”

As she mentioned about the door being the wrong one, he cursed internally. He lived in this house his whole life and still couldn’t remember where everything was. Then what was in the third door? He also couldn’t recall.

They walked back together and she asked about the paintings that hung on the walls. About them Adrien remembered, as his father made him accompany him and his guests on the tours he did around the house.

She smiled. “They’re beautiful.”
Without thinking, he opened his mouth to say ‘not as beautiful as you’, but then he realized that would be weird coming from him. Not from Chat Noir, but from him, Adrien Agreste, yes.

So he settled for, “I’m glad you think so, Nino thinks they’re terrifying.” He heard her laugh, and it was enough. It wasn’t like the flustered face she’d make if he had chosen the other words, but it was enough.

They walked side by side in silence as they crossed the hall, and he got lost in his thoughts again.

If only he could tell her who he was. But Adrien knew the miraculous had their rules, and even if they allowed him to say something, it’d only put her in danger. He sighed internally, letting a defeated smile quirk up his lips. Well, at least he could still have her company.

“I wish she’d just pin us against that wall right now.” The quiet mutter coming from his pocket made him freeze and grab the kwami through the fabric. Plagg.

She had furrowed brows as she stared at him. Oh mon dieu, she had heard it. “What the hell was that?”

He realized he had stopped in the middle of the hall and resumed walking. “Nothing.”

Adrien wished she’d just forget about it, but she asked, “Who is pinning you against walls?”

He screamed internally, wanting to kill Plagg right now. But as if the world was against him, or more specifically, Plagg was against him, the kwami whispered, “Not you unfortunately.”

He coughed, hoping that she wouldn’t hear the words, and squeezed Plagg, warning him one last time. “It’s for a photoshoot.” He gave a nervous chuckle. “I was just thinking out loud.”

She arched one brow at him, but fortunately, the excuse seemed to convince her for now.

Adrien glared at his pocket, before letting go of it. He’d have a long talk with Plagg when the party was over.

“Finally!” Alya exclaimed from the couch as they arrived. “You both were gone for ages!”

Nino tilted his head at him from his girlfriend’s side. “Adrien, man, why are you so flushed?”

Adrien turned his face away, going to get a drink. “I’m not.”

Marinette grinned. “Oh, yes, you are.” Adrien gave her a glare. Not you too, Marinette.

“Oh,” Alya said and Adrien prepared himself, breathing hard. “So that’s why you guys were taking so long?”

The artist seemed confused at Alya’s words, so Mari elaborated, to his complete misery. “So you did accompany her to the bathroom after all, huh?” She wiggled her brows at him, making him roll his eyes.

The others laughed, and he felt the blood rise to his face. “Why don’t you guys tease Marinette this time?”

Alya crossed her legs, grinning. “She doesn’t have a date.”

Oh no. Adrien closed his eyes as he heard his artist gasp. “Wait, I’m your date?”
He passed a hand over his face, trying to pretend this wasn’t happening.

“You didn’t even tell her, Adrien?” Marinette asked, grinning from ear to ear.

“They’re just being assholes.” Adrien explained to his dear by his side, and took a big gulp of his drink. “I invited you because you’re our friend.” He narrowed his eyes at the others, who looked amused at the exchange.

“Oh, alright then.” She looked away, a bit flustered, and Adrien took another sip from his drink. Maybe it’d make him forget about this. “But I wouldn’t mind if I was.”

“Oh,” he heard Plagg say in a tiny voice, but he almost didn’t pay attention to it, his heart skipping a beat at her words.

“Just kiss her already, Adrien.” Alya’s voice made Adrien blink and focus on the conversation. What? Kiss her? Yes, please.

She must have realized what her words sounded like after seeing everyone’s reactions, because she was suddenly really flustered. “Wait! I just meant that being his date wouldn’t be a bad thing!” It was the cutest thing. The others laughed, their voices echoing in the large room.

He bit his lip to stop a smile from forming and had to look away, otherwise he’d be actually tempted to kiss her.

“Alright!” Marinette cleared her throat, but a trace of laughter was still present in her voice. “Present time!”

Alya was first, and her gifts made everyone a bit teary-eyed. Marinette gave him a look when her friend almost got her superhero animal right, and he grinned when she did the same to him. Alya was really perceptive, and they both knew they had to be careful around her, especially because she knew so much about their hero identities.

Nino’s tape was a really cool present, and Adrien carefully put it in his pants pocket, deciding it’d be handy for when he was busy sculpting.

He furrowed his brows when Marinette gave him a scarf, almost like the one she gave to his artist. “I’d say it was for the marks as well, but knowing you, you’ll probably find another use for it, right?”

He arched one brow at her, and she smirked. But then he glanced at the still flustered girl by his side, and the image of the scarf wrapped around her wrists flashed into his mind, and then his wrapped wrists pinned to a bed–

He cleared his throat as he looked back at Mari, thankful that she couldn’t see what was on his mind.

She gave a low chuckle, probably imagining what he had thought about. “Have fun.”

Adrien had to focus on the windows and breath hard for a few moments to recompose himself after that. Damn you, Marinette.

It was finally his dear’s turn to give presents, and she gave him a cautious smile as she handed him a drawing. He had seen her drawings before, especially the ones of him as Chat, but this one was fascinating. She had been able to retain some characteristics of the Chat drawings and mix them with his civilian personality. It was weird how she didn’t realize the faces were the same, but he knew the miraculous magic was involved in that.
“Did you like it?” He heard her voice from his side and raised his head, a smile gracing his lips.

“I love it,” he said in a gentle voice and she smiled back, her eyes showing the happiness she felt. The urge to touch her was getting stronger, so he breathed deeply and gave her his present instead. “It’s quite fragile, be careful.” He tried his best to ignore the light touch of her fingers on his.

Her eyes lit up when she saw the little cat figurine, and she laughed, “A chat noir?”

Adrien grinned. “You said you liked him, right?” It was extremely narcissist on his part, but after seeing her grin, he knew that it was the right present.

Alya and Nino got closer to have a better look at the little sculpture.

“The details are so delicate and perfect, as always.” Alya observed, and he rubbed his neck with a bashful smile. “You did a great job with this one, Adrien.”

“You have a gift, dude.” Nino patted him on the back and Adrien rolled his eyes, but gave him a smile. His friends were always supporting him in his choice to study sculpture, and he was grateful for that. “Did you already send to charity the other figurines you made?”

Adrien nodded, remembering the delighted face of the charity headmaster. “Yeah, the children should have their presents for Christmas now.”

“I can’t believe this.” He heard Marinette say and turned to her. She grinned at the cat sculpture, and shook her head, glancing at him.

“I won’t say anything.” Mari put her hands up after the artist glared at her, and Adrien resisted the urge to chuckle, his dear one probably didn’t want anyone else to know about her and Chat. If only she knew.

And when she admitted that she liked Chat Noir, Adrien couldn’t stop his heart from fluttering. This girl wasn’t making this any easier for him.

“The sculpture is perfect, thank you so much.” she said and pulled him into a hug. His heart almost stopped for a second at her touch.

He put his arms around her and squeezed, whispering, “I’m glad you liked it.” He could stay like this for a long time, but he knew he couldn’t. So with a deep breath, he let go of her.

Adrien gave the others their presents, being filled with warmth at seeing their smiles and laughs. This was what he liked the most about the end of the year parties, that everyone was happy together.

Marinette was ecstatic about her Jagged Stone figurine and began to talk about him, her hands moving around with excitement. He missed the singer as well, and wished he could go to another show of his.

Time passed by too quickly, the stars slowly taking their position in the sky, even if it as a faint light in the middle of the vast amount of clouds. The rain had stopped for a moment, but Adrien knew it was only temporary. December was usually like this in Paris.

Plagg had been quiet for sometime and Adrien grew worried for a moment, but when he looked inside his pocket, he saw the kwami fast asleep and smiled. At least Plagg wasn’t going to embarrass him anymore.
The house got emptier and quieter as Adrien said goodbye to his friends. Alya and Nino were first and left together, their silhouettes merging with the night as they walked.

Mari was next, a grin on her face. “I still can’t believe you gave her that present.”

He rolled his eyes. Of course Marinette was going to say something. “She liked it, that’s what matters.”

“Narcissist,” she laughed, hugging him hard and he couldn’t breathe until she let him go. Marinette wasn’t aware of her force sometimes. “I’m gonna let you two say goodbye alone, but don’t take too long. À plus.”

“À plus,” he let out in a little voice, still trying to fill his lungs with air as Mari went to the gate.

Adrien saw his dear approaching and couldn’t help but tap his feet on the ground with expectation and a bit of sorrow. It was a shame that the party was over.

“Thank you for inviting me, it was one of the best parties I’ve ever went to.” She gave him a smile, showing him the figurine in her hands. “And also thanks for the present.”

“I’m the one who should thank you. It wouldn’t have been the same without you.” Adrien mirrored her smile, trying to show that he really meant it. “And sorry about the teasing. They can’t help themselves.”

She chuckled, and his stomach did a little flip, “It’s okay, I had fun.”

“Have you guys finished flirting yet?” Marinette shouted from the gate, completely ruining the moment. “I’m freezing here!”

They both sighed, and then chuckled. It seemed that his dear artist was getting used to the teasing, and at least he wasn’t alone in this anymore.

“À plus,” Adrien said and hugged her one last time, preparing to go back to the now silent house.

“She said before leaving to meet Marinette at the gate, the sculpture carefully hidden in her hands.

Adrien closed the door when his eyes couldn’t follow them anymore into the humid and cold night. He’d accompany them to the metro, but she was more than safe with Marinette.

He leaned his back on the front door with a sigh, his heart beating hard against his ribcage.

Plagg flew from his hiding spot in his pocket with a yawn. “Well, congratulations. Apparently she likes you as Adrien as well.”

Adrien let out a chuckle, but it had no humor in it. He was so egoistic. Now that the thought of her possibly liking his both selves was embedded in his mind, there was a yearning inside him to get closer to her.

He remembered Marinette’s troubled face as she looked out of the window, and closed his eyes. He’d have to stop thinking about how his dear artist smiled at him this evening before he did something stupid.

And talking about doing something stupid… He opened his eyes with a start and glared at Plagg, who stopped licking his pawn in mid air at the intensity of his gaze. “What?”
‘‘I wish she’d just pin us against that wall right now’?’ Adrien gritted his teeth. ‘‘Does that ring a bell for you?’’

“Oh.” Plagg gulped and muttered, “I bet you were thinking the same thing.”

Adrien gave a step forward. “Plagg…”

“I’ll be in the room. Bye.” The kwami flew off in an instant, leaving a fuming Adrien alone in the hall.

The blonde huffed, deciding to have the serious talk with him later. He then got away from the door, his steps being the only sound echoing in the big hall, like it normally was. A small smile lifted his lips as he turned back to look through the windows, seeing the rain begin to fall again. Besides everything, it had been easily one of the best end of the year parties.

Chapter End Notes

I must say I had a lot of fun writing this chapter, it was nice and kinda challenging trying to develop more Adrien's emotions and thoughts. And I made an announcement on tumblr about more chapters like this one. If you liked the POV chapter and wish to see more, please check out what I wrote!

Also I didn't forget about the next chapter or the drawings for Ch. 13 and 14. I'll get back on track in July, after my finals are over!

Oh, and I always forget to say this, but I uploaded the fanfic to wattpad since some of you asked for that, but I still have to update it. That site is too complicated for me hahahaha
Hello once again guys! This chapter will have two parts, mainly because I'm not really satisfied with the second half and also I won't be able to post from now until August. I'll be traveling to China and won't be able to use any social media /cries

So if you find any errors or the editing is a bit off, it's just because me and Samantha had to work fast to get this chapter out for you guys. I hope you like it!

The restless rain ceased the following week. The sky didn’t regain its blue color, light gray clouds still looming over the city, but at least you didn’t have to use a coat or bring an umbrella everywhere you went.

With Marinette’s help, you found the perfect gift for Chat, and now you only had to wait for him to appear. It was getting quite frustrating that you didn’t have a way to communicate with the cat boy, but you couldn’t imagine him walking around with a cellphone while transformed, so you waited.

The days passed as you tried to make yourself busy by visiting some of Paris’ museums. You went alone since your friends were still busy with their finals, but it was great having some time to yourself, to arrange your thoughts. Thankfully the museums were less crowded than usual because of the season and you could appreciate the paintings and sculptures better without having to fight for a spot with tourist groups. You liked to sit down on one of the wooden benches and spend the day drawing, taking inspiration from the classical artists.

When you weren’t tired and the wind wasn’t so cold, you enjoyed walking by the Seine on your way back home from the museums, taking in the beautiful scenery. It didn’t matter when you passed, be it early afternoon or sunset, there were always couples sitting together along the riverbank. You always averted your eyes, determined to ignore the emptiness in your chest when you passed by them, hearing the sound of their combined laughter.

It irked you that your thoughts always shifted to Chat when you saw affectionate couples. There was no need for you to feel like this. You tried to block the thoughts from entering your mind, but it seemed that the more you tried, the more they came back, and with more force.

You walked by another couple and huffed, putting your cold hands inside your pockets as your thoughts once more betrayed you, deviating to blonde locks and a too familiar smug smile.

Trying to distract yourself, you remembered a painting from Manet that you just saw in a museum. He had used his muse, Victorine, as inspiration, and you wondered if the thought of her haunted him like this. If he had ever tried to prevent his feelings from surfacing or just threw himself into this madness with selfless abandon.

Because this is what it was, madness. Not being able to stop the flashes of what happened the last time you were together, or the ghost of the touch of his hands on your thighs, and missing the comforting heat of his body lying next to yours. Madness.
At the end of the week, when you’d almost given up on giving the present to Chat, Mari sent you a message asking you to meet her at the Seine to celebrate the end of the semester.

Half an hour later, you were sitting by her side, with your feet dangling over the water as the boats filled with tourists took off into the cold late afternoon. Your thoughts insisted on going back to the cat hero, but you made an effort to pay attention to Marinette’s words.

Mari took a bite from one of the pastries she brought from her parents’ boulangerie before sighing. “I can’t believe it’s finally over.”

You nodded with a smile, grabbing a pastry as well. “But don’t you still have your part time job?”

Mari waved a dismissive hand. “I love working there, it doesn’t count.” She looked at the half eaten food in her hand and sighed. “But I wish I could be like Adrien, off to different countries every month. Now he’s in Germany for a photo-shoot.”

“He travels a lot, right?” You heard people laughing and turned around to see a group of teenagers arrive, sitting a few meters away from you, wine bottles in their hands.

Marinette nodded. “Yeah, but he should be coming back soon.” She gave you a pointed look. “He was really happy that you went to the party. Everyone was, actually.”

You looked at your hands with a little smile, remembering the party. “I’m glad.”

Mari looked at you with a worried face. “Chat still hasn’t appeared?”

You snapped your head back at her, before looking to the water flowing in the river in front of you. “No.” You wondered how did she know you were thinking about him. Was it so obvious?

She nudged you, making you look back at her. “Hey, he’s probably busy, don’t worry so much.”

You furrowed your brows, “I’m not–”

“And I’m pretty sure he’ll love the present.” She interrupted you before you could complete the sentence. “You may even get a reward in return.” She wiggled her brows and you laughed at her expression.

“That’s not how it works, Mari.” You shook your head with a chuckle, taking one last bite of the pastry in your hand.

She tilted her head to the side. “What? Why not?”

You shrugged, dusting your hands off the crumbs. “I already told you, he helps me with projects. That’s it.”

Marinette gave you her best neutral face. “He inspires you with his body. Is that it?”

You felt your cheeks begin to heat up, but kept a straight face. “That was his idea.”

“You just thought drawing him was enough. I looked at him and inspiration just… came so easily.” You grabbed a little pebble from the ground and threw it in the river. “But now, it’s like my body aches for him, and I can’t get him out of my head. And
not just because of drawing.”

Marinette gave you a sympathetic smile. “Chat can be quite captivating with his touch.” She shrugged with one shoulder. “That’s what people like to say anyway.”

You bit your lip hard, averting your eyes from her blue ones. You didn’t want to hear about Chat’s activities, about what – or who – he did when he wasn’t with you.

“Why don’t you talk with him?” The genuine concern in Mari’s voice made you look back at her.

You absentmindedly threw another pebble into the river. “About what?”

She furrowed her brows. “Your feelings.”

You let out a loud laugh, the teenagers by your side glancing at you for a moment. You shrugged, ignoring the stares. “There’s nothing to talk about.”

Mari bit inside her cheek and huffed. “You both are so stubborn.”

“What?” You were about to throw another rock into the water when your hand froze in midair. “Did he say anything to you?”

She waved her hand in a nonchalant movement. “It’s not important.”

“But–” You began to protest when she interrupted you with a raised hand.

“If you don’t have any feelings then it shouldn’t matter, right?” She arched an amused brow at you.

“Mari…” You groaned, feeling frustration well up in your chest.

She chuckled, shaking her head as if the situation was hopeless. “Talk to him. It’ll make your heart lighter.”

Mari offered you a tart and you silently accepted it, taking a bite as you watched the historical buildings light up for the night.

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The weekend arrived, bringing with it the coldest day since you arrived in Paris. The meteorologists said it was going to snow tonight, but no one really believed it, since it almost never snowed in the city.

You put on the scarf Mari gave you and got ready to leave your apartment, checking yourself one last time in the body length mirror in your room.

It was Christmas Eve, and since your French friends would be busy with their families, you had accepted an invitation from other foreign students to have dinner with them. That day by the Seine, Mari had invited you to eat with the Dupain-Cheng family, but you didn’t want to disturb their family time and politely declined the offer.

Your eyes darted to the window when something flew past it and you got closer to the glass, looking outside for what seemed to be the tenth time today. All you could see were the dimly lit streets and one person walking by carrying supermarket bags. Sighing, you got away from the window, disappointment swelling in your chest.

Chat still hadn’t appeared and the present you bought for him with Mari’s help was waiting neatly
wrapped inside your wardrobe. Your impatience hadn’t lessened and it was beginning to worry you that wanting to give him the present wasn’t the main reason for your growing apprehension. You missed the cat boy.

You went to the kitchen to grab a plastic bag filled with bottles of soda and wine to take to the dinner. As your eyes darted back to the living room, your body grew hot thinking about what happened there the last time Chat was here. You shook your head, trying to break away from that train of thought. You had to leave or you’d miss the dinner.

You grabbed a piece of paper and wrote a note for Chat, in the unlikely event of him appearing tonight. In the message, you told him about the dinner and wished him a Merry Christmas if he celebrated it. You put the paper by the window, and after making sure you had everything you needed and wouldn’t freeze to death, you left the apartment.

The metro was full of people going back home to celebrate the holiday with their loved ones, their hands full of bags with food and gifts in them. A little boy was carrying a black stuffed cat in his arms, and you smiled as you thought back to Adrien’s present. The delicate sculpture had a special place in your living room.

After walking in the freezing streets for some minutes, you finally arrived at the students’ house, where five of them lived together, and ringed the doorbell.

A short blonde girl from Belgium smiled as she opened the door for you. Her name was Louise, if you remembered it right. She kept smiling as she guided you into the small house, the sound of quiet chatter and music getting louder as you walked through the corridor.

You put the bottles you bought on the table in the living room along with the rest of the food. There were many different packages, since everyone contributed a little for the dinner.

Louise then introduced you to the other ten students and you greeted them, noticing there were some faces that you didn’t recognize from college.

Your eyes landed on a familiar pair of green ones. “Julien?”

The blonde smiled from where he was sitting on the sofa, seeming surprised to see you there. “Oh, ça va!” He got up to greet you with a kiss on your cheek and you did the same.

“What are you doing here? I thought this dinner was for foreigners.” You smiled, sitting down on the sofa by his side.

“I’m here with Luan.” He motioned with his head to the kitchen, where other students were cooking, and you saw the same Brazilian guy from the café laughing as he talked with other people.

You grinned at Julien, a warm feeling in your chest. “I guess it worked then?”

He nodded, a big smile on his face. “Thank you for that advice. It’s been amazing so far.”

You kept talking with Julien until the rest of the dinner was ready and everyone gathered around a large table to eat.

You were appreciating a delicious casserole made by a Mexican girl, when you noticed someone was calling your name.
You searched around the table until your eyes landed on an Asian girl with short black hair smiling at you. “Aren’t you the one who got akumatized at the university?”

You grabbed your glass and took a sip from your drink before nodding with caution. “Yeah.” It felt like that fateful day was so long ago.

The girl grinned at you. “It was super cool.”

You grimaced, remembering the nagging headache and the amnesia you got from being controlled by Hawkmoth. “Being mind controlled isn’t really cool.”

Louise shook her head. “But you had all that power, and even tricked Chat Noir and Ladybug.” She let out a dreamy sigh. “I wish I could be akumatized one day.”

You looked at her in shock. “Why would you want to be controlled by a crazy villain?”

She only shrugged with a smile, making you even more confused. You couldn’t comprehend why people would want that for themselves. Maybe Louise had an idealized view of being akumatized. Little did she know it wasn’t about being powerful.

“And what you said in that interview about Chat Noir was true?”

You felt a pang in your heart at the mention of the cat boy’s name and turned to look at Kostas, the Greek guy who asked the question. “The interview?”

He nods, his light brown eyes never leaving yours. “I saw it on YouTube sometime back.”

“Oh, yeah.” Another student joined in the conversation and you felt everyone looking at you. “You said he was super hot or something, right?”

You took a deep breath and shrugged. “I don’t remember much of it.” You went back to eating, hoping the others would take the hint and drop the subject.

Louise chuckled. “But I wouldn’t blame you. He’s pretty hot.”

Oh god.

You resisted the urge to put a hand over your face as people began to agree with her and comment about Chat’s appearance. You tried to zone out and concentrate on your meal, but you still heard thirsty comments about the cat boy’s thighs, and groaned internally as you cut a piece of the casserole with more force than intended. It seemed like the world was working against you to not let you forget about Chat for even a second.

After everyone finished eating and chatted for a while, you were about to excuse yourself to the warmth and quiet of your own apartment when the others suggested going to a nightclub. You didn’t even know a place like that would be open on Christmas, but they seemed confident. Julien and his boyfriend were going, and being in a nightclub on a day like this in Paris was a completely new thing, so after thinking for a moment, you decided to try the new experience and agreed to go with them.

While walking around the tourist area, the others found an open place. To your surprise it was full of people, mainly students and tourists, who danced to the booming music and sipped from colored drinks. Bright lights flew around the dimly lit place, creating an almost surreal atmosphere for a
Christmas night.

You and the others sat at the corner of the club, and you let your eyes wander around the mass of people flirting and dancing. It was quite difficult to talk with all the noise, but you still had fun chatting with the other students. Some were from Latin America, others from Poland, Spain and even Japan.

Julien sat by your side for a few moments, but he soon disappeared onto the dance floor with Luan, and the seat by your side was replaced by Kostas, who seemed to have taken some interest in you and didn’t leave your side all night. His words had a light flirting tone as he talked to you, but he wasn’t pushy to the point of it being uncomfortable.

After some time you decided to leave, the colorful lights and the non-stopping music were beginning to make your head hurt, and your quota of socialization was fulfilled for today. Luckily for you, Julien and his boyfriend along with a group were leaving as well, and it was your chance to not go alone. Waving goodbye to the other students you were talking to, you got out of the club and were met by the cold of the night. You closed your eyes for a moment and breathed deeply, adjusting the scarf around your neck.

“It’s quite cold tonight, huh?”

You opened your eyes and saw Kostas closing the club door behind him, the blue neon light coming from the club’s sign reflecting on his tanned face. Was he leaving as well?

You smiled at him. “Yes, it is.”

The group began to walk away and you did as well, noticing Kostas was sticking by your side.

“You study Fine Arts, right?” You nodded, putting your hands inside your coat and the guy smiled. “That’s pretty cool. Who’s your favorite artist?”

You chuckled internally at his attempt at starting a conversation and began to make small talk with him as you walked to the nearest metro station.

The group got smaller and smaller as people went off in their own way. Julien waved at you when he and Luan walked to a narrow street, and soon it was only you and Kostas. At least there were a few other people walking on the street, going home for the night or looking for more clubs.

“It must be hard to find inspiration to draw, right?” Kostas’ shoulder bumped into yours and you noticed he was walking really close to you.

You tried to get a bit of distance between you two as you thought back to your new source of inspiration. “Sometimes.”

“I could help you out if you want.” You arched one brow at the guy, and he laughed. “I could be your inspirational muse. What do you say?”

You eyes widened, the question catching you off guard. “I—” A noise coming from above made you hastily look up, but it was only a pigeon flying off in a hurry. You furrowed your brows, slowly looking back at Kostas. “I… already have one.”
“Really?” His shoulders deflated. He looked to the side, thinking, and then turned back to you with a grin. “I could just pose for you then.”

A confused smile made its way to your lips. Why was he so interested in helping you? Was this his way of flirting? But if he was being serious, it was a good proposition. Live models weren’t easy to find.

There was another noise, this time coming from some streets back, and you both looked back before giving each other a look. Kostas didn’t seem worried, but you were now painfully aware of the darkness and quietness of the street. You were now the only ones here, not even cars were passing by.

You quickly resumed the conversation to distract yourself, and tried not to walk too fast. “Have you posed before?”

Kostas shook his head, but the confident grin didn’t leave his lips. “Actually no, but I could learn.” You arched an amused brow at him, and he chuckled, before giving you a sly smile. “And I could pose naked if you want.”

You felt your eyes widen as you tried to think of what to say to that, but you didn’t have to think for long. The hairs on your neck stood up and a second later someone landed behind you both.

With your heart beginning to hammer in your chest, you turned around and saw green eyes staring at you from the shadows.

“Bonjour.”

You let out a soft, relieved breath after recognizing who it was, but your heartbeat didn’t slow down. Instead it seemed to beat faster with anticipation as you looked at the familiar shadowed figure with cat ears.

Finally.

You blinked, surprised by your eagerness. You almost forgot Kostas was by your side for a moment.

You turned to him to see if he recognized the cat hero as well, but the guy seemed to be frozen on the spot, looking at Chat with wide eyes.

“It’s okay, he’s not going to do anything,” you said to him and glanced at the cat boy. Chat’s eyes were far from amicable, and you bit your lip. Well, he didn’t have a reason to do anything. Right?

Kostas squinted his eyes, trying to get a better look at Chat, but you doubted the shadows let him see anything. “Is he that cat hero guy from TV?”

Chat took a step forward, the yellow lamppost light revealing his blonde hair and the smirk on his face. “The one and only.” You couldn’t help but smile at his cocky tone. It seemed too long since you had heard it.

“Chat Noir, right?” Kostas tilted his head to the side. “Is there anything you want?”

“Oh, I do want something.” Chat looked straight at you, his gaze strong, stopping you from looking away. You swallowed dry and he grinned, looking at Kostas now, his expression feigning innocence. “I want to wish you a Merry Christmas, of course.”

You almost scoffed, seeing through his obvious lie. You weren’t sure what was on his mind, because
he could’ve just met you in your apartment if he wanted to talk to you.

“Right…” Kostas looked at Chat with furrowed brows for a moment. “Well, Merry Christmas to you
too. Now if you’ll excuse us—” Kostas tried to pull you away gently by your arm, but you refused to
move, eyes locked on the green ones that watched your every movement. You didn’t want to leave.

Chat smiled at your reaction, his tail swaying slightly from side to side.

Kostas said your name quietly, pulling on your arm again. “The metro will close soon, we need to
go.” You saw Chat’s eyes narrow, the smile gone from his face.

You bit your lip, seeing the cat boy still staring at you with attention. But you couldn’t just ditch
Kostas to stay with him, as the Greek could spread rumors about you and Chat.

You gave the hero an apologetic look and were about to follow Kostas when Chat’s voice cut
through the silence of the cold night.

“Actually, there’s another thing I want.” He grinned as he gazed at you. “I need the beautiful lady’s
help.”

“What?” Kostas furrowed his brows, his hand still on your arm. With a careful movement, you
disentangled yourself from his grasp, making him look at you.

“Maybe he really needs help,” you said in a worried voice, playing Chat’s game. “I saw on a blog
that the Parisian heroes sometimes stop people to ask for their help. It could be important.”

Chat gave a little chuckle and you glared at him, telling him with your eyes to cooperate.

He smirked at Kostas, crossing his arms in a smug manner. “She’s right. You can leave.”

The guy didn’t seem happy at Chat’s words. You gave the cat boy another glare before turning back
to Kostas with what you hoped was a convincing smile.

“You can go ahead to the metro, the main line really is going to close soon.” You motioned with
your head in Chat’s direction. “I’ll stay and help him.”

You kept smiling and took a step closer to the cat boy, but Kostas’ hand grabbing yours stopped you.

“Wait,” he pulled you closer to him and touched your face. “I want to stay with you.” Your eyes
widened at the same time that you heard a deep growl.

Chat was glaring at Kostas, his whole body tense, claws gripping his biceps. “Leave.”

The cat hero took a step forward, and Kostas gave one back, putting you in front of him, his hands
gripping your shoulders with force.

You blinked and glanced back at the guy, who was quite taller than you and stronger as well. And
yet there he was, hiding behind you.

“Kostas.” You said and he snapped his eyes to you, his grip loosening.

He swallowed hard before puffing up his chest and staring back at Chat. “No, I’ll stay, I’m not
letting you—”

But his momentary bravery didn’t last long, as Chat’s hands began to glow a bright green, shutting
him up.
“I’m going to say this one last time.” Chat uncrossed his arms, glowing hands turning into fists and a murderous look taking over his masked face. “Leave.”

The threatening and demanding tone of his voice made goosebumps rise on your arms. You had never seen him like this, and it was making something flutter in your stomach. Something warm that wanted to spread to your whole body.

For a moment you thought Kostas wasn’t going to obey. He seemed to be frozen in shock. But then Chat gave another step forward and the guy let out a shriek as he let go of you and began to run away, tripping on his own feet.

You accompanied him with your eyes as he went in the direction of the metro entrance, his form appearing and disappearing as he passed under the lampposts’ light.

You sighed when you couldn’t see his silhouette anymore. “Was that really necessary?”

Chat huffed, the green light on his hands fading slowly as he walked closer to you. “I could give you a list as to why that was completely necessary, ma belle.”

You passed a hand through your hair. So much for being careful not to spread rumors.

“Oh, well, what a shame.” You adjusted the scarf around your neck, pretending not to notice your heart beating faster at Chat’s growing proximity. “He wanted to pose for me.”

The cat boy stopped in front of you, and you turned to look at him. His eyes still had a glimpse of that anger from a moment ago, the green in them like a furious sea. “I thought I was your only muse.”

“Muses and live models are completely different.” You shrugged, noticing you could feel the heat his skin was emitting, and trying not to think of how inviting it was. “Artists need various references for drawings.”

Chat bit his lip, looking away. “Right.” He motioned with his head for you to follow him. “C’mon, I’ll take you home, chérie. It’s too cold to go back walking.”

You felt a pang in your heart at seeing his upset expression. “Chat, wait.”

He stopped, but didn’t look back at you.

“Hey.” You walked in front of him, but he still refused to look at you, so you put a hand on his chin, carefully turning his masked face in your direction. “You’re my only muse.” His green eyes widened slightly at your words and you smiled, determined to completely expel the aggravation in his gaze. “I can just look at you, that inspiration comes so easily. No one else can do that.”

His eyes searched yours, as if looking for the truth of your words in them.

Chat sighed, touching his forehead to yours, and you felt a wave of nervousness in your stomach. “Promise me you won’t have other muses.” It was hard focusing on his face from this distance, but you could feel the intensity of his gaze. “I know this is a selfish request, ma belle, but now it’s the only thing that’ll put my heart at ease.”

You blinked a few times, his words surprising you. Now that you thought about it, you weren’t sure if you even could have another muse. The cat boy had probably ruined you.

“Only if you promise me that you won’t inspire anyone else.” You remembered that night in
Marinette’s room, how you felt when you thought he was inspiring her. It wasn’t a nice feeling and you preferred not to experience it again. Maybe that’s how Chat felt when he saw you with Kostas.

“I already told you I don’t do this with anyone else, chérie,” Chat chuckled. “But we have a deal.”

You nodded, staring into the now serene sea of his eyes. This seemed to be an agreement to a relationship of some sorts, but you couldn’t put a label on it.

“Are you calmer now?” You let a smile lift your lips as you took a step back to have a better look at his face, glad to see the grin on his face.

Chat chuckled, shaking his head. He grabbed your hand and pulled you into the shadows. You didn’t even realize you were still in the middle of the sidewalk. As you were near the brick wall, he brought your hand to his lips.

“Do you see what you do to me, chérie?” He laid a light kiss on your hand. “When I saw him touching you like that, I just couldn’t–” Chat interrupted himself, closing his lips tightly.

“Yeah, the touching was a bit too much.” You nodded, noticing Chat still hadn’t let go of your hand. His gloved fingers were warm against your cold ones. “I prefer when you do it.”

You saw Chat’s expression change, and almost gasped when you realized what you had just said, eyes widening.

Chat looked perplexed. “You like… When I touch you?”

You swallowed hard, feeling your cheeks heat up. “W-well, I–”

You jumped a little as Chat touched your face just like Kostas had done, but at the same time it was completely different. You shuddered at his careful touch on your skin, which seemed to lighten up as his fingers made contact with it. Chat’s face got closer to yours until your noses were barely touching.

A sound coming from down the street made you snap your attention back to where you were at the moment. The noise was similar to the one when you were walking with Kostas, but now it couldn’t be Chat, as he was right in front of you, staring with narrowed eyes at the end of the street covered in darkness.

The cat boy pulled you closer to him, before whispering in your ear. “Let’s go, chérie.”

He put you on his back with the same ease as you remembered and you grabbed onto him as he climbed onto a building’s roof with fluid movements. You looked down as you let out a white puff of smoke in the air, but the dimly lit streets didn’t reveal anything.

Chapter End Notes

EDIT: Jealous Chat drawing :D
The Calm Before the Storm (Part 2)

Chapter Notes

Yoo I'm back! Thank you all for the nice wishes about the trip. It was amazing!

And I have just one more thing to say before we continue with the story. Since I uploaded the last chapter in a hurry (I did it at the airport tbh), I forgot to mention that the lovely Alex made a playlist for the fic! It's really amazing, so thank you once again!  
\(^{(*^▽^*)}/\)

It's available on Youtube and on Spotify!

Also if anyone want to share something they did about the story, feel free to send me what you did! It'll make me really happy ♡

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Your apartment’s window made a clicking sound as Chat easily opened the lock with his claws while still holding you behind his back.

“Didn’t I tell you to change this lock, chérie?” Chat sighed as he carried you inside.

You huffed, tightening your arms around his neck momentarily as he moved. “The apartment isn’t really mine, I can’t just make changes like that.”

It had taken a few more minutes to get to your flat, since Chat had decided to take a longer path. When you had questioned him about it, he'd said that he was just making sure no one was following you both. With your heart in your throat, you had decided to be quiet for the rest of the trip.

You were relieved to finally be at your place, where the cold wind couldn’t cut deep into your bones any longer.

Chat stopped in the middle of the living room and you carefully put one of your feet on the ground, trying to balance yourself. But your muscles seemed to have frozen during the trip to your flat and you grabbed onto Chat as your feet gave out.

“Whoa,” Chat gripped your thigh, pulling you up before you collapsed. “You okay, princess?”

He looked back at you with a worried face, but all you could focus on were his claws piercing your skin. The indentations on the flesh were deep, almost as if they could rip the fabric of your clothes.

Before your face could get warm, you nodded and proceeded to try and get up again. “I’m fine.”

You kept repeating that to yourself until you were on your feet and at a safe distance from Chat. You shivered at the loss of contact. The cat boy was really warm and all you wanted was to stay close to him.

“So, thank you for bringing me home, but,” you resisted the urge to step closer to his inviting warmth, and instead licked your dry lips. “What were you doing alone on the streets on a cold Christmas night?”
“Well, I–” Chat made a funny face, and you arched a brow at him. A moment later he sneezed. That was… the cutest cat sneeze you’d ever heard.

“Alright, I’ll make us something warm before you catch a cold.” You smiled as you went to the kitchen. Turning on the light you saw various packages on the counter. “Do you have any preference?”

Chat shook his head with a smile. “I’m sure anything you choose will be great, ma belle.”

You pursed your lips at his vague answer and tore up a tea package, putting it inside a mug. Chat seemed to be distracted by something and you wondered what the reason was.

You put water to boil into an electric kettle and waited. There was a comfortable silence between you and Chat. He seemed to be deep in his thoughts, staring out of the window, and you couldn’t bring yourself to interrupt him, deciding to wash some dirty plates you had left on the sink.

It was strange to believe that some minutes ago you had just made an agreement over some sort of relationship, but thanks to that weird noise the sentimental moment was over far too soon. You let the lukewarm tap water run over a glass, reminiscing about Chat asking you not to have another muse. It made your stomach flutter. Marinette had told you to talk with the cat boy, but what could you say? That you missed him? That you just wanted to grab him and kis–

“What are you thinking about?”

Chat’s voice was really close to your right ear and you gasped, almost letting go of the glass in your hands.

You turned around and glared at the cat boy.

He put his hands up, a small guilty smile on his lips. “Desolé, chérie, but you looked troubled about something.” He motioned with his head to the kettle. “And the water is already boiling.”

“Thanks,” you sighed, turning off the faucet and putting the cup down to dry.

Grabbing the electric kettle, you poured the hot water into the mug before giving it to him. “Careful, it’s–” Your eyes widened when you glanced at his hands.

“Hot?” Chat finished your sentence with a chuckle. His bare hands were touching the cup carefully and he sighed in contentment, although it sounded more like a purr. “Thank you, princess.”

You hummed, eyes still glued to his hands, as it was the first time you were seeing them without the black gloves. They were beautiful, and his long fingers were wrapped around the cup in a gentle manner as he put sugar in his tea.

The cat boy finally noticed you staring and arched a brow at you, a smug smile making its way to his lips, like it always did when he realized you were looking at him for too long. “What?”

You blinked a few times, before getting your mug with your own warm drink from the counter. “Your hands are beautiful.”

“Oh,” Chat looked down at them before smiling at you, the cockiness apparent in his voice. “Merci for the lovely compliment, my princess. Yours are quite dashing as well.”

You let out a little chuckle, going to take a sip of your drink, but then something came to your mind. “Actually, they remind me of someone…” You furrowed your brows as you focused.
“Yeah?” Chat let out an uneasy chuckle and moved his hands closer to his body, as if trying to hide them from your scrutinizing eyes.

“Oh, I know!” Your face brightened up when the person’s face appeared in your mind. “My friend Adrien has beautiful hands like yours.”

“Your friend?” Chat froze, mug a few centimeters from his lips.

You bit the inside of your cheek and muttered, “Well, I consider him my friend anyway. Don’t know about him though.” You saw Chat staring at you with a strange expression and cleared your throat, “But yeah, his hands are just like yours—”

You stopped, feeling like an important realization was coming to you.

“Chérie?”

But then it vanished like a puff of smoke blown by the wind. Your eyes defocused as you tried to pursue the thought, but it was getting further and further away like some kind of magic was pulling it from you.

You blinked a few times, eyes focusing on the cat boy in front of you again. “Err, what was I talking about?”

“Tea.” Chat gave you a relieved smile. “You were giving me tips about making wonderful tea like this.”

You furrowed your brows at his expression, “Oh, okay…”

You had a strange feeling it wasn’t really that, but you let it slide, and began a weird explanation about how to use the electric kettle, all the while feeling as if you were missing out on something.

After finishing your drinks, you both sat down on the couch. Chat gave his thighs little taps and you put your legs over his lap.

Feeling warmer, you finally took off your coat and scarf, and put them on the small table in front of the sofa. “So, how did you find me?”

Chat shrugged with one shoulder. “You’re always looking for trouble, so it wasn’t that difficult.”

You rolled you eyes. “Oh, please—”

Before you could continue your protest, Chat laughed. “I was doing a night patrol before I passed by and saw your note, ma chérie.” He put a hand on your leg, and you tensed for a brief moment before relaxing. “I just had to follow your scent after that. It wasn’t exactly difficult.”

You hummed, archiving the information into your brain that he could find you by your smell. You didn’t know that.

“But a night patrol on Christmas? I thought you celebrated it.” You looked out of the window, and just remembering the cold wind had you shivering. Why would Chat be out on a night like this?

“I celebrate it.” Chat shrugged. “But that’s how I spend most of my Christmases.” He finally put his gloves on again, and you almost sighed in disappointment. “I was patrolling the city to ensure people had a good Christmas night. And to make sure the naïve ones didn’t go to wrong places.” He gave
you a pointed look.

You decided to ignore his last comment. “What about your family?”

His eyes widened for a split second before he averted his gaze. Uh-oh. Wrong topic.

“I’m sorry, Chat.” You put a hand on his shoulder. “I shouldn’t have—”

“It’s okay, chérie, don’t worry.” He put a hand over yours and gave it a gentle squeeze. “It’s just… complicated.”

You could understand that.

You nodded. “It’s okay, you don’t have to say anything.”

For a brief moment, he gave you a sad look, like he wanted to tell you something but couldn’t, and then it was replaced by a serious expression.

“Chérie, I’ve been meaning to ask you this, but…” Chat looked away for a moment and you felt apprehension bubble in your chest. He looked back at you and grinned. “You really like black cats, huh?”

“What?”

Chat pointed to the table in the middle of the room, where Adrien’s little cat sculpture was. Goddammit, you had forgotten to hide it like Mari had said.

“I mean, I don’t blame you princess.” Chat smirked, passing a hand over his blonde hair. “If you want to display your adoration for me so openly like this—”

“Oh, stop it.” You pushed him with your feet and he laughed. “Adrien gave it to me.”

“This Adrien boy again.” Chat rolled his eyes playfully, his words having no bite. “Are you that close?”

You pursed your lips for a moment. “I wouldn’t say that, but he’s a nice guy.”

Chat arched an eyebrow, an amused grin on his face. “Do you like him?”

“Why are you so interested?” You tilted your head to the side, narrowing your eyes, a confused smile on your lips. “He’s a famous model, actually, so maybe you’ve seen him. Blonde hair, green eyes…”

You looked at Chat and felt something funny in your chest. The masked hero was staring back at you with wide green eyes, and a lock of blonde hair was tickling his cheek.

He cleared his throat. “I was merely curious, mon ange.” Chat gave your legs a little pat before removing them from his lap and getting up quickly. “But I must go now.” He sounded restless and you didn’t know why.

You straightened up on the sofa. “Really? So soon?” He nodded and you crossed your arms over your chest, muttering, “But you were gone for weeks.”

“Oh?” Chat smirked, putting one arm on the back of the couch, cornering you and leaning in. “Did you miss me that badly?”
You shrugged, feeling like a pouting child, but were unable to stop. “Maybe.”

He let out a low chuckle, touching your face with the back of his hand. “Don’t look so sad, chérie, I know my presence is a gift—”

You gasped.

*The present!*

You pushed Chat to the side as you got up, and he fell on the sofa with a huff. “I have something for you! Don’t go yet!”

He only stared at you with wide eyes as you made your way to your room, almost running the small distance. Searching inside your wardrobe, you finally found the almost forgotten gift and smiled.

Walking back to the living room, you saw Chat was in the exact same place you’d left him.

“What an obedient cat,” you teased, getting closer to him.

He winked, sitting upright. “Only for you, my dear.”

You chuckled and extended the present to him. “You said you celebrate Christmas, right? So, Merry Christmas, Chat.”

“You…” His eyes got wide as he carefully took the package from your hand, his gaze darting from you to the gift. “You didn’t have to.”

You chuckled. “Just open it, cat boy.”

He tore up the paper with his claws and soon he was holding a small Pusheen plush in his hands. He stared at it, and you felt a wave of nervousness hit you. What was he thinking about?

You cleared your throat, catching Chat’s attention. “Mr. Pusheen here might not be an expert in fighting crime like you, but he really knows how to cuddle.” You nodded gravely. “Not that I’ve tried or anything.”

Chat let out a hearty laugh and you felt butterflies erupt in your stomach. “This is the cutest thing someone has ever given me.” He got up from the couch and hugged you. With a relieved grin on your face, you wrapped your arms around his lean torso, hugging him back. “Merci, mon ange.”

You bit your lip and sighed, breathing in deep. “It was nothing.”

Chat leaned back, smiling from ear to ear as he looked at the cat toy. “He’ll fit right in with the others.”

You grinned. Mari had told you he had a collection of cat plushies, but you didn’t believe it. It seemed that it was actually true.

“But…” Chat muttered with knitted brows. “I don’t have a present for you, princess.”

You waved a nonchalant hand at him. “Don’t worry about it.”

You thought about saying that he was your present for a moment, but elevating Chat’s ego to that level wouldn’t be a good idea. You couldn’t give him that much power.

“Well, I thought about helping you out with inspiration,” he said, and your interest picked up at that.
“But you’re on winter break, right?”

Your shoulders deflated. He was right.

You didn’t have projects anymore, and that meant no more Chat helping you with them for at least a month. You couldn’t help the wave of devastation that rushed through you, and it was unsettling to realize how dejected you were feeling about that.

“Let me repay you in another way, then.” Chat stretched his hand to you. “Go out with me on New Year’s Eve.” Your eyes widened a fraction, and Chat grinned. “I’ll take you somewhere special.”

You mirrored his grin, pushing down your disappointment about the projects. “Alright.” You took his hand and he laid a soft kiss on the top of yours.

“It’s a deal.” He smirked before letting go. “I’ll meet you here at 10 pm.”

You nodded and pulled him into a quick hug. “Stay safe,” you muttered as you pulled back.

He smiled at you, present in hand. “You too.”

A moment later he was gone, his vanishing warmth on your skin and faint smell on your clothes the only indications that he had been here.

You quickly closed the window to stop the cold breeze from entering. When the lock clicked you realized that Chat didn’t tell you where you were going to celebrate the New Year together.

That meant that for the next days you’d be stressing over what to wear. Where would Chat take you? Would it be indoors, outdoors? Would you walk a lot? You had no idea, but at least you still had some days to prepare yourself for… You struggled for a moment to give the encounter a name.

Isn’t it a date? A little voice in your head suggested. Your eyes widened a fraction as you thought more about it. Oh boy, it was definitely a date.

----

It was finally New Year’s Eve, and the merciless cold was still present. Night had already fallen, and a lamp-post’s light was the only thing you could see from your bedroom’s window as you were getting ready to go out with Chat.

The cat boy had said he’d meet you in your apartment at 10 pm, so you were waiting for him to show up. Marinette had mentioned once that akumatized villains usually appeared during this time of the year, trying to ruin everybody’s party, so you imagined Chat was probably patrolling the city right now with Ladybug. You saw on the internet that a villain had already appeared, and the Parisian heroes had already taken care of it. Ladybug was confident that it had been the last one of the year.

This past week you had thought a lot about what Mari had said to you at the Seine, and after what had happened that Christmas night with Chat, you’d decided to talk with him. You had no idea what would be the outcome, but you had to know how he felt about this entire muse thing. You had a feeling it’d be a good thing for you both, not only as muse and artist, but to understand what was going on in each other’s heads.

So it was settled. You’d have some time with Chat today and hopefully would be able to talk with him about it. Your feet had been anxiously tapping the ground a concerning amount of times all day, but you wouldn’t back off now.
Your head lifted when you heard the sound of the living room window being opened and a grin stretched your face. Looking at the time on your phone, you saw that Chat arrived quite earlier than what he had told you. It was still half past nine, and you weren’t ready, but at least you only had to put your shoes on.

Barefoot, you went to the living room to greet the cat boy.

“Hey Chat, I’m still not–”

But who you saw wasn’t Chat.

A masked man with dark purple clothes was staring at you, a sick grin on his face. “Sorry to disappoint you, dear, but I’m not your feline lover.”

His voice sent a chill down your spine, making you unable to move for a moment. Who the hell was this man?

“I can see you don’t recognize me.” He smirked, making a movement with his arm, his long cape flowing behind him. “I’m surprised. After all, you ruined my life.”

You could feel your heart beating rapidly against your ribcage. You knew who he was now, as his cold voice was still the same.

You licked your lips, glancing at your bedroom’s door. “It wasn’t me. It was Hawkmoth.”

The crazy teacher glared at you through glassed over eyes filled with fury. He was clearly akumatized.

He then laughed, shaking his head. “You and that cat have been really bad students.” He took a step closer to you. “The worst, actually.”

Before he could take another step you ran to your bedroom and slammed the door shut before locking it, adrenaline filling your veins. You had to get out of here.

As you ran to the window you heard murmurs, and a second later the door was blown open. Without looking back you opened the window with trembling hands.

“Freeze!”

You were perched on the windowsill when your muscles stopped responding.

“Tsk, tsk, tsk,” the man chided, before pulling you to him by your arm.

“Let me go!” You tried to move, but it was no use, your body wasn’t under your control anymore.

The teacher gave you a bored look. “Stop this nonsense, dear, it’s useless.” With a swift movement he put you over his shoulder like you weighed nothing.

In a last attempt you started to scream, hoping anyone would hear your pleas.

The teacher tsked with annoyance. “Quiet.” He made a movement with his hand and words that seemed to be made of smoke appeared around you. You recognized ‘quiet’ and ‘puppet’. “I’ll let you go when the real nightmare starts.”

He laughed loudly as the words touched your skin and disappeared. Your vocal chords stopped working and you were motionless like a doll as he carried you through the same window you had
tried to use as an escape.

The man was way too pleased with himself as he said, “Now let’s teach that cat and that little insect a lesson.”

Chapter End Notes

Whoa is that a cliffhanger I see? Sorry, not sorry ♡
The Nightmare

Chapter Notes

Freaking finally! Am I right? hahah

Oh, well, sorry for the seemingly everlasting suspense guys, but this is an important chapter for the story and I wanted to make sure it was how I wanted it to be :)

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Champ de Mars, the large green field behind the Eiffel Tower, was brimming with people, all excited to celebrate the New Year around the Parisian icon. Even with the merciless cold wind, laughter and chatter could be heard everywhere, but they all transformed into terrified screams the moment the teacher’s feet touched the grass.

Still immobile on his shoulder and with only your eyes being able to move, you saw him create those smoke words that he used on you and throw them at people. The words consisted mostly of pain, and soon the crowd began to disperse, trying to run away in panic. Some succeeded, but others fell to the ground in agony.

The man laughed and you’d have contorted your face in disgust if you could. For a moment you could’ve sworn you were able to move your head a little, but the sensation was gone far too soon when the man began to jump.

With quick hops he was only able to perform because he was akumatized, the villain carried you with ease to the first level of the Eiffel Tower. He expelled the people who were there with his smoke words, making workers and a group of entertainers that would do the countdown for the New Year flee as quick as they could. They left behind their microphones and cameras in their hurry.

The teacher let you down on the glass floor like you were nothing more than a dead weight, and you let out a hiss as your right shoulder hit the hard surface. Your eyes widened at that, ignoring for a moment the pain spreading to your arm. You could almost use your voice again.

“Now be a good student and wait for the other delinquents to arrive.” He laughed and kicked one of the glass protection walls, making glass shards fly everywhere. He didn’t seem to notice your small regain of control. “I’ll start the class.”

He began to whisper and throw the smoke words at people down at the Champ de Mars as he cackled, obviously having fun with the madness and chaos. Each time he used his magic, you could feel an ounce of force come back to your body. It seemed like the teacher didn’t know about the limitations of his power.

You glanced at a glass shard near you. You just needed to regain enough control of your arm to be able to reach it. Gathering your force, you tried to move, but to no avail. Sighing internally, you closed your eyes for a moment feeling completely powerless. Well, you could scratch ‘being kidnapped by a villain’ off your bingo game of ‘being in a sort of relationship with a superhero’.
A sudden noise made you open your eyes again. The glass floor under you let you see what was happening down there: people doubled over the grass in pain, families running away in the midst of chaos, a mother carrying a crying child in her arms. It hurt to look at it. You wanted to help those people escape, but first you had to help yourself escape, and at the moment even breathing was hard.

It was when the teacher gave another loud laugh that you felt it. You could move your arm. Adrenaline rushed through your veins as you prepared to act.

Glancing at the mad man, you made sure he wasn’t paying attention to you and moved your arm until your fingers wrapped around the glass shard. You brought it back to your body as fast as you could and bit your lip when pain shot through you. The spell had weakened, but it was still working.

You were divided between trying to escape and attacking the teacher from the back when the sounds of a commotion reached your ears. People began to cheer and that could only mean one thing. You turned your head to look through the glass and smiled in relief as Ladybug and Chat Noir landed on the green field in front of the akumatized villain.

“Ah, welcome heroes, welcome!” The man took some steps backwards, getting away from the edge of the first floor.

Chat rolled his eyes, already approaching the Eiffel Tower. “Can we finish this already, old man?” He shouted. “I’ll be late for my date.” Your chest tightened painfully at the mention of the date.

“Oh, don’t worry,” the teacher laughed, his voice laced with smugness. He disappeared from your field of vision and you searched around for him. A strong hand then grabbed your arm, pulling you up roughly. The man smirked down at Chat. “Your date is right here.”

You blinked as you looked down at the expanse of green in front of you until your eyes locked with Chat’s. He was staring at you in shock, eyes wide.

“Leave her out of this!” Ladybug screamed, and Chat’s gaze transformed into one of pure fury.

His voice was laced with anger as he demanded, “Let her go right now, or you’re going to regret this.”

“Let them go, bla, bla, bla,” the teacher sighed. “Why do all heroes say that?” He broke another protection glass with his fist and brought you close to the edge, his feet making creaking sounds on the shards of glass on the floor. “Don’t they know what happens?”

Chat and Ladybug began to run in your direction, and the teacher sent some dark bubbles after them with a sinister grin, making the heroes slow down to dodge the weird objects. You could feel the control of your body returning as the man used more of his power. From this close you noticed he was wearing a dark necklace. Something swirled inside the purple jewel. Could this be his akumatized object?

The villain whispered in your ear, “Remember when I said I’d let you go when the real nightmare was about to start?” You shuddered, gripping the glass shard tightly in your hand, not caring about the pain. He chuckled. “I wasn’t lying.”

He let go of your arm, and the moment he did that, you turned around and plunged the shard in the nearest part of his body, which turned out to be his shoulder.

He hissed in pain and you tried to grab his necklace, but he was faster than you and gripped your wrist with so much force you thought he’d break it. You cried out when he twisted your arm behind your back, making the shard fall from your hand and join the other pieces of glass on the ground that
pierced your bare feet.

The man then laughed, his eyes shining with madness. “Feisty, huh?” He twisted your arm more and you hissed.

“Fuck off.” You managed to say, your throat dry. Your arm and feet were hurting like hell, but at least you had injured him somehow.

The teacher glanced down to the green field and what he saw made a large grin stretch his face. “Well, have fun.”

He pushed you off into the open space.

You cried out in surprise as your body plummeted down. The wind in your ears distorted people’s screams and gasps, and terror settled in your stomach. The fall wouldn’t take long as you weren’t so high up. You could see the Eiffel Tower stretching to the sky and you heard what seemed to be Chat’s voice calling your name as you continued to go down. Your only hope was that him or Ladybug would be able to catch you in time.

However, instead of hitting the ground or being caught by someone, your body landed on something soft and as you looked to the side, you saw it was one of the dark bubbles the teacher had thrown. You tried to move, but your body was already sinking into it, as if it was quick sand. Darkness began to surround you like water and you extended out a hand at the light that was rapidly turning into nothing more than a spot in the distance. When the light finally disappeared, so did your conscience.

You heard a loud laugh and your eyes opened with a start. With a quick inhale you looked around, your heart beating erratically in your chest. You were back at your college campus in your country. The sun was shinning bright against your skin and you had to put a hand over your eyes as you looked up at the few clouds that covered the blue sky. *What happened?*

Someone snapped their fingers in front of you, and you realized you were sitting at a large table with other students, but you didn’t recognize any of them.

“Hey, are you even listening?” A boy said and the others laughed, some drinking from plastic cups. You heard one of them mutter ‘artist’ in a mocking tone.

With a bad feeling in your stomach, you ignored them and looked around instead, trying to understand what was happening.

A girl with curly hair touched your arm, making you look back at the group. “You study art, right?”

“Yes.” You tried to get your arm away from her, but her grip tightened to the point of hurting.

“That’s pathetic.” The girl smirked and the others snickered at her words. “Why didn’t you choose a real profession like us?”

You pulled your arm back from her with force, her nails leaving a red trail on your skin. “Who the hell are you again?”

“You’re never gonna make it.” A tall boy with jet-black hair got up and you did the same, the bad feeling in your stomach intensifying. “And you know that.”

They formed a circle around you. More and more people appeared until you didn’t have anywhere to run. You recognized some of your relatives in the middle of the commotion as the temperature dropped in an instant. The people’s bodies transformed into shadows that towered above you and
covered the blue sky. Some were laughing, others shaking their heads with pity.

_This isn’t real_ , you told yourself as your hands began to shake. _Nothing of this is real_. When they were about to attack a strong icy wind blew them away like ashes.

The wind got stronger, making you close your eyes tightly. When you opened them again you were in front of a building. In your hands was a box full of your belongings and there were similar boxes piled up around you. A small dog and a cat were near your legs, playing with each other and you smiled at them. For some reason you knew they were yours.

“Is this all?” A voice by your side said, and you turned to look at a tall woman in heels and a bright purple suit.

_What?_ You wanted to say, but the words that left your mouth were different.

“Please give me one more month.” You heard yourself pleading as you tried to balance the box in your hands. “I know I can do it.”

The woman looked down at you with disdain. “If you had paid the rent this wouldn’t be happening, dear.”

You opened your mouth to protest when a man appeared by her side and grabbed your pets roughly by the neck, putting them into a cage.

“What the hell! Let them go!” You tried to get to them, but the woman stepped in front of you.

“Look at you! You can’t even take care of yourself. How are you going to take care of them?” She spat, and you felt a devastating pain in your heart as you saw the animals stare at you and whimper through the bars of the cage. “Now go before I call the police.”

You felt a lump in your throat as you turned away from them and ran. The buildings around you and the box in your hands disappeared like smoke. You shook your head and couldn’t stop the tears that began to stream down your face. They dried up, but were soon followed by fresh ones. You didn’t know why this was happening, and the pain was slowly consuming you. A faint memory of a teacher and a fight came back to your mind, but it was vanishing with each step you gave.

You ran and ran until there was only emptiness and void. Your bare feet were hurting and bleeding, but you couldn’t remember why. Darkness surrounded you, and the fear of the unknown only spurred you to go further. The air got colder, and you heard a voice calling your name. It echoed in the void, but you couldn’t see anyone.

“Hello?” You called back, your breath a puff of white, but there was no response. In the distance you saw a faint light that seemed to call for you, so you let your legs take you in its direction.

You slowed down when walls began to appear, and you realized you were in an empty alley surrounded by buildings. The place looked strangely familiar, and the light you saw was coming from a window on the tenth floor. The ground was covered in thick mist that covered your feet and made it hard to see what was in front of you. The white fog moved as you walked, but soon went back to its place. When you were near the end of the alley, you saw Chat waiting for you.

“Chérie!” He opened his arms with a smile. “I’m so glad I found you.”

You felt a wave of relief run through you as you wiped your tear streaked face and ran in his direction. Your arms wrapped around his torso in a hug, but his body was cold as ice, completely different from what you remembered.
With furrowed brows, you were about to turn to him when the mist cleared enough for you to see scattered bodies lying on the ground. Panic made your chest tighten and your breath still.

“Chat, we need to leave, now!” You let go of him and pulled on his hand as hard as you could, but he didn’t bulge.

He chuckled, tilting his head. “What are you talking about?”

A shadow appeared behind him and you saw the glint of a blade.

“No!” You cried out, pulling Chat to you with all your force, but it wasn’t enough.

The teacher plunged the blade behind the hero’s back and you screamed. His sinister laughter echoed in the alley as he disappeared into the shadows.

You tried to hold Chat’s body, but as your trembling fingers made contact with his skin, he vanished in strings of dark smoke.

“Chat…” You fell to the cold ground on your knees. The mist and the bodies had disappeared, leaving only dirt.

Why? The tears came back with force, and your body doubled over. You could feel yourself breaking with each second that passed. All the light and hope you had in you was now gone.

A growl came from the other side of the alley and you lifted your head just enough to see menacing green eyes staring at you. Your breath hitched, but you didn’t have the energy to run away anymore. You just closed your eyes as the beast lunged at you. Maybe this would free you from this nightmare.

You waited, but the bite never got you. Slowly, you opened your eyes and saw a curtain of smoke rising to the sky. Behind it was Chat with his baton in a striking position. His green eyes shined in the dark alley, a dangerous look in them.

He looked at you and his expression softened in an instant. “I finally found you, princess.” He offered you a gloved hand, and you gave it a wary glance. What if the villain appeared again? Maybe this was all part of his plan.

“You trust me, right?”

Your eyes snapped to Chat’s, and there was something in them that made you nod without hesitation. You grabbed his hand and his palm was warm, contrary to everything else around you. He pulled you up and you hugged him hard, burying your face in his chest.

“I saw you…” Your eyes threatened to fill up with tears again as you relived the realistic scene in your mind. “You were—”

“Shh, my dear, it wasn’t real.” He stroked your head, and you gulped, trying to get rid of the knot in your throat. “It wasn’t real.”

A hiccup left your mouth and his arms tightened around you for a moment.

“Let’s get out of here.” He planted the end of his baton on the ground and grabbed your waist.

You wrapped your arms around his neck, holding onto him as the baton expanded, getting you higher and higher until you reached the window where the light was coming from. The light got
brighter as you got closer and when you both finally went through the window, you had to close your eyes.

When you opened them again, you realized you were a few meters above the ground. Ahead was an expanse of green filled with dark spots. The Champ de Mars. You felt a pull in your stomach and looked down, seeing a bubble of darkness under you. It was trying to cling to your body and pull you back. Chat held you closer against him and you tightened your hold around his neck.

A popping sound reached your ears when Ladybug poked the bubble with a red needle and the thing exploded, vanishing into thin air.

“Take her away from here!” She screamed at Chat as she dodged smoke words with graceful moves.

“On it!” Chat screamed back and Ladybug nodded, running through the field in the villain’s direction. The cat boy gave you a reassuring smile. “Hold tight, chérie.”

Chat lowered you both to the ground, the baton getting smaller. The minute your feet touched the grass, your face contorted in pain and Chat supported your weight.

“Are you hurt, ma belle? Can you walk?” Chat looked down at your feet and you did the same, seeing they were dirty and bleeding. Chat’s expression darkened, and he glanced back at the field. “Let’s get you out of here first.”

He scooped you off of the ground, carrying you bridal style, and began to run to the right side of the field where the police was escorting civilians to a safe zone, a few meters away from the Eiffel Tower.

You held onto him, your head still foggy because of the intense nightmares. It was like being awakened in the middle of a dream, everything was slowly coming back into focus, but the strange sensation still remained. Even so, you were feeling completely different from before. The sadness and desperation you felt in the bubble were fading away with each moment, making your senses go back to normal again, along with your memory.

You put your head on Chat’s shoulder as the nightmares came back to you. You were glad it wasn’t real. Chat glanced down at you with a worried expression for a moment before dodging four smoke words and continuing on his way.

You heard the teacher scream behind you, his voice strangely loud. “You may have gotten to her in time, Chat Noir, but this is just the beginning!”

You looked back to the man over Chat’s shoulder, and saw that he now had a microphone. You furrowed your brows. He was laughing into it while throwing bubbles everywhere, trying to slow down Ladybug from getting too close.

“When the clock strikes midnight, everyone will live inside the Teachmare’s nightmare bubbles!” He let out another maniacal laugh as he pointed to a huge digital clock that was perched on the middle of the Eiffel Tower. It marked 11:30 pm. “Forever!”

“You may have gotten to her in time, Chat Noir, but this is just the beginning!”

“Teachmare?” Your throat was dry when you spoke, your voice sounding strange to your ears. Chat slowed down when he finally got to the side of the field. You just had to cross the road to get to the police.

Chat scoffed, “It’s that maniac’s name, apparently.” He carefully put you down on the ground, and touched your face. “Go to a safe place, chérie. Can you do that for me?”
You nodded, grimacing a little at the pain in your feet. “Yeah.”

“Good girl.” He kissed your forehead. You gave him a playful roll of your eyes in return and he grinned. “Don’t worry, we’ll handle this.”

You believed him, but you couldn’t help having a bad sensation in your stomach. But you smiled either way as he began to leave, not wanting to worry him with gloomy omens. “I know you can do it.”

Chat’s grin got larger at your words. “Of course I can, my princess! I’m a pro at this!” He cried out as he ran backwards with a laugh. “Didn’t you know?” He winked and hit a bubble that got in his way with his baton, making it fly many meters away.

As soon as he turned around, you saw his expression change. He wasn’t smiling anymore. The nightmare about him came back to you, but you shook your head. Chat and Ladybug would solve this. You knew they would.

A policewoman spotted you and motioned for you to follow her. When you were about to cross the road, a scream sounded behind you.

Two nightmare bubbles were closing in on a mother and her three daughters. You looked back and saw the policewoman was busy helping another person. Without thinking too much, you searched around frantically for anything pointy and saw a broken umbrella in a garbage cart. It’d have to do.

You grabbed it and as you gave the first step in their direction, you felt a wave of pain in your feet, but didn’t stop. You couldn’t let what happened to you happen to them as well.

Remembering what Chat had done with his baton, you hit one bubble with force. It went flying a few meters away. The older daughter, who seemed to be fifteen, saw what you did and grabbed a sturdy stick from the ground. She hit the other bubble, making it change its direction. The nightmare bubbles weren’t destroyed like Ladybug had done, but this would buy some time for the family to escape.

The older girl thanked you in English, but the mother said a lot of words in a language you didn’t understand. By the look on her face, you imagined it was a thank you as well, so you smiled at them and conducted them in the police’s direction.

You were about to follow when a collective gasp made you stop in your tracks and look back. On the first floor of the Eiffel Tower, Lady and Chat were both attacking the Teachmare, who was shielded by a mix of bubbles and smoke words, and was defending himself with a big cane that looked like a ruler. The heroes were trying to get near the villain without getting hit, and were getting close little by little.

“Get him Ladybug!” Someone nearby exclaimed, and you heard other people shouting encouraging words as well.

“Go Chat Noir!” A guy with a strong German accent screamed from behind a bush. Everyone was peaking out of their hiding spot to cheer for the heroes.

Even if you were considerably distant from the Eiffel Tower, you heard Chat laugh thanks to the microphones the teacher had been using for his announcements.

“You heard it, old man? You know you won’t win, right?” Chat shouted as he hit another bubble out of the way. “Me and my lady here have been doing this for years now!”
With Chat’s help, Ladybug found an opening in the fortress of bubbles and made the cane fly away from the teacher’s hands with a swift movement of her yo-yo. “He’s almost down, Chat!”

Ladybug reached to grab his necklace, but the villain gave her a twisted smirk. “Not yet.”

He let out a powerful smoke wave, breaking the remaining glass barriers and sending the heroes flying from the first floor. Apprehension twisted your stomach when they hit the ground. Anyone else would be heavily injured with a fall like that, if not dead. You took a step forward, but a hand on your arm stopped you. It was the older daughter. She pointed to the field and you finally saw it.

Chat was up, shaking his head. His hair was a mess, and his suit dirty, but overall he seemed ok. You let out a relieved breath, and searched for the other hero. Ladybug was still getting up. As she had been closer to the Teachmare, the wave must have hit her stronger.

Then it all happened in the blink of an eye. The teacher made a bigger bubble and sent it Ladybug’s way. She was in no shape to get out of it’s path on time.

“Lady!” Chat ran to her and pushed her out of the way. He tried to hit the bubble, but the thing was already too close.

His baton fell to the ground as the dark goo consumed him.

“No!” You cried out, feeling a terrible sense of déjà vu.

The girl by your side gasped and pulled on your arm. A dark bubble was coming in your direction, but it exploded in a second.

Ladybug appeared behind it, her red and black suit unmistakable. She had a bleeding cut on her forehead.

“What? How–” You looked back at the field with furrowed brows, and there she was, fighting against more bubbles.

“Go help your family,” Ladybug said to the girl and she nodded quickly, eyes wide.

As she left running, Ladybug stared at you, a somber look in her eyes. “I don’t have much time. That’s just an hologram I projected so I could talk with you.” She extended her hand to you and you saw Chat’s baton. “I need you to go find Chat.”

You stared at her, dumbstruck. Was she insane?

“I can’t pop the bubble with him inside of it.” She glanced at the baton. “Take it.”

Your trembling fingers wrapped around the cold metal and the green paw on its base emitted a faint glow. Ladybug gave you an unreadable smile.

“I’m not as strong as you,” you said in a small voice.

Her doppelganger got hit by a smoke word and fell to one knee.

“If I get into that bubble, I’ll be trapped, and it’s game over.” Ladybug ran her palm on her forehead, smearing the blood on her skin. “You’re our only chance.” She motioned to the baton in your hands. “And the baton accepted you.”

You wanted to ask her what she meant, but you knew you didn’t have time for that. You nodded, feeling your heart beating wildly against your ribcage.
As the hologram was defeated and disappeared, Lady put you on her back and ran to the big dark bubble, dodging more bubbles on the way.

“You’re still here?” The teacher screamed in anger when he saw her.

Ladybug put you on the ground and got into a fighting stance.

“Now go!” She began to run to the villain. “Find Chat and bring him back!”

You closed your fist around Chat’s baton and looked at the huge clock on the Eiffel Tower.

It was ten minutes until midnight.

With a deep shaky breath, you stepped into the bubble and let it take you to Chat’s nightmares.

Chapter End Notes

I was thinking about just posting this one, but I thought you guys already had your fair share of cliffhangers, right? So, double update! (°▽°)/
Village on the Hill

Chapter Notes

I just realized I’ve been writing this story for more than a year??? WHAT Σ(Ο_Ο) When did this happen? My goodness.

If you've been reading for this long, thank you, really. A year is such a long time. And if you're new, welcome! ♡

Well, I wouldn't have written 70k words without you guys, so thank you again. And now, without further ado, the resolution of this story arc!

At first there was just darkness. The same void you remembered so well from your own nightmare. You walked with caution, afraid of the horrors that could appear your way.

You wandered without direction until a manor appeared in the horizon on top of a hill, and grass covered the ground. The dark gave way to a sky tainted in orange with dark pink clouds. The new source of light reflected on Chat’s baton in your hand, catching your attention, but when you looked at the weapon, it wasn’t a baton anymore. You were holding a long sword.

Your eyes widened as you looked at it closely, noticing a green jewel on the adorned hilt. And tied around your hips was a scabbard for the sword. You touched it in awe, as you couldn’t be any more confused.

The sound of something collapsing made you look up to the hill. Could it be Chat?

You made haste to the manor as fast as you could with your hurting feet, but as you approached, you realized it wasn’t a simple manor. It was made of stone, and it seemed to be straight from the Middle Ages. Some rocks fell from the side, making a loud noise. You got closer and saw some walls had collapsed, letting you see the damage. Half of the house was burned, the stones black as coal and still emitting the heat from the fire. All the objects inside were destroyed.

Making sure Chat wasn’t in there, you went forward, following a path. At the side of the burned down manor was a cemetery full of vines. The sight of it made a chill go down your spine. You made the mistake of looking at the first tombstone and saw your name carved in the stone. Next to the name was written in rough letters, ‘another victim of the beast’.

Gulping down the bad feeling that wanted to take control of you, you kept going, walking faster. You didn’t know how much time you had until midnight.

Houses began to appear. They were simpler than the manor, and soon you found yourself in a medieval village. The silence was perturbing. There was not a single soul on the streets. As you walked you wondered what did this have to do with Chat’s nightmares. Why were they set in the Middle Ages?

You heard exalted voices close by, and cautiously followed them until you were in a square that seemed to be the center of the village. An angry mob of about thirty people was around a wooden
platform, screaming insults in a strange English accent.

Chat was in the middle, tied to a pole. Around his feet were many logs of wood, piled up like a bonfire. He had his head down, and some of his golden locks were stained with blood. You tightened your hold on the sword. What had they done to him?

You noticed he was wearing medieval clothes, black leather with green details, but the mask and the cat ears were almost the same. His jerkin and pants were torn in many places. Worry began to settle in your heart, but his chest heaved and you breathed in relief. He was still alive.

The people around the platform stopped screaming all at the same time, making it possible for you to distinguish what they were saying, but you didn’t like it any bit.

“Burn the witch!” A woman shouted as she carried a child in her arms.

A man dressed in fine clothes joined his voice with hers. “Murderer!”

“Let’s kill the beast once and for all!” A tall man raised a torch and the crowd cheered. Your eyes widened in horror when you realized what they were about to do.

They were going to burn Chat alive. You had to do something, and quick.

Looking around frantically, you saw a tavern had small beer barrels on display by your right. After sheathing the sword, you ran, ignoring the discomfort in your feet. You grabbed two open barrels full of liquid and went in the tall man’s direction. Gathering your force, you threw one barrel at him, drenching him and the torch, which went out.

The mob gasped in unison as the beer hit the ground with a splash. You didn’t waste time and grabbed the other barrel.

The now wet man was seething with rage as you ran by him, dodging his hands. “You! Stop!”

With your heart beating wildly in your chest, you threw the beer on the wood at Chat’s feet.

“She wetted the wood!” An old lady cried out. “She’s helping the witch. Kill her!”

Without looking back, you began to run away. Soon the mob was running after you on the stone paved streets, with axes and pitchforks. You passed by a pot stand and threw it on the ground, making the metal cookware splatter on the ground with a loud noise. You heard people curse as you hid yourself in an alcove and waited as they passed by running. They didn’t seem so bright, and you were grateful for that.

Making sure that they went the other way, you wobbled a little as you ran back to the square, your feet refusing to cooperate. It seemed that everyone had left to go after you, which was all that you needed to help Chat escape.

You were running in Chat’s direction when the tall man, drenched in beer, stopped in front of you and swung the torch in your direction. You were able to dodge in time, the torch almost hitting your head. For a split second you wondered if you died in this nightmare you’d die in real life, and decided you didn’t want to find out. Without thinking, you unsheathed Chat’s sword and tried to hit the man like you had seen in movies before.

Fortunately, otherwise it wouldn’t have worked, the sword seemed to know what to do. When the blade sliced the man’s skin, he disappeared like smoke. Breathing hard and thanking the sword with all your heart, you climbed the steps to the wooden platform.
Chat raised his head a little as the wood creaked, and you saw blood dripping from a cut on his cheek. His eyes widened when they landed on you. “Chérie?”

You nodded, carefully wiping the blood from his cheek with your thumb. “I’m going to get you out of here.”

You went around Chat and looked at the rope tying his wrists. It was cutting into his skin, making it red. You heard screams and realized the mob was getting close. They were probably furious that you had tricked them.

Gripping the sword carefully, you began to cut the rope. Chat fell to the ground when his arms were freed.

He groaned and you cursed internally as you ran to him. You could hear the people’s feet making noise on the stone streets as they ran. It was like the ground was shaking.

You grabbed Chat’s waist and helped him get up. You bit your lip hard when the extra weight made a sharp pain come from your feet. You were glad for the adrenaline running in your veins, as it made the pain bearable, but you knew that when you relaxed it’d hurt much more.

Chat touched your face as if to make sure you were real. He was shivering. “How? I saw you–”

You smiled at him the best you could. “You’ll understand soon. We need to find the exit. Quick.” You didn’t know how many minutes you still had until midnight, so you had to go back now.

The bubble was probably draining Chat’s force to create the nightmare, but fortunately, the cat boy could walk even if he was weak. You both walked as fast as you could manage to a narrow alley.

You turned right and saw a faint light coming from under a door at the end of the street.

The exit.

When you took the first step, four people, that now looked more like monsters of smoke, blocked the way.

Screams behind you told the others weren’t far away.

“Leave me,” Chat said, and you stared at him with furrowed brows. “Save yourself, princess. We’re not gonna make it like this.” Chat whispered, looking behind you at the angry mob that appeared around the corner. You had never heard Chat so pessimistic before. It was like he had already given up.

You swallowed dry, gripping the hilt of the sword with force. “You trust me, right?”

His eyes widened, like your words had sparked something in him, and his gaze got more focused.

You smiled at him. “Let’s go.” You pulled Chat along with you and he got the idea.

The mob was catching up, but you didn’t stop. You went faster and raised the sword. It emitted a green light and the monsters growled, stepping back.

When you were close enough you brandished the sword, and like it had a mind of its own, it cut through two monsters with ease. You went through the curtain of smoke they left behind while the other two were still stunned by the attack. Chat kicked the door open and light engulfed you both.

You fell on the grass with Chat by your side. Not a second later, the bubble was popped and you
saw Ladybug pass by running.

She grinned at you, her right cheek bruised, before continuing to go after the villain. “I knew you could do it!”

The sword went back to being a baton, the scabbard vanished, and Chat was wearing his black suit. The loud sound of a helicopter flying above you filled the air.

Chat sat up and groaned, looking around frantically. “What the–”

“You were inside one of those bubbles.” You got up quickly, faltering when your feet hurt once again. You thought that at this point you would have gotten used to the pain, but it didn’t seem like it.

You extended your hand to Chat and he took it without hesitation.

“You don’t have much time.” You helped him get up and pointed to the clock. 5 minutes until midnight. It was going to be a close call.

Chat’s eyes widened. “*Merde.*”

“Here.” You gave him his baton before he could leave. “Stop that lunatic.”

Chat nodded, his green eyes now focused. The effects of the nightmare were wearing off.

“I’ll be back for you, *chérie.*” He touched your face briefly, smiling. “Meet me at the Amélie bookstore’s rooftop.” He took off running and you breathed deeply, trying not to let worry take over your mind.

Ladybug saw him approaching and grinned. “You almost missed the fun, chaton!” She gave him a pat on the back. “It’s good to have you back.”

Chat smirked. “Let’s get this over with, my lady.”

Without the bubble to drain his energy, Chat was soon back to normal. As the cat hero had asked, you limped to the bookstore, which thankfully wasn’t too far away, all the while making sure not to get hit by a bubble. People ushered you in, and you saw the fight was being transmitted on a big television.

Now finally being able to fight together, the heroes worked fast. Chat was distracting the teacher, who threw smoke words at him. But the hero was too quick, and with a swift move, he gave place to Ladybug, who used a big red fan to blow the words back to the teacher. The man screamed in pain and was paralyzed.

The bookstore roared with cheers, and you grinned with relief. Finally.

Chat pulled off the Teachmare’s necklace and broke the jem. A guy began to cry by your side.

You almost couldn’t believe all of this happened in 3 minutes. If Chat didn’t have to go after you in that bubble, the fight would have ended much faster. A twinge of guilt made your stomach tighten.

Ladybug threw her arm in the air and you felt some sort of energy hit you, like a sound wave.

Looking at the TV screen, you watched in awe as pink light began to expand through the city. Everything it touched went back to normal. The dark bubbles disappeared and people were smiling again. Even the pain in your feet subsided a little, and you actually felt the cuts getting smaller.
You shook your head, amazed at Ladybug. She could cure people and rebuild things with one move. Her powers were insane. You had heard of it, but seeing it happen in real life was on a whole new level.

Lady and Chat stood in the first level of the Eiffel Tower and the camera focused on them. Chat grabbed the microphone and put it between him and Ladybug. Even if they had won the fight, they weren’t smiling.

“I know you can hear me, Hawkmoth, so here’s a warning.” Chat’s voice reverberated in the field. “And make it a warning to every other villain out there.”

“I’m sure you all remember the pact me and Lady did in the last–” His voice faltered, but he recomposed himself. “The last fight with the first Hawkmoth.”

The first Hawkmoth? You gaped at the screen. This wasn’t a single person? There was more than one?

Ladybug crossed her arms. “We promised we wouldn’t spill any blood like he did.”

“That’s right.” Chat put a hand on her shoulder and nodded, a solemn look on his face. “But you try to hurt the ones important to us again,” his expression turned dark. “And I won’t hesitate to hunt you down and break that deal.”

“Make it two.” Ladybug nodded gravely.

A shiver went down your spine at the tone of Chat’s voice and his words, especially the way he said ‘important ones’. He didn’t seem to be joking. Your head was spinning with so much information. There were so many things to focus on, and you were certain that you were missing out on something.

You could feel the intensity of Chat’s gaze from the screen. “You’ve been warned.”

When the last word echoed in the field, it was followed by an instant uproar of applauses from the crowd in the field. The guy by your side sniffed, drying his tears.

“But now it’s time to celebrate, Paris!” Ladybug smiled, her serious expression being replaced by one of cheerfulness. “The New Year is almost here!”

The crowd screamed with excitement and the screen focused on the digital clock on the Eiffel Tower. The 10 seconds countdown started, and everyone in the bookstore began to go outside. You looked around and saw a staircase. You crossed your fingers, hoping it’d take you to the rooftop.

“Ten!” People shouted in unison.

You made sure there wasn’t anyone left in the store and ran to the back, going for the staircase. You climbed two steps at a time.

“Nine!” You could hear everyone’s voices as you opened the door to the rooftop, breathing hard.

People were gathering together in the streets, and you saw the family you had helped hug each other.

“Eight!”

A melancholic smile made its way to your lips as you slowly got closer to the small fence that circled the rooftop.
Someone landed by your side and you tensed up, thinking it was a villain for a moment, but an ecstatic smile lifted your lips when you saw Chat’s masked face.

He smiled back, and the string lights illuminated his skin as he walked over to you. “I said I would come back to you, didn’t I?”

“Six!”

You grinned as he wrapped his arms around your waist in a loose embrace. “I never doubted it.”

“Five!”

You touched his face, glad to see his injuries were healing, and smiled. “You becoming my muse was the best thing that happened to me this year.”

“Four!”

Chat gave you a smile that warmed up your heart and kissed your forehead. “The same for me, ma belle.”

“Three!”

He cupped your face, his thumbs stroking your skin. “Chérie, you know how they say that New Year’s kisses bring luck and good things, right?”

“Two!”

You did your best to keep a serious face, but failed. “Is that so?”

“That’s what they say.” Chat smirked, eyes full of mischief. “Want to find out if it works with inspiration as well?”

“One!”

You couldn’t help smiling from ear to ear. “Sure.”

You and Chat leaned in at the same time, and your lips touched as people cried out in the whole Paris.

“Happy New Year!”

Fireworks illuminated the sky as you lost yourself in Chat’s embrace, his warmth a comforting remembrance that it was all over.

For now.

Chapter End Notes

The plot thickens (✧ω✧)

Well, this was a wild ride! Waah, I loved writing the latest chapters! I consider this the
ending of the first season of The Muse. I hope the next season will be even better!

EDIT: This time it's a gif :D
Chapter Notes

Hey everyone! After all that adrenaline from the last chapter, we're going to wind down a bit with another Chat's/Adrien's POV!

A big thank you to everyone who bought coffees and made this happen (╥ω╥)♡ thank you so much for the support, I can't begin to explain how much it means to me!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

A light breeze and bright sunrays entered the room through the large windows, illuminating a form laying down face first on the bed. A melancholic muffled sigh sounded in the room.

“Stop,” Plagg said while sitting on his small cushion on the table beside the bed, munching on a piece of cheese.

A shuffle on the bed and another sigh, this time louder.

“All right,” Plagg shook his head, looking at him. “I can’t concentrate on my cheese like this.” He put the half eaten food down. “Just get over it already.”

Adrien sat upright on his bed, his blonde hair sticking up from all sides due to him thrashing around on the mattress. “I can’t, Plagg.”

Flashes from the night at the Seine came back to his mind. The way he just stared stupidly at the artist as she introduced herself. A groan left his mouth. “I was so stupid.” He let himself fall on the bed again, covering his eyes with his arm.

“Oh, please.” Plagg munched on the cheese again. “Just because you embarrassed yourself in front of the very person you wanted to impress?”

Adrien grabbed a pillow and threw it at the kwami, who flied away from it with ease. “You’re not helping!”

Plagg snickered as he flew back to his place. “Relax, boy. I bet she doesn’t even remember it.”

“Yeah, right.” Adrien turned to the other side as he once again remembered what happened.

‘Are you sure about this?’ Marinette had asked after he had made a fool of himself, a serious look on her face.

Adrien sighed, earning a groan from Plagg, who began to fly away with his cheese.

“That’s it. I’m leaving.” He looked back at Adrien before exiting the room. “Do something about it instead of moping around, will you.”

Adrien shook his head, getting up to change his clothes and go to college. If only he knew what to do.
The whole week passed by in an instant, and through it all, Adrien couldn’t stop thinking about the artist.

He meant what he said as Chat in the alley that night. He wanted her to see him as more than someone who posed for her. He wasn’t sure what having a muse meant for the artist, but it felt like she was putting a barrier between them. The reason for that was still a mystery to him, was it professionalism? His flirtatious reputation? But after the day in the terrace, Adrien was sure of something. He wanted more and wished the artist felt the same.

His thoughts as Chat were more confident, as always. He kept thinking of ways to show her what she was missing in trying to distance herself from him, from his touch. However, none of his plans seemed good enough, and the embarrassment from their previous encounters impeded him from visiting her.

The urge to see the artist was stronger every time he transformed, and he told himself he would go, but chickened each time he got too close to her flat.

The week passed by and his dilemma continued, until he saw her in the cafeteria on a weekday.

At lunchtime, she was sitting alone with many papers scattered around the table. Adrien wondered what she was doing, a hand supporting his chin. Was it a project?

“Your food is getting cold.” Nino’s voice made him blink and look at his plate, still full of food. “And you’re going to burn holes into her head with all the staring, man.” Adrien took a sip of his water, ignoring his friend, but Nino continued. “If you want to talk to her, just go.”

The blonde almost choked. “I don’t want—”

Nino gave him a poker face and Adrien sighed, rolling his eyes.

But maybe… He glanced at her table again. Maybe it could be a good idea. He could properly introduce himself to her, and hopefully he wouldn’t mess up this time.

Adrien ate his food as quickly as he could. Nino watched him with raised brows as he ate his own food, but at a less frantic pace. When finished, Adrien looked at the clock. He still had five minutes before he had to go back to the sculpture building.

If he was transformed right now, Adrien wouldn’t be worrying so much. Chat Noir would just go over there and flirt with the artist and make her laugh. But he couldn’t bring himself to be like Chat even after all these years. It kinda infuriated him somehow.

He breathed deeply and got up, Nino giving him an encouraging thumbs up.

The blonde crossed the cafeteria and some people followed him with their eyes. He was used to the stares, but wished they would give him a break. Especially when he was about to potentially embarrass himself again. He didn’t want anyone else to see it.

As he got close to her table, he saw she was trying to do sketches, but by the amount of scribbles she had in her sketchbook, it didn’t seem like it was working. She was so focused that she neither noticed him approaching, or the materials that were scattered on the ground.

He grabbed her fallen eraser and pen before tapping her on the shoulder. The artist began to choke and he immediately felt terrible.
“Oh, désolé! Désolé!” He said as she drank a bit of water.

She looked at him and waved a hand dismissively. “It’s ok.”

He handed her the material that was on the ground and she thanked him with a tired chuckle.

“It was nothing.” He smiled at her, wondering how would he bring the topic of the Seine up. She was staring at him, waiting, so he began to talk.

“Hey,” he scratched his neck. “I’m sorry for that day near the river. I had a long day and I also shouldn’t have drunk so much.” He let out a little embarrassed chuckle.

She smiled. “It happens.”

He smiled back, his face lighting up. “I want to try that introduction again, if you don’t mind.” He extended his hand. “I’m Adrien Agreste, sculpture student.”

She stared at his hand for a moment, making him panic for a bit, before grabbing it. Adrien felt a shiver go through his body. She then yawned and let go of his hand. He noticed that she had dark circles under her eyes.

“Are you ok?” He asked, worry making his stomach turn.

“I’m fine,” she smiled at him, fighting back another yawn. “Just having a bit of trouble with inspiration for a project. Thanks for asking though.”

His eyes widened as he cursed at himself. Goddammit. She had been having problems with inspiration and the one who could’ve helped her had been avoiding her for a whole week like a coward.

Adrien was going to offer to help when his classmate called his name. Class was about to begin.

He gave her his best encouraging smile before leaving. “I’m sure you can do it.”

He went to the sculpture class, guilt making his chest feel heavy. He was so egoistic, only thinking about himself while his artist was struggling without his help. Shaking his head lightly, he decided he was going to make it up to her.

When his class ended in the afternoon, he was free for the day. He bought what he needed for his plan, and then he just needed one more thing: to convince Plagg.

“C’mon Plagg, she needs us,” Adrien pleaded as the kwami kept looking at his computer screen, watching a video on Youtube about cat adoration in the Middle Ages.

“You’re just feeling guilty that you didn’t help her when she needed it,” Plagg said without sparing him a look.

Ouch. Adrien almost winced. Plagg really didn’t sugar coat his words, but he was used to that by now.

“She still needs the help, Plagg. C’mon.” Adrien poked the kwami, who glared at him. “I’ll give you a lot of cheese later.”

“Fine,” Plagg huffed, and Adrien was actually surprised he agreed so fast.
To get the kwami out of the house for other purposes besides patrolling and defeating villains had always been a difficult task. And every time it involved some sort of cheese bargain. That didn’t seem to have changed though.

“Transform me!” Adrien cried out, eagerness clenching his chest. He hoped his plan worked out.

Plagg was sucked into his ring and his power flowed into Adrien’s body. He closed his eyes as the transformation took place, and different feelings and thoughts occupied his mind. When he opened them again, a smirk curled his lips upward. He knew the plan would be a success.

The artist wasn’t in her apartment when he arrived, trying his best not to be seen by any passerby. He opened the window lock with ease, and furrowed his brows as he got in. This lock and nothing were almost the same thing, this couldn’t be safe.

Making a mental note to tell the artist about the lock, he decorated the flat with candles, all the while smiling to himself, wondering about what her reaction would be.

After finishing the decorating, he laid down on the sofa and waited a few minutes, his cat ears raising every time someone climbed up the stairs, but it was never his awaited one. He was dozing off, the tiredness of sleepless and overthinking nights getting to him, when steps approached the door and the sound of a key being inserted in the door lock reached his ears.

Blinking rapidly, Chat smiled from ear to ear and made his best seductive pose for the artist.

She opened the door carefully and peaked inside, seeing the candlelit room. “What on earth…”

“Welcome back, my lady,” he said and she turned around with wide eyes.

“Chat!” She exclaimed, a grin gracing her lips. Chat felt his chest swell at her ecstatic expression. “What are you doing here?”

He got up and bowed, deciding to be honest with her. “I thought I was being a really neglectful muse, leaving my artist without inspiration like that.”

“You were.” She looked away with feigned hurt, and Chat couldn’t help but chuckle. He had missed this. He was such a fool to try and stay way.

He smiled. “I’ll make it up to you.”

She stared at him for a moment, and he wondered what was she thinking, when she enveloped him a hug, making him tense up for a second.

“Thank you, Chat,” she said with a soft voice.

Before he could hug her back, she let go and went to grab something in her backpack. He just stared at her as his heart fluttered incessantly in his chest.

_Merde_. He was falling for her quickly, too quickly.

She poked his nose and he tsked, being brought back from his thoughts. She passed by him and he followed her with his eyes, wondering if he hadn’t fallen already.

“And how did you get in here?” She asked as she grabbed her usual drawing chair.
“Your window locks aren’t exactly hard to open, you know.” The blonde shrugged, looking at his claws. “You should be more careful.”

She chuckled, and he wanted to tell her this was a serious matter. “You’re the only crazy person that would want to break in here.”

He shook his head as she sat on the chair, waiting. She was hopeless sometimes.

The flickering light of the candles was illuminating her figure, and he almost sighed at how beautiful it made her look. He couldn’t resist getting closer. “Did you like the candles, ma chérie?”

What he didn’t expect was her leaning in and saying with a sly expression, “I loved it, kitty.”

His eyes widened as his stomach gave a little flip. She had never called him that, or any pet name, for the matter. He blinked as she pushed him away with a chuckle.

She rubbed her hands together, sketchbook on her thigh. “Now, my dearest muse…”

He grinned and passed a hand through his hair, still remembering the pet name. She was just making him want her more and more.

She smirked. “Let’s begin.”

Chat was used to this, posing. It had been a part of Adrien’s life since his younger years, after all. And so the time passed by quickly as the artist drew, the lit candles getting smaller and smaller.

Chat glanced at her from time to time. It was fascinating to see her concentrated face, her gaze almost burning holes into the paper. It was like she was in her own world. Sometimes their gazes would meet and he’d smile at her in encouragement. She’d smile back, but soon go back to drawing.

His thoughts had shifted to if she’d ever want him to pose naked for her when he heard her sigh.

Chat looked back at the artist, seeing her upset expression. “My lady?”

She gave him a weak smile. “Thank you, Chat. I’m sorry for making you do this.”

He scoffed, stretching up. She didn’t have anything to be sorry for. He was her muse, and he’d do whatever he could to help her. “I’d do much more for you, ma chérie.”

“I–” She looked down at her hands and he heard the disappointment in her voice. “I still don’t have any ideas.” She sighed as she got up to turn on the lights and blow out the candles.

He was trying to think of a way to help her when she pointed to his ring. “It’s almost time.”

He bit his lip as he considered his options. A grin appeared on his lips when he decided what to do. “I’m not leaving my lady like that.”

She blinked. “What about your transformation?”

He pursed his hips and started to head out to the kitchen. “Do you have any cheese?”

“Cheese? I have a bit of Camembert in the refrigerator. Why?”

His ear perked up at her words and he clasped his hands. “Purrfect!” She groaned at the pun, but he
didn’t mind, and put an arm around her shoulders to turn her around.

“Now, my lady, I have to ask you to stay in your bedroom until I regain my strength and transform back.” He led her to her bedroom. “Could you do that for your favorite muse?”

She nodded, but then paused, eyebrows furrowing. “Wait. You’re my only muse.”

He hushed her to the room, hearing her chuckle in return.

The door closed with a soft click, and Chat went to the kitchen to get the cheese. He concentrated and after a beep from his ring, the ancient kwami power left his body at the same time that worry inundated his mind. He almost tsked during the transformation, but it was too late. In a second, he was back to being Adrien Agreste, his confidence in his plan gone.

Adrien looked around frantically. He couldn’t believe he was doing this. It seemed such a better idea when he was Chat. It always did.

“I cannot believe this.” The irritated voice of Plagg indicated that the kwami didn’t approve of his choice.

“Plagg, lower your voice, she could hear you!” Adrien whispered, glancing at the door of the bedroom.

“This isn’t good.” The kwami shook his head. “She could open the door right now and discover your secret.”

Adrien rolled his eyes and gave the kwami the cheese. “I trust her. You should too.”

Plagg muttered something about stupid hormones under his breath as Adrien sat with his back to the door, waiting. At least the kwami wasn’t complaining about staying to help the artist.

Plagg began to eat, and Adrien looked at the darkening sky outside until he heard her voice from the other side of the door.

“Hey Chat – or whoever you are now,” she began, and he almost stopped breathing, listening carefully. “It’s ok if you don’t say anything, with me hearing your voice and shockingly discovering who you are and all that.”

He couldn’t help the chuckle that left his mouth. That’s not exactly how it worked.

“But I just wanted to say thank you,” she continued, and his eyes widened a fraction. “Thank you for coming here, ever since the beginning. You didn’t have to, just because of that crappy drawing.”

It took him a moment to understand that she was talking about the day they met. He smiled fondly as he remembered. It seemed so long ago, when he thought it’d be fun to get close to the beautiful stranger.

He was still happily reminiscing when she said it. “Thanks to you, this city feels… more like home now.”

The words travelled from the other side of the door to his ears, hitting him like a truck. The blonde sucked in a breath and out of the corner of his eye saw Plagg stop mid-air, the cheese millimeters away from his mouth.

Adrien remained frozen for a few seconds, his heart beating rapidly in his chest. Home…
He glanced at Plagg and the kwami looked back at him with a soft expression. If Adrien thought he was falling for her before, now he understood. He had already fallen.

Plagg knew it too. It was probably obvious through the clear green waters of Adrien’s eyes.

The kwami sighed and muttered, “Here we go again.”

Adrien knew he was referring to the last one he longed for, but now was not the time to talk about it. He made a shushing sound before Plagg said anything else. The kwami shook his head and ate the last bit of cheese.

He nodded at Adrien and the blonde got up, preparing himself. It was time.

“Transform me!” He cried out, yearning for the power to come back to him. Now more than ever, he wanted to see the artist.

“Do you really have to say that?” He heard her say through the wooden door.

Clad in his black suit and mask, Chat opened the door, and saw she was on the floor, looking at him with a startled expression. He grinned. “Yes.”

He extended his hand out to her and as she took it, he pulled her close.

The artist didn’t seem to notice the effect her words had on him as she arched an amused brow and smiled. “Yep. You’re back.”

She pulled him to the middle of the room and began to pace around with anxious steps, probably trying to think of something. It didn’t seem to be working. Chat bit inside of his cheek, watching her, until he remembered a book where a quite famous artist from centuries ago explained his relationship with his muse.

An idea formed in his mind. It was perfect. She could get the inspiration she needed, and this was a great opportunity for him to show her how good it could be if they went past this ‘only posing’ phase.

“Touch me,” he said with resolve as she bumped into him, too focused on her own thoughts.

“What?”

He grabbed her hand and put it on his chest. She just stared at him for a moment, and he waited restlessly for her answer.

A sly expression made its way to the artist’s face. “Well…”

Chat rolled his eyes as she chuckled. She thought he was joking.

He gazed at her and squeezed her hand. “I’m serious. I’m your muse. It’s my job to be your inspiration.” The smile faded from her face, replaced by astonishment. “You tried to look at me, it didn’t work. Now,” He grabbed her other hand and also put it on his chest, right over his rapidly beating heart. “Touch me.”

He stood still, waiting for her response as she stared at him.

“Okay.” She moved her hands to his face and he smiled in relief that she had agreed to his plan. “Tell me if you want me to stop.”
He scoffed. He had wanted this for quite some time, it’s not like he’d waste his chance now.

She began to explore his face with her fingers, like he was a sculpture from the Louvre. His mask, his lips, his nose, which she insisted on booping for some reason. Chat kept watching her face as she did so, wishing he knew how she felt about all this. What was she thinking right now?

Her fingers passing through his blonde locks interrupted his thoughts, and he closed his eyes, enjoying the satisfying sensation. He could feel his body relaxing with each passing second. If he wasn’t careful he’d begin to purr at any minute now, and that would be rather embarrassing.

The artist stopped and Chat opened his eyes, wondering what happened. Was she already done? But she pulled on his hand, taking him to the couch, one of the few pieces of furniture in the living room.

He sat down, but she wasn’t satisfied, and pushed him until he was laying down on the sofa. His pulse began to quicken as he imagined what the artist would do. She began to look around, trying to find something to sit on, but Chat was having none of that.

He patted his stomach and she looked at him like he had just sprouted another head. He rolled his eyes and pulled on her hand. She would just sit on his stomach, it wasn’t like they’d do something naughty or anything.

Yet.

“All right, all right!” She sighed and he watched with amusement as she climbed on top of him, avoiding his gaze.

He couldn’t help smirking at the effect this was having on her. Could it be that his plan for her to see him differently was working?

With one hand on the sofa near his shoulder, she began to trace his clavicle through his suit. The artist gave a pull on the bell around his neck and Chat hissed, but not from pain like the artist seemed to think as she apologized.

He closed his eyes, concentrating on her touch and trying not to let it affect him, which was a difficult task. And this task became impossible when she touched one of his cat ears.

Chat opened his eyes with a start as a loud gasp left his mouth. He looked at the artist with wide eyes and saw she was smirking down at him. “Do you want me to stop?”

The feigned innocence with which she said it made shivers run from his head to his core, making him feel warm all over.

He clenched his jaw and looked away. “No…”

She hummed, touching his ear more firmly. He bit his lip, hard enough to feel a sharp pain. He had to concentrate. If she kept doing this, he’d get hard at any minute— She began to caress his ear and he couldn’t help arching his body as pleasure took his breath away from his lungs.

*Merde.* He was getting hard. He had to control himself to not go overboard. This wasn’t about him.

The artist, on the other hand, seemed not to have a care in the world and was elated at the reactions she was getting. He had never seen her like that. She looked almost predatory, and it was making something inside him stir.

“Hey Chat,” she said, readjusting herself over his abdomen, applying pressure on his hips and
making it all the more difficult for him. “Can you really hear with these?”

She touched one of his ears and he had to close his eyes firmly. “Yes.”

She hummed and Chat took a deep breath, aware that he was becoming putty in her hands. He had to do something before he lost the little remaining control he had, and let her do whatever she pleased with him. His body was screaming at him to do just that.

It was when she blew hot air in one of his ears that he snapped. Taking advantage of her position, he switched places with her, and soon she was on her back, staring at him in shock.

“That’s… enough,” he said as he tried to control his breathing. “My turn now, ma chérie.”

She blinked and tried to get up. “What? That wasn’t what–”

Chat didn’t let her finish. “Did you have any ideas?”

She shook her head negative, her eyes wary, and he smirked. It was his turn now.

“Then I, your dearest muse, shall try to inspire you,” he said with a solemn face, and then whispered as he got closer to her neck, “Tell me if you have an idea. Or if you want me to stop.”

A jolt of satisfaction went through his body as he bit her neck for the first time, but soon a hiss left his mouth when she pulled on his hair and asking how would this help. He honestly wasn’t sure, but as far as he knew, artists usually made out with and had sex with their muses and that stimulation seemed to inspire them.

This was neither of those two things, but hopefully they’d get to that. Chat smirked to himself.

The artist scoffed and muttered at his explanation. “Lies.”

Wondering if she was actually ok with this, Chat raised his head. “Do you want me to stop?”

“No.” She bit her lip and looked away, and he had to grin at her attempt of trying to deny what she wanted.

He hummed and began to lick her exposed neck. She gasped and bit her lip, and Chat saw this as a signal to continue. He kept biting and licking her neck, trying to elicit as many reactions as he could.

She pulled on his blonde locks, and he grabbed her thighs. “Anything yet, ma chérie?”

“No,” she said, a little breathless.

He couldn’t help but be a little pleased with her answer. Putting her legs around his hips, he lowered his weight into her, smiling to himself when she gasped. He knew she needed to have an idea for the project, but he was enjoying this way too much to want to stop just now.

Encouraged by the noises she was making, his moves began to get rougher. She tried to control her reactions, but her moans were soon filling the quiet apartment, and Chat just wanted to swallow the quiet noises she was trying so hard not to make.

Clearly not wanting to be the only one becoming a moaning mess, she gripped one of his cat ears, making his loud moan echo in the room. He couldn’t help the purring coming from his chest, or the heat in between his legs.

“What about now, my lady?” He whispered, and was about to finally go for her mouth when she
froze in place.

“That’s it.”

Chat stopped, panting on her neck. “Hm?” She was silent, so he raised his face to look at her. “My lady?”

She let out a loud laugh, startling him. “I know what to do, Chat!” She hugged him, laughing again and kissed his cheek.

He was beyond confused when the artist got up from the sofa and went for her sketchbook, but then it dawned on him.

The idea. It had worked.

He smiled and shook his head as he watched her focused face. He had almost forgotten why they were doing this, but he was elated that he could help somehow. That was why he came to her apartment after all.

He took a deep breath, trying to calm down his body. It was screaming at him for more, but they’d have to continue another time.

He heard a beep and looked at his ring, nestled safely around his finger. It was time to leave. The artist gave him a hug, and he tried not to linger too much.

“Thank you, Chat. I couldn’t have done it without you,” she said, and he felt pride swell in his chest.

“I’m glad I could help, my lady.” Glancing at her, he saw a path of hickeys trailing down her neck and couldn’t help a smirk from stretching his lips. At least that was a win. At another time they’ll be covering her whole body, and hopefully his as well. “I’d be careful with going out tomorrow though.”

As her eyes widened, he winked and left the flat, his racing thoughts accompanying his rapidly beating heart.

Chat grinned as he jumped from roof to roof, the cool wind of the night pushing his blonde locks back. He could feel something had changed. He saw it in the way she was glancing at him. He hoped he had managed to make her lift a little the barrier she had put between them, and see him in a different way.

Chat had just arrived at the roof of the Agreste manor when the ring began to beep incessantly. Avoiding the security cameras with an ease trained by years of practice, he opened the window to his room just in time for the transformation to wear off.

Plagg left the ring and Chat transformed back into Adrien, the power of the kwami leaving him and making the smugness and raw bliss that Chat felt become the composed euphoria of Adrien. It didn’t matter how many times he did this, he couldn’t get used to the feel of his thoughts and emotions shifting within a second. It always mesmerized him.

“Oh mon dieu.” He laughed to himself, lying down on his bed with a smile and feeling his face flush. “I can’t believe that happened.”

Adrien nodded. Plagg always felt more tired when Chat had more… stimulating emotions.

The kwami was silent for a moment, before he asked in a small voice, “You actually like her, don’t you?”

“I think so.” Adrien smiled at the ceiling of his bedroom, feeling like a goddamn teenager with a crush all over again. He had forgotten how good a crush could actually make you feel.

“Alright,” Plagg said, and Adrien knew he’d bring the topic up another day, but for now he grabbed his cushion and began to fly away. “I’m leaving.”

“What?” Adrien propped himself on his elbows, following the kwami with his eyes as he crossed the room. “Where are you going? Aren’t you going to sleep here?”

“I know from experience I won’t be able to sleep in the same room as you today.” Plagg yawned again. “Especially if you’re going to take care of that.” He motioned with his head to Adrien’s direction, and without looking back, Plagg flew through the open door. “Bonne nuit.”

Adrien was puzzled. What was Plagg talking about? As the door closed with a soft click, Adrien looked down at himself with furrowed brows and saw a tent in his pants. Oh, that.

He chewed on his bottom lip. Well, since Plagg was already gone…

With a last glance at the door, Adrien pulled his shirt up, exposing his abdomen, and began to sneak a hand down his lean torso as a happy sigh left his lips. He smiled and hissed as his fingers went past his boxers and reached the pool of heat between his legs.

Her face came back to his mind and he sighed once again. He couldn’t wait for the next time.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you guys enjoyed knowing Chat’s and Adrien’s thoughts! Please tell me what you think :)

Also, since Season One ended, I thought we needed an update to the ko-fi rewards, so I’m doing another survey to know which chapters you guys would like to read!

☆ Click here to go to the second survey ☆

The survey ends on the 1st of November, and I’ll decide the rewards afterwards. If you have any suggestions, please tell me!

My ko-fi page ♡
Plastic bags were digging into your arms as you walked back to your apartment, your steps careful on the wet pavement. The rain had stopped for now, leaving only the cold humid wind behind, but your feet were still healing from the New Year events, and it was better to be careful.

A small smile lifted the corners of your lips as you remembered Chat bringing you back to your house afterwards. It had disappointed you that he couldn’t stay, but you understood that he had to go back and help Ladybug with the teacher. The guy would be put into a rehab clinic for akumatized villains here in Paris. You didn’t even know that existed.

A noise coming from your right made you jump in fright, your heart speeding up. But as you looked at the source of the sound, you saw it was just a pigeon. You let out a sigh, wondering when you’d stop being so antsy. You understood it was a side effect of being kidnapped, but still wished it’d go away soon.

*Maybe it never will,* a small voice suggested in your head.

You didn’t let it phase you. It was just the first of January, one day after the fight with the akumatized teacher. With how exhausted you were, you had slept for almost the whole day, and now the afternoon light that was able to get past the heavy clouds illuminated the streets.

Your plans had been to stay in your apartment and see if Chat would appear, as you needed to talk to him as soon as possible. Your stomach, however, had other plans and growled until you had to get out of bed.

After checking that you didn’t have anything to eat in the fridge, you had groaned as you changed your clothes and left the warmth of your flat to buy a crepe on the street. With your stomach a little happier, you had done some shopping in a small supermarket near your apartment on the way back.

You checked inside one of the plastic bags and saw the bandages you bought were there. Thanks to Ladybug’s magic, your injuries were better, but not cured completely. As you passed under a tree, water drops fell on your head. You looked up and saw a white cat climbing a tree branch. It made you wonder if Chat would be waiting for you in your apartment. You hoped so.

There were so many questions unanswered in your mind, about the fight, the past, and your future together. You couldn’t stop thinking about what you saw in his nightmare. What did it all mean? It seemed so intimate, like a part of his soul had been exposed to you on a plate. As for your own nightmares, you kept telling yourself they weren’t important. There was no use to live in the past.
That was why you came to Paris in the first place.

Approaching your street, you saw a commotion ahead of you. Vans and cars were parked on both sides of the street, and the once peaceful place looked like the tourist area of Paris in the high season.

What is happening?

With a bad feeling in your chest, you made your way through some onlookers. A bunch of reporters holding microphones and recorders were around your landlord, a middle aged man with a unique fashion sense.

“I already told you she’s not here!” He cried out, the tone of his voice making his irritation obvious. “Leave before I call the police!”

One woman turned around with a serious face, like she had just witnessed a murder, and began to talk to a camera, which was being held by a cameraman.

“Hello Jean, we’re in front of the apartment of the girl who was kidnapped by the akumatized villain last night.” You froze in the middle of the sidewalk, breath caught in your throat. The reporter continued. “The landlord and the other residents don’t seem to know what is her connection with Chat Noir.”

You cursed internally, feeling your pulse in your ears. How did they find you? And so quickly?

Another reporter, a few meters away caught your attention. “… And this mysterious girl was seen kissing the hero on New Year on a rooftop, and left with him afterwards.”

You put a hand over your mouth as you inhaled sharply. They knew about the kiss.

“Yeah, we’ll stay posted and wait for her to appear so she can make a statement.” A guy to your right was talking on the phone. He let out a loud laugh. “Of course we’re not leaving. Do you think I’m going to miss out on something like this?”

With careful steps, you began to back off. With the amount of information they had, they’d recognize your face in an instant. You had to get the hell out of there.

You began to make your way back, your mind and heart racing. Where would you go? What would you do? Your head was throbbing with the mess of thoughts that overlapped each other.

As you passed by an alley, you heard a call of your name. You snapped your head to the side, ready to start running.

Marinette was waving at you. She seemed almost desperate, her blue eyes wide.

You approached her as fast as you could, the plastic bags in your hands moving from side to side. Marinette enveloped you in a tight hug.

“Oh mon dieu, I’m so glad they didn’t see you.” Her face was full of concern, and she looked paler than usual. “C’mon, we need to get you out of here.”

She grabbed your arm and leaded you to an expensive black sports car, parked a few meters away. You hopped into the back seat as Mari sat in the front.

“Did they spot you?” A familiar voice asked as soon as you entered the car, and you saw Adrien was
the one driving.

Mari shook her head. “No, we’re good.”

“Thank goodness.” He let out a relieved breath and started the car, the engine making a loud sound. “Hey,” the blonde looked back at you. “You okay?”

“Yeah.” You nodded and looked out of the window, checking if no one had followed you as the car began to move. “You guys came here to rescue me? How did you know?”

“It’s all over the news now.” Adrien sped up through the street, the car engine roaring, and you held onto the car seat. The news? It was already on the freaking news? “We came as fast as we could.”

Marinette turned around on her seat to look back at you. “Alya is recording a video to put on the Ladyblog asking for people to respect your privacy.”

“Oh god,” you sighed and passed a hand through your hair, unsure of how to react to all of this sudden chaos. “How did this happen?”

Mari gave you a concerned look. “There is a picture going around the internet showing you and Chat kissing on New Year’s Eve.”

You cursed under your breath. How did someone manage to sneak up on you and do that? But you had to admit you weren’t really paying attention to your surroundings, with Chat’s kisses making you light headed.

You let yourself fall on the backseat and put your trembling hands over your face. Just when you thought things would calm down and you could breathe. “Fuck. I can’t go back to my apartment now.”

“You can stay at my house—” Marinette held onto the roof handle for dear life as Adrien made a swift curve. “What the hell, Adrien, calm down!” She hit his arm and he mumbled an apology. She continued. “Anyway, I can’t offer you my bed, since my uncle and his family from China are staying over, but we can share the couch, if you want.”

“There’s no need for that, Mari. She can stay at my house.” Adrien stopped at a traffic light and turned around to look at you. “I have many vacant rooms there, and the security will keep the reporters away if they ever find you.”

You bit your lip. You didn’t want to bother anyone, but you also didn’t have anywhere to go. “Alright, thank you Adrien. I promise I won’t a bother.”

The blonde smiled at you through the rear mirror. “You won’t be.”

Marinette seemed like she wanted to protest, but you didn’t know why, it honestly sounded like a good plan to you. Your friends looked at each other, having a silent discussion between themselves.

“And my father won’t be there, so it’ll be just us,” Adrien added, his voice a bit forceful. Mari huffed, and you wondered what was the problem with his father being home. Didn’t he like guests? You remembered Adrien telling you his dad didn’t like kids running around the house. But you weren’t a kid, so it should be fine, right?

The stoplight turned green and the sports car’s engine roared to life as it began to move.

Mari let out a defeated sigh after a moment.
“Fine.” She didn’t seem happy to have to say that. “I guess you’ll be safer in the Agreste manor.”

After a few minutes of dealing with Paris’ traffic, Adrien stopped the car in front of the Dupain-Cheng boulangerie and Mari got out.

“If you need anything, or just want to talk, send me a message ok?” She said to you through the open window.

You gave her a grateful smile. “Yeah, Mari. Thank you.”

You waved as the car moved and she waved back until she was just a small dot in the distance. What did you do to have such lovely people as your friends? You didn’t know.

As you walked into the Agreste manor, you remembered the last time you were here. The place still seemed expensive and intimidating, the portraits on the walls judging you and your plastic bags.

Adrien had insisted on carrying half of your bags, and now you were following him up the marble staircase.

You looked at some landscape paintings that decorated the house. At least you could admire the Agrestes’ taste in art and forget about your situation for a second. “I promise I’ll go back to my place soon.”

“Don’t worry about that, you can stay for as long as you need.” Adrien’s steps were quick as he took the corridor to the right. “And as I said before, my father isn’t here. He’s in a fashion show in Switzerland, so it’s just you and me.”

You weren’t sure if that was reassuring. This place was too quiet, and you somehow wished there were more people around so the silence wasn’t so oppressive.

“Oh, there are the employees too, of course.” The blonde added with a grin. “Don’t get scared if you see someone walking in the garden at night. It’s just the security guard, Lucius.”

You swallowed dry. Were Adrien and his father such a big deal that they needed this much security?

As the blonde took you to your new room, you wondered if you’d ever meet his father. He seemed the type of person that was a tourist in his own house, with how much he travelled. All you knew about him was thanks to Marinette, who worked part time in his fashion design company. But all she talked about was his work, and not the man himself.

Adrien stopped in front of a door and unlocked it.

“You first.” He made a gesture with his arm, and you got in, not knowing what to expect.

You gaped as you looked around. The bedroom was twice as big as the one in your apartment. The light coming from the window illuminated the simple and modern decoration. Your eyes fell on the queen-sized bed. It was like it was calling for you, the apparent softness inviting.

Adrien opened the window, allowing the cold wind to renew the air in the room for a moment.

He pointed to a door. “The bathroom is right there.” You hadn’t noticed the room was also a suite. Wow. It was better than a hotel. The blonde put your bags on the bed. “There’s a bathrobe and a
towel inside, if you want to take a bath or a shower.”

Realization hit you as his words reached your ears.

“I don’t have any spare clothes,” you murmured, mostly to yourself. The truth was, you didn’t have anything. You only had your grocery bags, your cellphone, and the clothes you were wearing.

You felt a lump in your throat as angry tears began to well up in your eyes. The reality of your situation was catching up to you, and the mental and physical tiredness of yesterday only made it worse. You bit inside your cheek hard, the pain making you focus. You wouldn’t cry in front of Adrien, you didn’t want to worry him.

Adrien tilted his head. “I can buy you some clothes—”

“No, no, you don’t have to do that.” You interrupted him, shaking your head. “You’re already doing so much for me.”

He bit his bottom lip, thinking for a moment. “Well, you can wear my clothes, if you don’t mind them being a little big.”

Thinking about being surrounded by his comforting perfume made your mood lighten a little. “That’d be great, thanks again Adrien.”

“Don’t mention it.” He grinned, going for the door. “I’ll bring you something to wear when you finish the bath.”

When the door clicked close, you closed the open windows, shivering a little at the wind, and went to the bathroom.

The hot water warmed up your body as you lied in the large bathtub. Your head was resting on the edge as you stared at the ceiling, a million thoughts on your mind.

You could finally cross out ‘being persecuted by the press’ from your bingo game of ‘kind of in a relationship with a superhero’. All you needed now was ‘discovering that his superhero secret identity was obvious the whole time’ and you’d win the game.

A sigh left your lips as you passed a wet hand over your face. You had to focus. Things were serious now. Not only Hawkmoth knew who you were and your connection to Chat, but everyone in Paris. And the worst was that you didn’t know what Chat thought of all of this. Was he mad at the press or was this common to him? The doubt was eating you from inside.

You needed to talk to him more than ever. But how? You couldn’t leave the manor, and you also didn’t have a way to contact him. You scoffed. What kind of relationship was that anyway? You remembered how it was so easy some months back, when Chat went to your flat and posed for you. You were still trying to follow the ‘platonic muse’ path back then.

A humorless chuckle left your mouth, the water around you rippling with the movement. Things weren’t so simple anymore. You imagined something would change after your relationship with your muse followed another path, but you never imagined it’d come to this. But you couldn’t go back to how it was. It’d be foolish of you to think that.

The hot water turned lukewarm as you tried to sort out your feelings, without success. There was too much in your head and you couldn’t focus on just one thing. Maybe you could ask Adrien some
questions later to try and ease your mind.

You got up, drained the tub and took a quick shower, enveloping yourself in a soft bathrobe afterwards. The cold tiles of the bathroom made goosebumps rise on your arms as you looked at the mirror. Your reflection stared back at you with an exhausted gaze. You were a mess.

You were in the middle of applying the new bandages you had bought around your feet when there was a knock at the door.

You fixed your bathrobe before saying, “Come in.”

Adrien’s head peeked inside the room first before he opened the door. “I got you some clothes.” He stopped when he saw you in the bathrobe, but soon averted his eyes, putting a mix of t-shirts and pants on the bed. “Tell me if you need anything else. I’ll call you when dinner's ready.”

You thanked him as he left in a hurry. As the door closed, you shuffled through the folded clothes he brought. You found a soft grey hoodie and black sweatpants, and put them on. The sweatpants were a bit large, but the elastic made them fit around your waist. You brought the hoodie closer to your face and breathed deeply. Adrien’s taste in perfume was amazing, but it was better if you didn’t do that in front of anyone.

Especially Chat, your mind added. You scoffed. The cat boy wouldn’t mind, would he? An image of Chat doing the same thing to another person’s clothes came to your mind, and you didn’t like the annoying feeling that tightened your chest. Not at all.

Trying to distract yourself, you grabbed your phone and searched for the Ladyblog. Alya’s new video was on the first page. Her voice filled your earphones as you hit the play button.

“Hey everybody, I’m here today to talk about one thing. Privacy.”

Your eyes were glued to the screen as she explained how everyone had the right to have a private life, superhero or not. The press was the next thing that she talked about, saying how disgusting they were for stalking you.

She finished the video with a statement. “This happened before in the past with Ladybug, and I think we can do better. We can be better, Paris.”

The video ended and after rubbing your eyes to free them from possible tears, you sent Alya a message, thanking her for the support.

A knock at the door made you jolt.

“Hey, dinner's ready.” Adrien’s muffled voice reached you.

“Coming.” You got up from the bed and opened the door.

A grin appeared on Adrien’s face when he saw you in his clothes. “You look great.”

“Yeah, right.” You rolled your eyes.

He chuckled. “I’m serious.”

You shook your head, a hint of a smile on your lips. “Just lead the way, Adrien.”
The dining room was the same as the rest of the house, huge. Chandeliers descended from the ceiling and a large table occupied the middle of the room. There were too many chairs for just Adrien and his father, and you wondered if they often hosted parties or something of the sort.

The cook was putting the food on the table when you arrived, and you tried not to be awkward as you thanked him. You weren’t used to having someone cook for you, unlike Adrien seemed to be.

You sat in front of Adrien on the table and made small talk about the university, Paris, the neglect of the government when it came to art courses. But you knew you were just avoiding the inevitable, and soon Adrien asked.

“So…” He stretched out the word and you knew exactly what he was going to ask. “About you and Chat Noir…”

You were sure his intentions weren’t bad, but you couldn’t talk about that with anyone at the moment. Otherwise you’d end up crying in front of him, and you preferred to curl up and die, dramatic as it sounds.

So you put up your hand before he could finish, and he closed his mouth. “Can we not talk about this right now?” You gave him an apologetic smile. “I’m not… ready for it.”

“Of course.” He put a lock of blonde hair behind his ear. “I’m sorry. I’m not trying to pry, it’s just that… If you need anything, or anyone to talk to, know that I’m here.”

“It’s okay, thank you Adrien.” You gave him a warm smile and went back to your food.

Adrien began to talk about a new TV series and you listened, thanking him in your head for changing the subject.

With your stomach sated, you followed Adrien to your room, a glass of water in your hand.

“My room is just next door.” He pointed to a door behind him. “Just knock if you need anything, ok?”

You nodded, hoping you wouldn’t have to bother him. “Alright.”

“So… Bonne nuit,” he said, scratching his neck.

You could see he was hesitating, so you got close and put your arms around his torso, hugging him. “Bonne nuit, Adrien. Thank you for everything.”

He squeezed you tight, and it took great strength to part from him.

“Sleep tight.” He smiled and walked to his room, his steps on the wooden floor vanishing as you closed your door.

You got ready to sleep. As if by magic, a toothbrush and paste had appeared in the bathroom. You were sure this was Adrien’s doing.

After checking if the window was locked for the third time, you sighed and went to bed. You knew the security guard would be around, but you were still antsy. You shook your head as the face of the akumatized teacher came back to your mind, and laid down on the soft bed, letting the covers envelop you in their warm embrace.
You’re safe here. That’s what you kept telling yourself, in hopes you’d fall asleep.

Minutes passed as you stared at the ceiling. The heater was making the room warm and cozy, but you still missed your bed, your apartment, your things…

You sprawled your arm out on the large bed. The mattress was cold, and empty. Biting your lip, you pulled your arm back and wished Chat were here.

Now that you were alone, everything you had pushed back was coming back with force: the tiredness, the pain.

Feeling a hole inside your chest, you grabbed one of the spare pillows by your side and hugged it, trying to trick yourself into thinking you were not alone. But the softness of the pillow was nothing compared to the warmth of Chat’s body against yours.

You sniffled, burying your face into the pillow. If he was here, you could talk and go through this mess together. A quiet sob left your mouth and you hugged the pillow tighter. You couldn’t stop the stubborn tear that left your eye, and soon more followed.

Your body shook as you tried to muffle your sobs. You didn’t want Adrien to hear them.

The sobs got weaker and weaker until the last tears dried on your cheeks, and you fell asleep.

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The bags under your eyes were dark when you woke up the next day. You didn’t sleep well, waking up many times during the night thanks to nightmares. All of them consisted of you running away from something, someone, and it was like the exhaustion from the dreams clung to your body as you woke up.

You put on Adrien’s grey hoodie from yesterday and a pair of pants, and went back to bed, your muscles too tired to do anything else. Crying had helped to numb the mess of feelings inside your heart, but in exchange it had sucked all the energy from you.

A knock on the door made you sit up on the mattress. “Yes?”

The door opened slowly and Adrien appeared carrying a tray of food. “Bonjour, I got you some breakfast.”

Your eyes widened. “Adrien, you shouldn’t have. I’m not sick—”

“I’m just taking care of my guest.” He arched an eyebrow, putting the tray on the bedside table.

You pursed your lips for a moment before shaking your head and smiling. “Thank you. Really.”

He shot you a warm grin that made your chest tighten. “I’ll be in my room if you need anything.”

Before leaving, Adrien took your clothes to wash, even after you told him you could do it yourself. He just used the guest argument again, and you complied with a grumble.

After having lunch together, Adrien gave you some space, leaving you in your room, and you were glad for that. You didn’t have to smile and pretend you were okay. And if he noticed your tired state during lunch, he didn’t mention.
You spent the day searching for answers on the internet. Laying on the bed, you made some searches on your phone, but there was almost nothing about the fight with the first Hawkmoth. *How is that possible?*

You found some videos, but they were shaky and consisted mostly of people screaming and showing the destruction in the city. In the best one you found, you heard a wicked laugh that made your stomach twist and goosebumps rise up and down your arm. But before the video showed who it was, it ended, like the camera had been broken. You didn’t want to imagine what happened to the person afterwards.

Was that the first Hawkmoth? You had imagined he’d sound older, and not like a teenager.

After pondering for a moment, you gave up and decided to listen to some music with your earphones to distract yourself. You sat on the windowsill and looked around the garden that stretched out in front of you, the small lamp-posts on the grass creating a path to the manor in the dark.

Where could Chat be? You wished you could send him a message, or find someone who could talk to him.

Your eyes widened a fraction.

Marinette.

You sent a message to your friend as fast as your fingers could manage.

You: hey Mari, you and Chat are close right? Can you tell him where I am? I really need to talk to him

You didn’t even have time to wonder if you seemed too desperate since her answer was almost instantaneous.

Mari: he hasn’t talked with you yet?????

You: nope

Marinette sent you a gif of a young Macaulay Culkin cocking a gun.

Mari: I’m gonna put some goddamn sense into this asshole’s head, wait a moment

You chuckled at her reaction, and wondered how she was going to talk to Chat. You heard a phone ring louder than the music booming in your earphones and furrowed your brows. Well, wasn’t that a coincidence.

The next song began to play and you lost your line of thought. You just knew it had to do with Chat’s identity or something like that.

Three songs started and ended as you waited for Mari’s answer, your feet tapping on the windowsill. What if Chat appeared at the manor? Could he get in with all the security?

You walked to your door. It was better to tell Adrien about it.

Your feet took you to his room, and you heard voices inside. Was he talking on the phone?

You knocked on his door and the voices stopped. The wait felt like an eternity, and you almost went back to your room when the door opened a fraction.
“Oh hey.” Adrien peaked from inside his bedroom. It felt like he didn’t want you to see what was behind him. “Do you need anything?”

You shuffled on your feet. “I wanted to ask if it’d be okay if Chat Noir appeared here.” He blinked a couple of times, and you continued. “It wouldn’t be for long, I just need to talk to him. But I figured it was better to let you know, in case he tries to get in from a window or something like this.”

A noise came from inside his room, and the blonde looked back for a moment. “It’s fine. If he wants, uh, to come, it’s okay, don’t worry.”

You grinned, your heart feeling lighter. “Thanks, Adrien.”

“Don’t mention it,” he muttered, and there was a hint of sadness in his voice you couldn’t understand.

The hours passed as you waited for Marinette’s response, but it didn’t come.

You wondered what could be the problem. Didn’t Chat want to see you?

Thoughts buried deep within your mind began to surface.

*Of course he doesn’t want to talk with you. You ruined his image.*

You shook your head.

*It doesn’t matter. He doesn’t want to be seen with you.*

*He won’t come.*

The sound of your phone beeping with a notification brought you back to reality, and you moved to grab it in haste.

Marinette had finally answered you.

Mari: Chat said he’s having some problems transforming right now, but he promised he’d talk to you soon

Something heavy settled in your chest. You wanted to believe in her words, but a part of you just couldn’t. It really seemed that Chat was avoiding you.

Mari: and if he doesn’t do it, I’m dragging him to you myself

You couldn’t help the chuckle that left your lips as you imagined the scene in your head. You were so thankful for having Marinette in your life.

You: thanks Mari :)

You pondered for a moment at how she had contacted Chat.

You: you know his civil identity, right?

She took some minutes to answer, but you waited, eyes locked to the screen.

Mari: maybe
You: that means yes

It stung a little that Marinette knew who Chat was, and you didn’t. But you were just someone he met about six months ago, and who would leave soon. It made sense, but it didn’t help appease the hurt in your heart.

You saw Marinette had sent you another message.

Mari: you know I can’t tell you right?

You sighed before typing.

You: I know, don’t worry about it

You: goodnight Mari

Mari: goodnight. Everything will be alright. Don’t worry.

The screen of your phone went dark as you locked it, and you saw your face looking back at you from the screen. You didn’t know if you believed in Marinette’s words.

You put one last forkful of food in your mouth and let out a sigh. The dinner had been as great as before, but the best part was that during your talk with Adrien, he hadn’t mentioned anything about Chat Noir, or the superhero coming to his house. You regretted asking him that, since Chat wouldn’t come. It made you look like a fool.

Adrien put his fork down and got up to leave. You bit your lip. You had too much on your mind, and didn’t want to go back to your silent room yet.

“Can I watch some TV?” You blurted out.

Adrien stopped, plate in his hand. “Of course. You don’t have to ask me for permission, you know,” he chuckled.

After you both took your empty plates to the kitchen and thanked the chef for the meal, you followed the blonde to the recreation room.

He sat down on the sofa by your side, but put some distance between you and him, which made you arch a brow. Was he going to stay?

Adrien grabbed the remote. “What do you want to watch?”

“I don’t know.” You probably wouldn’t be able to pay attention to the movie anyway, so you shrugged. “You can choose whatever you want, it’s fine.”

He ended up picking a musical based on the 50’s, something simple and spirit lifting. The songs and dances passed before your eyes, but it was like they weren’t even there and you were staring at a mix of light and colors that stood out in the dark room around you.

In the middle of a song, you muttered, “Adrien.”

“Hm?” He looked at you, the light coming from the screen dancing on his face.

“Can I ask you something?” You said.
“Sure.” He shuffled on the sofa.

“It’s about the New Year fight. At the end, Chat said something about the first Hawkmoth.” You averted your eyes to the screen, seeing a girl with a pink jacket ride a motorcycle. “I tried to look it up on the internet, but there’s almost no information about that.” You glanced back at him. “Do you know what happened?”

It was Adrien’s turn to avert his gaze. He kept looking at the TV for what seemed like a long time, before he finally opened his mouth to speak. “I wasn’t here at the time. I was in New York for Fashion Week, but I heard it was a pretty bad fight.” He glanced at his hands, flexing them. “Some people died. Even Ladybug’s power couldn’t make them come back.”

“That’s horrible,” you whispered, thinking about the innocent lives lost in the battle. “And Hawkmoth? Did they discover his identity?”

He nodded. “Yeah, but Ladybug and Chat Noir asked for it to be kept a secret, so nobody really knows who he is.” Adrien kept moving his hands, like he was incapable of staying still. “But I know he stayed at the rehab clinic for a long time.” You nodded. So the guy hadn’t died.

“I see.” You decided not to pry any further, since the blonde didn’t seem comfortable talking about this, and went back to ‘watching’ the movie.

Soon the sound of the TV began to lull you to sleep. The soft voices and songs were better than the oppressive silence of your room, and Adrien’s presence calmed you down.

You were in the middle of a dream when you felt a lock of hair being taken away from your face and a blanket being put on top of you.

“I’m awake,” you mumbled, voice coated with sleep and eyes still closed.

Adrien hummed. “You sure are.”

A pair of lips touched your forehead, careful not to wake you, and you let out a sigh, burying your face in the blanket.

“Let’s go, Plagg,” Adrien whispered.

A few seconds passed.

“Plagg.”

“Ugh. Fine.” Another voice grumbled and your dreams snatched you back to another reality as Adrien’s steps faded away.

You woke up with bright light rays on your face. Blinking a couple of times, you sat up and looked around, not remembering where you were for a moment. The sight of the TV made your memories come back. You were still in the recreation room. You had a vague memory of talking with Adrien yesterday, but you couldn’t discern what was dream and what was reality, so it soon vanished from your mind.

As you were going back to your bedroom, Lucius, the security guard, told you Adrien had left to do some errands, so it was just you and the employees inside the manor. You thanked him and continued on your way, wondering what was Adrien up to.
It was midday when you received the message. You were changing into your own clothes, now clean thanks to Adrien, when the notification beep reached your ears.

‘Come get your things. I need the flat. Now.’

Your hands were shaking as they held the phone. The message was from your landlord.

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“What a fucking asshole, I can’t believe he did this to you.” Alya put another box full of food supplies in her small silver car.

You let out a sigh as you dragged your luggage across the sidewalk. You had to shove all your clothes inside and sit on top of it for it to close. You didn’t want to think about what would happen when you had to open it again. It would probably explode.

Mari took the luggage from you with ease before you could protest. “Well, the guy will have to pay a huge fine for that.”

“Serves him right.” Alya pat you on the back, before going to the driver’s side. “Don’t worry, mon amie. We’ll find you another flat in no time.”

The landlord’s words were still ringing in your ears. He had accused you of troubling the other residents and himself, since the reporters kept coming back every day to question him. He didn’t want to listen when you said it wasn’t your fault. He was sure it was.

An unfamiliar voice called your name, and a bad feeling settled in your stomach as you turned around.

A man got out of a black car and began to walk in your direction. “Tell us what happened on New Year! Are you and Chat together? Are you just after his fame?”

“Merde, get in!” Alya got inside the car, and you and Marinette rushed to do the same.

“Wait! Answer me!” The man cried out, but Alya was already speeding down the street.

Turning around in your seat, you took one last look at your apartment before the car turned around the corner. You had made so many happy memories there, and now you didn’t even have a chance to say a proper goodbye to the place. It hurt to part from it like this.

“My life is a fucking mess,” you muttered to yourself, watching the streets pass by.

There was a moment of silence in the car, before Marinette spun around to look at you.

“It’ll get better, you’ll see. We’re here to support you, aren’t we Alya?” Marinette grinned, glancing at her friend.

Alya nodded. “Sure thing. And if you need anyone to punch those reporters,” she grinned at you through the rear-view mirror. “Leave it to me.”

You let out a snort, and it soon transformed into a laugh. Your friends joined you, and you were delighted in laughing again. It seemed to have been a long time since you last laughed like that, and it felt amazing.
You spent the day with your friends at Mari’s house. Marinette had insisted you needed a break, and you had gladly agreed with her. The house was empty, since her parents had left to take her uncle to the airport, so it was just you three.

The girls didn’t pressure you to talk about your problems; rather, they wanted you to forget about everything for a moment and relax. So you ended up enjoying their company while watching TV series and eating snacks. You were grateful for the friends you had.

Alya was explaining to you the confusing plot of a new detective series when a phone began to ring.

“And then the mother killed him—” Alya looked around the room. “Isn’t that your phone, Mari?”

Mari blinked. “Oh, right!” Alya rolled her eyes to you with a smile as Mari got up from the couch. “Allô?” Marinette grinned and looked at you. “Oh, hey Adrien.”

Alya scoffed. “Of course.”

You paled. You had forgotten to tell him you would leave the manor. He must have been worried when he saw you weren’t there.

“Yes, she’s here,” Mari said and you could hear the amusement in her voice as she spoke. “You worry too much.” She sighed. “Alright, mom. Yeah, yeah, I know, I’ll take care of it. À plus.”

“Can he be more obvious?” Alya rolled her eyes as Mari ended the call.

“About what?” You tilted your head.

They both looked at you.

“Yeah, he can.” Mari grinned.

They laughed, and you furrowed your brows. You weren’t that dense, so you knew what your friends were implying. “C’mon, you guys still think he has a crush on me?”

Alya opened her mouth to speak, but Mari beat her to it. “Not really.” A frown creased Alya’s forehead, but Marinette ignored her. “It’s just that Adrien isn’t that good when it comes to making friends. And it’s kinda funny, that’s all.”

The way Alya was looking at Marinette, like she had sprouted another head, and an ugly one at that, let you know your friend wasn’t telling you the whole story, but you decided to let it pass this time. You already had too much on your mind.

A soft pink light was coloring the Seine River as Alya drove you back to the manor. Your spirit was lighter, due to your friends, but now that you were aware of your luggage in the car trunk, a heavy feeling was coming back to your chest.

Some minutes later, Alya was pressing the manor’s intercom button.

“Yes?” A familiar voice said.

Alya got closer to the speaker. “Adrien, get your ass out here and help us with the luggage.”

“Alya?” Adrien asked, which made the girl chuckle.
“Who else, darling? Come quick.”

You were breathing heavily from carrying your biggest suitcase from the car to the sidewalk when a buzz coming from the gate caught your attention.

Adrien was striding in your direction, and you couldn’t help the flutter in your stomach when you saw his worried expression.

“What happened?” He got the luggage from you with ease, much like Marinette.

You watched him with a mix of shock and amazement. Did they go to the gym everyday or what?

Adrien looked back at you, making you realize you hadn’t answered his question.

“The landlord dumped me on the street.” You scratched your neck. “Said that the press was bothering him and the other residents.”

He stopped and you saw his face contort with anger. Your eyes widened.

“Don’t worry about it.” You rushed to say. “He’ll have to pay a fine for that.”

Adrien’s expression softened a little, but you could see by the way his forehead was creased that he was still very much pissed as he carried your luggage inside.

It made a small smile curl your lips up. You didn’t know why he cared so much about you, but it made you content.

“Is it true?”

Alya’s voice caught you by surprise.

“What?” You turned your head, seeing her by your side, a box under her arm.

“About you and Chat Noir.” It was like a bucket of cold water had been dumped on your head, making you cold and vulnerable. Alya must have seen your reaction, because she added. “I’m not asking as a reporter, but as your friend.”

“It’s... complicated.” You kicked a small pebble on the ground. “We aren’t together, but—”

She put her hand up with a smile. “You don’t have to tell me everything. I just wanted to hear it from you, and not those nasty reporters.” She put a hand on your shoulder. “I’ll support you, whatever happens.”

You let out a breath you didn’t know you were holding and smiled back at her. “Thank you, Alya.”

She gave you the box. “Now go before mom Adrien gets worried.”

“Alright, this is the last one,” Adrien said as he put a large box inside your room. He didn’t look tired in the slightest. You, on the other side, were breathing heavily while leaning on the wall, pretending you weren’t dying. Damn those stairs.

“Thanks for the help, Adrien.” You managed to say, and he nodded.

“I’ll help you search for flats.” He seemed determined as he leaned on the doorway. “I’m pretty sure
there’s one available around here.”

You gave him a nervous laugh, shaking your head. “I can’t afford that.”

That didn’t discourage him, resolve apparent in his green eyes. “I’ll look into it. The rent shouldn’t be that expensive.”

You smiled. Oh, naïve Adrien. This was the tourist area, and if that wasn’t enough it was also near the Eiffel Tower. Of course it’d be expensive as hell.

When the night had come and dinner was over, you asked Adrien if you could watch another movie. Seeing all your packed things inside your room was making you feel anxious, so you sat down in the recreation room to ease your mind. The blonde kept you company for an hour or so, and you were sure he was keeping an eye on you, since he kept sending not so furtive glances your way.

It was past midnight when he left, wishing you a goodnight. He seemed tired, and you almost stopped him to ask what happened today, but you let him go rest. He needed it.

During the movie, you could swear you heard purring near you, but every time you turned the volume down, it stopped. It kept distracting you, and when you realized, the movie had ended, giving way to a news program.

You knew it was better for your sanity if you turned the TV off, but you were frozen, your arm refusing to move. Part of you was sure they wouldn’t say anything about you, since there was nothing else to talk about.

But another part knew it was a foolish thought to have.

“Madame, monsieur, bonsoir. Now back to the Chat Noir affair,” the woman said and you rolled your eyes. There we go. “He and the girl have been seen together more than once, our sources say. The girl has been akumatized before, and an interview found on the Ladyblog shows that she already had feelings for the superhero back then.”

You shook your head and grabbed the remote. What a waste of time.

“Could this mean the Parisian hero is ready to love again?” Another news anchor said.

You stopped, finger hovering over the red power button.

She continued. “After Ladybug got herself a boyfriend, the cat hero fell into a depressing state, that only got worse after the great battle against Hawkmoth.” A frown creased your forehead. Ladybug has a boyfriend? How come you had never heard of that? “Five years later, is the charming Chat Noir ready for a relationship or is this just another one of his hook ups?”

“Thank you, Celine.” The other anchor said. “We’ll come back if we have more information.”

The screen turned black as you finally pressed the button, eyes unfocused.

The woman’s words made you realize something. You didn’t really know Chat. It felt like you did, but actually, you didn’t know much about the masked hero. You had never talked about his past, due to his secret identity, and the time you spent together was too short for meaningful conversations.

You had an idea that Chat felt something for Ladybug in the past, but you didn’t know it was that
serious. The hook ups were easier to understand, as Chat was quite gorgeous and seemed to flirt with everyone.

Could this be why he didn’t want to see you? Because for him you were just another hook up that went public?

You tried not to let it affect you, reminding yourself that he publicly referred to you as “important” on New Year, but your hands in fists by your side betrayed your emotional state.

Why did it matter so much to you? He was your muse, not your boyfriend. That day in Marinette’s room, you both had agreed not to involve feelings in this. Then why was it so goddamn difficult now?

You buried your face in a cushion, wanting to scream all your frustrations out. However, before you could do that, the sound of something falling behind you caught your attention.

“Ow.”

You shoved the cushion down and looked back, but the room was empty. What was that?

Another sound, this time similar to a pained meow, reached your ears. Did Adrien have any pets? You didn’t think so. You were almost sure his father wouldn’t allow it.

“Hello?” You asked, but there was no answer.

You turned forward again, just in time to see the cushion on the sofa to your right tumble to the ground. You weren’t even near it.

You strode back to your room, eyes wide and heart in your throat. First the purring and now things started moving on their own. That was it. Either this damn place was haunted or you had gone mad, and you weren’t staying alone in that room any longer to confirm any of those theories.

Back in the safety of your room, you distracted yourself with your phone, reading anything you could find just so you didn’t have to think. You were almost falling asleep when a message popped up in a group chat of foreigner students you were part of. You never really participated in the conversations, but this particular message caught your attention. You read it again and again, until you finally made your decision.

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“You’re going where?”

The morning light was reflecting on Adrien’s shocked face as he stared at you and your small luggage with wide eyes, a hint of exasperation in his voice.

“Barcelona, Spain. A group of foreign students are going as well.” You shuffled from foot to foot. “We’ll stay for two weeks.”

The flight was in the afternoon, but you had to leave early and meet with the others at the airport. You had bought the ticket yesterday night. It was quite expensive, being so close to the flying date, but you had to leave this city. You needed to, or otherwise you’d go insane inside the manor. Adrien was a lovely friend and host, but you were tired of being trapped with your own thoughts.

Also, you were sure the fine your landlord would pay would cover the expenses. At least the asshole would help you with something.
“But right now?” Adrien passed a hand through his blonde locks, and you noticed he was tapping his foot. Why was he so anxious?

“I decided in the last minute, that’s why I didn’t say anything sooner,” you said, but he still seemed worried. You let out a sigh. “I… need a break, Adrien. I know if I go out, the reporters will come after me like vultures, and I like the manor but I can’t—” You took a deep breath. “I need to do this.”

Adrien looked at you, and it really felt like he was taking everything in. Your expression, your features, the dark circles under your eyes… You stared back until it got too much, and you had to avert your eyes from his piercing green ones.

“Oh.” He finally said in a quiet voice. “And I… I found an apartment for you near here.”

Excitement bubbled in your chest, but it vanished the moment you thought about where you were.

“Isn’t it expensive?”

He shook his head. “I looked it up. It’s going to be the same rent you paid for your last flat.”

“Really?” You could feel the excitement coming back.

“You’re going to talk with the landlady for you.” Adrien chuckled. “You can move in when you come back. Is that good?”

You felt a huge amount of gratitude for this boy, who had been so good for you these past days without asking for anything in return.

You enveloped him in a hug, trying to show him how much you appreciated his help and company. “Yeah, it’s wonderful. Thank you, Adrien. Thank you for everything.”

His arms circled around you with caution, and he held tight. “It was nothing.” You separated from him and he smiled at you, green eyes filled with something you couldn’t describe. “Have a good trip. I hope you find what you’re searching for.”

---

You adjusted your backpack as you walked across the long corridors of the airport filled with tourists and locals coming and going. People who went to see their families and were coming back, others who came to celebrate the new year in the city of love and now had to go back to their hometowns. Everywhere you looked was packed with people, and you breathed in relief. You were just another traveler.

You followed the other seven students to the boarding gate. The Belgian girl, Louise, Kostas and Julien’s boyfriend were some of them, but Julien himself wasn’t there. It was strange to find one boy without the other, seeing how they were glued to the hip at the Christmas party. Kostas kept sending wary glances your way, but didn’t approach you, thankfully.

You looked at the others’ large backpacks and it made you think about your own. A hand luggage and a small backpack were all you were taking with you, so you didn’t have to pay extra fees for the flight company. It was definitely going to be cold in Spain, so you hoped the clothes you were taking were enough.

You got separated from the group for a moment as you went to the restroom. It’d be quick, so you told them to go on ahead.
You were about to get in when someone blocked your path.

“Excusez moi, mademoiselle,” a woman grinned at you. Her smile was almost made of plastic.

“Yes?” You asked, one brow rising as you waited for her next words.

“I’m Nathalie from Paris News—”

You didn’t wait for her to finish and began to walk in the other direction with a frown. Stupid reporters couldn’t give you break even to go to the freaking bathroom.

“Mademoiselle, please!” She went after you and you saw a man with a camera do the same. Where did he come from? “Just one question!”

You gritted your teeth, walking faster to the international flights’ entrance.

The woman began to bombard you with questions, catching the attention of other travelers.

“What’s your relationship with Chat Noir?”

“Are you lovers like everyone is saying?”

People began to whisper around you, but the woman wasn’t done yet.

“Did you already make love?”

You tightened your jaw.

“Is he a passionate lover in bed?”

You could feel the pent up anger coursing through your veins. “This is much more than one question, lady.”

She didn’t stop. “Do you love him?”

You jerked to a halt in front of the entrance, almost making the woman lose her balance as she stopped as well.

Chat not wanting to see or talk to you, the reporters not leaving you alone, the accusing words being thrown at you left and right. It was all piling up in an angry mess inside your head, and you couldn’t stop the words that left your mouth.

“We’re nothing.” You spat at the woman. “There’s nothing between me and the cat.” You showed your ticket to the guard, and looked one last time at the reporter. “Now leave me the hell alone.”

She tried to go after you, but the guard stopped her, asking for the ticket, which she didn’t have.

You walked inside, pulling your luggage behind. It was like a fire was lit inside you, transforming all the frustration into anger. Damn that woman, and damn Chat Noir as well.

People kept staring at you as you walked to the metal detector, and you stared them down until they looked away, embarrassed.

A few minutes later, you sat down near the other students. You crossed your arms over your chest and just glared at the large glass panels, seeing planes take off in the distance.
“What happened?” Louise asked in a careful voice by your side.

“Nothing,” you said, glancing at her. “Don’t worry about it.”

She didn’t try to pry, and went back to talking with the others.

Finally on the plane, you took your seat by the window.

Through the whole flight you put your earphones on and pretended to be asleep. The loud music boomed into your ears, drowning out the thoughts that wanted to settle in and the excited conversations around you.

And if a tear ran across your cheek, you pretended the fault lay in the air conditioner, and not in a troubled heart.

Chapter End Notes

Look at all that angst, all those feels (;ω;)✧(*´∀`*) I'm really excited for the next chapters aaaaa

And I've been thinking... Where are you guys from? You don't have to say it if you don't feel comfortable, but I'm really curious! I think many of you already know, but I'm from Brazil :)

Also I'll answer all your messages soon! I know I missed some in the older chapters, but I'll get to them eventually :)

PS: The second survey result for the next POV chapters are out! Check it out if you haven't!

PPS: I love you all! Thanks for all the overwhelming support♡
That time of the month when I suddenly appear and update is here yay (ﾉ´ヮ´)ﾉ*:・*
thank you all for the wonderful comments! I loved to know that this story has reached so
many people around the world, it's amazing and fills me with joy ♡

Samantha referred to this story as a "Heartbreak Conga Line" and I think it's really
fitting :') so get ready because the angst is real

The mix of colored lights entering the building through stained glass windows danced around the
couple a few meters ahead of you.

Your eyes focused on their intertwined fingers. They were whispering to each other, like the church
around them didn’t matter, and they were in their own world.

“Hey, you ready to go?”

You blinked, startled out of your reverie, and looked at Louise by your side. It was obvious on her
face that she was glad to be leaving. She had made a comment a few hours ago about how staring at
architecture and stained glass windows in the cold with tourists in every corner wasn’t her idea of
fun.

“Sure.” You looked around one last time, taking in the beauty of the lights in the Sagrada Familia. It
wasn’t a place to have fun, although some running children could disagree with you. The colored
lights and high ceilings made the place seem unreal and brought you a sense of melancholy and
peace.

Said peace vanished the minute you tried to get out of the church. There were people everywhere,
and you got lost for a moment in the middle of a huge Chinese tourist group.

After throwing many ‘excuse me’s here and there as you squeezed past, you got to the streets and
could finally breathe. Following your group along, soon the horde of tourists began to give way to
locals. You watched some teenagers laugh and talk in loud voices as they went in the direction of a
McDonald’s. It was weird being surrounded by Spanish everywhere after hearing and speaking
mainly French for half a year.

You took a few more steps before glancing over your shoulder. No one seemed to be following you.
You smiled a bit to yourself in relief. One week in Barcelona and nobody had recognized you yet.
However, a part of you wondered if it’d remain like that.

“Alright, so where are we going?” Zoe’s distinct accent made you snap your eyes to her. She was
turning and turning her map around, trying to find the way. You resisted the urge to sigh. So you had
been walking around for no reason?

With your hands inside your coat, you followed the group along the cold streets as they decided
where to go, but your steps weren’t as energetic as theirs. Not anymore anyway.
The first week you had tried your best to be excited about the trip, giving your opinion, searching for places to visit, doing everything to keep your mind occupied. You had, quite literally, run away from your problems, and at first it seemed to be working. Your days were simple. You walked all day, arrived exhausted at the hostel and slept right away. No thinking, no complicated feelings. Simple.

However, as the days passed and it seemed like you had been away from Paris for a month, you couldn’t keep up the pace anymore. Your body could be getting better and your feet were healing, but your mind wasn’t. Too many ‘what ifs’, too many unanswered questions – besides the new ones regarding your future. It was wearing you down.

You began to miss out on the group conversations, as your mind was elsewhere. The others got worried, but you kept telling them you were fine, until the questions stopped. They didn’t try to pry or ask about your relation to Chat, which you were grateful for.

You blamed everything on the tiredness of the trip and stress of the last week, but it was different, like something was missing.

You walked by some bars as you went to the gothic part of the town. A Korean couple passed by and you smiled as you were reminded of Marinette. She loved Korean couples’ matching outfits.

Your eyes kept travelling around until they landed on a blonde girl wearing a hat and sunglasses looking at a menu. She stared in your direction for a brief moment, before looking down again. Your heart sped up, wondering if she had somehow recognized you, but she didn’t show any signs of it.

Maybe it was an exaggeration of your distressed mind, but you could swear you began to see the girl everywhere after that. You mentioned that to Louise, but she hadn’t even noticed the girl. With a slight fear that you were making all this up in your head, even the girl, you decided it was just a coincidence, nothing more. There was no way any reporter would have found you here.

Your foot was tapping on the ground as the group kept looking over menus, trying to find a place to have lunch. It was always difficult to choose with so many people together. The restaurant needed to have a combination of cheap, good and varied food, which turned the simple task of having lunch into a complicated and absurd puzzle.

Looking around the large street filled with people, you were keeping an eye out for any blonde girls, but no sign of the one yet. A plan was forming itself in your head, a way to find out if she was actually following you and to stop this nonsense. You didn’t come all the way to Barcelona to feel paranoid again.

“Hey, we’re going inside this one. You coming?” Liz, a shy Mexican girl, tapped you on the arm.

You opened your mouth to speak when your eyes landed on a street corner a few meters ahead, where the blonde girl was looking around some shops. You clenched your fists. Who was she? Her hat and sunglasses seemed like some sort of disguise.

“Actually,” you turned to Liz with a smile. “I’m going to buy some souvenirs for my friends real quick before I forget. I’ll catch up with you guys soon.”

“Ok then.” Liz nodded. “We’ll be at the restaurant.”

You walked, pretending to look at the stores, before entering a big shop. You waited, looking at the
various t-shirts with “I love Barcelona” written on them. A huge bee landed on one of the clothes and you moved away from it with careful steps. It seemed to be staring at you with its big eyes.

Your attention was pulled away from the insect when the shopkeeper greeted someone with enthusiasm – he hadn’t bothered to greet you. As you looked at the entrance, you saw the blonde girl. You swallowed dry and delved deeper into the store. No, this wasn’t a coincidence.

You left the store with quick steps, trying your best not to look like you had stolen something. You turned around the corner and waited, hearing your pulse in your ears.

The sound of the blonde’s heels hitting the pavement reached you.

Confrontation wasn’t part of your initial plan, but you were tired of this, of being watched, hunted like you had committed a crime, when all you had done was… feel.

You shook your head and took a deep breath. Mustering up all the courage you could find in yourself, you stepped in front of her. “Why are you following me?”

The blonde’s blue eyes widened as she got into a defensive stance. A second later she blinked and composed herself, adjusting her purse on her shoulder as a sneer appeared on her face.

“Following you?” She scoffed. “Sweetie, do you know who I am?”

You narrowed your eyes at the French accent in her voice. A Parisian reporter perhaps? But why was she wearing a disguise?

You gave the blonde your best intimidating face. “I don’t know who you are and I don’t care. If I see you following me again, I’ll call the police.”

After glaring at her one last time for dramatic effect, you turned around and began to walk in the other direction.

You heard the blonde huff and mutter with outrage, “Call the police? The police! I’m doing her a favor!”

A favor? You had no idea what was she talking about, and if she was a reporter, you didn’t want to find out.

You let out a breath and put a hand over your chest as you moved, feeling your heart beating rapidly. You didn’t know how you were able to say all that to the girl without your voice wavering. With a quick look behind yourself, you went back to the restaurant. Hopefully she would stop following you now.

----

The shared room was empty when you got to the hostel. It was unusual to find it like this, so you decided to sit down on your bunk bed for a moment and revel in the silence. The rest of the day had been uneventful, and the blonde girl had disappeared, but the encounter with her left you skittish many hours later.

You grabbed your phone, watching as messages popped up on the screen.

You stared at one of Marinette’s texts.

Mari: hey, call me when you can! Miss you!
With a faint smile, you pressed the call button in the message app, so you didn’t have to pay international fees. Your eyes travelled around the room as you waited, the other bunk beds filling most of the space.

Seconds passed, and Mari didn’t pick up. Your finger was hovering over the end call button when you heard her voice through the speaker.

“Allô?”

You barely made out her voice from the background noise.

“Hey Mari, can you talk?” You lay down on your back, resting your head on the pillow.

She said something, but a loud song coming from her side of the line made it impossible to understand what it was.

“Sorry, I can’t hear you.” You raised your voice, the sound loud in the quiet room.

“Oh, for fuck’s—” Mari tsked. “Can you turn it down?” She screamed, away from the speaker.

It seemed like she was talking to someone, but there was no response and the song didn’t stop. Marinette sighed and for a moment all you could hear was the melody. You strained your ears to understand the lyrics.

*Et tu t’en es allée avec un bout de moi*

Your eyebrows furrowed in concentration. You went away with a piece of me? Was that it?

*Maintenant, tout ce qu’il me reste c’est juste une photo de toi, juste une photo de toi*

And now all that I have left is a photo of you. This part was easier to catch, as it seemed to be the chorus. You didn’t recognize the song, but it seemed quite melancholic.

Before you could hear the rest, there was a sound of a door being closed and the music was muffled.

“Allright, that’s better,” Mari sighed. “Sorry about that. I’m at a friend’s right now, and they’re… quite unstable.”

“I hope it’s nothing serious.” Your eyes unfocused as you stared at the bunk bed above you. “Do I know them?”

“Oh, no, no, I don’t think so,” she said in a hurry, making you think that you probably knew the person. Mari was still terrible at acting. “So, what’s up? How’s the trip going? Did anything happen?”

Adjusting your head on the pillow, you told her about your past few days, and at the end decided to mention the encounter with the blonde girl. You decided to leave out the fact that you had threatened her. Mari could get worried or scold you. You had to admit it hadn’t been a smart move, but you were tired and it had worked anyway.

“Blonde, you say?” Mari went silent for a moment and you could hear the faint melody of the same song still playing. Was it on repeat? “Do you know who she was? Probably just another reporter, right?” The tone of her voice was a bit edgy.

“Maybe,” you sighed. “She talked like she was someone important, but I didn’t recognize her.” You raised your head when the shared room door opened and two girls got in, laughing. Your moment of
peace was over.

Mari hummed. “Well, keep safe either way. We’ll talk soon, ok? I have to go now. À plus!”

“Well do. À plus, Mari.” You smiled, amused by the rapid way she had spilled all those words. She probably wanted to go back to comforting her friend.

You ended the call with a lighter heart. Talking to Mari about what was happening helped you get a grasp of your situation and feelings. It was also a nice reminder that someone cared, so you tried to keep contact with her, and Alya as well.

During these past days, even Nino had sent you a message asking how you were doing. Adrien, on the other hand, hadn’t spoken to you since you left for Barcelona. You had sent him a text, but received only silence in return. Maybe he was still upset about the trip. You shook your head as you remembered his reaction when you told him you’d leave. That boy worried too much.

You took a quick shower in the shared bathroom and went down to the hostel common room. They had some cool books there that you could use to distract yourself and free warm beverages. You had been doing this for some nights now, when you couldn’t sleep right away. It was better than being alone with your thoughts.

Liz was always there as well. Most of the others usually went out to nightclubs and bars. They had invited you to come, but after going one time, you just didn’t have the energy to go back.

You opened the common room door and spotted your six travel friends sitting around a table, whispering to each other. Some were probably waiting for the clubs to open, which happened way past midnight.

“Should we say anything?” You heard one of them say.

“I don’t know. She’s already pretty bad as it is.”

“I think she deserves to know.”

“Louise, don’t you dare.”

Curious to understand what was going on, you approached them. “Hey, what are you guys talking about?”

Everyone straightened their postures at the same time, like you were some kind of high ranked general and they were your cadets.

“Oh, nothing.” Luan grinned, pulling a phone closer to him, and the others averted their eyes. “Just deciding what we’re going to do tomorrow.”

You narrowed your eyes at their suspicious behavior.

“Chat Noir made a statement about the girl today.” Louise blurted out. “You, I guess.”

“Louise!” Luan glared at her.

Louise just shrugged. “It’s all over the internet.”

You reached for your phone.
“It’s not worth it,” Liz said in a pleading voice, making you halt.

You bit your lip, already feeling your pulse quicken. “I have to know.”

Sitting on a secluded sofa, away from them, you got your phone and searched for the Ladyblog. It was the first time after you got to Barcelona that you were getting any news about the ‘scandal’. You had tried your best to ignore anything related to it, or Chat.

And now your eyes were searching the video tag for Chat’s speech. A crease formed on your forehead when you didn’t find it. It wasn’t in the Ladyblog yet. That was odd, since Alya was always quick to upload anything related to the heroes.

With furrowed brows, you searched the internet for news. You found an article saying that Chat Noir and Ladybug had saved dozens of civilians from a metro accident. At the end there was a link to a video called ‘CHAT NOIR MAKES SHOCKING STATEMENT ABOUT MYSTERIOUS GIRL’.

You breathed deeply and clicked on it.

The footage started showing Ladybug and Chat Noir putting people on the ground outside a large metro station. The police began to take the victims away as a dark smoke cloud rose from the building.

When the last victim was taken away, the person holding the camera began to run in the heroes’ direction along with dozens of others.

“Chat Noir! Ladybug!” They all screamed, creating a cacophony of voices.

The two heroes turned around and when the camera focused on Chat’s face, you felt your chest tighten. All those days of trying to control your emotions seemed to go down the drain. It felt like such a long time since you had last seen him. And he was transformed, just a week after you had left for Barcelona. Was he lying when he said he couldn’t transform? You narrowed your eyes, but decided to focus on what was happening for now.

Ladybug stepped in front of Chat as the reporters started to circle him. “I’ll answer your questions. Leave him be.”

Chat put a hand on her shoulder as he stepped by her side. “It’s okay, my lady.” She stared at him for a moment and nodded, but her expression didn’t soften.

The reporters separated into groups to question Lady and Chat, and the person holding the camera followed a reporter to Chat’s side.

“What is your relationship with the artist girl?” Someone asked, and you almost rolled your eyes. Now they knew what you studied. Didn’t these people get tired of prying into your life?

“Straight to the point, huh?” Chat chuckled, putting a hand on his hip. “She already gave you an answer, didn’t she?”

You closed your eyes for a moment. Of course Chat had heard about the airport incident.

Your words at the time had been a product of days of frustration and fatigue. You knew that there was something between you and your muse, but you just didn’t know what it was anymore.

Chat’s tone was light and his face unreadable, trained not to show any emotion, making it impossible
to know what he was thinking. You couldn’t know if he was upset about what you had said. Maybe it didn’t make any difference to him? You just wished his emerald eyes could show you the truth, even a slight glimpse of it.

“Was it just a hook up then?” The question made you pay attention to the video again.

“Why does Ladybug get all the cool questions?” Chat gave them a breathy laugh, but you knew him well enough to know it was an empty one. “Don’t you guys want to know how we managed to save more than thirty people from the metro?”

There was silence, and Chat grinned.

“Not interested, huh?” He passed a hand through his hair. “Look, the girl already said there’s nothing between us, didn’t she?” He shrugged. The nonchalant tone of his voice made your chest tighten even more. “What else do you want? A detailed version of my New Year’s night?” He winked to a reporter near him and you saw her blush a deep red. “Well, I’m afraid I’ll have to leave that for another day. Au revoir!”

The reporters all began to talk at the same time. Ignoring them, Chat grabbed his baton and prepared to jump. Ladybug glanced at him and followed his example, saying a brief farewell and readying her yoyo.

“So she doesn’t mean anything to you?” A man blurted out, holding a recorder near the cat hero’s face.

Chat stopped for a moment and looked back at the reporter, his green eyes devoid of emotion. “No. Nothing.”

And he was off. Ladybug gave the reporters a glare before running after him. You looked away from the screen, your muscles tense. It was like Chat’s words were knives piercing your chest and lungs, making it hard to breathe.

You locked your phone and got up from the sofa. So he didn’t care. He was probably avoiding you all along. You breathed deeply, trying to force any upcoming meltdown to stay still within you. You thought you were ready to hear something like this from Chat, after the way he had ignored you, but it hurt much more than you were expecting.

You tried to turn the ruthless pain into fury, into anything other than this, but you just… couldn’t. You also tried telling yourself Chat was just your muse, that you could easily find another one, but your heart didn’t seem to care.

Was that why Marinette had sent you that message? Because she knew about the interview?

“Great job, Louise.”

Luan’s voice made you look back at the group in time to see Louise flip the guy off. You had forgotten you weren’t alone.

You loosened your grip on the phone in your hand and relaxed your expression, but your thoughts were still a mess. You wouldn’t be able to sleep or even read like this. Every time you thought back to the interview, the knives in your chest seemed to curl and cut deeper. So much for worrying about Chat and what he would think.

You stared at the group, your strong gaze contrasting with their wary glances. “Are you guys going to any club again tonight?”
They nodded, giving each other curious looks.

You glanced one last time at your phone before turning to them. “I’m coming with you.”

----

You felt more than heard the glass cup hit the counter, due to the booming music around you. The strong lights from the club reflected on the transparent material and the liquid inside. Your coat was folded over your lap, the confined space along with the large amount of people dancing making you almost forget about the cold outside.

Time was difficult to track in a closed place like this. You didn’t know how long you had been here, but you had lost track of your group, and were sitting on a stool at the bar, away from the dance floor, making small talk with some random guy.

You had a vague idea of what he was talking about, as the music was too loud for you to understand everything and your mind was anything but focused. But his pretty face illuminated by the dim light was a good enough distraction.

You had come to the club in hopes to take a break from your feelings and thoughts, but it wasn’t working. Everytime you told yourself it didn’t matter, a wave of uneasiness crashed over you. After all you had been through in those six months…

’She doesn’t mean anything to you?’ The reporter’s question surfaced in your mind once more and you clicked your tongue in frustration, gripping the glass tighter. This was pointless.

“Hey, you okay?”

The guy’s voice made you snap your head up to him. You didn’t even remember his name, but you doubted he remembered yours.

“Yeah, I’m fine.” You took a sip from your drink.

He searched your face for a moment. “You know, I come here quite often. And I can see when people are here to forget about something or someone.”

You put the glass down and glared at him. “And you take pleasure in making them remember?”

His light eyes widened, and you realized how harsh your words had sounded.

“Look, I’m sorry, I just—” You sighed, looking down at the counter. “I’m not in a good mood today.”

“Don’t worry about it, sorry for prying,” he said and you glanced at him, seeing a bashful smile stretching his lips. “I’m kinda surprised you endured my blabbering for so long.”

You let out a tired chuckle. “The talk was a nice distraction.”

He brought his cup up as if making a toast before taking a sip. “Agreed.”

You motioned with your chin to his drink. “Are you here to forget as well?”

He shook his head, a hint of sadness in his eyes. “I stopped trying a long time ago.”

You arched one brow. “Lover?”
He nodded. “You too?”

You resisted the urge to sigh. Why had you even brought the word ‘lover’ up?

“Not exactly one, but still… It hurts.” You shrugged, twirling your glass on the counter. “Can’t do anything about it for now, besides try to forget or accept what’s happening. Whatever comes first.”

*Since I can’t stop feeling anymore.* The thought kept repeating itself in your mind.

“Wanna talk about it? Share the pain?” He smiled.

You stopped your glass from moving and stared at his clear eyes. This was not what you had in mind when you came to the club, but why the hell not? You’d probably never see this guy again in your life. Maybe he could help shine a light in your thoughts, see things from a different perspective.

You filled the guy with the story, choosing not to mention Chat’s name or that he was a superhero. It’d make unnecessary questions arise, so you just said he was somehow famous and your muse. And in return Diego, he had mentioned his name at some point, told you about his ex-fiancée, how she had left him for another person days before their wedding. Even after a year he still couldn’t move on.

“So you’re telling me the press was involved, right? You shouldn’t trust them.” Diego took a sip from his new red colored drink. You had been talking for a while now. “Have you tried talking to him? That’s something I wish I had done with Mia.” Your arms were almost touching, since you had gotten closer to be able to listen to each other with all the noise.

“He didn’t want to,” you sighed, the memory of those days at the Agreste manor still fresh. “And now he announced publicly that I don’t mean anything to him. His words.”

Diego grimaced. “That’s harsh.” You pursed your lips, taking another sip from your drink. “But didn’t you say something similar? Maybe he was upset about that and wanted to retaliate. A dick move, but still.” He shrugged. “Or he could be trying to protect you from the press.”

You pondered for a moment, before shaking your head. There were too many possibilities. “I don’t know, but he could’ve at least sent me a note or something in the first place to explain what was happening.”

You noticed something moving near your drink and squinted your eyes. A bee? What was a bee doing inside this place? You shooed it away, careful not to get stung.

Diego nodded, getting your attention. “I don’t know how this artistic stuff works, but even if he’s not your boyfriend, nobody should be left in the dark like this. I… know how it feels.”

You gave Diego a sympathetic smile as he gulped down his drink. He was nice company, and somehow his wounded soul seemed to resonate with yours.

A new song began to play, and Diego’s face brightened up. “Hey, it’s our song!” You furrowed your brows, trying to pay close attention to the music. “Crying in the Club!” He stared at you with a grin and you stared back until you let out a quiet laugh, Diego joining you.

You looked at him as he smiled, dimples showing on his cheeks. “Everything is going to be alright. We’re going to be alright.”

Diego’s words seemed genuine, and made something crack inside you. A barrier you had put up so carefully to block all your feelings inside. You sniffled, feeling a tear ran across your cheek, like a
sign that the barrier was no more.

“Hey, don’t take the song too seriously.” Diego put a hand on your shoulder. “It’s okay.”

You shook your head, a chuckle leaving your lips as you wiped your face with the back of your hand. Everything was less than okay right now, but he was still trying to cheer you up.

You glanced at his hand on your shoulder and turned to him. Without thinking too much, you closed the short distance between you two and kissed him. He was startled at first, but began to kiss you back as the song kept playing in the background.

You clung to him like he was your only chance of eradicating the pain in your chest. But it didn’t feel right. His touch, his perfume, the feel of his skin on yours, it wasn’t right. Every cell of your body seemed to scream for you to stop, but Diego beat you to it. He pulled away and put some distance between you two.

You felt terrible as you stared at his wide eyes, which refused to look at your face. “I—I’m so sorry. I shouldn’t have—”

“It’s okay.” He interrupted you. “I went for it too. I thought this time I would be able to feel differently, but it’s still the same. She’s everywhere.” He shook his head with a small smile and went silent for a few moments, before asking. “Did you think about him?”

It was more a statement than a question, but you nodded anyway and grabbed your glass, gulping down the rest of your drink. Even now, all your mind seemed to tell you was that Diego’s eyes weren’t the right shade of green, as if there was a right one. The worst thing is that you knew whose eyes were.

You got up from the seat, your legs protesting, and put on your coat. You had to leave.

“Are you sure he’s not your lover?” Diego was still sitting on his stool, looking at you. “You seem to care for him a lot.”

You passed a hand through your hair and sighed. “I don’t think it makes a difference anymore.”

Diego stared at you with eyes filled with sadness and a bit of worry. You averted your gaze. “I need to go. Thanks for the talk, Diego.”

“You need company? It’s pretty late,” he said.

“I’m fine, thank you. The hostel is nearby.” You glanced at the time on your phone – almost 4 am –, before looking back at him. “I hope things get better for you.”

“For us both.” He raised his glass. “Take care.”

You gave him one last tired smile before heading for the exit, feeling more aware of your thoughts than when you walked in there, trying to forget them.

You pushed the heavy back door open and breathed deeply as it closed behind you. Something wet fell on your head, and as you looked up, you saw white flocks falling from the sky. You just hoped the streets hadn’t frozen. It’d make the walk back to the hostel much more difficult.

You were about to start walking when you heard voices.
“This was easier than I expected,” a man laughed. You looked in the direction of the sound and saw him and another guy carrying a girl away. All your muscles tensed and you froze on the spot.

“I told you.” The other slurred. “The dumb bitch didn’t even bother looking at what was inside her drink.”

Panic began to well in your chest. You looked around trying to find a bouncer, but there was no one around besides you. You had to do something. You needed to help that girl, but how? You couldn’t take on two guys, and if you went to call someone, they could disappear.

A hand on your shoulder made you jump. “Don’t worry, darling, I got this.”

You looked behind you and saw a masked blonde girl. With wide eyes, you watched petrified as she strode in the direction of the men, her black heels hitting on cobblestone.

“Put the girl on the ground. Now.” She announced in a cold voice, and the men stopped, twirling around to face her.

One cursed and let go of the girl, trying to run away. In a second there was a blur of yellow and he was on the ground, knocked out. You blinked a few times, your brain struggling to process what was happening. The masked girl was too fast.

The other guy left the girl on the ground and pulled out a knife. “Stay back, bee bitch!” You paid attention to the girl’s costume for the first time, and it really looked like a bee pattern.

The blonde sighed in exasperation. There was another blur and the guy tried to attack in all directions he could. He was on the ground seconds later.

The bee hero looked at her hands as she walked to the passed out girl. “I can’t believe I ruined my nails with filth like you.”

She kicked one of the men as she passed by them, before cradling the sleeping girl in her arms. Something beeped and you saw the girl look up at the comb in her hair. The sound made you snap out of your frozen state. You knew that noise. You had heard it many times before due to a certain cat hero.

“You’re one of them,” you muttered, staring at her yellow suit with black stripes. Tight and with an animal theme, just like Chat’s and Ladybug’s.

“Them?” She raised one brow.

“Ladybug and… Chat Noir,” you said, the absurdity of the situation dawning on you. There were other heroes and in other countries? And her accent… “You’re French, aren’t you?”

She just gave you a grin in return as police sirens wailed nearby and the club’s door opened, showing two girls looking for their friend.

A few minutes later, the alley was completely different. The sleeping girl was being put inside an ambulance, her friends by her side, and the police were arresting the two men. Curious people were beginning to exit the club, and you approached the bee hero before the commotion became too much. She had just finished talking with the cops.

“Hey, hum, thank you for appearing when you did,” you said. “I froze, and didn’t know what to
The blonde grinned and waved a hand dismissively. “It’s my job, darling.” You noticed she was pressing her other hand over a spot on her abdomen.

“You’re hurt,” you muttered as you saw the grimace on her face.

She glanced down and huffed. “This was nothing, sweetie. Not having Ladybug’s healing power nearby is a nuisance, but I can manage.” She winked at you and before you could ask the million questions in your mind, she waved. “Bye bye.”

“Wait!” You called out as she jumped high. You kept looking up, white snowflakes falling on your face, as she bounced from wall to wall until she was at the top of the building, hidden in darkness.

With a sigh, you wiped your face with your hand and began to walk away. Everytime you tried to know more about the heroes, it seemed like the world was working against you. That’s probably how Alya must have felt during all those years.

With your mind racing, you headed back to the hostel. At this point you shouldn’t be surprised with crazy things happening in your life, but it was like the universe always found a way to surprise you. In less than a month your life had turned upside down, and you hadn’t been able to do anything about it.

The sound of steps made you look ahead. A lone figure crossed the street in front of you and stopped to lean on a lightpost. You couldn’t believe your eyes.

“Goddammit Pollen, you couldn’t have waited for five more minutes?” The blonde girl hissed as she took out her phone. She wasn’t wearing a disguise today, so you could see her blue eyes shining due to the bright screen. Coming to a halt, you looked around, but it was just you two in the whole street, save some passing cars here and there.

After contemplating if you should go back and take another street, you looked back at the blonde. She was staring at you.

“Oh, it’s you,” she sighed. “Great, now you’re going to say I’m following you, right?”

You narrowed your eyes. “It’s a really big coincidence, don’t you think?”

The girl looked back at her phone and shrugged. “Call the cops, darling, whatever, I don’t care. Just hope they get here before my uber.”

You noticed there was a red stain on her abdomen. It seemed to be blood.

This could be a trap, but you couldn’t stop yourself from asking. “Are you hurt?”

She glanced down. “Nothing major, I just fell. And no, I don’t need your help.”

You stared at her, your forehead creasing. That injury seemed too extreme for a simple fall.

You remembered her words from hours ago, when she said she was doing you a favor. With a sigh, you crossed your arms to try and conserve some sort of heat as a gust of icy wind ruffled your clothes, and began to look around.

“What are you doing?” The blonde asked, suspicion in her voice.
You motioned to her phone. “I’m going to wait until your uber arrives.”

“Why?”

“It’s not safe here, and you’re hurt.” You didn’t know if that first statement was true or not, since you didn’t really know this neighborhood, but you didn’t want to let another girl have the same destiny as that one from the club. At least if something happened you could run with her to your hostel.

The blonde just stared at you for a long moment before shaking her head and turning her gaze to her phone.

You both waited in silence until the car arrived, with you putting a safe distance between you and her in case it was indeed a trap. Although, for some reason, you didn’t feel threatened by the girl anymore.

The blonde opened the back door and motioned her head to the interior of the car. “Get in.”

You furrowed your brows. “Uh, no?”

She rolled her eyes. “I’m gonna take you to your hotel. Tell me the address.”

“My hostel is pretty close, don’t worry about it.” You pointed forward. The hostel was just a few blocks away.

She kept holding the door open. “I swear I won’t kidnap you or anything, sweetie. Matías—” She put her head inside the car. “It’s Matías, right? Yeah.” She looked back at you. “Matías is here as proof. And girls should take care of each other, right?”

You chewed on your bottom lip. You still didn’t know if you could trust this girl, but at least the uber driver would be there, so you decided to try your luck. You were tired and exhausted emotionally, and it was snowing. A ride would be nice.

“Alright.” You got into the car, greeting Matías, the driver.

The blonde hissed as she got in after you.

You grimaced, imagining the pain she must have been in. “Shouldn’t you go to a hospital or something?”

“I’m fine.” Those were her only words before being silent for the whole car ride.

As the car stopped in front of your hostel, you tried to pay for your part of the ride, but the girl waved her hand, telling you money wasn’t one of her problems.

Feeling like you were in a crazy dream, you got out of the uber after saying goodbye to Matías. The blonde opened the window.

“Hmm, thank you…” You extended the word, waiting.

“Chloé. Chloé Bourgeois.”

You nodded. “Thank you, Chloé.”

She stared at you and then shook her head with a small smile. “I can see why he likes you so much.”

She ignored your question, opting for a flourish of her hand. “You have my blessing.” You kept staring at her solemn expression. Her blessing? For what? Before you could ask the car began to move. She waved at you. “Don’t give up on that fool, ok? Bye bye, sweetie, au revoir!”

You wanted to scream at her to explain herself, but she just left you gaping as the car sped off. Who was she talking about? It couldn’t be… Chat, could it?

Chapter End Notes

This chapter was supposed to end in a huge cliffhanger, but thanks to my lovely teacher, who made me redo my animation, I didn't have enough time to do that :DDDD

If anyone is interested, the song Marinette's friend was listening to is M. Pokora - Juste Une Photo De Toi. Middle school emo vibes lol

Thank you all for another year, happy holidays! (⋆¬³⋆)♡
Winter Sun (Part 1)

Chapter Notes

Well, well, well, it is I, with another chapter this month. It's still technically December, so consider this a double update :D The story now has +100k, ohmygod

I was actually pretty busy this month, with traveling, projects and far too many family reunions, but I managed to get this done, and thankfully Samantha was able to go over it today with me.

So, without further ado, the last chapter of 2017!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You tried not to wake the others in the shared room as you tiptoed to your bunk bed. Your feet were dragging on the floor, your shoulders slightly slacked, and that was probably the only reason why you would be able to sleep. Everything that had happened earlier kept passing in your mind in flashes, and if this were any other night, you’d spend it staring at the bunk bed on top of yours. But thankfully, your body was begging for rest.

Pulling the covers over your head and creating a bubble of warmth, you unlocked your phone and opened the internet. You had to search quickly before your tiredness got the better of you.

You typed ‘queen bee’, and a crease appeared on your forehead when the search engine completed the sentence for you with ‘identity reveal’. Your digit hovered over the option for a brief moment before you clicked on it.

You couldn’t stop the gasp that left your mouth when the first image that appeared was of the blonde girl you were with just a few minutes ago. Chloé Bourgeois.

Someone shuffled on their bed and you closed your mouth tightly as your wide eyes stared at the side by side comparison of Queen Bee and Chloé photos. So that’s why she had been wearing a disguise. If people saw the blonde, they wouldn’t leave her alone.

It was like a veil was lifted from your eyes. Everything made sense now. The injuries, the blonde hair, even her face… It had been so obvious. You wondered if it was going to be like this if you ever discovered Chat’s or Ladybug’s identity. There had to be some sort of magic that stopped you from connecting the dots and realizing the obvious, you couldn’t be that dense.

Your eyelids were dropping as you read Alya’s article on the Ladyblog about Queen Bee. It said that a few years back, when confronted about her identity, she had just transformed back in front of a crowd of people and announced with a smug grin, ‘You know what? I’m Queen Bee. Deal with it.’

Why she had done that was beyond you, since Chat seemed so adamant in keeping his own identity a secret. You imagined Ladybug was the same, but Chloé, apparently, didn’t care about that.

You tried to come up with theories for her identity reveal, but your brain was exhausted. And as your eyelids fluttered closed and your fingers’ hold on your phone relaxed, the only thing you could think about were Chloé’s— Queen Bee’s words before she parted from you.
Don’t give up on that fool, ok?

An image of Chat’s smile came to your drifting, slumberous mind. You wished she had said the same words to him.

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The waiter was just arriving with your plate when your phone vibrated. You looked at the notification.

Alya: this is all the information I have

You opened the message and saw she had sent you a link. You typed a quick ‘thank you Alya, you’re the best’ with a happy emoji to her before clicking on it. A name was written at the top of the page.

Rena Rouge.

“Your food will get cold,” Haruka nudged you.

“And you’re missing out on the cover guy, he’s pretty cute,” Louise added, motioning to the guy playing the guitar in the middle of the restaurant.

“Just a minute,” you mumbled as you kept reading the article.

A sigh left your mouth when you finished. It really didn’t have much information. When you had messaged Alya and asked if there were any other heroes like Queen Bee, you were excited when she told you there was one more.

But all the page said was that Rena Rouge was French like Lady, Chat and Queen Bee; that she used a fox themed suit, and had disappeared after the battle with Hawkmoth, leaving no trace behind.

You turned your attention to your now warm meal with a frown. Your curiosity was left unsatisfied once more. That battle seemed to have changed a lot of things, and as you gained more information, you became more and more curious to know what had happened.

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“We’re gonna miss it, c’mon!” Kostas said while running on the ramp.

You and the others did your best to follow him through the debris filled path. The last thing you wanted was to twist your ankle. You breathed in and out as you climbed more steps. Despite the cold, you were sweating under your coat.

Who had the stupid idea of coming to this ridiculous place in the middle of nowhere--

The thought vanished from your mind when you got to the top of the hill. Barcelona stretched out in front of you, and you could see everything from the Sagrada Familia to the sea. All of it was illuminated by the pink glow of the upcoming sunset.

“Wow,” Zoe muttered by your side. It was the first time you saw the Australian speechless, but you couldn’t blame her.

You got closer to the edge and sat down on the dirty ground. A cold breeze hit your face and you breathed deeply, your lungs being filled by the icy air. You snatched a picture of the breathtaking scenery and smiled as you looked at it. Even if the photo couldn’t capture the whole beauty of the
moment, it still looked stunning. You couldn’t wait to show it to Chat—

You bit your lip when you realized where your train of thought was headed. Why did he always have to be the first on your mind?

Luan called you to take a group picture and you shook your head as you got up. It wasn’t the first time that thought had occurred, and you doubted it’d be the last.

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You watched as the retreating waves left their mark on the wet sand. People were sitting by the shore, relishing in the warmth of the sun. It was too cold to swim, but a few courageous kids didn’t seem to care. You adjusted yourself on your towel, trying not to get too much sand on your clothes or your sketchbook.

You had been observing people for some time, sketching their figures when they weren’t looking. Some were taking pictures, others warming each other up when the northern wind blew too strong.

You looked down at your drawing of two girls sitting side by side on the sand. The fondness was clear in their gazes, and the sight of it made you painfully aware of the burning inside your chest. Some kind of longing that you couldn’t ignore anymore.

As the waves hit the shore in a serene melody, you told yourself it wasn’t something that was missing, but someone. Him.

Heaving a sigh, you got up, grabbed your things, and began to walk, following the coast as the salty wind pushed strands of your hair back.

It was your last day in Barcelona. You had spent the last week enjoying the city, going to museums and making sketches of the city’s landmarks. It had comforted you in a way. Art was reassuring, even if sometimes all you wanted to do was to throw your sketchbook across the room and not look at it anymore. But you always came back to it. Art made you see life through the eyes of another person and immerse yourself in another reality.

You had sketched mindlessly sometimes, and when your eyes skimmed over the pages at the final result, the drawings resembled far too much a certain cat hero. You weren’t really surprised. Chat was still your inspiring muse and would continue to be, even if there was nothing left between you two.

The pain from his words and actions was still fresh, but you were getting better at handling it. The talk with Diego had helped somehow.

It was a shame that it took a situation like this for you to accept what you felt. It seemed like a sick joke pulled by someone.

Maybe the Greek muses, or even Apollo, the god of arts himself, had looked at you and thought that your destiny was to create art from a broken heart. Maybe it was your destiny now, to create beautiful pieces out of your misery. That was what many artists did, they poured their negative emotions and pain in their art, wishing the paper, words, paint, would take away some of it.

You smiled at your own drama and crouched to grab a shell. After wiping most of the sand off of the surface, you put it inside your pocket, along with some other shells you had picked.

In some way, you were happy to finally admit and accept that Chat was more than your muse, more than just inspiration. He had asked you to admit that many months ago, but at the time it didn’t seem
serious. Now you knew better. You knew that the warmth you felt when you looked into his clear eyes, the worry when he got injured… It was all much stronger than inspiration, or even friendship. It was much closer to love than you had ever planned.

But it was too late, your pessimist heart told you. Your muse was still ignoring you, and after what he had said, you doubted he’d ever want to see you again.

You stopped at a high structure in the middle of the beach. It seemed to be some sort of modern sculpture. It consisted of four metal cubes with windows on both sides, stacked one above the other. Along with the deserted beach, it made the place look almost post-apocalyptic.

You sat on the concrete at the feet of the sculpture and put your back to the rusty metal. The cries of a group of seagulls were the only prominent sound, apart from the constant crash of the waves. You kinda missed the nonstop talking of Louise and the others.

The group had separated today, with each one wanting to do their own things on their last day. You had decided to come to the beach and enjoy your last peaceful day. You knew that’d change when you arrived in Paris.

Luan had told you he needed to buy souvenirs for his family, since he wouldn’t have another opportunity to go back to Spain. With furrowed brows, you had asked him if he was leaving Europe soon, and he nodded. But when you had asked ‘what about Julien?’, the boy had quickly changed the subject.

A seagull landed on top of the sculpture, and you strained your neck to look up at it. The posing bird gave you an idea, and you decided to take a picture of the structure. You’d show it to Adrien later. Maybe he’d know what it was.

As you took the photo, your phone vibrated in your hands. Your eyes widened a fraction when you saw the notification.

Cute model boy: hey

You opened the conversation and stared as he kept typing. Why now of all times? You had just thought about him, and after two weeks he finally messaged you.

Cute model boy: I’m so sorry for not answering your messages sooner, things have been crazy these past days

Cute model boy: anyway, the flat is ready for you to move in. We already carried your boxes and luggage to the apartment. I hope you don’t mind

Cute model boy: send me a text when you arrive ok? Have a safe trip back

You waited for Adrien’s next message as it said he was still typing, but it never came. He had probably erased what he had been writing.

You locked your phone with a smile. At least the blonde was back to talking to you, and that was a good sign.

You’d answer him later. Because right now, just thinking about going back to Paris was making your stomach get tied in knots.
You had been stressing over it for days. Would the reporters still follow you? Would you adapt to your new apartment? And Chat...

You knew these six months before your departure wouldn’t feel the same, not without the cat hero visiting you. But you knew time would go by fast, and you would do your best to enjoy your days before you had to say goodbye to the city and people that had changed your life forever.

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A sigh left your lips when you finally sat down in your seat on the airplane.

“Sorry, can I…” Kostas motioned to the seat by your side and you got up to let him pass. “Thanks.”

You got comfortable again as he looked out the window. Your relationship with the Greek had gotten better with the trip, but it was still a bit awkward. You still haven’t talked with him about that night when Chat made him run away in fear.

A child with a Queen Bee hat passed by in the corridor, and your thoughts shifted to Chloé. You hadn’t seen her again after that day, but you saw her face a few times on the news, a confident smile always on her lips. It seemed that she was still active in Barcelona.

“You seem better now than you have been for these past two weeks.” Kostas’ voice made you look at him. He was gazing at you with a hesitant smile. “Glad to be going back?”

“Barcelona was a nice change of pace.” You smiled back as the plane began to move. “But I miss Paris.”

“Yeah, I even miss all the rain and craziness.” Kostas chuckled. “…” He looked at his hands for a moment before speaking again. “You know, after I saw the news, I understood why you wanted to be with Chat Noir that night.” You froze. You didn’t think he’d bring the topic up. “I’m sorry for trying to make you leave, but I had heard the rumors about him and didn’t want to leave you alone.”

“It’s alright,” you said, relaxing and imagining what kind of rumors he had heard. “I’m sorry that he made you run away like that.”

The guy’s eyes widened before he shrugged. “It was a good exercise.”

Kostas laughed and you couldn’t help but laugh along with him, feeling the awkwardness slowly dissipate between you.

At the same time, the plane finally took off, leaving Barcelona behind and heading to the city of love. You rested your head on the headrest, having no idea what would be waiting for you there.

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You stared at your phone’s screen as you waited for Adrien’s message, people coming and going into the metro station. You had sent him a text saying that you had arrived and he asked you to meet him at the École Militaire metro station. Now you were waiting for him at the entrance, but no sign of your friend yet.

Cute model boy: I’m here, where are you?

You searched in the swarm of people until your eyes landed on a familiar tall blonde figure. Your stomach gave a small flip, which was odd. It was just Adrien, you should be used to his looks by now.
You waved at the blonde and his eyes widened the moment he saw you.

He approached with long strides worthy of a true model, and stopped in front of you.

He gave you a quick once over before giving you a hesitant smile.

“Hey, ça va?” He said and gave you a cheek kiss, touching his cheek with yours.

He parted from you in a second, not giving you enough time to give him a proper hug, like you liked to do.

You arched a brow. “Are you still mad at me?”

“I wasn’t mad.” A crease appeared on his forehead as he rubbed his neck. “And I’m still not.”

“Good,” you said and hugged him, wrapping your arms around his torso in a tight embrace.

He froze for a moment, but then his muscles relaxed.

Adrien let out a small sigh that didn’t go unnoticed to you before hugging you back. “I’m glad you’re back,” he said in a soft voice that made your heart skip a beat.

Confused at your own reaction, you just stared at him as he pulled away. What had happened to you? Was this a side effect of being nervous of coming back?

Adrien smiled, and you noticed his cheeks were dusted a light pink. At least it seemed like you weren’t the only one affected. “Let’s go to your new home.”

After walking up the stairs all the way to the top of the building, Adrien unlocked and opened the door as you leaned against the wall, chest heaving.

_Breathe, you told yourself, just breathe._

The blonde walked inside first and held the door open for you. “Ma’am.”

You rolled your eyes with a smile and stepped inside the place. Your heart was beating rapidly, not knowing what to expect.

Your mouth went slack as your eyes went over every detail, from every decoration of the hall, to the fancy chandelier to the large sofa. It even had a television.

Adrien walked to your side and peaked at your face. “So, do you like it?”

From where you were, you could see a corridor that had three doors. It was already bigger than your last apartment. And to the right there was another door that led to the kitchen. The place was too big for just one person.

“I—” The words died in your throat when you looked in front of you. As if in a daze, you walked to the window doors.

You opened them and a cold air current entered the warm hall, ruffling your hair. In front of you was a small balcony. It even had a petite table and two chairs. And when you looked up, you saw the top of the Eiffel Tower peeking over the blue roof of the building in front of you.
With wide eyes and a slack mouth, you looked back at Adrien, and then at the Tower. And then back at Adrien.

The blonde let out a laugh. “I guess you like it then.”

“Well, of course!” You got back inside and closed the window before turning to him. “I love it, but…” You glanced back at the Eiffel Tower. How was this the same price as your modest apartment in the suburbs? It wasn’t right. “Are you sure about the price?”

He nodded, focusing on adjusting a pillow on the sofa. “Yeah, the landlady will talk to you later to arrange the payment. It’s the same.”

“Wow.” You shook your head in disbelief as you looked around once more. “Thank you for finding it for me.” You tried to give Adrien a pat on the arm, but he took a step back, making you arch your brows.

The blonde looked away before giving you a bashful smile and walking to the corridor. “C’mon, I’ll show you how the heater works.”

A few minutes later, you stopped at the hall again after a small tour of your new apartment. Adrien had been acting strange, spacing out and getting skittish when you got too close to him. You couldn’t pinpoint what was bothering him now, since he even let you hug him earlier.

Now he was staring at a table lamp, lost in thought. You noticed the dark circles under his eyes. It made a wave of worry wash over you.

“Is something wrong?” You asked, making him snap his head in your direction. “Are you getting enough sleep?”

“I’m fine,” Adrien chuckled, waving his hand dismissively. “You know, just modeling stuff.”

You gave a small nod, wondering if it was an excuse. It sure sounded like it, but you wouldn’t pressure him to talk. “Alright, but don’t overexert yourself, model boy.”

His mouth curled up in a gentle smile. “I’ll try, chéri—” He began to have a coughing fit and you almost rushed to his side to pet his back, but he put a hand up. “I-I’m okay. Actually,” he grabbed his phone and looked at the screen. “I need to go now.”

Your shoulders sagged. “Really? Don’t you want to stay a little?” You looked at where your supplies boxes were, piled up in a corner of the hall. “I’m sure I have something to eat in here.”

You wanted to repay Adrien in some way for all the help he had been giving you. A snack wouldn’t be enough, but it’d at least be something.

You also felt a weird necessity to be near the blonde. Did you miss him that much?

Adrien scratched his neck, walking backwards to the door. “I, hum, I need to prepare for an important meeting.”

“Oh, ok then,” you said, trying to hide the disappointment in your voice.

“Here.” He gave you the keys of the place. “If you need help with anything, the landlady’s phone is written on a post-it on the fridge.” He motioned to the kitchen’s door. “You call also send me a
message if you want.”

“Alright.” You nodded, rubbing your arms and keeping a safe distance between you two in case Adrien freaked out again. “Thank you again for the help, Adrien. Take care.”

“It was nothing.” He hesitated before leaning in and giving you a quick kiss on the cheek. “À bientôt.”

You closed the door after he left. He might have said he wasn’t mad at you, but you couldn’t find any other reasons for him to be acting like that. You just hoped he’d go back to his calmer self soon.

Heaving a tired breath, you turned around to your new apartment, your mood lightening up a little. All of this, and it was all yours.

Still in awe, you went to one of the bedrooms. It had two. Two, for fuck’s sake!

You lay down on the soft queen sized bed and looked out the window, watching the dark grey sky. It felt weird to be in another place, another home, but it wasn’t as bad as you thought.

You knew you could adapt to this place, especially with a view like that, but still, you weren’t sure how long it’d take to feel like a home, if it’d ever feel like it.

You tried to think why the other apartment felt like a home to you, and soon realized it hadn’t really been the place, but Chat, your muse.

Letting out a sigh, you turned away from the window and stared at the wall instead.

The cat hero had made Paris into a home to you. Your new friends had helped a lot, but it was the cat boy who made you feel like you had a place you wanted to come back to everyday.

And now, without his presence, everything felt dull.

Deep down you knew this apartment wouldn’t feel right without him, but you’d try your best to adapt to the change, and hope the emptiness would pass.

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You were reading a book near the window, looking up from time to time to gaze at the top of the Eiffel Tower. The Paris landmark was illuminated and its light stood out in the dark of the evening. It still seemed surreal to live here, so close to it, and you would enjoy this view whenever you could.

Your phone signalized a message had arrived. You put the book down on your lap before grabbing the device.

Mari: it’s settled. I don’t want to hear any more excuses.

Your lips quirked up in amusement. The text was from the group chat Alya had just put you in. It consisted of her, you and Marinette. Earlier, Mari had asked for your new address, saying that they’d make a ‘welcome back’ lunch for you at your place. She apparently didn’t want to hear when you said that you had been away for just two weeks.

A knock on your window made you jump, the book flying from your lap. You gripped the brochure tight before it fell to the ground, and looked in the direction of the sound, your heart speeding up.

You got up, tiptoeing away from the window and getting closer to the front door. Due to the closed curtains, you couldn’t see who or what was knocking. But if it was another villain after you, you
wouldn’t be captured so easily this time.

It was just your goddamn luck. You had just arrived in Paris and they had already—

You heard your name being called, followed by, “Chérie, it’s me. Can I come in?”

At the moment his voice reached your ears, you made a huge effort to control your heart, but it was in vain. The bastard was already speeding up even more, this time not in fear, but shock and anticipation.

In a daze, you walked to the window door and opened the curtains. A familiar pair of green eyes gazed at yours through the glass. Swallowing dry, you looked down, focusing on opening the lock with a neutral face, trying not to show how much you were freaking out inside.

What was he doing here? How he did he find you?

You opened the door and watched with the corner of your eye as Chat walked inside the flat with cautious steps, his black suit contrasting with the neutral colors of the room.

You were hyper aware of his presence, like every cell of your body was ecstatic to be near him and was screaming at you. Trying to ignore the automatic need to get closer, you rubbed your crossed arms, goosebumps rising thanks to the cold wind coming from outside.

“I see you found a place with a better lock,” Chat let out a small chuckle, looking around.

“Yeah.” You closed the door, still refusing to take a proper look at the cat hero. With a deep breath, you turned around to face him. “Why are you here?”

“Ouch.” He put a hand on his chest, over the place his heart should be. “I suppose I deserve the cold words, but it still stings a little.”

You felt a pang of guilt. It wasn’t your intention to give that impression. You were just perplexed that he was in your apartment after what he had said in that interview.

It made no sense. If you meant nothing to him, why was he here? To make it official whatever you had was now over?

Gaining no reaction from you, Chat sighed. “I’m here to talk, chérie. We need to settle this.”

You looked at him and took in his expression. He seemed so different from that video, so… open. You could see the emotion in his eyes, and what you saw made you even more confused.

You nodded, wanting to settle this once and for all, for the both of you. “Yeah, we do.”

Chapter End Notes

Did you guys think you would escape the cliffhanger? :D C’mon, it's a beautiful one, I just couldn't let it pass

But anyway, my dear readers, it's the end of another year, and what a chaotic year it was. I just want to thank each one of you for your support, the comments, the coffees, everything. This story is part of my life, and I can't imagine what my days would be
without you guys, without reading your reactions and messages.

I would also like to thank Samantha, my wonderful beta, for her friendship, patience and lovely sense of humor, which makes editing each chapter something I look forward to. You're the best.

To the readers that tell me how this story changed or helped them in a way, I feel honored in a way I cannot express. You guys also helped me so, so much.

And if you're a silent reader, it's okay, thanks for reading! And I hope this story has made you smile at least once :)

Yeah, I'm getting kinda sentimental here, but I can't help it, you guys are the best.

A happy New Year to you all, and see you in 2018 ♡
Chapter Notes

Here it is, one of the most anticipated chapters! Thank you guys once again for the amazing support, the story just hit 2k kudos and I'm speechless (*ノ∀`*)

How do you think the talk with Chat will go? Read to find out!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The clock on the wall ticked as the seconds passed. It was the only sound that cut through the heavy silence of the room. Chat was sitting on an armchair across from you, fiddling with his ring, his face unreadable. You, on the side, couldn’t stay still on the sofa, tapping your feet. You knew you wouldn’t be able to relax until he was gone. Which, if taking into account his words at the interview, wouldn’t take long.

“I guess I should start.” Chat cleared his throat and glanced at you, his gaze strong and unwavering.

Your fingers gripped the edge of the sofa as you waited for his dismissal. The sooner he told you it was over, the better. If he could just be quick with it--

“First of all, I’m sorry, chérie. I’m sorry for everything I caused you.” His gaze softened, and all that determination seemed to give place to one emotion: guilt.

A slight frown creased your forehead. An apology straight out of the blue wasn’t what you were expecting. At all.

Chat started to count on his fingers. “The kidnapping, the reporters, your old flat. It was all my fault.”

“It’s fine now,” you said, crossing your arms and trying to keep a level face despite your inner turmoil. You had to show him you were fine, but why, you didn’t even know yourself.

“No, it isn’t. I can see in your face that it isn’t,” he said and you looked away, biting your lip and cursing your facial expression under your breath for giving you away so quickly.

“Look, princess,” the blonde let out a short breath. “I’m sorry for leaving you at a time like that. I know you thought I was avoiding you, but I wasn’t.”

“What was it then?” You felt a spark of anger within yourself, fueled by memories of the days after the New Year, and glared at him. “Why didn’t you say anything? Why didn’t you leave a simple message?”

It was Chat’s turn to look away, a pained expression on his face. “What Marinette told you was the truth. I couldn’t transform.”

You gave him a skeptical look, shuffling on the sofa. “Yeah, right.”

Maybe you didn’t understand a lot about his magic hero powers, but this really sounded like an excuse. Saying it was easy, and it also didn’t explain your other questions.
“You don’t believe me, do you?” The blonde said with a humorless chuckle. “Great,” he muttered and passed a hand over his face, sighing.

You watched as he became restless, like he was fighting against himself. Even his tail was moving from one side to the other. What was he thinking about?

He let out a breath and sat upright on the armchair. “Alright, fuck it.”

You waited for Chat’s next words. The sound of the insistent clock was forgotten as your heartbeat pounded in your ears.

He took a deep breath. “I’m not the only Chat Noir that existed.” He stopped for a brief moment, gauging your reaction. “There have been many before me, and thanks to my… powers, I’m connected to them.”

Where this was headed? And what did it have to do with this conversation? Your eyebrows furrowed in confusion, but you remained silent. It was the first time Chat talked about his powers in this manner, so you waited before asking any questions.

Chat continued to analyze your expression. “I’m not making this up. Later you can decide if you believe me or not, but for now just… hear me out, chérie.”

He gave you a pleading look and you gave a small nod in return. “I’m listening.”

He began to fiddle with his ring again. “Sometimes, the connection gets stronger. That’s what happened inside that nightmare bubble. What you saw was a mix of my thoughts along with memories of another Chat Noir, from the past.” Chat kept twirling the accessory, his mind far away, lost in another time. “His life was a hard one, with too much death and pain for one to bear.”

You chewed on your bottom lip, not liking where this was going.

“You saved me when that crowd was about to burn me for being a witch.” Chat looked up at you. “He didn’t have the same luck.”

You grimaced, putting a hand on your chest as a bad feeling came over you. What a horrible way to die. The image of Chat burning along that pile of wood entered your mind, but you were quick to change the course of your thoughts. It hurt just to think about it.

“The…” Chat struggled to find the word. “The entity that gives me my powers was too moved by the nightmare, and couldn’t transform me until a few days after you left the city.”

You leaned forward, as if your curiosity was pulling you to him. “Entity?”

Chat nodded, but didn’t elaborate.

You stared at his ring. So there was an entity that made him like this. Your mind was bubbling with questions, but it didn’t seem like Chat was going to talk more about it.

“Does the entity live inside the ring?” You asked, but Chat pressed his lips together. You took the hint. “You can’t tell me about it.”

The cat hero let out a breathy chuckle, passing a hand through his blonde locks and leaning back in the armchair. “Ladybug will already kill me if she finds out I told you all this. But I think you deserved to know why I couldn’t see you.” He gave you a somber look. “I wanted to.”
You averted your eyes, the intensity of his gaze too much to bear. Even if his story had made you understand his point a little better, it still didn’t answer all your questions.

“I… believe about the transformation, Chat, but why did you leave me in the dark? Did the entity stop you from sending a simple message?” You gave him a pointed look and saw him flinch. “I thought—” You sighed. “I thought you didn’t care. And then what you said in that interview…” You let out a chuckle. “I’m honestly surprised you’re even here.”

His cat ears were held back as he gazed at you.

“I thought about it,” he said, and began to fiddle with his ring again. “But there was another part of me that thought that if I sent you a message or talked to you right away, you would say you didn’t want to see me anymore because of all the trouble I caused you. So I postponed it.”

You shook your head in disbelief. How could he think something like this?

He glanced at your face before looking away, eyes downcast. “It was weak, and stupid, I know.”

“That was indeed stupid,” you said, trying to contain the irritation in your voice.

“Marinette told me as much.” Chat rubbed his neck. “But it didn’t matter how much she lectured me, it was done. I realized I screwed everything up when you went away and spoke with that reporter.”

You looked at your hands, remembering your angry words that day. You knew this would be brought up at some point.

“I’ll admit it, princess, your words hurt me quite a lot.” You saw Chat shook his head out of the corner of your eye. “But when I kept thinking about it, I just couldn’t believe it. Well, I had to believe you didn’t mean what you said, for my own sanity.” You glanced back at him and saw he was smiling, his face lighting up a little. “And now, I know I was right.”

Your heart gave a leap at his expression. He seemed so confident, with his eyes trained on yours, as if checking for a reaction. So he didn’t believe in what you said to the reporter? Then why had he reacted the way he did in that interview?

You were lost. You didn’t know what he wanted out of this conversation anymore. Because if he wanted to say it was over, he’d have done it already.

You tried once more to keep a neutral face, another attempt at maintaining your composure. “How can you be so sure?”

“If you really thought there was nothing between us, we wouldn’t be having this conversation.” His smile grew. “You wouldn’t be so upset about what I said at the interview. Am I wrong, princess?”

You narrowed your eyes at him, but said nothing. You didn’t have to. He already knew how you felt, but you, on the other hand, didn’t know what the hero was thinking when he said you didn’t matter to him. You wanted to put up a tough front, to lie and say you weren’t upset about his words, but that’s all it would be, a lie.

“What was all that for then?” You said, the defensive tone in your voice evident. “Didn’t you mean it?”

“All I said was just to keep those vultures away from you, ma belle.” He looked at you with such warmth in his eyes that it took you aback. “I hope you know how much you mean to me.”
You let out a heavy breath, his words like a punch to the gut.

Your head was a mess of emotions and thoughts, and with each word that left Chat’s mouth, it got worse. Your eyes kept darting around the room and then back to him, while your brain tried to comprehend what was happening.

You didn’t know what would be the outcome of this conversation. You were sure he was just going to say it was over and leave. You weren’t prepared for some sort of confession like this. You weren’t prepared to have a chance to make things right.

Chat kept looking at you, waiting for a response. Just looking at him made your heart ache. This boy meant so much to you.

You took a deep breath. If this truly were a chance to have him back, you would take it.

“I…” You began, thinking of how to continue. Chat had been open to you, and the least you could do was do the same to him. “I thought you cared for me. But then you left me when I needed you the most, and I began to doubt it.”

His expression was filled with guilt again, but as much as you didn’t like that look in his eyes, you wanted to let him know how you felt. You had to.

“I was frustrated, tired, confused.” You continued. “Mad at you for not saying anything. Those damn reporters kept asking me these ridiculous questions about you and—” You felt your throat begin to close as tears threatened to fill up your eyes, but you forced yourself not to let them fall. “And I wasn’t sure about anything anymore… I’m still not sure.”

Chat got up from the armchair and sat by your side, but at an arm’s length away from you. The proximity made you bite your lip to hold back the stubborn tears.

“It’s okay, princess, I don’t blame you.” His eyebrows were knitted together with worry. “Please, don’t cry over me, ma belle, I don’t deserve it.”

“Stop saying things like this.” You sniffled and rubbed your eyes in annoyance before glaring at him. “I’m crying because I care so much about you, you idiot. I—”

You shook your head, your voice getting caught in your throat for a moment.

“I’m sorry too,” you whispered. “Sorry for saying there was nothing between us after all that happened.”

“It’s okay,” he muttered, making a move to touch you with his gloved hand.

His hand stopped midair before he retracted his palm. The fact that he couldn’t bring himself to touch you made your chest tighten.

You brought your legs up and hugged your knees, needing some sort of comfort. “I know there’s something here,” you said in a small voice, gesturing between you and him. “I just don’t know what it is, and the doubt is eating me up inside.”

“We don’t have to put a label on it,” Chat said, his lips quirking up. “If you want, I can continue to be your muse, and you’ll be my artist.”

You leaned your chin on top of your knees, knowing full well you couldn’t go back to that. You didn’t want the cat hero to visit you just so you could draw him. You wanted his company, to hear
his laugh, to be near him, to touch him without any excuses…

“It’s not that simple anymore,” you muttered.

“What? You want more than that?” Chat chuckled, but upon seeing your troubled expression, his face fell.

You swallowed dry and averted your gaze. God, this was embarrassing.

You opened your mouth to answer, but Chat beat you to it.

“You know, I shouldn’t be encouraging this for a number of reasons, chérie, but I can’t help it.” Chat sighed, and you turned to him as he passed a hand through his locks. “When you have been dealing with danger on a daily base for as long as I have, you realize something.”

He opened his palm on his lap and stared at the three dots on his ring.

“When you find someone that makes you look up to getting out of bed everyday, someone who makes you want to win a fight just so you can live to see their smile again… You have this egoistic need to keep them close to you as much as you can.” He turned his face to you, and you saw a somber smile lifting his lips. “Because you don’t know how long you have left to be with them.”

You felt your eyes burn with unshed tears as you absorbed the meaning of his words. Did you really mean that much to him? If your head was a mess before, now it was even worse, with every part of you just wanting to hug Chat and keep him close.

“And there’s also the fact that you’re leaving Paris soon.” His voice was barely a whisper, but as it reached your ears, a bad feeling erupted in your chest. You couldn’t ignore the truth in his words. You had less than six months in Paris now.

Chat swallowed, and you saw the way his eyes were glinting.

“So,” Chat’s lips curved in a small smile. “If you being with me is what you want, princess, let’s enjoy this fully while we can.”

You smiled back at him and blinked, a single tear running down your right cheek. It was surreal to think that minutes ago you were certain that he’d just leave, and now you had the chance to be with him again. You wanted to talk, to say something, but it was like your mouth refused to move, trapping the words inside you.

“I’m aware that it’s a lot to ask.” Chat continued. “You know how my world is by now. Villains, danger, annoying reporters…” He leaned closer to you, approaching with care as if you’d run away at any moment. “And you had to be hurt for me to realize I’m not strong enough to protect you from all of it.”

He wiped the tear from your cheek with the back of his finger, careful not to hurt you with his claw.

“But even so, if you choose this… If you choose me, I’ll do my best to become stronger, and make sure no one will hurt you like that again,” he said, and you could see the promise in his determined gaze.

You forced yourself to break out of the haze you were in. You had to say that he had been what you wanted for a long time, even if you weren’t aware of that before. “Chat—”

The doorbell rang, making you jump in fright and snap your head to the front door.
Chat closed his eyes as his ears moved in the direction of the noise.

He blinked, opening his eyelids again, his dilated pupils thinning due to the light. “I think it’s the landlady.”

“The landlady?” You whispered in a mix of astonishment and relief. At this hour?

“Go. I’ll wait.” Chat said in a low voice, putting distance between you two again. He motioned to his ring. “We have time.”

You breathed deeply and got up, going to the door. Of all times the landlady could’ve come to talk to you. But at least your heart was lighter now, filled with hope. After talking with the lady, you would go back and tell Chat that you wanted to be with him. And then you could begin to work things out.

With a smile, you glanced back at the cat hero over your shoulder and saw him rubbing his eyes with the back of his hand. It made your chest tighten.

When you unlocked and opened the door, a small old woman grinned at you.

“Oh, hello there.” She greeted and narrowed her eyes through her glasses. Her blue eyes were clouded, probably due to cataracts. “You’re the new resident, right?”

Closing the door a little behind you so that the lady couldn’t see inside, you nodded. “Yes, ma’am, that’s me.”

“Oh, good! Welcome, dear, I’m Adelaide.” She motioned for you to get closer, and as you did, she gave you a double cheek kiss. “You seem lovely, just like the handsome blonde gentleman told me you were.”

_Handsome blonde?_

You felt your lips quirk up. “Do you mean Adrien?”

“Oh, yes, that’s his name.” She smiled, adjusting her purse on her shoulder. “You have a wonderful boyfriend, dear.”

Your eyebrows rose and you let out an amused chuckle. “He’s not my boyfriend.”

“Really? I could swear…” She scratched her chin. “Especially with the way he kept talking about you. He seemed to be completely in lov—”

There was the sound of something falling inside your apartment and you turned around, trying to peek through the half closed door.

“Is that he?” The lady whispered.

You looked back at her and waved your hands. “Oh, no, that’s… That’s not him.”

_Are you sure?_ A small voice in your head asked.

It was like a bucket of freezing water had been dropped onto your head. Your eyes widened as it dawned on you that, _no_, you weren’t sure.

Mrs. Adelaide narrowed her eyes, staring at the door, before she gave you a knowing look. “Right. You could have told me you were busy, dear.” She waved at you. “I’ll come back later.”
Snapping out of your reverie, you cried out to her, “Wait, Mrs. Adelaide, it’s not like that!”

The lady smiled as she prepared to go down the stairs. “It’ll be wonderful to have you here, dear. And Adelaide is just fine. À plus!”

You watched her figure disappear down the staircase before entering your apartment, passing a hand through your hair. What even had been this conversation?

“What did she want?” Chat asked, the book you had been reading earlier nestled in his gloved hands.

That’s… That’s not him. The words you had just said to the landlady came back to you as you stared at Chat.

“I don’t know.” You shrugged, walking closer to him, and with each step your heart seemed to beat faster. “Probably to welcome me and talk about the rent, but she left when you made that noise.”

“Oh,” Chat put the book down on the sofa. “Sorry about that.”

“Don’t sweat it.” You gave the blonde an amused look as you stopped in front of him.

Are you sure? You bit your lip as the question surfaced once again in your mind. Are you sure that’s not him?

“She thought you were Adrien,” you said, eyes locked on Chat’s green ones.

“Oh,” his eyebrows rose for a moment before a side-grin quirked up his lips. “That friend of yours?”

You nodded slowly, watching his reaction. Could it be?

You had wondered about that before, months ago, when you didn’t even know Adrien’s name, but you had dismissed it, their personalities were too different.

But now, thinking about it again, you couldn’t deny all the similarities, especially the physical ones. The blonde hair; the green eyes, which seemed to be of that same familiar green tone; the fact that Chat had taken you on that date in the Agreste manor’s balcony… There were so many, you could pick any one.

“Are you…” You tilted your head to the side. “Are you Adrien?”

Chat paled, eyes widening. You held his gaze as he searched your face for a long minute.

“Do you think I am?” Chat finally said in a low tone.

“Maybe. I… I don’t know,” you muttered, breaking eye contact. Your eyes became unfocused, staring at a random spot to your right, as your mind tried to put all your thoughts and evidence together.

“Princess, look at me.” The firm tone of Chat’s voice made you snap your eyes to his. “Do you think I’m Adrien?”

There was something different in his expression as he searched your face this time, a mix of anticipation and disbelief in his features. And by the way his lips seemed to curl up ever so slightly, you thought you saw a bit of hope in there too.

A bright green light coming from his ring caught your attention and you glanced at it for a brief second. Weird, it wasn’t there a moment ago.
You felt a sharp pain in your temples, and your hand flew to the right side of your head as the pain got worse. You hissed and closed your eyes. You could still see the green light under your eyelids. It was like it was imprinted on them.

“Chérie, are you okay?” Chat said, apprehension coating his voice.

“I think so,” you mumbled, massaging your temples in hopes to make the pain go away. “I just felt a sharp pain in my head all of a sudden.”

You heard Chat curse under his breath, and opened your eyes to look at him. He was staring at his ring, eyes wide. The light from before was beginning to fade.

“Did something happen?” You sat down on the sofa, leaning your pounding head on the backrest of the sofa.

Chat didn’t answer, deciding to sit by your side instead, peering at your face with a worried gaze.

What the hell had just happened? You tried to analyze the events that led to this, but another wave of pain hit you and you groaned.

You couldn’t concentrate, your thoughts now reduced to mush due to the pain. All your brain was telling you was that it was stupid to think Chat was Adrien. How had you even come up with that idea? It was absurd. Ridiculous.

“I’m sorry.” Chat said in a small voice. He sighed, looking downwards. “I’m so sorry.”

“Why are you apologizing?” You chuckled, massaging your throbbing temples again. At least the pain was slowly subsiding, now that you were making no effort to think. “You didn’t do anything.”

“I already did too much,” he muttered, glaring at his ring, and got up.

“Where are you going?” You raised your head from the backrest, watching as he got closer to the window door.

“I’m a fool, chérie.” He gave you a sad smile. “I thought I could have this, but it seems that whatever I do, I only end up hurting you more.”

Your eyes frantically searched his face. What was he talking about?

“Wait, don’t go.” You got up from the sofa in a rush as he opened the door. “Please, Chat.”

He turned to look at you, and as his eyes met yours, you understood. If he went away now, he wouldn’t come back. After all that talking, you were going to lose him.

You couldn’t let that happen.

You swallowed dry. “I need you here with me. You’re the one I want.”

The blonde shook his head. “You will only get hurt.”

“I’ll learn how to protect myself.” You said, trying to put confidence in your tone, even though what you felt was far from it. “You said you’ll get stronger for me. I’ll get stronger too.”

His green eyes widened for a brief moment.

“The reporters—” He began, but you cut him off.
“I don’t care as long as you’re with me,” you said.

Chat stared at you, but you didn’t waver and sustained his gaze. A chilly breeze entered through the open door, ruffling his blonde locks.

After a long moment, Chat averted his eyes and let out a breathy chuckle, passing a hand through his hair. “I can’t believe you.”

“Does that mean you won’t leave?” Your expression lit up with hope.

“Think about your decision.” Chat stepped onto the balcony, and your face fell. “Think if staying with me it’s what you really want, and…” He stopped for a moment. “If it’s worth it.”

You shook your head swiftly, wincing a little as mild pain shot through your head. “I don’t need to think—”

“Please, chérie.” Chat interrupted you, pleading eyes boring into yours. “Consider it.”

You gazed at him in disbelief. Did he really think you would say no?

“Fine.” You sighed, rubbing your arms. “I’ll think about it.”

Chat smiled and you wished you could hug him, to wrap your arms around him and not let him go.

“I’ll come back tomorrow to hear your answer.” He said. “Bonne nuit, ma belle.”

“Bonne nuit,” you muttered, hugging yourself to keep out the cold as Chat leaped to the roof and disappeared into the night.

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You swiped your finger on your phone’s screen, checking your email for the tenth time today. No response from the university yet.

After Chat had left yesterday, you weren’t able to sleep, reliving the conversation in your head over and over. By chance, you decided to check the Parisian college’s site, since the classes would begin next week. Panic had arisen in your chest when you read that there were only two days left to register for the next semester. You had totally forgotten about that.

In a rush, you had tried to enroll in your chosen subjects, but received an error each time. Seething with barely controlled rage, you had sent an email to the international student coordinator asking how to proceed. She still hadn’t responded, and you were beginning to get worried.

You sighed, putting your phone away and pushing the empty plate in front of you a little to the side, so that you could lean your tired form on the table. Around you were other empty plates and glasses, the only remnants of the ‘welcome back lunch’ you, Mari, Alya and Nino had put together in celebration of you coming back to Paris.

You rested your head on your hand and looked to your right. The sky was beginning to clear up, and a soft light was illuminating your apartment’s hall. Your friends were talking between each other around the table; excited about the shells you had given them as souvenirs from Barcelona. You had painted small landmarks of the city on them in your free time.

Your gaze shifted to the empty chair to your left. The shell you would give Adrien was sitting on the table. You picked it up and brought it closer to you. The small painting depicted the place Kostas
took your group one day, where you could see the whole city.

Adrien had said he couldn’t come, that he had to do some errands with his father. It seemed that he was avoiding you. You turned the shell in your hand. Did you do something wrong?

You were so absorbed in the shell that you didn’t notice when the room became silent.

“You okay?” You heard Alya’s voice. Turning to look at her, you saw all your friends staring at you.

“Yeah,” you gave her a small smile. “Just thinking that it’s a shame that Adrien couldn’t come.”

The three gave each other a look, which didn’t go unnoticed to you.

“What?” You asked, puzzled by their reactions.

“I’m sure he’s not doing this on purpose. To hurt you, I mean.” Nino said. “You know he likes you, right? Like, really likes you. In a romantic way.”

You almost dropped the shell on the table.

“Nino,” Alya whispered in a reprimanding tone, nudging him.

“No, Alya.” He hit his hand on the table, startling you and the girls. “If she doesn’t already know, she needs to. I’m tired of Adrien not doing anything.”

“Nino, I’m sure he knows what he’s doing.” Marinette warned, throwing a rapid glance at you.

“Yeah, right,” Nino scoffed. “This is the first time in years that he has cared for someone like this. And I’m not letting him fuck this up by being weird.”

You watched the exchange with wide eyes, still trying to digest the information that Adrien liked you. Sure, the others had made fun of the way he acted around you, but you didn’t think it was serious.

“You have no idea how many times Adrien has talked to me about you.” Nino’s eyes softened. “Saying how amazing you were, how beautiful.” He smiled. “He became so much happier after meeting you.” He motioned to the girls with his head. “Alya and Mari know I’m not making this up.”

Alya nodded. “Yep, can’t deny that.”

Marinette stayed silent, staring at the table in deep thought, a hand covering her mouth.

You looked at the shell in your hand. If what Nino was saying was the truth, it could explain why Adrien was always so nice to you, but also awkward at the same time.

“But you like Chat Noir, don’t you?” Nino said.

You swallowed dry and kept looking at the shell. Did Adrien know about that? Did he know that you couldn’t reciprocate his feelings?

You gave Nino a small nod. “Yeah… I do.”

“Nino,” Marinette straightened her posture, turning to glare at him. “Let Adrien deal with this.”
The boy didn’t spare her a glance, still staring at you. “Even if you like another guy, all I’m asking is for you to give him some time. I’m sure he’ll go back to normal soon.”

“Oh mon dieu,” Marinette sighed, putting a hand over her face.

“Relax, Mari.” Alya put a hand on her friend’s arm. “It’s for the best.”

Marinette just shook her head, a troubled expression on her face, like she wanted to say something but couldn’t.

You chewed on your bottom lip, gripping the shell in your hand.

“Does he know?” You finally said, to no one in particular. “Does he know that I like Chat?”

Due to that photo of you two kissing, it was made public that you had something going on with the cat hero, but you had told the press that it was nothing. Had Adrien believed in it?

“Yeah, he knows,” Nino said, and you gulped. “I believe that’s why he’s acting the way he is now. He just needs time to come with terms with that fact.”

You thought back to how Adrien had acted yesterday. How he had been distant and didn’t want to come closer to you. How he tensed when you had hugged him. He probably needed his space at the moment, but he had still come to help you with the apartment.

You tried to put yourself in his place. If it were you, you’d feel awful. Being so close to someone you like, but knowing that they didn’t feel the same way.

“I feel terrible now,” you muttered, putting the shell on the table, away from you.

“Don’t be.” Alya put a hand on your arm, a comforting smile on her lips. “You can’t choose who you fall for.”

Marinette gave Nino a pointed glare and the boy arched a brow to her, mouthing a ‘what’.

You sighed and Nino leaned forward on the table, probably to avoid Mari’s furious gaze.

“Look,” he said with a smile. “I just said all this so that you didn’t think Adrien was mad at you. Even as a friend, I’m sure your presence is important to him. Don’t get out of his life.”

You nodded, giving a small smile back. “I won’t.”

You glanced at Adrien’s shell. You knew that when you came back to Paris your peace would be over, but you were expecting reporters and villains, not this. Your mind was already full with thoughts of the conversation you had with Chat, and now you had all this to worry about too.

“Is someone’s phone ringing?” Alya asked, and you blinked, breaking out of your thoughts. You recognized the ringtone in an instant.

“Allô?”

“Bonjour, this is Inès from the Art and Design University of Paris,” a woman said. She said your name, asking if it was you, and after you confirmed, she continued. “Please come to the international office this afternoon so that we can resolve your enrollment problem.”

Your eyes widened, looking at the clock on the wall. This afternoon?
Your hurried footsteps sounded on the granite white floor as you strode through the long corridors of the university. A shiver went down your spine when a gust of wind hit you. The stones made the cold winter seem even colder. You thought that you wouldn’t need to face this freezing place until next week, but here you were.

If you were almost running through the corridors, it wasn’t really your fault. Inès had told you to meet her at 4pm, and you had two minutes before you were late. After your talk with her, you had left your apartment in a hurry, apologizing to your friends for cutting the reunion so short.

The few scattered students in the corridors stared as you passed, some whispering to each other in not so subtle voices.

*It’s the girl from the news.*

You heard it again and again, as if the voices were following you.

It was a sample of what would happen when the semester actually started. You held your head high, hands balled into fists. Let them talk. If Chat decided to be by your side, they could say what they wanted, you didn’t care. You told the cat boy you’d get stronger, and you’d begin to put that into practice already.

You breathed deeply through your nose, turning to the right. The International Office was just a few meters ahead.

You hoped this talk with Inès wouldn’t take long. Chat had said he would come back today, but he didn’t tell you when. Your stomach had been hurting all day from anxiety. You didn’t want to miss it.

You stopped in front of the office’s door. It made you think back to the Administration Office, the place you went to after the crazy teacher had given you that zero. It gave you a bad feeling in the pit of your stomach, but you shook your head and opened the door. This was different, nothing was going to happen. But if something *did* happen, you wouldn’t get angry like before. You already knew what would happen if you did.

You got closer to the counter, and a woman raised her head from a stack of papers to look at you. “*Bonjour. May I help you?*”

“I have a meeting with Inès,” you said as naturally as you could.

“Oh, that would be me.” She giggled. “You had a problem with enrolling, right?” You nodded. “Well, let’s see.” She typed on the computer. “Yep, I see what’s the problem. You also need to include ‘Figure Drawing 2’ in your chronogram.”

“Why?” You furrowed your brows, looking at her in confusion. “I already did Figure Drawing.”

“Yes, I see it on your file.” She nodded. “But we received an email from your college saying that it was compulsory for you to take this subject if you wanted to prolong your stay for another six months.”

You arched a brow at her, beginning to get suspicious. “I didn’t receive this email.”

“It was directed to our university. Here, I can show you.” She typed on the keyboard, and you waited, mulling over why your college was forcing you to attend classes like this.
Inès turned the computer screen to you, and you saw the email, recognizing who had sent it. It was a teacher of your course who had helped organize your student exchange. It even had her signature and stamp.

“Alright, then.” You shrugged with one shoulder, defeated. “I guess I don’t have a choice.”

The woman hummed as she typed again, her long nails making clicking sounds as they hit the keyboard. You foot was tapping on the ground as you looked at the time on your phone. All you wanted was to leave already.

“Here you go,” Inès handed you a piece of paper a few minutes later. “That’s your new schedule, and the required supplies for Figure Drawing 2. You can look up the classrooms on the internet, but you know that already, right?”

“Yeah, thank you,” you said in a quiet voice, looking over the papers.

You weren’t worried about that. You were more preoccupied about the fact that you already had a class of Figure Drawing 2 the next Monday morning, and the list of supplies was enormous.

You already had some supplies, and some others wouldn’t be hard to find, but you almost let out a pained groan as you saw that you had to buy a large metal easel. That would be such a pain, the type they were asking for was expensive as hell, and big, meaning you wouldn’t be able to take it back with you when you went back to your country.

“Oh, the teacher also said that you can use some materials from the university,” Inès said, catching your attention. “You just need to inform her on the first day of class.”

You could feel the grin stretching your face. That made things a hundred times easier. You thanked Inès with a big smile and said a swift ‘au revoir’ before leaving the office.

You were almost skipping on your way to the entrance. Ignoring the other students wasn’t even hard with your happy mood. Now you didn’t have to go running to a big art store on the other side of town and could go back to your apartment.

You hoped Chat wouldn’t take too long to appear. All you wanted was to tell him your choice, which hadn’t changed since your talk with him. You didn’t have to think much about it. You already knew what you wanted: your muse. The blonde cat dork with the captivating green eyes.

And you’d tell him exactly that.

Chapter End Notes

Are you guys too frustrated with the almost identity reveal? LOL I’d say I’m sorry, but that would be a lie :D

The next chapter will be the Chat’s/Adrien's POV of Chapter 10, so keep an eye out for the sinful thoughts of the blonde cat hero ;)

Say, in a nearby future, we may, may not have chapters with smut, you know? Maybe/cough/ Would you guys feel more comfortable if I put a warning before the chapter? If we, hypothetically, have a chapter like this, of course.
Chapter Summary

Lewd meter: (°_³°)

Chapter Notes

Hey, I'm back!! Sorry about the delay, a lot of things happened and life was a mess. To summarize: I got sick and had to go to the hospital. I'm getting better now, but my health is still pretty shitty and things are going slower than usual.

Oh, and I decided to put lenny faces in the chapter summary when things get heated. The amount of lenny faces symbolizes how lewd I think it is (°_³°)

Enjoy the sinful kitty thoughts!

The pink energy coming from Ladybug’s yoyo hit Chat and the unconscious artist in his arms. He watched as the gray tones left her skin and she went back to normal. A relieved smile made its way to his lips. She was safe now. But he didn’t have much time to admire her face as they were on the base of a broken statue, which would be soon fixed by Ladybug’s power. He jumped off the base as the broken part hovered in the air.

“How is she?” Ladybug walked over to him as he put the artist on the ground, under the shadow of a tree.

“Unconscious for now.” Chat caressed the girl’s face, but she didn’t move.

“I’ll wait with her, you can go,” Ladybug said.

Chat looked at her like she had grown another head. “What are you talking about? I’m not leaving her.”

Ladybug gave him a side smirk. “I don’t think you want anyone else, especially the upcoming reporters, to see that.” She motioned with her head to the lower part of his body.

He looked down and his whole face flushed in a second. The outline of his erection was clear through the tight suit. Well, merde. He had forgotten how revealing the suit could be.

Chat got up with a quick movement and moved his crotch away from Ladybug’s amused eyes. Even if his face was burning with embarrassment, he couldn’t be mad at himself. Of course he had gotten hard, with the artist rubbing herself all over him and saying those things while he was pinned down.

He cleared his throat, snapping away from his thoughts. “I’ll... I’ll go inside,” he said, pointing to the main building.
“Good choice.” Ladybug smiled while crouching down to put the artist’s head on her lap.

Chat bit his lip as a wave of jealousy hit him. He wanted to be the one doing that so bad, but he knew he couldn’t. Not right now, anyway.

He shook his head and readied his baton. He closed his eyes for a brief moment, the friction of the suit on his sensitive skin making his head spin, and ran.

He jumped through an open window and entered an empty classroom, chest heaving. Because of the attack, there was almost no one inside the building. It made things easier for him, and he was glad. Thanks to his erection, it was difficult to concentrate on anything else.

He went into a bathroom on the second floor, where he had transformed when he first heard the commotion. His backpack was hidden there, and luckily he had a piece of Camembert inside of it. He always kept one in there for emergencies, although the strong smell was the price to pay.

As soon as he closed the door, his ring began to beep in a crescendo and he transformed back to his civilian self.

Adrien caught Plagg, who almost passed out in his hands as he left the ring.

“That was…” Plagg said in a weak voice. “Great.”

Adrien snorted. “Yeah, right, you perv.” Plagg narrowed his eyes and bit his index finger. “Ouch! What the hell!” Adrien glared at the kwami and put him down on one of the sinks.

“Look who’s calling me a perv.” Plagg yawned. “Just give me the cheese.”

The blonde shook his head. The nerve. He found his backpack and gave Plagg the piece of Camembert. The kwami almost ate everything in one bite. He was more worn out than usual and Adrien knew why.

The kwami absorbed his energy and feelings while he was transformed as Chat Noir. And when he got too… excited, the amount of energy was tripled and Plagg went into sensory overload. It basically meant that Plagg got into a daze when Chat was really happy or horny.

And talking about the latter… Adrien looked down at his jeans, which were too tight for comfort. He adjusted them a little over his crotch, but it didn’t help and the revealing shape was still clear as day. How was he going to go back and help his artist like this? With the adrenaline and arousal still pumping in his veins, this could take a long time. Unless…

He looked back at Plagg, who had finished eating and was floating near the sink. “Plagg, hide and keep an eye on the door for me.”

The kwami yawned once again. “What are you going to do?”

Adrien felt his cheeks grow warm. “Just… Just tell me if someone comes in.”

Plagg’s eyes widened before he gave him a knowing look. “Oh, you’re going to masturbate.”

“Plagg, don’t—” Adrien let out a heavy sigh. “Nevermind. Just keep looking.”

He headed for one of the stalls and locked the door behind him. He wished he could just be like Plagg and absorb the damn energy and be done with this.

Adrien looked at the toilet lid for a second before scrunching up his face. Like hell he’d sit on that
filthy thing. He put his back to the metal partition and got a bit of toilet paper, so he wouldn’t mess up his clothes. Opening the zip of his jeans, he let out a satisfied hiss.

“Don’t take too long.” He heard Plagg say and his eye twitched.

“Shut up,” Adrien said through gritted teeth.

He heard the kwami snicker. The bastard.

He relaxed again and took his overly sensitive erection out of his boxers. He had been so close to coming when the artist had been touching him, and now his body was imploring him for release.

The moment he began to move his hand, his eyes rolled back into his head and he had to bite down on his bottom lip hard to prevent himself from moaning. He sneaked his other hand under his shirt and began to touch his nipple, feeling it get hard under his touch.

The artist’s face, looking down at him with half-lidded eyes, appeared in his mind. ‘You’re mine now,’ she whispered. Adrien swallowed dry, his hand moving faster. He knew if Ladybug hadn’t stopped her, she would probably have done him right there, in front of everyone.

Adrien let out a rather loud groan at the thought. His eyes widened and he clamped his mouth shut. He stopped and listened for a moment, but there was no other sound in the quiet bathroom besides his pounding heart and his labored breathing. He bit down hard on the back of his other hand to keep himself from letting out any embarrassing sounds and kept going. Soon his muscles began to tighten and he knew he was close.

‘Moan for me, kitty cat,’ the artist’s voice in his mind said.

It sent him over the edge and he came with a cry on the toilet paper, muttering profanities in between the quiet moans that he couldn’t contain anymore.

A lazy smile curled up his lips as he leaned his head back on the metal partition, chest heaving. He had really needed that.

He began to clean himself up when he heard the bathroom door close.

“Adrien, dude, is that you?”

Nino’s voice made Adrien’s blood run cold, his whole body freezing.

“Dude, I recognized your voice. What the hell are you doing?” Nino’s voice got closer to the stalls. Adrien’s heart began to hammer in his chest as he zipped his jeans up. “Is someone inside there with you?”

“N-No! It’s just me, wait a second.” Adrien threw the toilet paper into the toilet and flushed away the evidence. Taking a deep breath, he opened the stall door with his best supermodel smile. “Hey Nino, how are you? Is it safe to go outside yet?”

With a quick look, Adrien searched for Plagg but didn’t see the kwami anywhere. He was going to kill him for not warning him about the door.

“What the hell man?” Nino’s voice made him look at his friend. By the look on his face, the smile didn’t seem to have worked on him. “I searched the whole building for you, and you were here jacking off?”
Adrien’s eyes widened as the words echoed in the quiet bathroom.

“Nino, shh!” Adrien put a finger to his own lips. “I wasn’t doing anything.”

“Oh yeah? Care to explain why you were moaning like that?” Nino crossed his arms over his chest.

Adrien tightened his jaw. Goddamn Plagg for not warning him. How much had his friend heard?

Nino began to pace around.

“I understand that you have your needs, man, but fuck. In the middle of a villain attack?” He gave him a look. “Did you even know who got akumati—” Nino stopped in his tracks and looked at him with wide eyes. “Wait, did you see her?”

Adrien swallowed dry. “See who?”

An unreadable smile crept over Nino’s face. “Did you see your little crush akumatized? Is that why you’re all hot and bothered?”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.” Adrien turned away from him, trying to hide his burning face, and went to grab his backpack near the sink.

“You did, didn’t you?” Nino sighed. “I should’ve known that all that sexual tension would be too much one day.”

Adrien scowled. He opened his backpack and saw Plagg was already inside of it. He glared at the kwami, who just shrugged at him.

“It will take months for me to forget about this.” Nino kept talking, but Adrien ignored him, jaw clasped tight. “I’m traumatized for all eternity.”

“Nino, shut up,” the blonde hissed, leaving the bathroom. His friend followed close behind.

“I’m serious, man, for all eternity.” Nino shuddered and Adrien rolled his eyes. Could his day get any more embarrassing?

Lady Fate must have been enjoying torturing him that day because that’s exactly what happened.

He had just walked over to Alya and his artist, trying his best to pretend he hadn’t been touching himself to thoughts of his dear one, when Nino almost snitched on him about the bathroom thing. What a great best friend he had.

Thankfully, the artist didn’t seem to understand Nino’s innuendos. He noticed her eyes were a little unfocused and a wave of protectiveness washed over him. Adrien knew it was due to the akuma controlling her. How he wished he had been able to stop it from happening.

He got closer to her. “Are you okay?” He knew she wouldn’t have any memory of what had happened. She was probably so confused.

Adrien knew he had been confused as hell when he had been akumatized as Chat Noir. After the akuma got him, he was transformed into that… guy. It was all but a blur from that point onwards. He shuddered at the thought. He didn’t remember anything, but from what Marinette and Alya had told him and what he had seen later, it was enough to know that it had been bad. Really bad.
“Yeah,” the artist smiled at him, making him snap out of his reverie. “I’m getting better.”

Adrien smiled back, feeling himself relax as the worry he felt eased a little. His eyes went to her mouth for a split second, the need to touch her getting stronger with the proximity. He remembered how she rolled her hips against his and swallowed dry.

“I heard you gave Chat Noir and Ladybug a hard time.” He couldn’t help the innuendo.

“Hard indeed,” Alya said with a sly smirk and Adrien blinked at her. He didn’t think anyone was going to understand the dirty reference. Alya was sharp, too sharp.

The brunette wanted to ask the artist something and Adrien backed off, feeling calmer. Now he could help his dear one and everything would be okay. That’s what he thought, but once again, Lady Fate had other plans.

“What do you think about Chat Noir?” Alya asked, using her phone as a recorder to interview the artist.

Adrien froze, he hadn’t expected that to be the question. He tried to control his features, trying not to show how much he was interested in this.

“What?” His dear one seemed so confused and he felt bad for her. She needed to rest, not be bombarded with questions.

So when Alya wanted to show her the videos, Adrien decided to intervene, even if he wanted to know the answer to Alya’s question himself. The artist could deal with that another time.

“Alya, I don’t think now is the best time to–” he began.

She put a hand up. “I need to ask this now Adrien, while her emotions are still connected to her akumatized self. It might not be the same later.”

Adrien bit his lip. Alya curiosity had been piqued. She wouldn’t back off, unless the artist told her to.

As the girl watched the video, he looked away, focusing on some students leaving the campus as he did his best not to remember what had happened. The last thing he wanted was another hard on. But he hoped Alya would post those videos online. He would love to watch them later.

“Oh, wow,” the artist muttered in astonishment, eyes glued to the phone’s screen.

Adrien gazed at her lost expression. It was a shame that she didn’t remember anything. He almost let out a sigh. Just when it seemed like she had come to terms with her attraction to Chat Noir, she didn’t remember a thing that she had done.

“Allright, so now that you saw it. Let’s go to the facts.” Alya rubbed her hands together, and Adrien waited, wondering what in the world she had in mind. “You could have sucked Chat Noir’s color, but you didn’t. And he could have released himself, but he didn’t.”

Excuse me, what? Adrien was outraged. He had been pinned down and the artist was straddling him. What was he supposed to do? Move and get free? As if.

“He was being held down by two warriors, Alya,” he deadpanned, crossing his arms over his chest.

“But he could have at least tried. Right?” Nino said by his side. “And you can clearly see that he wasn’t trying at all.” His friend smirked and Adrien furrowed his brows.
Even if he had tried, it wouldn’t have made any difference, and well, of course there had been that part of him that really didn’t want to move at all. But Nino didn’t have to know about that.

Adrien went back to paying attention to the girls and noticed Alya was still interviewing his artist. She was dedicated, he had to give her that.

“How did you feel about him before being akumatized? It’s for scientific purposes, so please try to answer truthfully,” Alya said.

“I think he’s pretty hot,” the artist said without a hint of hesitation and Adrien did his best not to choke on his own spit.

Was he dreaming? Did she just admit she also had the hots for him? He could feel his whole body get warm. He thought he was going to die right there.

“Interesting,” Alya muttered. “So with that we can conclude that sexual desires can manifest in the akumatized form.”

“Alya!” Adrien couldn’t help exclaiming. He had been thinking about that as well, but she didn’t have to say it in such a crude way.

His artist grinned at him. She didn’t seem bothered by Alya’s words. He felt a little embarrassed at having reacted so strongly, but at least Nino seemed as shocked as he did.

The artist’s face then fell. “Alya, you’re not going to put this on the blog, right?”

Adrien raised an amused brow at her. What was she worried about? Of strangers knowing about her attraction? He smiled. If he could, he’d show the interview to the whole city, to let everyone know that she liked and wanted him.

Well, not really him. Adrien sighed internally. But Chat Noir, at least. It was something, he told himself, trying to ease his disappointment.

He snapped out of his thoughts when Alya began to talk frantically on the phone with Marinette. He hadn’t seen her since they parted ways earlier.

“Marinette’s inside the school and said Ladybug discovered something about the teacher who gave you that grade,” Alya said to the artist. “Even the police are there right now.”

Adrien frowned as he glanced at the main building. The teacher? Could he have something to do with this? Adrien felt anger bubble in his veins. He wanted to go there and discover more about it, but he trusted Marinette to handle the situation. She’d tell him later, he was sure of that. And now he had something more important to take care of.

He accompanied the artist to the metro station, watching her from the corner of his eye to make sure she was okay. After she had almost fallen when getting up, he grew worried again. Usually, akuma victims weren’t affected that much. This couldn’t be a good sign.

He flexed his fingers, changing her painting for one hand to the other. The wind was getting colder, making his hands stiff and uncomfortable. Winter was almost here.

People, mostly women, stared as they passed. He paid them no mind, deciding to get a bit closer to the girl by his side instead. He wished the others would take a hint. He wasn’t interested in anyone else. Not anymore.
“Was that your only class of the day?” Adrien said to break the silence.

The artist took a moment to answer. She must have been deep in thought. “Yes, it was.”

He could see the worry in her gaze, but he didn’t know what was the reason for it. He decided to take a guess. “I’m sure they’ll change your note on that project. And besides, it’s just one subject, right? I’m sure your university will understand.”

“That’s not the problem.” She sighed and smiled sadly at him. “If I don’t get good grades in all my subjects, I won’t be able to stay here for another semester.”

Her words made a surge of desperation hit him. She’d leave? So soon?

She looked at a wall, which had a poster with a black cat printed on it. “And, well, I wanted to stay a little longer.”

Adrien kept looking at the poster, realizing the deeper meaning of her words and feeling warmth spread in his chest, despite the cold.

“Chat Noir?” He had meant to say that mostly to himself, so when she snapped her head to him, he panicked. “Désolé, I just imagined from what you said earlier—”

She laughed, interrupting him. “It’s fine.”

He let out a chuckle, glad she wasn’t mad. “I’m sorry Alya asked you about that.” He passed a hand through his hair and sighed. Always eager to know things, Alya often overlooked other people’s feelings. “She can be pretty straightforward sometimes.”

“Well, she wasn’t exactly wrong,” the artist said and Adrien lifted a brow at her.

He wasn’t expecting those words to leave her mouth. One thing was to say something in the heat of the moment; another was to confirm it later on. He licked his lips, feeling himself get warm again, but now in a completely different place.

She gave him a one-sided smirk. “I’m kidding.”

A smile tugged at the corners of his mouth. The artist wasn’t going to fool him. She could say whatever she wanted, but now he knew her true feelings about Chat Noir.

“There is a grain of truth in every joke,” he said and kissed her cheek, lingering a bit longer than it was customary. “Take care.”

She just stared at him as he gave her the painting back and walked away. He put his hands in his pockets and pretended he was on a catwalk. He hoped she’d keep looking.

Adrien wondered if she thought he was hot as well. It would be a ridiculous and cruel irony if she were only attracted to Chat Noir. Maybe it was the skin-tight suit or even the ears. He shook his head with a smile. Heaven knew how much the artist liked them.

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“He did what?” Adrien tried to maintain a level voice as he sprung from the chair he had been seated.

“The teacher was bribed to give her that grade.” Marinette paced around her room. Plagg and Tikki were watching their conversation with attention. “I found the money in his office.”
“Putain.” Adrien passed a hand through his hair. There was only one person capable of doing this.

“Hawkmoth knows about you and her,” Mari said, and Adrien hated the sorrow he saw in her eyes.

He stared out the window, closing and opening his hands by his side. It was all his fault. He had been too careless, too wrapped up in the way the artist made him feel. He didn’t think about the consequences.

“Stop it.” Marinette’s voice cut through his anxious thoughts. “You’re going to go crazy if you keep blaming yourself.”

He shook his head. Of course Marinette knew exactly what he had been thinking.

“You decided that you wanted this, now you need to deal with the consequences. Just like I did.” Marinette continued. He noticed how her voice faltered a bit at the last part. Adrien knew she was talking about Ji Yong.

“Mari…” He took a step in her direction.

“It won’t come to that.” She put a hand up, stopping him, her eyes sharp. Her gaze then softened. “We won’t let it happen.”

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“Plagg, do we bring bad luck to people?” Adrien said as he modeled another figurine in his hands. The afternoon light was entering his studio through the long windows. He sat close to them, enjoying the warmth and the brightness.

“We’ve already talked about this,” the kwami said in between bites of his Camembert. “It’s a myth.”

“What about the other Chats?” Adrien asked.

“What about them?” The kwami said in a quiet voice.

Adrien kept looking at the figurine in his hands as the other spoke, but he could almost see the displeased face Plagg was making.

But he didn’t seem so reluctant to talk this time, so Adrien saw that as a sign to keep going. “Some of them had significant others, right?”

“Well, yes,” Plagg said and let out a sigh. “Why are you asking me this?”

“Curiosity,” Adrien said, quickly. “But were their loved ones happy near them?”

“Many of them were, and for many years.”

Adrien remembered dreams he had about the other Chats’ past lives, and some of them didn’t fit what Plagg was telling him. “But at what cost?”

Plagg went back to his cheese and didn’t answer.

Adrien went back to sculpting, his heart heavy. It calmed him, the act of creating something with his hands. Giving it life, form. But his mind wasn’t completely into it. He’d have to come back another time and finish the small sculpture before sending it to charity.

His mind kept going back to the artist’s words when they had walked together. Adrien didn’t know
she’d leave so soon. He knew she was a foreign exchange student, but not that she’d only stay for such a small amount of time. How hadn’t he thought about that before? Plagg would probably tell him he had been blinded by love.

He let out a long sigh, his eyes closing for a moment. Why did things have to be so complicated?

“You’re worried about her.” Plagg’s voice made him open his eyes.

“Hawkmoth targeted her, and we’re not even a thing yet.” He glared at the kwami. “Of course I’m worried.”

After a moment of hesitation, Plagg flew closer to him and sat on his leg. “As you said, there are costs. A hero’s life isn’t an easy one.”

Adrien stared at him, wondering why the kwami was telling him this. “You didn’t approve of my involvement with her before. What made you change your mind?”

Plagg began to lick his paw. “I like her energy.”

Adrien scoffed. Of course that’d be Plagg’s answer. He never explained his real motives.

“And she makes you happy,” Plagg said.

Adrien’s eyes widened for a brief moment before a smile quirked up his lips. Although Plagg didn’t say, the blonde knew the kwami cared about him.

“That you, Plagg.” He scratched the kwami’s ear as he looked out of the window, to the setting sun. “I’m going to talk to her and see what she thinks about all this.”

Adrien put the figurine down on the table and got up, making Plagg fly away complaining.

“C’mon, we should go check on her,” he said, going to wash his hands.

Plagg let out a long and dramatic sigh, but Adrien knew he didn’t mind.

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When Chat got to the artist’s apartment, the sky was already dark. He waited to see if there was anyone around before opening the window lock and getting in.

They were already well acquainted with each other, so hopefully she wouldn’t mind.

The apartment was quiet as he made his way inside. “Chérie?”

He heard whimpers coming from her bedroom and rushed to her. She was thrashing on her bed, her head going from side to side, eyebrows furrowed.

“Chat,” she mumbled. “No, no!”

She was having a nightmare. His chest hurt at the pained tone in her voice. He had to wake her. However, when he tried calling her name, her eyes snapped open, staring at him in horror and she began to scream.

Chat grabbed her arm when she tried to get away. “Wait! Princess, it’s me!” Recognition flashed in her eyes and she stopped. He lowered his voice to a more calming tone. “It’s me.”
He hugged her, but she seemed hesitant to return the gesture. He tried to pretend that it didn’t hurt him; at least she seemed to relax a little.

They talked about her dream, how she was affected that he had chosen Ladybug during the fight. Why was she worried about that? He wanted to make the worry vanish from her gaze. She was trying to conceal it, but he wasn’t going to let it pass.

He grabbed her hand and laid a light kiss on top of it. “There’s no need for that, princess. But if you really want to know, if you had asked me as your normal self, I wouldn’t even have to choose.” He winked and grinned, and she smiled back. That was better. He didn’t want to see her sulking. He decided to continue. “And besides, I’m here now. You have me all to yourself.”

The artist hummed, trying to contain a smile. “That’s great. I don’t like competition.”

“I don’t see how that’s a problem, my dear, considering you don’t have any,” he promptly said, smirking.

“Oh, you smooth cat.” She finally let out a laugh and he laughed as well, proud of himself for making the sour expression leave her face. What he had said was the truth though; he didn’t want the artist to think it was just a jest. He hoped she’d believe in his words.

The artist thanked him and apologized for hurting him during the fight. He stopped for a moment until it clicked in his brain that she didn’t remember what had happened.

He gave her a sly look when the image of her on top of him formed in his mind. “You didn’t hurt me, ma chérie, on the contrary.”

But then the image was replaced by fragments of his talk with Plagg and his expression turned grim.

He lowered his gaze. “And I’m the one who should apologize. If it wasn’t for me, Hawkmoth wouldn’t have suborned those people and none of that would have happened.”

He caressed one of her hands with his thumb, thinking that maybe that this hadn’t been a good idea. Plagg said that the other Chats’ lovers were happy, but being close to a hero wasn’t easy. And in his foolishness, Chat had dragged her into his world without even asking if that’s what she wanted.

“I guess what they say about black cats is really true, huh?” He gave a weak laugh. He had to do it. He had to tell her that it was too dangerous, that she was better off without him. But he couldn’t bring himself to say it.

But the artist put one hand up before he could utter another word. “Before you tell me I shouldn’t be near you anymore, you should know that it won’t be some nightmares, nor a headache, nor a crazy evil villain that will keep me away from you.” Chat’s eyes widened. She didn’t mind? She still wanted to be close to him? The artist continued. “And if what they say about black cats is that they’re cute as hell, I agree.”

He was so distracted by her and her words, that he almost didn’t catch her wrist as she tried to bop his nose.

He narrowed his eyes. “Why do you keep trying to bop my nose?” She swallowed and he smirked at the effect he had on her. “And I think you meant to say sexy as hell, ma belle.”

“I’m pretty sure I meant cute.” She laughed at him, laughed. He pursed his lips, but she only smirked. “And I like bopping your nose, because as I said, it’s cute.”
She tried to touch his nose again and he almost tsked as he grabbed her again. She never learned.

“I’ll show you cute,” he said in a low voice, grabbing both of her wrists in one hand.

Her eyes widened when he began to tickle her stomach. She protested and squirmed but he wouldn’t let her go. She deserved it, for calling him cute and saying those things to him during the fight. Why did she have that big of an effect on him? It wasn’t fair.

Chat was so entertained by her laugh, that he didn’t notice her pushing at him until he was falling backward on the bed. She landed on top of him, a startled expression on her face. He blinked, feeling her thigh pressing in between his legs. It made his inner thighs grow hot, and the feeling began to spread. Flashbacks of her akumatized self on top of him kept coming back.

He gulped. He had to move, otherwise things would get embarrassing really fast. But the artist got closer to him and he held his breath in expectation. That same expectation crumbled when she bopped his nose.

“Cute,” she muttered.

Chat tsked, a furrow creasing his brows. “Oh, you…”

She laughed and got off of him quickly. He breathed deeply, relieved, and glared at his crotch for a moment. That’s not why he came here. He came to check on her, nothing more. He needed to control himself and behave.

Chat sat up on the bed and saw the artist was staring at him with a funny look on her face. She looked better, at least.

He chuckled, shaking his head. “Well, glad to see you’re feeling better, princess.”

“Thanks to you, kitty cat.” She winked and he gave a little bow while still sitting, trying to hide his face. She needed to stop. How was he supposed to behave like this?

Chat teased his artist as she went to the kitchen. He grinned from ear to ear as he watched her go. He was such a fool for thinking he would be able to get away from her. She told him she wouldn’t stay in Paris for long, so that meant she wouldn’t get too involved in his problems, right? He would be careful.

“You know, I guess it’s for the best if we keep seeing each other,” Chat said, going to join the artist in the kitchen. “I mean, I can’t deprive you from all of this hotness, right, princess?”

He leaned on the counter, doing his best seductive face, with half-lidded eyes and everything. When she almost choked on the water she was drinking, he smirked. It had worked.

She gave him an amused look. “Someone’s narcissism levels are way over the top today, huh?”

He hummed, filling a glass of water for himself and slowly drinking from it. She watched him and he tried his best not to purr under the attention. Now that he knew what she felt for him, he’d tease her even more.

He finished drinking and licked his lips. “Let’s just say I learned some valuable information today.” He waited to see if she’d take the bait.

She raised one brow at him, “About what?”
He grinned. *Bingo.* “About your deepest desires.”

He tried not to laugh at the conflicting emotions on her face.

She finally settled for a neutral expression and shrugged. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Chat decided to play her game. “You really don’t remember, my dear?” He said, voice low.

“Did I say something?” She seemed worried. He hummed and she bit her bottom lip, making his eyes drop to her mouth. “What did I say?”

He decided to inspect his claws to distract himself. “I’m afraid I can’t repeat it, *ma chérie.* It was quite graphic.”

“Just tell me already,” she said, impatience clear in her tone. She was always the curious one, and he loved it.

“The lighter thing you said was that I was yours while I was pinned to the ground,” he whispered in her ear.

He expected her to be at least a bit taken aback by his words, but with a sly smile, she whispered back, “I bet you liked it.”

Chat almost couldn’t stop the growl that wanted to leave his throat. She knew exactly what she was doing, riling him up. His suit was getting too damn hot for comfort now.

He chuckled low in his throat. “You know me too well, my dear.” He put a hand on the counter behind her and got closer. His eyes glanced at her lips and he wetted his. “In fact, we could continue—”

*What the hell are you doing?* His mind screamed at him, and he froze in place.

“That’s not why you came here!”

He backed off, cursing at himself in his head. He had forgotten that he came here to check on her. Just that, nothing more.

“No, you need to rest.” He turned around. He had to leave. Now. Otherwise he wouldn’t be able to.

“What?” The artist asked, following him to the living room. “Where are you going?”

“Away. I’m afraid I stayed for too long, *ma belle.*” He kept walking and didn’t look back. He couldn’t. “And you need to rest.”

“You didn’t stay even 15 minutes! And you still need to tell me what happened.”

Chat bit his lip. Of course she’d make things difficult for him. He turned around and couldn’t help his eyes from roaming over her body. His fingers itched to touch her.

“I know, ma chérie. But you still need to rest.” He began to walk backwards towards the window, forcing his body to go, even if his heart told him not to. “And if I stay any longer, I’m afraid that won’t be possible.”

“So you’re just going to be a tease and leave.” She crossed her arms over her chest. “Is that it?”

Oh, she was mad. He loved it.
Stop it, he hissed at himself. She has just been akumatized. She needs a break.

But he had already stopped walking. “Do you want me to stay?”

“Do you want me to beg?” She asked, narrowing her eyes.

He imagined the scenario in his head and he couldn’t stop a smile from lifting his lips. He definitely wouldn’t mind it, although he wasn’t opposed to the other way around.

He shrugged. “I’m just asking, ma belle. But if you have an important reason, I might change my mind.”

Chat watched her focused face as she looked away from him. He knew she needed a reason for him to stay. She couldn’t bring herself to say that she wanted him. He shook his head. He would go along with it, but it didn’t mean that he’d make it easy for her.

“Well, I have a project I need to do.” She began and Chat grinned. Here we go. “I should start working on it as soon as possible, since it’s for…” She stopped, and Chat remembered the class Marinette had told him about. The one she and the artist were taking together. Mari had whined about this project to him already.

“Monday,” he blurted out.

“Yeah, Monday. And I–” The artist stopped, eyeing him incredulously, and he swallowed dry, realizing what he had done.

“So, you want me to stay because you need my help with inspiration again,” He got closer to her, to distract her from thinking too much. He had almost screwed up everything. “Are you sure you don’t want to rest?”

She narrowed her eyes at him. “I’m sure. And if you could tell me what happened while I was akumatized, maybe that’d help spark an idea or something.”

He hummed, glad that she didn’t focus on his slip up. Thankfully, her curiosity was stronger.

“So what do you want, princess? I was hoping you’d want to do it like last time,” Chat said, eyeing her neck. He passed his tongue over his canines, which were practically begging him to touch her skin.

“Well, I’m not opposed to using that day’s method.” She shrugged. “If you also tell me what happened.”

“Deal.” Chat chuckled and put one hand on her neck. He shouldn’t be doing this. He really shouldn’t. But now that they had started, he couldn’t stop.

He began to tell her of when she pinned him to the ground, all the while teasing her neck. But she wasn’t satisfied, of course not. Chat gazed at her expectant eyes and felt a purr come from his chest.

He didn’t know how he had been able to stay this long without kissing her. He usually didn’t take long to kiss the girls he wanted, but with her, it was different. Everything was different. He wanted to take his time and make her squirm for him. But now that he knew about the little time she had left in Paris, he couldn’t take things slow anymore. He needed to know the feel of her mouth on his.

So when she said for him to go for his new idea, he didn’t hold back and kissed her. He was afraid for a brief moment that she’d pull away, but she held onto him and pulled him closer, and he couldn’t
help smiling in the kiss.

He couldn’t think much after that. He just wanted to have her close to him, pulling on his hair. He couldn’t have enough.

“What do you think, ma chérie?” He said in between pants, locks of blonde hair falling over his face. “Is it working?”

She took a moment to answer as if she had forgotten why they were doing this. He couldn’t blame her.

“I think so,” she said, ragged breath matching his. “Don’t stop.”

He smirked. “Wasn’t going to.”

After months of pent-up want and having her visit his dreams every night or so, he wasn’t going to stop. Unless she told him to or had an idea, like last time. He wished it’d take longer now for inspiration to come to her. But he would enjoy it while he could.

So he touched her while they kissed, her sides, her back, her thighs, trying to memorize the feel of her body in his mind. He wished he had taken his gloves off, but it was too late now. He’d have to stop touching her to do that and he didn’t want to.

The artist parted from him once again, chest heaving against his body. Her lips were red, pupils dilated, and he wanted more. He pressed her up against the wall and a shiver went from his arms to his groin when she moaned. He looked down and saw his leg was in between hers. He smirked and raised his thigh, which earned a gasp from her.

He couldn’t even rejoice too much in making her let out these lewd sounds, because she pulled him close and pressed her thigh against his growing erection. He sucked in a shaky breath and closed his eyes, the raw pleasure making him freeze for a moment.

“Tell me what happened next,” she said, voice surprisingly firm.

He gazed at her, trying his best to concentrate. He decided to nibble and lick her earlobe to have something to focus on. “You began to roll your hips into mine, and said you could make me come in front of everyone.”

He rolled his hips against her to illustrate his words. The friction was amazing. And it was much better when she pulled on his hair.

“I can always do that later if you want,” she said.

A wave of pleasure hit him just at the thought of it. He gave her a lazy smirk, “I’m counting on it, princess.”

They went back to kissing, all the while rutting against each other, trying to get more friction.

Chat was feeling too hot inside his suit. Why weren’t they both naked already? He just wanted the feel of his skin against hers. But just when he was going to suggest that, an insistent beep sounded in the room and he knew they didn’t have much time left. He cursed the damn ring in his mind. Couldn’t it wait like an hour or so?

Chat raised one of the artist’s legs and put it around his hips to have better access. She touched his cat ears in return and he let out a loud moan. Of course she’d go for the ears. She knew what she was
doing.

He could feel his muscles contracting. He was almost there.

“Come for me, kitty cat,” the artist whispered in between heavy breaths and it was like he was in the middle of the fight again, helpless, with her on top of him.

He buried his face into her neck and bit down hard while his hips bucked into hers with shallow thrusts, his orgasm hitting him hard. He could feel the sticky mess inside his suit, but right now he couldn’t care less as the artist arched her back and he felt her muscles spasm. He wanted to watch her face as she came, but he’d have to leave that for another time.

He breathed in and out, feeling her body slump against his. “Did it work, ma belle?” He said against her neck and felt her shiver. She didn’t say anything about having an idea this time, and he wondered if she even thought about it. He knew he would have had a hard time concentrating if it were him.

“Yeah. That was really inspiring. We should definitely do it again sometime, my muse,” she said after she got down on her feet again.

Chat almost let a dreamy sigh leave his mouth. She wanted to do it again. He chuckled lightly. “Agreed.”

He wanted to be with her longer, but he couldn’t ignore the ring anymore. He could feel that his transformation was wearing thin, the magic in him growing weaker with each passing minute. He had to leave.

“I wish I could stay,” he murmured. He wished they could stay together without all these complications.

She licked her lips, and he couldn’t resist giving her another kiss, just to remind himself that the past minutes had truly happened.

She hummed, stroking his hair. “I wish you could stay too.”

He gazed at her for a moment and contemplated telling her everything. His secret identity, his past, his fears, who he was behind the mask… But Master Fu’s severe expression came to his mind before he could even begin to think what to say first. He couldn’t.

He gave her one final kiss while asking her for forgiveness in his mind, and then he left through the window before he could talk himself into breaking the Miraculous rules.

Chat almost didn’t make it to the manor. He had just enough time to get down from the top of a building to a dark corner of the street before the last strings of magic left him. Plagg promptly passed out as he left the ring and Adrien caught him with his hands. He stared at the kwami with concern, but a second later realized he was purring softly.

Adrien shook his head.

“Perv,” he muttered to the kwami, but Plagg was so out of it that he didn’t even bother to respond to his teasing.

Adrien smiled at him and walked down the empty street, to the entrance of the manor.
He was smiling to himself as he walked to his room, Plagg secured inside his shirt’s pocket. What a night. Adrien didn’t remember the last time he had so much fun.

“Adrien? Is that really you?”

He froze at the voice, stopping in the middle of the corridor.

He turned around, his smile faltering. “Good evening, father.”

“Oh, thank goodness. I thought it was another hallucination.” Gabriel chuckled, rubbing his arms.

“It’s just me.” Adrien looked at his father, from the dark circles under his eyes to the dark robe that made him look so small. Perhaps the hallucinations were getting worse? “Did you take your medicine tonight?”

His father nodded, but then he seemed lost, his confidence wavering. “I… I think so.”

Adrien sighed as he stared at him. The man couldn’t even remember taking the medicine anymore. He was getting worse with each passing day. Adrien looked away. It hurt to see him like this.

“I’m going to check with the nurse to make sure,” Adrien said and began to turn around.

“Are you going to sleep here today?” The tone of his father’s voice made him stop.

His voice was so full of hope. It made Adrien feel awful. How he wished he could go back in time and fix everything so that he could stand to be near his father for more than a few minutes. But every time he looked at him, the memories invaded his mind and it was too much to bear. After five years, it was still too much.

But still, Gabriel was his father.

“Yes, I’m staying for the night,” he muttered.

He saw the man smile from the corner of his eye. “I’m glad.”

Adrien swallowed dry before resuming his walk. “Goodnight, father.”

“Goodnight, son.” His father’s voice echoed in the corridor, following him like a ghost as he walked away.

Soon it was only Adrien and his thoughts again, and he tried to think of the artist, hoping that she’d be able to make the dreadful memories that wanted to surface vanish from his mind, at least for now.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter wouldn't be possible without the coffee donations, so thank you so much to anyone who contributed!! 💖💖💖

Also, I decided to add a bit more plot to the POVs, that's why the chapter is giant like that orz
The Gates of Dawn

Chapter Summary

Lewd meter: (°_°)(°_°)

Chapter Notes

Hello everyone, long time no see! We’re back with another update and I made sure this chapter was longer to make up for the past month.

Thank you to everyone that sent me well wishes messages, it really means a lot! I had to take some time to recover and all this positive energy was one of the few things that put a smile on my face during that time. So thank you ♡♡♡ Thankfully things are getting better now. It's good to be back!

Enjoy the chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Your chest heaved as you climbed the stairs to your apartment two steps at a time. The metro line you used to get home had stopped due to a strike, so you had to go back walking. You were glad your flat was relatively near the university, so it only took you half an hour.

It was the end of the afternoon now. Would Chat be waiting for you already?

You slowed down as you passed by another resident, trying your best to look composed as you greeted him. When he disappeared down the stairs, you went back to your former rhythm. You couldn’t help it. It felt like your heart would burst with all the anticipation. What was Chat going to say? Was he going to accept your decision?

You unlocked the door of your flat and looked around. The place was empty. You bit your lip. Maybe he couldn’t open the window lock? You went outside and searched for a sign of the masked hero, but to no use. He wasn’t there.

Your shoulders sagged as you leaned on the balcony rail and looked down at the calm residential street. Your chest felt heavy with Chat’s absence, but you forced yourself to smile. Chat liked to appear at night, that was probably it.

To pass the time, you began to unbox your belongings and organize them. Every time you went to open another box, you looked outside, seeing the sky getting darker and darker, but still no cat hero. You let out a sigh and went back to the task at hand.

Cradled in a safe nest of clothes, you found the black cat figurine Adrien had made for you. A sad smile lifted your lips as you put it on the coffee table. You hoped the blonde was doing all right. Maybe you should talk to him later about what Nino had told you, or maybe it was better to forget about it. You didn’t know what to do. You already had so much to think about.
The clock on the wall showed it was way past midnight. It seemed to mock you, telling you to give up and go to sleep. You were already in your pajamas, lying on the sofa in the hall. The TV was on, and while you were aware some news about a fashion designer was going on, you weren’t paying attention. Your eyes were unfocused, staring out at the illuminated top of the Eiffel Tower through the window.

You were ready to sleep, but a part of you believed Chat would still appear, so you decided to wait. But… it didn’t seem like he was going to come.

With a defeated sigh, you turned around on the sofa, turning your back on the TV and the judging clock, and closed your eyes. Enveloped in darkness, your thoughts began to wander about you and Chat. Were you really sure about your decision? You scrunched up your face, but the thought persisted. If you got more involved there would be no going back, and when you had to leave it’d be much more painful. You sighed. This was ridiculous. You were already too involved, and you had already made your choice.

You tried to empty your mind, but the thoughts kept repeating over and over. It took some minutes until you were able to fall into a restless sleep.

Your eyes opened with a start when you heard a noise coming from the balcony. It had been almost imperceptible, but you had heard it, you knew it.

“You’re going to be disappointed again,” a voice in your head said.

You shook your head and sat up, rubbing your eyes. You waited, but there wasn’t a second knock. A glance at the clock perched on the wall told you it was 2 am.

You got up with a groan and peeked through the curtains with tired eyes. A rush of adrenaline made your heart speed up at the sight in front of you. Chat was there, with his back to the door, staring up at the Eiffel Tower. Your growing excitement died down when you saw his somber expression, green eyes devoid of their usual liveliness. Did something happen?

You unlocked the door and Chat turned back, getting away from the glass surface as you opened it. Your eyes met and you both stood there, just gazing at each other for a moment like you hadn’t met in a long time. You watched as the wind ruffled Chat’s hair, and wished you could know what he was thinking about.

“I’m sorry for waking you, princess.” Chat finally broke the silence, and you told yourself the goosebumps on your arms were due to the wind, not his voice.

“It’s fine, I was just taking a nap.” You shrugged, rubbing your arms to get rid of the goosebumps.

He eyed your sleepy face and pajamas with suspicion. “Right.”

You gave him a small smile. “You didn’t have to come so late. Did something happen?”

“I promised I’d come.” He rubbed his right eye with the back of his hand and stifled a yawn. “I’d have come earlier, but…” He took a deep breath. “But my father had a breakdown, and I had to take him to the hospital. I was there until now.”

You put a hand over your mouth. “That’s horrible, how is he?”

“He’s getting better, I guess.” Chat shrugged. He didn’t seem so optimistic.
You urged him inside your apartment. “C’mon, we can talk inside.” Besides it being more warm and comfortable, it was better to talk in a more private place. You didn’t know if Hawkmoth was still spying on you both.

As you followed Chat inside, you realized this was the first time he was confiding information about his family to you. It seemed serious.

“You said he had a breakdown,” you said as you closed the door behind you. “Is he ill?”

Chat let out a humorless chuckle and muttered, “You could say that.” You tilted your head in confusion and he cleared his throat. “It’s complicated. He has been dealing with this for a few years now, but it’s getting worse. His health is delicate, so he needs to stay at the hospital in observation. I’ll go get him tomorrow.”

“I see.” You nodded, walking closer to Chat. “I hope he gets better soon.”

“Yeah, me too.” Chat gave you a smile, but you could see it was a bit strained. He had tensed up at your proximity. You were getting more and more confused with his behavior.

“Can I…” Chat looked away from you for a brief moment before looking back. “Can I stay here today? I don’t want to be alone.”

Your chest tightened at the vulnerability in his voice. “Of course. C’mon.”

You motioned for him to follow you to your room. It almost felt like he already knew the way, but that wasn’t possible. He had only seen the hall yesterday.

You pulled the covers away and sat on your bed, back leaning on the wall. You patted the spot beside you and Chat stared at you for a moment before sitting down, keeping some distance from you.

Again. You scrunched up your face. You didn’t want to admit, but it hurt. Every time Chat put distance between you, your heart ached. Why was he doing this?

You looked at the cat hero, but instead of him asking that question, you decided to settle for something else. If you couldn’t be close to him physically, at least you could understand him better.

“Do you wanna talk about it? Your dad?” You said in a small voice.

The blonde shook his head a little. “I don’t want to think about it for now.”

“Alright,” you nodded, trying not to feel rejected again. It was probably a lot for him to deal with and his mind needed a break.

“This reminds me,” Chat said. “You never talk about your family.”

Your muscles stiffened for a brief moment before you forced yourself to relax. “There’s nothing to say.”

You were about to change the subject when, to your dismay, Chat continued. “Don’t they call you or send any messages to ask how you are doing?”

You turned your face away from him, bitter memories surfacing. ‘Why are you even doing this? It’s ridiculous and you know it.’ Your mother’s voice was still clear in your head from the day of your departure to Paris.
Chat softly calling your name made you come back to the present.

You forced the memories back and shook your head. “No. They’re just waiting for me to fail so I have to go back home.”

Chat scrunched up his face in disgust. “They’re a bunch of jerks then.”

You couldn’t help but chuckle. “I guess. I worked hard to get this internship, all by myself.” It had taken months of studying, working, all the while having your family tell you it was useless. It seemed to have happened long ago now. “They didn’t believe I could make it. They still don’t.”

“Well, I believe in you,” Chat said.

Your breath got caught in your throat. You’re one of the few ones then. You swallowed dry and smiled at the blonde.

“You’re a sweetheart.” You put a hand on his arm and squeezed, but he remained still, so with a sigh you retracted your hand. “I would stay here if I could.”

His green eyes lit up for a moment, before his expression darkened and he looked down at his hands. “Paris is a dangerous place.”

“But everything I want is here,” you said and watched his face to see his reaction.

Chat glanced at you before looking away. “How was the Barcelona trip?”

You let out a sigh at the change of subject. Why was he being so evasive? Didn’t he want to talk about you two? He couldn’t run away from that talk forever. That was the reason why he came to your apartment, right?

“It was pretty great,” you began to say, trying not to let out your annoyance show in your voice. “I got to meet Queen Bee, or should I say, Chloé.” You glanced at Chat and saw his eyes were open wide. Did that mean he didn’t know about your encounter with the girl? “Can’t you reveal your identity like her?”

“I’d rather not take the risk.” Chat shook his head. “Chloé almost exposed the rest of us, and her family and friends now live under fear and threats.”

You hummed. “That freedom comes with a price then.”

Chat nodded and you both went quiet. You wondered if Chloé ever regretted her decision to reveal her identity. You were then reminded of the day you met her. ‘Don’t give up on that fool.’ You glanced at Chat, who seemed to be lost in his thoughts, looking at his hands. You were trying to make things right again, but he wasn’t helping.

“Oh, I almost forgot,” you said and Chat glanced at you. “She was also stalking me.”

“Oh.” The blonde averted his eyes again, eyebrows shooting up. He then cleared his throat. “Really?”

You gave him a pointed look and saw him flinch. “Did you ask her to watch me?”

His shoulders sagged. “I was worried about you.”

“You could’ve just asked how I was.” You couldn’t help the sadness in your voice. If only you had talked with each other, none of this would’ve happened.
He muttered, “I know.”

You let out a breath as a heavy silence fell between you. You just wanted to fix this mess.

The night at the club in Barcelona came back to you. You bit your lip, wondering if you should say something about what had happened there. If you didn’t, Chat wouldn’t know, but you would. And you knew it would drive you mad with time. But how would Chat react when you told him about the kiss? Would he leave?

You swallowed dry, gathering up courage. “I... I kissed someone in Barcelona.” The words left a bitter taste on your tongue.

To your surprise, Chat didn’t seem affected by your statement. He just stared at you and you stared back, trying in vain to read his thoughts.

“Ah, so it was that,” he finally said.

Your eyes widened at his response. “You knew?” Your voice was barely a whisper.

He gave a curt nod, turning his gaze away from you. “You’ve been smelling too different since the day you came back. I just couldn’t pinpoint what it was.”

You let out a heavy sigh, leaning your head on the wall behind you. “I thought I could forget about you.”

“Did it work?” Chat asked, and his dull voice made you feel even worse.

“No.” You glanced at him. “And I realized I didn’t want to.”

He hummed and began to open and close his fists in a restless manner.

“Although the thought of you kissing somebody else makes my blood boil,” he said the last word through gritted teeth before continuing in a calmer tone. “We weren’t exactly a thing, so I don’t blame you, chérie.”

“We weren’t?” You asked, gazing at him intently. “Does it mean we are a thing now?” He didn’t answer. You huffed in exasperation. He was avoiding the subject again. “C’mon, Chat. Didn’t you come here to talk about this? Just tell me, did you make a choice?”

“Me?” Chat finally looked at you, an amused expression on his face. “Weren’t you the one supposed to make a choice?”

You almost let out a relieved breath. At least he was back to looking at you. You took that as a good sign.

“Yeah, but my choice didn’t change.” You smiled at him and saw the corners of his mouth twitch. “What about yours?”

His gaze softened, and you felt the atmosphere of the room change, like a fog that was keeping you both from clearly seeing each other had been lifted.

“I made my choice the moment I saw you, love,” Chat said, eyes trained on yours.

Your smile turned into a huge grin. Your heart seemed to jump in your chest, both at the statement and the new pet name.
“Love?” You let out a small chuckle.

“I decided to add this one to the list.” Chat got closer to you and your pulse began to quicken at the sudden proximity. “I gave up on trying to find just one pet name for you, so now they became a list of everything you mean to me.”

You couldn’t help but swoon at him. This cat truly had a way with words.

“Smooth,” you chuckled, relieved that he was slowly going back to acting normal around you.

You reached up and brushed a few strands of hair from his masked face. A smile curled your lips when he didn’t flinch.

“Does this mean you will stop putting distance between us?” You motioned with your hand to the space, too big in your opinion, between you and the masked hero.

Chat grinned a little sheepishly. “If I do that, things might get a little rough.”

You leaned over him. Your fingers itched to touch him, his face, his hair, his lips... It had been too long since you did.

“You muttered, “I don’t mind.”

You let out a surprised gasp when he pulled you to him by your waist. He then laid you on your back and hovered over you, the light on the ceiling above like a halo contouring his figure. “Good, because I can’t stand this smell on you anymore. It’s driving me insane.”

He leaned down and kissed you. Your eyes closed the moment your lips slid together, relief and delight washing over you. It felt right. This was what you wanted. He was the one you wanted.

Chat was rougher than usual, his palms gripping your sides, claws scratching your stomach as his hands went under your shirt. You finally understood why he was keeping a distance from you and acting so odd. He had wanted to mark you all along, and had been holding back from doing so. You broke the kiss, which earned you a groan from the blonde, and exposed your neck to him. His pupils dilated, and your lips quirked up in a side-smile when he eagerly began to kiss your neck.

Your smile fell when you felt his hand go from your stomach to the waistband of your underwear. His claws grazed your skin and you shivered. He then pulled off of you and you watched as he took his gloves off. You swallowed dry at the heated look in his half lidded eyes.

“What are you…” You began to ask, but stopped when he sucked on his index and middle fingers. Your eyes widened and you gaped at him as it finally dawned on you what he was about to do.

He smirked as he pulled your underwear down and touched you. You let out a breathy moan and closed your legs on instinct.

“No, no, my love, keep them open,” Chat whispered in your ear, pushing your legs apart with his other hand.

“Fuck,” you muttered as pleasure made your eyes roll back in your head.

You raised your hand to pull Chat in for a kiss, but he grabbed your wrist.

“Hmm, not today, love,” he said with a grin and began to kiss your collarbone. You tried to touch him with your other hand, but he held your other wrist as well.
“It’s not fair,” you said and let out a moan as his fingers began to move faster.

“I know.” He went to kiss your neck.

You swallowed, your chest heaving. “Is this punishment for me kissing someone else?”

He hummed and bit your neck, making you hiss.

“Maybe,” he said and his ears twitched.

You wetted your lips and tried to control your breathing. “What if I told you that I kept thinking about you the whole time?”

His hand stilled and he raised his head to look at you. “Are you serious?”

“Yeah.” You gazed at him through half lidded eyes.

A smug grin stretched Chat’s lips and you could hear him purr. “I’m glad, princess, but still no touching.”

You groaned and tried to escape, to touch him, but he put your hands above your head. He stopped touching you for a moment to pull your shirt up, but went back at it as soon as his lips ghosted over your nipple. You let out a gasp when he began to lick it.

“C’mon, chérie,” he gave a light suck and you arched your back, “Let me hear you.”

You bit your bottom lip hard, keeping your mouth shut. If he wasn’t going to let you touch him, then you wouldn’t let him hear you.

“You’re so stubborn,” he said when he realized you wouldn’t comply and went back to sucking on your nipple.

“You love it,” you said in between pants. Your orgasm was building up, your muscles tightening with each second. You knew you wouldn’t last long.

He grinned. “I can’t deny that.” He began to move his fingers in circles and your eyes fluttered shut. “Are you close?” You heard his voice right by your ear. You nodded, breathing hard. “Come then.” He whispered.

You clamped your thighs around his hand as you felt your orgasm hit you, hard. Chat kept touching you as you let out broken moans and threw your head back.

When you relaxed and your breathing got more even, he let go of you and peppered your face with kisses.

“Now, go to sleep, love.” Chat gave you one last deep kiss before pulling back.

“What? What about you?” You crossed your legs behind his waist, stopping him from moving. “C’mon, let’s keep going.”

Chat just chuckled and pulled your legs off him. “You don’t know what a punishment is, do you?”

You tried your best not to pout. Still dazed and a little disoriented, you sat up and watched as Chat began to take off his shoes. You never imagined he would turn down sex like that. Was he really doing this just to punish you?
“Looks like you’re punishing yourself.” You motioned with your head to the obvious bulge in his suit.

Chat bit his lip, but then shrugged. “It’s no big deal.”

You narrowed your eyes as he laid down on the bed again, arms behind his head. You glanced at him, your eyes lingering on his lower body. It was a big deal.

An idea formed in your head and you smiled, getting closer. His eyes got wide when you climbed on top of him and straddled his hips. Your fingers were itching to touch him.

He raised a brow at you, putting his hands on your waist. “What on earth are you–” You palmed his erection through the suit and he sucked in a breath.

“I’m going to take care of you,” you said, smiling down at him. You saw his Adam's apple bob as he swallowed. “If you don’t want this and want to continue with this ‘punishment’ of yours, you can tell me to stop now.”

He looked up at you, biting his bottom lip. Even the mask covering most of his cheeks couldn’t hide the deep blush on his face. It was obvious that he wouldn’t resist.

“No?” You smirked and he narrowed his eyes at you. “Alright then.”

You found the zipper of his suit under his bell and pulled it down to his navel. You touched his chest, opening the suit further, and eyed his defined body. It seemed that all that fighting and jumping over roofs had paid off. You palmed his abdomen and felt Chat shiver under your touch.

“You’re evil, do you know that?” He said, licking his lips. You could hear a purr coming from his chest.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.” You leaned down and began to kiss his chest.

You focused on his nipples for a moment until he began to buck his hips up and mutter your name, and then went further down until you reached his navel. Chat was panting and wriggling, little groans leaving his mouth from time to time, and you hadn’t even started yet.

You smiled and pulled on his suit. “C’mon, take it off.”

“So bossy,” the blonde said, but did what you said anyway. He laid there under you in nothing but the mask and the cat ears, and you had to stop a moment to appreciate the view. You wished he had kept the tail though.

“I’m pretty hot, I know, just admit it.” Chat gave you a half smirk, putting his arms behind his head.

“You are,” you said and wasted no time in taking him into your mouth.

Chat threw his head back and let out a loud breathy moan. You chuckled at his reaction, making sure to make vibrations in your throat, and he hissed.

“Don’t do that– ahh!” He closed his eyes shut tightly as another moan escaped his lips.

“I didn’t know you were so vocal,” you teased, switching to working him up with your hand.

“You’re going to wake up everyone in the building.”

“It’s all, ah, your fault,” Chat panted and put a hand on your head, grabbing a handful of hair.
You chuckled and shrugged with one shoulder. “I guess it is.”

You kept alternating between your mouth and hands and soon you saw his abdomen muscles stiffen. Chat was covering his mouth with his arm, but it wasn’t enough to keep the moans down. You hoped your neighbors hadn’t woken up. But honestly, you could care less.

Chat said something to you, but it was muffled by his arm.

“What was that?” You asked, moving your hand faster.

“I’m gonna— ah!” He cried out and you felt his come hit your chest and neck. But you didn’t even care as you watched the ecstasy on his face for the first time. You wanted to burn that image in your mind.

Chat calmed down and then his half-lidded gaze turned to you. His eyes widened when he eyed your neck. “Ah, princess, I’m so sorry!”

You shook your head with a smile and took your shirt off. You’d have to wash it tomorrow. “It’s fine, kitty.”

“Wait, I’ll go get a towel,” he said and got up swiftly.

You watched his naked back as he walked to the bathroom and sighed happily. That boy’s body was a work of art.

He came back and cleaned your neck. You just stared at him in a dazed state. It seemed like your heart would burst with affection for him.

You got dressed again and waited for Chat as he cleaned himself and put his suit back on, besides your complaining.

Laying down facing each other, you raised one hand and caressed Chat’s face slowly, trying to memorize his features. The soft light coming from the closed curtains created a cozy atmosphere in the room. You tucked a lock of blonde hair behind his ear and smiled. You felt peace, warmth, and happiness fill your lungs, heart, and body.

“You asked me to think about what I really want,” you whispered. “This is what I want. To be with you like this.”

Chat’s eyes seemed to shine brighter for a moment. He kissed the tip of your nose and whispered back, “Then let’s do it, for as long as we can.”

You nodded, swallowing dry at his words. Chat turned around and you hugged him from behind, putting your hand over his and getting comfortable, the adrenaline dying down and making you sleepy.

You took a deep breath. For as long as we can. You repeated his words to yourself as you lightly kissed his shoulder blade. You tried to match your breathing to his, and soon enough your mind was drifting off to sleep.

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You heard the screams that came from outside. They had arrived.

“You can’t stay here,” the boy said in hushed whispers. “Take the ring and leave.”
You shook your head, beginning to panic. No, not again. “I’m not leaving you.”

“You don’t have a choice. Even with the miraculous I can’t fight that many people, and you can’t let them take the ring. Go!” The boy gave you the ring and opened the window of the small shack.

The screaming got louder, and you could see many torches’ lights in the dusk. You tried to understand what the crowd was saying and a shiver went down your spine when you realized they were chanting ‘burn the witch’.

You looked at the boy and an immense sorrow filled your heart. “I–”

“Plagg, just go!” The boy screamed at you.

You pressed your forehead to his as a silent apology.

“Don’t worry. I’ll always be with you,” the boy whispered and smiled. You gave him a smile back, but you were being torn to pieces on the inside.

You flew to the window and the boy unsheathed his sword, getting into a fighting stance. Even without your powers’ help, he wouldn’t go down without a fight. That’s how he was.

It was night when you saw the fire from the outskirts of the village. When his screams began, you turned your head away and didn’t try to stop the tears from falling.

You had lost another one. You shook your head, finally coming to a rest on a tree branch. You couldn’t go on, it was too much. The feeling of helplessness was tearing you up inside. Couldn’t they just be happy for once? Were they all fated to suffer? If only you could change that… But how?

You woke up with your chest heaving and cold beads of sweat sticking to your body. You were still hugging Chat and his ring was emitting a faint green light through your fingers. You quickly took your hand off like the ring was made of lava and the light faded. You tried to control your breathing. A dream. It was all a dream.

Chat muttered something and turned around, hugging you and putting his head on your chest. He still hadn’t transformed back. You let out a deep breath as you looked at him. For someone that didn’t want to reveal his identity, he was being really careless.

Your eyes went to his ring. Plagg… Could it be the entity Chat had told you about? Was it inside the ring?

A swarm of questions was going through your mind. Had it really been all a dream, or had you seen something you shouldn’t have? What exactly was Plagg? What did he mean when he said that they were all fated to suffer? But even if you were dying to know more, you knew you couldn’t ask Chat. Your relationship with him was on thin ice and you had to rebuild your trust in each other first.

Chat mumbled in his sleep and you stroked his blonde hair. This boy had so many secrets, and yet, he couldn’t share them with you. If only you could know…

Your eyes shifted to the ring.

You swallowed hard and got comfortable again. With a deep breath, you put your hand over the ring and closed your eyes, letting your consciousness slip away once more with no idea of what you would see this time.
Your head felt heavy, and the puddle of water you were laying in was soaking your hair. You struggled to open your eyes and saw blurred figures a few meters away. They were shouting at a man kneeling on the ground.

“How could you do that? To your own son! You monster!”

“Ladybug, calm down!”

“I didn’t know…” The man muttered.

“Bullshit!” A slap, and the man fell to the ground with a thud. Your vision began to focus and you could recognize the girls.

“Lady!” Rena Rouge pulled the other away from the man, but Ladybug freed herself from the grasp.

“Let me go! JiYong is dead. Dead.” Her face was like stone as she glared at her friend. “And it’s all his fault.” Her voice trembled.

JiYong? Dead? No, it couldn’t be… You began to sit up slowly, feeling beads of water running down your face. You tried to remember what happened, but you couldn’t. You looked down at your hands and saw they were covered in red. You began to panic when you realized the puddle you were lying in wasn’t water, but blood. Was it yours? You didn’t know.

“Chat!” Rena Rouge exclaimed and ran closer to you. “Oh thank goodness, you’re awake.”

You tried to get up, but stopped and hissed as your head throbbed. You looked up at her. “What happened?”

Rena looked back at Ladybug. Your eyes followed hers until you recognized the man on the ground. Hawkmoth, the one who was responsible for this war going on in Paris. Your father.

“I’m… I’m so sorry, son. I’m so sorry,” he whispered.

You blinked a couple of times, feeling a pressure on your chest. You looked down and saw blonde locks sprawled on top of you.

Chat.

You glanced at his body, searching for the suit, but what you saw was a white t-shirt and black skinny jeans. The arm that was around you was bare, the skin uncovered. Your heart began to beat faster. He wasn’t transformed anymore.

Relax, you told yourself, relax.

You realized you were still touching the ring and slowly removed your hand. Why did it show you that moment? You couldn’t understand. But now you knew Hawkmoth was Chat’s father. The same father that Chat had to accompany to the hospital yesterday. How were they on good terms? Maybe they aren’t, a voice in your head suggested.

Before you could think about it some more, you felt Chat’s voice rumble in your chest. “Chérie, cover your eyes for me, please.”
You swallowed at his voice. It was raspy from sleep, but even so, it sparked something within you, a familiarity that almost hurt. You did what he asked, moving your arm over your face, but not without reluctance.

“Good girl.”

You felt him move, the weight on your chest vanishing. You wanted to peek, to raise your arm. It took all your strength not to do that.

“Bonjour to you too,” you muttered.

You felt him get closer and your breathing stopped. You could hear a faint purring.

His lips touched yours and you gasped, your arm moving away from your eyes in reflex. But the blonde was faster and put his hand over your eyes, still covering them, as he deepened the kiss.

It was different from last night. He was slower, more passionate. You moaned into the kiss and wrapped your legs around him.

He chuckled and bit your bottom lip before pulling back.

“Bonjour,” he whispered in your ear. “You know, love, you look amazing like this, at my mercy.”

Goosebumps ran across your skin and you heard him chuckle.

“If you don’t transform right now, I’m not going to let you get away this time.” You warned in a low voice, pulling him closer with your legs.

“As you wish.” Chat pecked your lips once more before pulling away.

You groaned as you heard him walk into the hall. You didn’t think he’d actually leave.

“When are you coming back?” You asked, opening your eyes and sitting up on the bed.

“Next week,” came his voice from the hall.


“Eager to see me, love?” Chat laughed.


You waited for a few moments, but there was only silence in your apartment.

“Chat?” You walked to the hall and a chilly breeze met you. The window door was open wide.

He was gone.

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The Parisian streets were bursting with life in the morning as you made your way to the university campus. The wind wasn’t so cold anymore, a sign that spring was soon to come. You were passing by one of the many newsstands on the sidewalk, when you heard a commotion in front of it and slowed down.

A group of girls were talking in excited voices as they looked at a magazine. You stretched your
neck to see what all the fuss was about and froze when you saw the page they were looking at.

Adrien was posing half-naked, lying on the ground, and his skin was glistening as a warm light illuminated him.

“He looks amazing in this one,” one of the girls said, pointing at the magazine in her hands, and the others hummed in agreement. You almost hummed as well, but contained yourself and looked away.

Adrien was stunning in that shot. You realized you had never seen his modeling work before.

The girl paid for the magazine and walked away, chatting with the others. You bit your lip and looked at the time on your phone, you still had a few minutes before your class started. Maybe you could take a look? Did the magazine have other pictures of Adrien? You couldn’t understand why you wanted to see it so badly, but you had to do it.

You greeted the vendor and looked at the stack of magazines, looking for one like the girl was holding. Your eyes stopped on a cover that had Adrien looking at the camera with a seductive half-lidded gaze.

Well, there was no mistaking which one it was now.

*Are we really doing this?* You asked yourself and then sighed internally. *Stop being dramatic. It’s just a peek; it’s not going to hurt.*

You opened the magazine to a random page and your eyes widened. Now Adrien was in just his boxers. You contained yourself and tried to look at the photo from an artistic point of view. That pose and lighting was really good. Oh, and look at those muscles. Those would be really good for reference.

“Are you going to take it?” The vendor’s voice made you snap out of your reverie.

You blinked as you stared at him, processing his question. When it dawned on you, you closed the magazine and shook your head with a bashful smile. “Oh, maybe later.”

You thanked the vendor in your mind for snapping you out of it and were about to put the magazine back down when he spoke again.

“These are selling like hotcakes,” the man said, pointing to the magazine. “That is the last one, and the next batch only arrives next week.”

“Is that so?” A strained smile lifted your lips. You stared at Adrien’s photo on the cover, which stared back at you with his green eyes. Daring you.

Minutes later, you were huffing as you plopped down in one of the chairs in the classroom, putting your things on the table along with a brand new white paper bag.

You checked inside of it and saw Adrien’s magazine there. You shook your head. You couldn’t believe you had bought it. It was like it had called for you, like a cunning devil. You had all the right to buy it, of course, but why did it feel like you had bought a damn porn magazine?

You told yourself to relax. It was nothing. You grabbed your sketchbook and decided to ignore the magazine for now. You would use it for reference. Just that.

Indistinct chatter could be heard around you as the other students arrived. You were doodling, trying to ignore people’s stares. Didn’t they get tired of staring at you? Were you that interesting? You had
already stared some of them down, but you got fed up and decided to ignore them instead.

The chair by your side creaked, but you didn’t bother looking up.

“Bonjour.”

The familiar voice made your eyes widen and you almost hurt your neck as you turned to look at Adrien.

He smiled. “Ça va?”

You quickly put your sketchbook down to cover the paper bag on the table. What was Adrien doing here? You began to panic. What if he saw the magazine? You glanced at the paper to see if it was see through, and goddammit, of course it was.

Adrien tilted his head to the side with a confused expression and you smiled the best you could. “Ah, bonjour, Adrien, ça va.”

“I didn’t know you were taking this class,” he said, passing a hand through his blonde locks. You got distracted by the movement for a moment.

“I wasn’t going to, but the lady from the international office told me it was compulsory, so,” You shrugged and hoped your smile wasn’t so affected as you felt it was. “Here I am.”

“Oh, it’s compulsory for me too,” Adrien said, leaning back in his chair. You glimpsed at his collarbone and the photos from the magazine flashed before your eyes.

Goddammit. You averted your eyes quickly. Things were already awkward between you two, especially after what Nino told you. You couldn’t make it worse.

“What a coincidence.” You let out a strangled chuckle.

“Yeah.” Adrien said and went quiet.

You tapped your pencil on the table, thinking about a conversation topic to cease the awkward silence around you. People were staring now more than ever, and you hoped that they were focusing on Adrien instead of you.

Before you could begin to talk about a random topic, a tall and elegant woman stepped inside the classroom and the chatter ceased.

“Bonjour, I’m Manon Boucher and I’ll be your teacher this semester,” she said, surveying the classroom with her dark blue eyes. “In Figure Drawing I, you learned the basics, so in this class we’ll focus more on practice. Form pairs and we’ll begin with today’s exercise.”

You turned to Adrien, wondering if he already had someone to partner with in mind, and saw him already looking at you.

“Do you want to…” You gestured between you and him.

“Sure.” He smiled and you smiled back, albeit a little flustered.

You couldn’t help it. You were feeling extremely guilty. You glanced at the compromising paper bag and prayed to all the gods that he didn’t see the magazine. What would be his reaction? You didn’t want to find out.
Adrien was positioning his table in front of yours when the classroom’s door opened and everyone turned to look.

Julien appeared, muttering a quiet ‘excuse me’ as he entered the classroom.

“Mr. Lenoir.” The teacher said and Julien froze. “Please refrain from arriving late next time.” She gave him a smile, but the boy just nodded.

“Yes, ma’am.” He ducked his head and went to an empty seat.

You kept looking at him, hoping he’d look your way so you could say hi, but he kept looking down. You furrowed your brows as you saw the dark circles under his eyes and his messy hair. Julien was usually so kept together, but now he didn’t look that good.

“Are you ready?” Adrien asked and his voice had a hint of annoyance.

Not used to him using that tone, since Adrien was always so calm, you turned to look at him to ask what was wrong when you saw everyone was already drawing.

“Oh, sorry. What do we have to do?” You got your papers and pencil case, and put it on the table. “I zoned out for a moment.”

You decided to talk to Julien later, now you had to focus on the class.

Adrien stared at you for a few seconds with slightly narrowed eyes before he chuckled. “We need to draw each other.”

“Alright.” You looked down at your papers, trying to avoid Adrien’s gaze. What was up with that anyway? Was he still mad at you? Did Nino say anything? You shook your head as you sharpened your pencil. Adrien was a mystery to you sometimes. Most of the time, actually.

Drawing Adrien was… strange. You didn’t have any difficulties; the pencil flew on the paper, creating lines like it already knew the way. But at the same time, it was hard to look your friend in the eye. One of the reasons was obviously the magazine. Every time you looked at him, your mind decided to remind you of the pictures. It made you groan out loud more than once and Adrien arched an eyebrow at you.

Another reason was his gaze. You had never stared at the blonde for so long and from this close. It made you feel confused, and you couldn’t pinpoint why. It kept distracting you from the actual drawing, but you didn’t stop and managed to finish it.

After thirty minutes, the teacher told you to stop. You raised your arms and stretched. Looking around, you searched for Julien and saw him at the other side of the classroom. He still wouldn’t look your way.

“Can I see?” Adrien asked, pointing to your drawing.

You nodded, taking your gaze off Julien. “Sure. Let me see yours.”

He handed you the paper and your lips quirked up in a smile when you saw the drawing. It was so beautiful. You didn’t know Adrien could draw like that. His sculptures were already stunning, but his drawings were as well? That wasn’t fair. You glanced at Adrien’s face and shook your head. Actually, nothing about this man was fair.
“I love the way you draw,” Adrien said, putting your paper down.

“Thanks.” You smiled at him. “Yours is pretty good as well, mister sculptor. How does it feel to be good at everything?” You propped up your chin with the palm of your hand.

He let out a hearty laugh.

“I wish,” Adrien said. “So, what do you think of the drawing? Is it that good?” He tilted his head to the side with a confident smile.

You smiled back, deciding to mess with the blonde a little. “It’s great. I think all those drawings you made of me in the library months ago helped, huh?”

The smile fell off his face in an instant and you tried your best to not burst out laughing.

“You noticed that?” He asked, his cheeks getting redder by the second.

“You weren’t exactly subtle, you know.” You grinned, and you could swear his whole face was red by now.

Adrien sighed and shrugged, like he was accepting his fate. “Well, I think you’re really beautiful, I couldn’t help it.”

You gaped at him and watched as he froze, the realization of what he had just said dawning on him.

“Uh, thanks?” You rubbed your neck and let out a flustered chuckle, not knowing how to react. Great, now you were embarrassed as well.

Adrien stared at you with wide eyes. “I, uh—”

“Sit down, everyone.” The teacher clapped her hands at the front of the classroom. “I’ll now explain the assignments for the rest of the semester.”

You silently thanked the teacher for interrupting the awkward interaction between you and Adrien. You might not be talking but it was still there, present in the silence as the teacher spoke. At least you didn’t have to do anything about it.

You let out a sigh, leaning on the table. Was it going to be like this during the whole semester?

Your plate wobbled on the food tray as you put it down on the cafeteria table. You sat down with a sigh. It was just lunchtime and you were already feeling exhausted.

“How was class?” Marinette asked from the seat in front of you.

“Awkward,” you said as you put your things on the seat by your side. That word resumed your whole morning with the model boy. “Adrien was there too.”

“Oh, I can imagine,” Mari said, taking a sip of her juice. “Nino shouldn’t have told you that Adrien was into you.”

You couldn’t help the chuckle that left your mouth. Judging from the affronted tone of her voice, Mari was still pissed at Nino for yesterday. You couldn’t imagine what she had said to him when they left your apartment. And you wouldn’t ask. It was better to avoid the subject altogether since you really didn’t want to see Marinette angry.
You glanced at the long food line and saw Adrien waiting while he talked to a girl. The blonde was your partner for the first assignment. You were grateful that you could do it with someone you knew, but you didn’t know if you were prepared for more awkward interactions.

“Look at what we have here.” You heard Alya’s voice from behind you and you froze, like you had been caught doing something wrong. You turned around and saw she was just carrying a food tray. “You guys didn’t even wait for me, how rude.”

You rolled your eyes playfully and relaxed, going back to your food.

“I was hungry.” Marinette said while she chewed. “Just sit down already.”

You grabbed your things from the seat so Alya could sit and put them on the ground.

“Here, you forgot this,” Alya said, grabbing the white paper bag from the seat and handing it to you.

Your eyes widened and you rushed to get it before...

“Wait, is this...?” Alya arched a brow as she turned the see-through paper bag around. Oh no. She gave you a funny look. “No, it can’t be.”

“Alya, just give it to me,” you hissed and tried to grab the bag, but she turned away from you and looked inside.

“Oh mon dieu, it is!” Alya’s loud laugh reverberated in the noisy cafeteria.

“What? What? Let me see!” Marinette made grabby hands at Alya.

“Can I show her?” Alya batted her eyelashes at you.

You rolled your eyes, they wouldn’t stop until you agreed. “Fine.”

Alya laughed and showed the magazine to Marinette, who laughed even harder.

You put a hand over your face as you felt all your blood rush to your face. It was like you were a kid whose parents found out about his stack of porn magazines.

Stop comparing it to porn! You screamed at yourself.

“I had heard rumors about this, but wow.” Marinette opened the magazine and shook her head. “It’s much better than I expected.” Mari gave you an amused look. “I can see why you bought it.”

“I bought it for reference,” you said. Both girls looked at each other and then at you with poker faces.

“Sure,” Mari said, going back to look at the magazine.

“Yeah,” Alya said.

You tsked and went back to eating, your cheeks burning. “Whatever”.

“You know,” Alya gave you a look. “I’m beginning to think you might like both Chat and—”

“What are you all looking at?” Adrien’s voice came from your right side. You choked on your food and rushed to drink something. Oh hell no. He continued. “I could hear you from the other side of the cafeteria.”
He sat down by your side and you began to tap your foot anxiously. *No, no, no, no, no.* It was one thing for your friends to tease you, but this? No, just no.

“It’s the new magazine,” Mari said, showing the front page to him with a wicked smile. You glared at her.

“Really?” Adrien arched a brow, looking from one girl to the other. “You guys bought it?”

“We didn’t buy anything,” Alya said, making you close your eyes and curse internally. *Alya, why?*

You could feel their stares even with your eyes closed. You just wanted to bury yourself inside a hole.

“Is it yours?” Adrien asked with amusement.

There was no denying it anymore, so you just opened your eyes and nodded, ready to face the embarrassing consequences. “Yeah.”

“I didn’t know you liked fashion,” he smiled.

You blinked once. Twice. A smile slowly made its way to your face. “Yeah, fashion. I really like it.”

Mari and Alya were staring at you in disbelief. They were probably wondering how you got yourself out of that. You grinned at them. You didn’t even know it yourself.

“Well, I’ll participate in a fashion show here in Paris in a few days.” Adrien propped his elbows on the table, leaning closer to you with a smile. “I can get you an invitation if you want.”

“Oh! Oh! I’ll be there too!” Marinette exclaimed, super excited all of a sudden, and you saw Adrien give her a poker face.

Alya groaned. “You guys and your clothing obsession, ugh.” You chuckled. You could see she wasn’t going.

“Then it’s settled,” Adrien said.

“Wait, wait, wait. But what about the invitation?” You asked, still unsure about all this. It all happened *way* too fast. “Isn’t it too much work?”

“It’s my dad’s new collection,” Adrien said and your eyes widened. The blonde gave you a mischievous look that you couldn’t understand. “I’m sure he can get me an invitation or two.”

Chapter End Notes

Oh the drama (o˚∀˚o)

Just an observation, I was using Volpina to refer to Alya's superhero identity, but now that her official name (Rena Rouge) was revealed, I decided to change and use it instead :)

Also, I really want to draw and create the magazine full of Adrien suggestive photos haHA
Dear readers, first of all, I apologize for the once again late upload. This chapter was a bit difficult to write, and I was making changes to it until the last second hahaha and of course, life really didn't want to cooperate and give me time to write, but I persisted!!!

This chapter was going to be 10k long, but that's way too much (I really need to stop writing so many words omg), so I decided to split it into two parts. The second part is already written, me and Samantha just need to edit it.

As always, thank you for the support!! The amount of love I receive because of this story still baffles me. There are so many comments and I get overwhelmed sometimes. But I try to reply to everyone, even if a bit (really) late, because you all mean so much to me♡

Enjoy!!
“Gabriel had some… health complications.” Mari smiled. A slight frown creased your forehead. You had heard something like that before, but you couldn’t remember where. Mari continued. “So his return is a big deal.” She got closer to you and pointed to a less crowded part of the patio. “There are less people this way, c’mon.”

You smiled as you followed her, grateful that Mari seemed to understand your unease. Thankfully, the paparazzi seemed more interested in the models and wealthy guests arriving in fancy sport cars and ignored you and Mari. It also helped that the brunette had a pass hanging around her neck, since she worked for Gabriel’s company, so people assumed you were also part of the crew.

You looked around to the people arriving at the main entrance. They were dressed in fancy clothes that indicated their wealth and interest in fashion. You swallowed dry and looked down at your own attire for the night. You had put together a nice outfit with Mari’s help, and although some people were dressed in an ostentatious way, you weren’t feeling too out of place.

Distracted, you almost bumped into Mari when she stopped in her tracks.

“Julien!” She exclaimed and waved to a lone figure leaning on the base of a sculpture, a lit cigarette on his lips. Mari had told you Julien would probably be here as well, since he worked for a fashion magazine, but you didn’t expect to see him so soon. You were just at the entrance after all.

“You ladies look lovely tonight.” Julien bowed down a little as you got closer. He was wearing a blue tuxedo that went well with his blonde hair pushed back.

Mari scoffed, greeting him with a kiss on the cheek. “And you wonder why people think you’re Chat Noir.” He laughed and you pressed your lips tight, feeling exposed all of a sudden. Well, at least you hadn’t been the only one to think that he was Chat.

“Taking a break?” You asked, greeting Julien as well.

He blew a puff of smoke into the night air. “Finally. I’ve been working all day since Gabriel’s return has everyone going nuts.” The blonde pushed a lock of hair out of his face. “I’m too old for this.”

“Julien, you’re 23.” Mari arched a brow and you laughed. The boy waved his hand nonchalantly. Marinette then crossed her arms over her chest. “And I thought you had stopped smoking?”

“I had.” Julien let out a small chuckle before taking another drag of his cigarette and blowing the smoke out. Marinette gave him a look to which he gave a defeated shrug. “Too much going on. It helps me focus.”

You opened your mouth to ask if everything was okay with him, like you had wanted to do since that class on Monday, when Mari spoke first.

“You still haven’t talked with Luan?” She asked, and your eyes widened a fraction, remembering that Luan had been acting weird on the trip to Barcelona. Did they fight?

Mari’s words made Julien grimace and look away. “We should talk later. People are looking for you.” He then turned to you. “And backstage entrance is going to end soon, so you should hurry.”

“Backstage?” You turned to Marinette, startled. You didn’t know your ticket allowed you to go backstage.

“Yup. So you don’t need to go through there.” Marinette motioned with her thumb to the main entrance a few meters to her right. There were paparazzi on each side, clicking their cameras non-stop and being held back by bouncers. You gulped just thinking about having to go near them.
“Adrien went all out with the tickets.”

“It seems like it,” you mumbled.

You had to add this to the list of things you had to thank Adrien for. You were afraid you’d never be able to repay him for everything he had done for you so far.

“Let’s go then.” Mari started to walk, but you realized Julien hadn’t moved.

You turned to him with an arched brow. “Aren’t you coming?”

“I’m just going to finish this one.” He raised his hand, showing the lit cigarette held between his fingers. “I’ll meet you inside.”

“We’re still going to talk,” Mari told him as you and her walked to the backstage entrance.

Julien just waved at you both. A somber expression then took over his face and the light from the lit cigarette seemed to be the only thing that brought life to his dull eyes in the dark.

Your heart felt heavy for leaving the blonde like that. He seemed to be suffering and you didn’t know what you could do to help.

Mari put a hand on your shoulder. “Don’t worry, we’ll talk to him later.” She then grinned and her eyes seemed to shine. “Now let’s go, the show awaits.”

You couldn’t avoid getting your photo taken as you got in the line for backstage, near the gardens. You had gotten distracted, admiring the gardens as Mari showed the guard her pass, when you saw a flash to your left. Everything turned into chaos after that. People began calling your name and your heart started to beat faster as more reporters seemed to become aware of your presence. They began to run in your direction and you showed the guard your ticket as fast as your trembling hands could before the other paparazzi arrived.

You almost ran inside when the guard let you in and blocked the reporters from entering. A relieved sigh left your lips as you stopped in the first part of the garden, near the colorful fountains. If that was the backstage line, you didn’t want to imagine what would’ve happened if you had gone through the main entrance.

“You okay?” Mari asked, putting a hand on your shoulder and you nodded, still recovering from the adrenaline rush. “Don’t worry, no one is going to bother you here. Paparazzi and reporters aren’t allowed.”

“Thank goodness,” you muttered, shoulders sagging in relief. At least the worst had passed.

Your shoes bit into the gravel as you walked down a corridor with tall hedges on both sides. Posters and torches decorated the way. ‘Gabriel’ was written in bold letters on each poster and the photographs on them showed some pieces from the fashion collection. Your eyes stopped on one that had Adrien’s face. It seemed to stare at you just like the photos from the magazine you had bought.

You clutched your coat closer to yourself and kept walking, hoping the outfits weren’t like the ones from the magazine. Those photos had haunted and affected you more than you cared to admit, and
you preferred if it didn’t happen again for the sake of your sanity and dignity. They made you feel weird, and while at first you thought you were just flustered by the poses or something, it was different. But the words to describe what it was seemed to escape you.

The air got fresher and colder as you walked, going further into the gardens and closer to the sound of chatter and booming music. You were glad for the posters, since you could easily get lost here, especially at night like this. The place was like a labyrinth.

“Is it still far away—” You began to ask Marinette when the narrow corridor opened to reveal a huge clearing. “Oh, wow.”

Torches lightened up the place along with spotlights. Sculptures of angels were at each side of all five exits, which seemed to lead to more corridors. The black catwalk was in the middle, surrounded by chairs – some already occupied – and behind it there was a big and decorated white tent that resembled a church. Was it backstage?

“Kinda eerie, right?” Mari said, looking around as well, and you nodded.

The decoration was heavily inspired by the baroque style, full of details and ornaments in gold. And here and there you could see some golden skulls and more angels. It reminded you of the architecture in cemeteries and made you wonder why Gabriel had chosen such a macabre theme for his return.

“I can’t wait to see what Gabriel has in store this time.” Marinette began to walk to backstage and you followed her.

“Don’t you work for his company?” You asked. “Shouldn’t you know what he created?”

Mari passed a hand through her short hair, a troubled expression on her face. “I didn’t work on it this time. I used to work closely with Gabriel’s designs a few years back, but… not anymore.”

You couldn’t help but ask, “Why?”

She gave you an apologetic smile as she entered the tent. “It’s complicated. Maybe I’ll explain it to you someday.”

Backstage was brimming with people running around with haste and preparing the outfits. Marinette greeted everyone as she passed by, and you just smiled and waved, pretending you belonged there.

You looked for Adrien in the middle of the many models getting ready to walk down the catwalk, but you couldn’t find him anywhere. Your fidgeting hands wouldn’t stop moving as your anxiety began to increase again. You couldn’t understand why you wanted to see him so bad.

“You’re looking for him, aren’t you?” Mari asked by your side, a knowing look on her face. “He’s probably waiting for you too.”

“Who?” You made the best neutral face you could manage and the brunette chuckled, shaking her head.

“Marinette, dear, I thought you would never arrive!” A middle-aged woman approached you both, arms open. The red scarf wrapped around her hair created a nice contrast with her dark skin.

“Aimée!” They both greeted each other with a kiss on the cheek before Marinette introduced you to the woman. Aimée was the right arm of Gabriel, now responsible for most of the company since he
wasn’t so active anymore.

“I’m so happy that he’s producing again. After all this time.” Her eyes seemed to shine as she put a hand on your arm. “You’ll love it. Gabriel’s work is something out of this world.”

You chuckled at the raw admiration in her voice. “I can’t wait to see it now.”

“Ah, Marinette, chérie,” a low voice said and you both turned around. A black haired guy dressed in a tuxedo was leaning on a rack of clothes. You wondered if he was one of the models participating in the show like his angled features seemed to suggest.

“Butcher.” Marinette said, not moving from your side. You noticed how her tone had lost the amiability from only moments ago.

The guy rolled his eyes at her tone and grabbed her hand, kissing the top of it. “Stunning as always.”

Marinette pulled her hand away, clearly not amused by his flattery and you couldn’t help letting out a snort.

The guy turned to you, looking you up and down. He grinned and glanced at Marinette. “Aren’t you going to introduce me?”

“You have a mouth, introduce yourself,” she said, crossing her arms over her chest. You put a hand over your mouth to contain your laughter, but by your side, Aimée let out a loud laugh.

“Oh, you two, years working together and always teasing each other,” she said, putting her arms on Marinette’s and the guy’s shoulder and bringing them closer. “This is Marius Boucher, a prodigy in our company, just like Marinette.”

Marius released himself from Aimée’s grip and kissed the top of your hand before you could even realize what was happening. “It’s a pleasure.”

You saw Marinette fake gag by your side and had to quickly transform the laugh that wanted to leave your mouth into a cough. “Likewise.”

Marius smirked. “Where are you from—”

“Where is Adrien?” Marinette interrupted him with a loud voice, looking around in an affected manner. “I don’t see him anywhere.” You grinned at her attempt to stop the conversation. She really didn’t seem to like this guy.

“He’s on makeup right now.” A man stopped by her side and your eyes widened when you recognized his face from the many paintings in Adrien’s house. Time had taken away the vitality from his skin and made the dark circles under his eyes more apparent, but he still bore the same stern expression. He greeted Marinette before continuing. “Adrien has been agitated the whole day. Do you know the reason for his behavior, Marinette?”

“I think I have an idea.” Mari gave you a look, but you ignored her, aware of what she was implying.

“Adrien’s usually so calm, Gabriel, almost apathetic,” Marius said. Your heart gave a leap at hearing the name. That was it. You were finally face-to-face with the man you had heard so much about. “It’s a nice change, don’t you think?”

Gabriel hummed and looked around. “Is everything in place?”
“You have asked this ten times already, Gabriel,” Aimée answered, with the patient tone of a mother.

“He said with furrowed brows and you shared a look with Marinette. You had a feeling Gabriel wasn’t having the best of days. Maybe he was still sick?

His eyes then locked on yours and you froze, not knowing how to react to his empty gaze.

“Hum, hello,” you said with a smile. All your ability to form coherent sentences seemed to leave you at this crucial moment, but you managed to introduce yourself and extend a hand to him.

To your utter relief, Gabriel didn’t leave you hanging and shook your hand after a few seconds.

“A foreign student…” He seemed to think. “Have we met before?”

You pretended to think for a moment then shook your head. “No, sir, I don’t think so.”

He squinted his eyes, confusion clear in his gaze and you swallowed dry, getting more uncomfortable with each passing second. Had you done something wrong?

A staff member appeared in the corner holding a walkie-talkie. “Sir, ma’am, ten minutes for the show.”

Aimée clasped her hands together. “Well, it’s time everyone! C’mon Gabriel, don’t just stand there.” She pulled the man by his arm, practically dragging him further into the tent, before turning back to you and Marinette. “It was a pleasure, dear. Enjoy the show!”

Marius winked at you and Marinette. “À bientôt, enjoy.”

You exited the tent and noticed that almost all the chairs were occupied already. People were chattering as the bright spotlights focused on the catwalk.

You followed Mari as she searched for your seats. “You don’t like Marius, do you?”

She groaned and rolled her eyes, and you chuckled. Well, you already had your answer.

“He’s insufferable, always trying to get into everyone’s pants. He never gives up,” Marinette said and you grinned. He really seemed like the seducer type. “You’ve probably met his mom, Manon Boucher.” You gave her a confused look and she continued. “From the Figure Drawing 2 class?”

“Oh, that’s her son?” You said and gaped at Mari when she nodded. “Wow, what a small world.”

“Tell me about it, it’s like he’s everywhere. Just my luck,” Mari said as she stopped in front of two empty seats.

“Ahn… Are you sure these are the seats?” You just stared at the chair in front of you. It was exactly in front of the catwalk, where the models stopped to pose before going back.

“Yep, best seats in the house.” She grinned, sitting down.

You slowly did the same, still not believing it. And oh god, you would be face to face with the models. Why hadn’t Adrien chosen a more hidden place? You saw Aimée sitting down by Marinette’s side and swallowed dry as you realized that your seats were probably VIP.

Before you could have a nervous breakdown, a shadow blocked the light from the spotlight in front
of you and you heard a familiar voice.

“Well, well, welly, well, look at what we have here.”

You looked up and saw Chloé Bourgeois with a hand on her hips staring at you. A faux fur coat covered her shoulders and a gemstone necklace hung around her neck. She looked so different from when you last saw her in Barcelona.

“I thought you wouldn’t come,” Marinette said as she crossed her legs.

“I thought so as well.” Chloé looked at her yellow painted nails. “You know Marinette, a hero’s life is a difficult one.” She gave the brunette an affected smile and you saw Marinette narrow her eyes at her. You watched the exchange with amusement, surprised that not only they knew each other, but seemed to have some past together. Chloé continued. “But I managed to come for Gabriel and Adrien’s sake. Also, have you seen that magazine? I had to ask in person what the hell was that for. So rude.”

“So rude indeed,” you muttered, remembering the photos. Both girls looked at you and you cleared your throat. “So, you know each other?”

“We went to school together,” Marinette said as someone approached Chloé asking for an autograph.

“Fun times.” The blonde said with a grin as she finished signing the paper and gave it back to her fan with a smile.

Mari sighed. “She’s a constant burden that I have to carry.”

Chloé gave Marinette’s foot a light shove. “Oh, shush, you love me.” Both girls smiled at each other and you couldn’t help smiling as well. They seemed to be good friends after all.

The lights began to dim, signalizing that the show was about to start and Chloé winked at you before going back to her seat. “Enjoy the show!”

You furrowed your brows. Why was everyone saying that to you? Did they know something you didn’t? This definitely wasn’t helping your feet to stop tapping on the ground.

The spotlights turned on to full power again and focused on the catwalk; the music changed; and the models began to exit the tent. Every outfit that appeared had people murmuring in appreciation and taking photos. The first models were dressed in darker colors, with skulls decorating the clothes, and you took some pictures of the outfits so you could take inspiration from them later.

However, you couldn’t help flinching every time the models with the stunning outfits stopped right in front of you and the photographers flashed their cameras. You were still on edge thanks to those paparazzi. It also wasn’t helping that you were curious about Adrien. When would he appear?

By your side, Marinette gasped in wonder everytime a new outfit appeared. She kept murmuring to herself and shaking her head. You smiled at her in the dark. It was impossible not to be impressed. Aimée was right when she had said that Gabriel’s work was something out of this world. He made death seem fancy and beautiful.

Then the music changed to something more epic and a choir began to sing. Your heart gave a leap. Maybe Adrien would appear now? You hadn’t seen the blonde backstage, so you had no idea how his outfit would be. Then another model appeared and you tried not to be disappointed.

The next models started to appear with halos behind their heads and their clothes had lighter colors
with golden tones. It was a mix of baroque details and modern pieces of clothing. With the warm lights coming from the spotlights, the models looked like angels.

You sat more upright in your chair to take another photo and in your haste dropped your ticket. You cursed under your breath and doubled over to grab it from the ground. It was then that you heard a collective mix of gasps and murmurs. When you looked up, you saw the reason for such reactions.

Adrien was walking down the catwalk in a white and gold outfit. His pants hung low on his hips, and an open draped cardigan left his bare torso showing as two pairs of golden embroidered wings sprouted from his back. And he was staring straight at you.

Your gazes locked and you sucked in a breath, feeling goosebumps go from your scalp to your legs. Then your body relaxed, Adrien’s presence melting the anxiety from before. He irradiated light, which seemed to burn and warm something in your chest. Like in a trance, you couldn’t look away.

He stopped to pose in the front of the catwalk for the photos, and in the brief moment that he glanced down at you, you saw his lips quirk up slightly before he turned away and walked back.

You breathed deeply and let the air out slowly, your chest a mess of conflicting emotions. You felt an urge within you, but to do what, you didn’t know. What just happened? You tried to ask yourself, but no answers came to you.

“Did you just sigh dreamily?” Mari whispered to you.

You felt your face heat up. “I did not,” you whispered back, not taking your eyes from the retreating frame of the blonde on the catwalk.

“I think you did.” She insisted.

“Mari, shh.”

The warmth in your chest refused to go away as you watched the other models come and go. No one could compare to Adrien, and that made something sour pool in the pit of your stomach. Guilt. You were getting worried at your reaction to the blonde. First the magazine and now this. Chat’s face appeared in your mind and you sighed. You weren’t supposed to feel like that. You already had your muse.

The sound of Marinette clapping caught your attention. You blinked and looked around seeing everyone standing up to applaud. You swiftly did the same, deciding to worry about your feelings later. All the models walked together in a line as the applause filled the room. And when Adrien appeared, you turned your head away, deciding to look at the crowd instead.

When the models left, Gabriel Agreste appeared and people applauded even more. The light of the spotlight reflected on his glasses as he stood there with a smile, waiting for the ovation to end. The bright light seemed to amplify the paleness of his skin, making him look like a ghost.

“Young thank you all for coming here tonight.” Gabriel smiled and looked down at a paper in his hands, probably containing his speech. “This collection is a special one, not because it symbolizes my return, but because it represents the end of an era.” People began to look at each other, lost expressions on their faces, and confused murmurs filled the clearing. “This show was my last one.” Gabriel continued and people gasped, Marinette included.

“No.” You heard Aimée say by Mari’s side. She was staring at the stage with horror. “Gabriel, no…”
“It’s… it’s with great sorrow that I say goodbye to the fashion industry. But it’s necessary.” The man looked up from his notes, and you saw sadness in his eyes. “From today on, I’m retiring.”

“Don’t do this.” Aimée was looking at Gabriel without blinking, a hand gripping her chest. Marinette touched her shoulder, but then took her hand off with a hiss. Your friend’s eyes widened and your stomach dropped at her reaction. Something was wrong.

“You can’t do this, Gabriel.” Aimée continued and you noticed her eyes were now purple. They weren’t that color before.

Marinette began to walk backwards with careful steps and pulled you along with her.

“Mari?” You whispered, but she didn't answer, her eyes focused on the woman now in front of you.

“You can’t!” Aimée cried out as her body began to contort and get bigger until she almost reached the height of the tall hedges that contoured the clearing. Screams filled the air as she transformed into a half human, half red spider hybrid.

The energy of the transformation threw you and Mari backwards, along with the others who were close to Aimée.

Your body hit the gravel-covered ground hard, scratching your skin and face. The ground thumped as the spider ran to the catwalk, and you got up as quickly as you could. People were desperate to leave the clearing and you were going to be trampled by them if you didn’t get out of the way.

Thankfully you were able to get away in time and went to a corner to search for Marinette. You looked around, but you couldn't find her anywhere. What you saw instead made your blood run cold.

The spider was holding Gabriel Agreste with one of her long human arms as she spun a cocoon around him. Five other people were already on the ground, enveloped in white strings that began to get darker by their feet.

The spider put Gabriel’s cocooned body on the ground with the others and turned around. Her purple eyes locked on yours.

“You.” Her deep voice reached your ears and made a shiver go down your spine.

She started to move in your direction, and it was like you were paralyzed. You screamed at your body to move, but it didn’t obey you.

You felt a hand close around your wrist and a second later you were being pulled to one of the exits. “This way!”

You recognized the voice. How couldn’t you?

Adrien was still wearing the clothes from the show. Now he didn’t have the wings, but he still looked much like an angel.

The blonde took you through the dark corridors and you were thankful that he was with you in this plant maze. You heard the sound of the spider legs following close behind and you both ran faster.

Your heart seemed like it’d burst out of your chest. The corridors got narrower and you thought that it was a good sign until the sound of bushes being crushed reached you. The spider hadn’t given up and the hedges didn't seem to be a problem for her.
“Here,” Adrien said and pulled you into a small opening in the plant wall. It was another clearing, but smaller this time, and the only light came from the moon above you.

Adrien pulled you close to his chest and you held your breath, wishing your heartbeat would make less noise. It seemed too loud, like it’d create echoes in the empty clearing any time.

A few seconds passed before the sound of the spider’s heavy steps passed by.

Adrien waited a moment before he let go of you and took a deep breath. You sighed as you put your hands on your knees and tried to calm down.

“You okay?” Adrien asked.

“Yeah, thanks.” You breathed in and out, struggling to form words. “I can't believe I froze like that.” You cursed at yourself, imagining if you had been caught and transformed into one of those cocoons.

“It happens.” Adrien passed a hand through his hair, taking it out of his face. “What’s important is that you are okay.”

“Thanks to you,” you said in a quiet voice, eyeing him from the side.

He said your name in a soft voice and took a step in your direction. Screams coming from another part of the maze made him stop in his tracks and stare at you. You stared back with wide eyes. The hairs on the back of your neck stood up and your instincts were telling you to run as far away as possible.

Adrien walked up to the exit of the clearing. He grabbed something from his pocket and put it on his finger. A silver ring. You stared at it as your heart seemed to scream at you, but your mind was empty. All you felt was a searing ache in your chest as your mind pulled you to one side and your heart pulled you to another.

The blonde peeked outside and motioned for you to come to him, which you did with careful steps. You couldn’t see anything out there. All the torches had been blown out, and the tall hedges blocked the moonlight from lighting the path. You swallowed dry. It felt like you were in a horror movie.

You got closer to Adrien, seeking some sort of comfort. He touched your arm. “It won’t be long before the spider finds us here. We need to leave.”

You gulped and nodded. The last thing you wanted was to leave, but he was right. “Alright.”

Adrien removed his hand from your arm and your chest squeezed in protest at the lack of contact, but a second later he extended his palm to you. You gave him a small smile as you grabbed it. It was comforting to know you weren’t alone in this.

You walked side by side in silence, listening closely to any sound, but there was none. A branch creaked and you squeezed Adrien’s hand with force as you stopped walking. The silence returned and the blonde caressed your hand with his thumb. You breathed deeply, forcing yourself to calm down.

“Look,” Adrien whispered, pointing to the exit of the maze a few meters ahead.

Your shoulders sagged in relief, but you still stayed alert and checked behind you to make sure the spider wasn’t coming.

There was another creaking sound and this time Adrien was the one to squeeze your hand. You
turned back and saw he was looking up with wide eyes. *Oh no.*

“There you are.” The spider dropped to the ground in front of you, throwing up gravel all around her.

Adrien let go of your hand and pushed you, making you stumble back. “Run! Now!” The spider grabbed him with one of her legs and pulled him to her.

“Adrien!” Your voice cracked as you screamed. You wanted to stay and help him, but as your mind quickly tried to go over a plan, you realized running was your only option. Maybe if you ran the spider would leave Adrien alone. You were the one she wanted.

So you turned around and let your trembling legs take you into the chaos of corridors in front of you. You heard the spider begin to follow you, but a moment later silence was the only thing that kept you company in the dark.

Chapter End Notes

Do you all want to kill me?? Of course not, right?? Because the new chapter is probably going to be uploaded next week, so it's all good! Yay! :D

Also, I was really inactive the past few months and the POV chapters got a bit neglected, but I'll start to promote them here again! The next reward is Chapter 13 winkwink and we're at 46 coffees right now, just more 4 to go!
So if you guys would like to support the story and get sinful kitty thoughts in return, here's the link to ko-fi (∩’ω’∩)/*: ••

And one last thing, how do you guys feel about Patreon? I was thinking about moving the POV chapters decisions and the art for the chapters to that site, but it's still just an idea
Here we go, the conclusion to that unfair cliffhanger! I promise I'll try not to add many cliffhangers in the future, but I might not resist :p we'll see...

Also my sincere apologies to all the readers that have arachnophobia. Hang in there, Chat will protect you ♡

Enjoy!

You felt tears pricking your eyes. How you hated to be so weak, so impotent. Your muscles were stiff from exhaustion and you had to stop running after you entered the tenth corridor. You couldn’t keep going anymore.

Your skin was sticky with sweat even with the cold chilling your bones. You passed by a torn poster with Adrien’s face and shook your head, your eyes burning along with your lungs. You were dejected. He had sacrificed himself for you and you couldn’t do anything to help him. The spider hadn’t followed you like you had planned.

There was a small hope in your heart that the miraculous heroes had arrived by now, but the distance from Versailles to Paris was big. It’d take them at least half an hour to arrive.

You let out a long, distressed sigh. If only Chat would be able to get Adrien before the spider transformed him into one of her horrible cocoons. You still didn’t know what she’d do to those. Transform them into spiders? Eat them? You shuddered at the thought.

You entered the clearing with careful steps. Maybe you could help the others before this happened to them. You just hoped Adrien wasn’t in one of those things.

You managed to open a few cocoons, scrunching up your nose at their weird smell and stickiness, but it seemed that they were also made of cloth. The people inside were all sleeping, probably poisoned. You sighed in relief when you opened the last one. No sign of Adrien.
You got up on the catwalk and kneeled down on the ground to help Gabriel. His cocoon was almost all dark already. When you took the last strings off his face, he began to breathe again, his chest going up and down as he slept.

The hairs on the back of your neck stood up as you noticed something coming right at you in your peripheral view. You managed to duck, feeling something whizzing past your head.

“You’re a slippery one, aren’t you?”

You turned around and saw the spider perched on the hedges, three of her eight red legs limp. She contorted her body and crawled down, trying to balance herself on her remaining legs. The sound of them cracking as she moved made your stomach churn in disgust.

“Hawkmoth said I could have Gabriel if I caught you,” she said, fixing the scarf around her head. “It’s nothing personal.”

Taking a closer look at her body you could see she was bleeding in various places. There were some bumps and claws marks even on her human skin. Your attention perked up at that. It seemed that the miraculous heroes had arrived and had fought her at some point.

The spider took a step forward and grabbed the open dark cocoon. As she touched it, the red strings went to her lower body, wrapping around her torso and legs. She closed her eyes in satisfaction as her wounds healed and disappeared.

You took advantage of that moment to get down from the catwalk and hide behind it, your chest heaving as you struggled to breathe. The spider was using people to regenerate. How were the heroes going to defeat her?

You heard a loud crack, followed by the spider’s visceral scream.

“You healed again?” Your heart skipped a beat at the voice. “I have to say this is getting really annoying, lady. We don’t have all night.”

You got up from your hiding spot just enough to see Chat entering the clearing with a grin. He dodged the spider’s attacks and hit her legs, making her fall hard on the ground. You sighed in relief at seeing him, your eyes filling with unshed tears again. But you managed to keep them from flowing. Everything would be all right now, you knew it.

Chat’s eyes found yours and the grin left his lips. He ran over to you and pulled you up, his eyes searching your face. “I’ve been looking for you everywhere, chérie. Are you okay?”

You smiled to soothe the concern in his eyes. “I’m fine, I just couldn’t find a way out.” You checked his suit and masked face for any injuries. The magical cloth wasn’t ripped, which was a good sign, but the blonde still had a scratch on his chin.

“I’m getting you out of here,” Chat said. He prepared his baton and pulled you close by your waist.

“That girl is mine, cat.” The spider shot a web at Chat’s hand, making the baton fly and hit the ground meters away. She finished absorbing another dark cocoon and got up, her legs healed.

Chat stood in front of you, cat ears pulled back. “You stay the hell away from her.”

The spider smirked, her face contorting in a crooked smile. “Or what?” She motioned to her body. “All your attacks did nothing. The other girls’ powers were also useless.” Your ears perked up at that. Other girls? Did that mean Ladybug and Queen Bee were here?
“Stay behind me, chérie,” Chat whispered to you and you nodded, touching his back. You didn’t know how well he’d be able to defend himself without his baton, but you trusted him.

“You can’t defeat me,” the spider said, getting closer.

“I still have some tricks up my sleeve, lady, don’t underestimate me.” Chat smirked with confidence as his hands glowed green.

You stared at his palms. This was the same power he had used to frighten Kostas that day. It was the second time you saw it. Why didn’t Chat use it more often?

The spider cackled. “Ah, yes, the ‘destruction god’, isn’t it what they call you?”

Chat narrowed his eyes at her. “I really don’t mind the ‘god’ thing, lady, but Chat Noir is just fine, no need to flatter me.” You shook your head. Of course he’d keep joking even in a dangerous situation like this.

The spider wasn’t impressed.

“Is this what you’re going to do, hero?” She took a step forward, her weight making the broken things on the ground creak. “Destroy me with your power? This is your specialty, isn’t it? Destroying things, people—”

“Shut up,” Chat hissed in a dangerous voice, the joking tone gone, and the spider’s eyes widened a fraction.

“Oh,” she smirked, and it was clear in her eyes that she knew she had hit a nerve. “You don’t like talking about it?” You saw Chat tense up in front of you. Whatever they were talking about was angering him, making him ball his hands into fists.

“Do it, hero. It’s what you were made for, wasn’t it?” The spider opened her human arms, but Chat was hesitant, the green light flickering. He glanced back at you. The spider narrowed her eyes dangerously. “And if you don’t, I’ll transform this darling of yours into a beautiful piece of cloth and eat her life force.”

Chat growled at her and you saw his hands begin to glow brighter. Black particles were leaving his palms and your body was buzzing from the energy coming from him. You took a step back, heart in your throat. You had never seen so much power before.

Chat took a step forward and the spider’s purple eyes widened.

She stumbled back, all the confidence gone from her gaze as she stared at Chat’s hands in fear. “You don’t have the guts—”

“Try me,” he said, getting closer.

The spider froze. The purple outline of a mask hovered over her face, and as she opened her mouth, a different voice left her lips. A man’s voice. “Do it.”

“Stop!” Hurried steps echoed from the corridor and Ladybug and Queen Bee appeared.

Chat halted and stared at them with wide eyes. His hands lost their green glow, making the room fall into darkness again.

A rumbling sound came from the spider and the scarf around her hair began to crumble like threads
of cloth. Her huge body began to disintegrate, and it was about to fall on top of you and Chat, crushing you both.

Before you could even have a proper reaction other than ‘well, I’m gonna die’, the cat hero grabbed you by the waist and took you to a safe corner at the same time that Queen Bee flew and caught an unconscious Aimée before she fell to the ground. Safe by Chat’s side, you saw Ladybug catch a dark butterfly that flew from the scarf.

You stared at Chat’s troubled face as Lady used her power to purify the akuma and fix the mess it had done. The blonde stared up at the pink lights circling the room and didn’t look your way.

You grabbed his gloved hand, making him finally turn to you.

“You’re shaking,” you said, entwining your fingers with his.

He lowered his gaze, cat ears pulled back. “It’s nothing.”

“Doesn’t seem like it.” You insisted and waited for his response. Chat’s silence spurred you to continue. “Is it about what the spider said?”

The blonde sighed. “I shouldn’t have reacted so strongly.” He looked up at you. “But every time you get involved, I just…” He closed his eyes and another sigh left his lips.

“Hey, it’s okay.” You put your other hand on his face, caressing his cheek. “I’m okay. You’re okay.” You squeezed Chat’s hand. “It’s what matters, right?”

He just stared at you for a moment before a smile appeared on his lips and he squeezed your hand back. “Right.”

You smiled as well, glad that he seemed to be calmer. You would still ask him about that ‘god of destruction’ thing, but now wasn’t the right time.

The pink light faded and everything was back in place. Even the fire lighting the torches was alive again. People who once were in the cocoons began to wake up and look around. Even the ones who had been consumed by the spider had come back, which made you wonder how Ladybug’s power could revert death. Did it have some sort of limit?

You decided to ask Lady or Chat that question later, maybe even Bee. There were so many questions on your mind that you’d have to start archiving them.

Chat went to help the still confused people get up and you joined him. Queen Bee was carrying them out of the maze by air one by one. Aimée had been the first one to be taken away, and you wondered how she was doing.

Chat walked to Gabriel Agreste and helped the man to his feet. He was even paler now, looking around with a hand massaging his temples.

“Ah, thank you….” The man gazed at Chat with a troubled expression. You furrowed your brows as you watched the exchange. Didn’t Gabriel know about Chat?

“Chat Noir, sir.” Chat said with a small smile and something akin to pity in his voice.

“Ah, yes, yes… Chat Noir.” The man nodded as Chat helped him get down from the catwalk. “Chat Noir…” The man kept repeating the name over and over as Bee carried him into the air. You watched him go with a heavy heart. He really didn’t seem well. Maybe it was better for Gabriel to
Soon you had all left that horrid maze, with Queen Bee carrying Ladybug and Chat raising you both over the hedges with his baton. You looked back at the walls of the labyrinth and shivered, glad to be away from it. The other guests of the fashion show were all walking to the entrance of the garden, being conducted by guards.

“Ah,” Queen Bee stretched by Ladybug’s side as she walked. “What a weird fight. It’s the first time an akumatized villain goes back to normal on their own, isn’t it?”

Ladybug nodded. She seemed deep in thought, her brows creasing her forehead. “It never happened before. And she didn’t even say her villain name.”

The seriousness in the brunette’s voice made apprehension arise in your chest. This didn’t seem good. You glanced at Chat walking by your side.

He gave you a reassuring smile, and the apprehension eased a little. “I was waiting for the terrible pun.” You could see he was trying to lighten up the mood. “Kinda disappointed she didn’t say it.”

Bee let out a loud laugh. “Look who’s talking.”

“Oh, c’mon Bee, my puns have always been pawsome.” Chat grinned as you and the girls groaned.

“Even with the puns,” Queen Bee gave Chat a pointed look, “I have to admit I missed the times when we all fought together.”

“Yeah,” Ladybug said, a nostalgic smile lifting up her lips. “Me too.”

You chewed on your bottom lip as you listened to the conversation. You thought they’d talk about Chat’s power and why Ladybug had stopped him, but they didn’t even mention it. You wanted to groan in frustration. It seemed that it’d be one more hero secret for you to be curious about.

You bumped your hand against Chat’s and before you could pull it back, he grabbed your palm in his. You looked at him and he gave you a grin that made your heart flutter. You averted your gaze with an embarrassed smile, your face burning. This was the first time you were walking hand in hand like some sort of couple. You felt like a lovestruck teenager.

“I still remember your first akuma,” Ladybug said to Bee, oblivious to how fast your heart was beating in your chest. “When you tried to fly and landed on your ass.” Lady laughed, the sound echoing in the gardens.

Chat pulled your joined hands to his lips and kissed the back of your hand. You bit your lip at the sly look in his half-lidded eyes. He then turned forward again, a smirk on his lips. Damn him, he knew the effect he had on you.

“Nobody needs to know about that, Bug.” Queen narrowed her eyes at the brunette. “Nobody.” Bug? You stifled a laugh at the nickname Queen Bee had chosen. “Just like nobody needs to know about that time we fought that giant boar and you let it trample half of the city.”

They continued to bicker and you chuckled at them. At the edge of your vision you saw someone with blonde hair and stopped in your tracks, heart speeding up. Adrien?

Chat realized you had stopped and did the same. You let out a frustrated breath when you saw the
blonde person wasn’t Adrien. You knew you wouldn’t be able to rest until you found him and discovered if he was okay.

“Is something wrong, love?” Chat asked by your side, caressing your hand with his thumb.

Before you could say something, Queen Bee had already spoken.

“Wait, wait, wait. Love?” Queen Bee turned around on her heels to face you both and glanced at your joined hands. “Whaaa— Does it mean you two are officially together now?”

You and Chat shared a look. There was no denying it anymore.

“Yeah.”

“Yep.”

“Oh. My. God. I can’t believe this!” Bee pulled Chat into a hug, startling you both. “I thought I’d never see you date someone, mister Don Juan.” She pulled back and put her hands on his shoulders, a serious expression on her face. “Wait, did Bug already know?”

“I did, yes.” Ladybug shrugged with a grin. You arched a brow at her and then at Chat. You didn’t even know that Lady knew about it already. The cat boy only shrugged at you with one shoulder, an apologetic smile on his face.

Queen Bee’s face was contorted with exasperation as she stared at Chat. “You told her first? And not your best friend?” She put a hand over her heart. “I’m honestly hurt.”

Ladybug rolled her eyes at Bee’s drama and turned to you. “Did you see something?”

“I thought I had seen Adrien, but it’s not him,” you said in a defeated tone as you looked around once more.

“Adrien?” Queen Bee asked.

“Yeah, Gabriel’s son. You said you came to the show to see him, right?” You explained. Chat was silent by your side. “He helped me get away from the spider, but then he got caught. I just want to know if he’s okay.”

You felt Chat grip your hand a little tighter and you glanced at him with a strange expression.

“I’m sure Adrien’s fine, don’t worry,” Ladybug said, putting a hand on your shoulder. “He’s probably outside already.”

“Yeah, I bet that diva is okay.” Bee waved a nonchalant hand in front of her face. “There’s more to that boy than just his pretty face.”

“I know,” you said with a smile. You had discovered that a long time ago. “He has helped me so many times. He’s so kind and—” You froze when you felt Chat’s eyes boring into you. You turned to him slowly, wary of his odd behavior. “What?”

You were expecting a lot of things, but not Chat putting a hand on the back of your neck and bringing your lips together. Your eyes widened and as they were about to flutter close, Chat pulled back.

You gaped at him as he went back to stand by your side. What the hell? You tried to ask him with
your eyes, but Chat just kept grinning from ear to ear, satisfaction clear on his face.

Queen Bee let out a low whistle. “Damn, was that all jealousy? Ouch!” She put a hand over her ribs and turned to Ladybug. “Ouch, Bug. That hurt!”

You and Chat kept staring at each other. Your chest heaved for being caught by surprise and it’d take some time for the sudden desire burning in your veins to simmer down. Jealousy could be the reason for the sudden display of affection, sure, but Chat didn’t seem mad about you talking about Adrien. It made you even more confused.

Ladybug cleared her throat. “So…” She extended the word out, before she motioned with her thumb to the garden entrance. “Let’s go then?”

“Yes!” Bee clasped her hands together. “I’m sure there’s a bunch of reporters anxiously waiting to talk to us.” She laughed with excitement and Lady rolled her eyes with a smile.

The mention of the word ‘reporters’ hit you like a bucket of cold water to the face. “I can’t go there.” You fidgeted with your clothes, thinking about when you had arrived. Just thinking about going through that again made you feel sick.

“There’s another exit through that corridor.” Bee pointed to a dark corridor a few meters away. “The gate opens only from the inside, you should be fine.” You wondered how she knew about that. She then winked at you. “And don’t worry, I got you, sweetie. We’ll get their attention.”

“Wait, we?” Ladybug asked as Bee linked arms with her.

“Of course, silly Bug!” Bee pulled Ladybug along as she went to the entrance with a huge grin on her face. Lady looked back at you and Chat with a face that screamed ‘help me’ before she was dragged along.

“Hello, everyone! Waiting for us?” You heard Bee exclaim. The reporters went crazy screaming her and Ladybug’s name.

“C’mon, love, before the paparazzi get bored.” Chat pulled you to the corridor.

When you were almost at the gate and could see the golden gate of Versailles in the distance, Chat stopped, making you bump into him.

“Whoa, what happened—” Your words got lost in your throat as his lips crashed into yours. The blonde didn’t waste time in pressing you against the cold wall and deepening the kiss. You hummed as you grabbed his arms for support, not really understanding what was going on, but not complaining either. The desire that had been building up in you since the last kiss burned alive again and you pulled Chat by the waist until his body was flush against you.

The cat boy hummed with appreciation and bit your bottom lip, making a small moan leave your mouth. A noise coming from the patio startled you both and you parted from each other, cheeks flushed and out of breath. After checking that no one had seen you, Chat turned to you. He was grinning the same way he had before, that hint of satisfaction clear as day.

“Alright.” You let out a breathy laugh, trying to breathe in and out as you leaned on the wall for support. “What’s going on?” One second he was hurrying you to leave because of paparazzi and then he was pushing you against walls. You couldn’t be more confused.

“Nothing. I just felt like it.” Chat smirked, but you saw something else in his eyes. A sudden
happiness that had no reasonable explanation to you. He kissed your jawline and whispered in your ear, “Did I tell you that you look absolutely gorgeous tonight?”

You smiled as he left open mouthed kisses on your neck. “You’re changing the subject.”

“Can’t a muse kiss his artist when he so pleases?” He said against your skin.

Goosebumps broke out on your arms as you tried to make sense of his curious behavior. Could it be that he was truly jealous?

Chat’s ring began to beep, but besides raising his head to look at you, Chat didn’t move a muscle. He kept gazing at you, his green eyes making you not want to think about anything else other than him. But it was time to go. You broke your gaze away from him and put your hand on his chest to make him move, but Chat still didn’t let go of you.

You arched a brow at him. Wasn’t he going to leave?

You swallowed dry at the implications of that. His ring was blaring in the dark corridor, insistent.

“Chat?” You asked in a small voice, and he hummed while staring at you through half-lidded eyes. “Is this about Adrien? Are you... jealous?” Chat’s lips stretched into a smirk and you took that as a yes. “You don’t have to be. You know I don’t want anybody but you, right?”

Uncertainty flashed in Chat’s eyes, and the expression on his face was no longer warm. This was definitely not the reaction you were expecting.

The blonde sighed and looked to the ground. “Why is this so difficult?” He muttered. If to himself or to you, you didn’t know.

“What is difficult?” You asked, aware of the ring still blaring. Shouldn’t Chat’s transformation be over? Why was it taking so long?

Chat let out a humorless chuckle and briefly kissed your forehead. “I’ll see you later, princess. Take care.”

The cold of the wall behind you seeped into your clothes as you watched him run to the other end of the corridor. You contemplated following him for a moment, but then you just let out a breath and let a tired smile tug at your lips, wondering if you’d ever truly understand the cat hero.

After Chat’s cryptic behavior, you left the corridor and sneaked past the reporters. They were still focused on Queen Bee, who now had Marius by her side, talking excitedly about how he barely escaped being transformed into a cocoon.

Bee and Marius were fighting for the press’ attention, one interrupting the other, but you couldn’t see Ladybug anywhere in the commotion. It seemed that she had escaped somehow. You chuckled as you walked through the patio. Lady didn’t seem the type to like the reporters’ attention. Chloé, on the other hand…

“Oh thank goodness.” You heard Marinette’s voice first before you saw her walking up to you. “I thought I’d never find you.”

“Where were you?” You asked, spotting a purple bruise on her neck.
“I managed to run away when Aimée transformed, and when I looked back, you had disappeared,” she said, scratching her earlobe and making you notice her red and black earrings. Were they always there?

“Adrien helped me out,” you said, focusing back on her face. “If it wasn’t for him the spider would’ve gotten me.” You looked around the patio. “Have you seen him?”

As if on cue, someone poked your shoulder and you turned to look. A bright smile curled up your lips when your eyes met green ones.

“Adrien!” You cried out and hugged him. He had normal clothes on now and you buried your face in his grey hoodie, closing your eyes in relief. You could finally relax now. He was okay. “I was so worried. Thank you for what you did.”

You felt him swallow dry before he returned the hug. “It was nothing.”

Images of him on the catwalk flashed in your mind and you became fully aware of your proximity. You let go of him as if his hoodie had burned you and tried your best to smile.

“What happened after I...” You couldn’t finish the sentence, the guilt of leaving him behind was still alive in you.

“You don’t have to feel bad about what you did. I was the one who suggested it.” Adrien smiled at you. It seemed that he understood what you were trying to say. “And Ladybug arrived and rescued me.”

“I bet she carried you bridal style.” Mari grinned at Adrien. “Like a damsel in distress.”

Adrien rolled his eyes and you chuckled. “I’m glad it worked out.” You pushed the blonde’s shoulder playfully. “But you can’t just give yourself up like that, Adrien. What were you thinking?”

“At least *someone* is reasonable here.”

Adrien’s eyes widened and you tilted your head. His mouth hadn’t moved. Who had spoken just then?

You turned to Marinette, noticing she was staring at Adrien with wide eyes. “Did you say something?”

She opened her mouth to answer when another voice cut in the conversation.

“Adrien, are you coming?” Gabriel put a hand on his son’s shoulder, startling him. The man looked much better now than when you saw him in the gardens. His clothes were impeccable again, along with his grey hair.

“Oh, yes, um, father, this is my... friend,” Adrien motioned to you with his hand while saying your name. “And this is my father, Gabriel.”

You gave the man a polite smile. “We’ve met—”

He extended his hand to you, making your words die in your throat. “It’s a pleasure to meet one of my son’s friends.”

You opened and closed your mouth, puzzled, before shaking his hand. “The pleasure is all mine.” Had he forgotten about meeting you before? How was that possible?
“Is that another friend of yours?” Gabriel pointed to someone behind you.

You turned and saw Julien sneaking up to you with a bouquet of yellow and white roses. He froze on the spot when all eyes turned to him.

“Sir, with all due respect, you ruined my surprise,” he said, straightening his posture and making you and Mari laugh. “Here, for you.”

You gaped at the bouquet held in front of you before you took it from him with a grin. “Wow, thanks, Julien.” You sniffed the flowers’ perfume, trying to understand your friend’s sudden generous mood.

“You deserve it, beautiful. Now,” He put his arm around your shoulders and you raised a brow at him, noticing the smell of alcohol coming from his breath. Well, that explained his weird behavior. “I think we all need a drink after this mess. The Agrestes are invited as well, of course.”

Your eyes focused on Adrien and you saw him staring at you and the roses in your hands. His lips were pressed in a thin line and you could see him opening and closing his hands.

He took a step forward. “Sure.”

Gabriel put a hand on his shoulder. “We have an interview in ten minutes Adrien, did you forget?”

You could see Adrien tighten his jaw. He still hadn’t looked away from you, and you stared back, feeling like you were at the show again, when he walked down the catwalk. But this time, you swallowed dry and forced yourself to avoid your gaze.

“Fine,” Adrien said through gritted teeth and turned on his heels, walking to a trailer with ‘Dressing Room’ written on it. Gabriel said a quick and confused apology to you before going after him.

You watched as they walked away, wanting to follow after the blonde and make a smile appear on his face again.

“Julien…” Mari sighed and crossed her arms over her chest. “Why did you do that?”

“Why not? Did you see his face?” He laughed and let go of your shoulders. “And I was just helping a friend out.”

You noticed he was staring at you with a grin. A very drunk grin. “What, helping me? With what?”

“To get a date, of course. Making Adrien jealous was all part of the plan,” he said, nudging your arm. “If I can’t be happy, at least I can help my friends be. That’s my motto now.”

You wanted to get angry at Julien, but you couldn’t. All your heart felt was worry for him. “It’s not like that.”

“Now, now, let’s go.” Mari linked arms with you and Julien and pulled you to the exit. “After this night, I’m the one who needs a drink.”

You looked back at the trailer one more time before allowing Mari to drag you out to the golden gates.

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“IT’s over,” Julien sniffled and took a big gulp of his drink. It was his fourth glass already. “And now I can’t look him in the face.”
The Irish pub was nearly empty. You had come back to Paris, and gotten into the first open place that sold drinks that Julien had found. It was cozy and had many TVs around, showing different shows.

“Why did you break up with him like that?” Mari said by your side on the booth, her words a little slurred. Her sixth shot of tequila was almost at the end, but she seemed better than Julien at least. How, you didn’t know.

“It was fated to end anyway,” Julien said, wiping his eyes. “He’s leaving, Marinette.”

You shook your glass a little, watching the drink inside it twirl. It seemed that Mari and Julien needed to vent, so you decided to be the responsible friend that’d make sure they would arrive home safely.

“So you just gave up?” You asked and took a sip of your own drink. In a way, Julien and Luan were in the same situation as you and Chat, the difference being that your time to leave Paris still hadn’t come yet.

“Long distance relationships are doomed from the start.” Julien let out a broken sigh and muttered, “I wish I had never met him.”

His words pierced your heart like shards of ice. Would you or Chat feel that way when you had to leave? Would the pain be that great that you’d prefer to forget everything you had went through together? You took another sip of the drink, hoping it’d take away the freezing uneasiness that wanted to consume you.

“I used to think like that,” Mari said in a small voice. “When the pain got so unbearable and I thought I wouldn’t be able to live through another day.” She downed the rest of the tequila and motioned for the bartender to bring her another drink. “But I try to be grateful for what we had. Try to see it that way.”

Julien put his hand on top of hers on the table. “I know I always say this, but I’m sorry for what happened.”

“I appreciate it,” Mari smiled and lowered her eyes. “It has been five years now, but the ugly wound still opens from time to time when I think about him.”

“Wait, what happened?” You glanced from Julien to Mari. She had never mentioned having a boyfriend before.

The bartender gave Mari her new drink, a glass of whisky, and she already took a sip from it. “My boyfriend was one of the victims that died in the war five years ago.”

“The Hawkmoth one?” You asked. When she nodded, you continued. “Ladybug’s power wasn’t able to bring him back?”

Mari closed her eyes tightly, and you winced at the pain in her expression, immediately regretting your question. “I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have asked.”

“It’s okay.” She gave you a smile that didn’t reach her somber eyes.

Silence fell between you; Mari and Julien seeming lost in their own thoughts.

You raised your head to look at one of the TVs and saw Adrien and Gabriel sitting side by side giving an interview. You saw Adrien laugh and averted your eyes, feeling that same warmth from
before. It had transformed into an ache now, demanding to be acknowledged. You just wanted to pull it from your chest and be done with it.

Not being able to stay still, you moved your glass a little to the side and began to play with the water trail it left behind.

“How come Adrien is so famous here in Paris, but he isn’t followed around by paparazzi?” You asked to distract yourself. Your friends turned to look at the TV.

“He was, years back,” Mari said, twirling her glass on the table, “But now he basically never leaves his studio, so they think his life isn’t that interesting anymore.”

Julien chuckled. “I think people usually go after him in these kinds of events, right?”

Mari nodded with a smile. “Yeah, they take as many pictures as they can before he goes back to his cave.”

You couldn’t help grinning at the image of Adrien hiding in his studio. You imagined a model like him would be spotted at big parties and events, but it seemed that he wasn’t like that. It actually suited his calm personality somehow.

You kept playing with the water and it vaguely began to take the form of a face. The ache was becoming more bearable now.

“And talking about Adrien...” Julien straightened up his posture on the booth and leaned closer to you over the table. You refrained from rolling your eyes, waiting for what was about to come. “Let’s talk about all that tension between you and him, shall we?”

A frown creased your forehead. “There’s no tension, Julien.”

“Oh, please,” Julien waved a hand in front of his face. “I can’t be the only one that noticed that look he gave you at the catwalk. It made me squirm in my seat and it wasn’t even directed at me.”

Mari snorted. “And you didn’t hear the sigh she let out after he turned around.”

“I guess that ass was too good, huh?” Julien let out a loud laugh and Marinette joined him, making the few people in the pub turn to look at them.

“Guys...” You put a hand over your face, your cheeks growing hot. It wasn’t your fault. You couldn’t control the impression Adrien had on you. Just because there was something in your chest that brimmed with energy when you looked at him—

Your thoughts came to a sudden halt when your eyes locked on the water trail on the table. What once was just water, now formed a distorted portrait. That warmth, that ache that Adrien had installed in your chest, it had only subsided when you began to create that ‘drawing’. Your mouth felt dry, your head buzzing. Only once you had felt something so strongly, and it was when you began to draw Chat.

“Hey, you still with us?” Mari waved a hand in front of your face. You snapped your head at her, remembering where you were. “We should be the drunk ones here.”

“She’s daydreaming about Adrien’s ass, Marinette, leave her be.” Julien giggled, slurring on his words as if to prove Mari’s point.

“Guys, _stop_, this is serious.” You put your hands on the table, smearing the ‘portrait’ and making it
go back to the trivial water trail that it once was. Your friends’ eyes widened at the firm tone of your voice. “I love Chat Noir…” You swallowed. It was the first time you were saying this, even to yourself. But you knew it to be true. “I love him, ok? It took me a long time to realize that, and now I just want to enjoy my time with him. So, please, stop.”

You were saying this to them, but it was mostly a warning and plea to yourself. You had to stop that ache, inspiration or not. It could be platonic for now, but you knew what had happened with your platonic feelings for Chat. You didn’t have time for this drama.

Marinette and Julien gave each other a look.

The blonde nodded. “Alright, I’m sorry. We’ll stop, right, Mari?”

Mari shook her head and took a big gulp of her whiskey. She grimaced when the drink went down her throat. “Knowledge is both a blessing and a curse.”

“What are you even talking about?” Julien asked. “Do you know something we don’t?”

Mari gave him a tired and melancholic smile. “Many things, Julien. I know too many things.”

Chapter End Notes

I have to say that I truly love updating this fic because of you guys’ reactions. It makes my day. Even while I’m writing a new chapter I keep thinking ‘what will they think about this?’ hahahah it's fun :)

See you next month!♡
Sacred and Profane Love

Chapter Summary

Lewd meter: (°_°)

Chapter Notes

woooo I'm back!! :D sorry for the delay everyone!

Samantha wasn't able to help me with this chapter for personal reasons. Thanks to her help, this fic was able to grow to what it is now and I'm deeply grateful for her advice and friendship. I hope you all can send warm thoughts and energy her way ♡

So, since English isn't my first language I had to find another beta and Parker kindly offered to help me with the editing!! Thank you!

You guys told me you like long chapters. Me too. This one is 31 pages long and has more than 11k. I can't control myself. Enjoy~ ☆ \( -_-\) ヽ (°_°; )

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You didn’t know where you were. You tried to look around, but what seemed to be a thick fog impeded you from seeing your surroundings. Muffled sounds reached your ears and there was a constant pressure against your eardrums, like you were underwater.

“Please,” you almost didn’t hear the man beg in front of you. You couldn’t see his face thanks to the fog, and when he tried to speak again, his voice cut off, like a malfunctioning radio.

The dream changed, the previous gone as if blown away by a strong wind, and Chat appeared in front of you. His eyes were red, brimming with unshed tears. The loud noise of the airplane behind you filled the air, and the wind made your clothes ruffle around you. Final call for boarding, the woman kept saying. You tried to touch Chat one last time, to say goodbye, but he backed off, face scrunching up.

“I wish I had never met you.” He said, turning his head away.

Your eyes snapped open and you sat upright on the chair. You looked around, expecting to see an airport, but was met by the early afternoon light reflecting on the furniture of your flat’s living room. The open curtains allowed you to see the Parisian rooftops bathed in light outside. Your muscles relaxed and you passed a hand over your face. A dream.

You looked down at the table and sighed at seeing the damage you had done to the drawings in your sketchbook. They were all smudged now, thanks to your face. You let out a small, tired chuckle and scrubbed your cheeks, hoping to get rid of the graphite. Well, at least you hadn’t drooled all over the pages.
You got up with a groan and stretched, blaming yesterday events for leaving you so exhausted. After assuring a very drunk Julien and a quite inebriated Marinette had made it home safely, you had been able to go back to your flat. When your head finally rested on the comfort of your pillow, it was already way past 4 am.

But although you had closed your eyes, hoping for a peaceful night, your subconscious had other plans and decided to provide you with a night filled with dreams of spiders and blonde angels. And now these two last nightmares were the cherry on top.

You couldn’t understand the first one; you had never had a dream like that. It felt so real, but at the same time it seemed that there was a veil that stopped you from seeing everything. The dream held no meaning to you, so you would let it remain on the outskirts of your thoughts until you could try to make sense of it.

But the second one, oh the second one… There was no mistaking it. You already knew Julien’s words about Luan had impacted you, but it seemed that your mind wanted to remind you of how much it had.

You leaned a little on the table and rearranged the bouquet Julien had given you, which was now inside a vase filled with water. Would Chat react the way Julien had when you had to leave? You had never really talked to him about your departure, but you were postponing the inevitable. France’s law had changed a lot in the past years, and thanks to their strict international policy, you couldn’t stay more even if you wanted to. It had already been difficult for you to get to Paris, and it would be impossible to stay longer.

You had to mentally prepare yourself for July, when you had to leave, but you didn’t want to think about it. You didn’t want to imagine having to leave this life behind, your friends, your muse… Chat was more than special to you now. You did love him, there was no other way of expressing what you felt. Just the utter of the word ‘love’ seemed to resonate with the mess that happened in your chest when he was around or in your thoughts.

And the others you would also leave behind, Marinette, Alya, Nino, Julien and… You swallowed dry and looked down at your sketchbook on the table, the next name stuck in your throat.

After a moment of hesitation, you flipped the page and Adrien’s face appeared, staring straight at you. Sketches filled the page, most of them rough and messy, signs of the desperation that was holding your heart at gunpoint when you drew them. Even if you had tried to draw other things, like Gabriel’s designs from the show, you always came back to his son.

You hadn’t been able to stop yourself. You had a meeting with Adrien in a few hours to discuss your project for the Figure Drawing II class and that ache from yesterday was still burning inside you. You had to get rid of that feeling before you went to meet him, and drawing was the only way you could think of.

You traced his features on the paper with your finger and wondered how the blonde was coping after yesterday’s events. Did he have dreams about the spider as well? Was he still angry with you?

A knock coming from the window made you jerk your hand away from the drawing and drop the sketchbook to the ground. You turned to the window-door and a mix of surprise and elation made your stomach flutter. A smile stretched your lips and you quickly crouched down to grab the sketchbook and put it on the table again.

You breathed in and out and tried to keep your cool as you walked with slow steps to the door and opened it.
A gust of cool wind pushed your hair back as you leaned on the doorframe. “I thought someone said that they wouldn’t come back until next week.”

Chat grinned and your chest was filled with warmth at the sight. “What can I say, ma belle? I just couldn’t wait.”

“Is that so?” You chuckled and walked inside, Chat following close behind. You closed the door and turned to him, opening your arms. “Missed me much?”

He stared at you for a moment, before he began to walk in your direction with slow steps. “Actually, yes.” He said and hugged you, pressing your body tightly against his. His skin and suit were cold under your fingertips, thanks to the chilly wind outside. “I missed you far too much, my love.”

You were taken aback by his response for a moment. You thought he’d deny it for sure and tease you. With a content smile adorning your lips, you closed your eyes and lost yourself in the feeling of his body against yours. You were so glad Chat appeared when he did, you were really in need of a hug like this.

Your eyes shot open when you heard him sniffing your neck. He had tried to make it subtle, but it hadn’t worked.

You arched one brow, even though he couldn't see it. “Did you just sniff me?”

Chat’s body tensed. “I… It’s just that you smell really great.” He sniffed your neck once again to prove his point and lay a kiss on your skin.

“Well, that makes one of us.” You tried not to laugh as you got away from him with a look of mock disgust on your face. “Did you fight against a possum villain or something?”

Chat looked insulted for a second, but then he saw your face, struggling to hold back a smile.

“Oh, you…” Chat pulled you to him and began to poke your sides.

“I’m kidding, I’m kidding!” You said, laughing as you struggled in his hold.

He stopped, but didn’t release you, a playful but dangerous smile on his lips. “Of course you are, I always smell the best.”

You kissed his neck and muttered, “You do smell amazing today, kitty.” You felt a shiver go through him and kept leaving kisses on his neck and under his jaw. “I also missed you, especially after those kisses from last night.”

He swallowed when you played with the hair at the nape of his neck. Now that Chat was here, maybe you could finally continue what you had started the last time he slept in your flat.

You went to kiss his lips when Chat freed himself from your hold in a swift move and stepped back a few times. You were left frozen in place, blinking at him with a confused frown on your face. What was up with him this time?

He stared at you for a moment, pupils wide, before he gave you a small smile and began to walk around the living room.

“So… How was your night?” He asked as he looked around. You’re sure he intended for the words to sound nonchalant, but you caught the hint of uneasiness in his voice.
“It was great.” You began to follow him, observing his behavior carefully. “I went to a pub with some friends.”

Chat hummed, grabbing your black cat figurine from the coffee table. “Did you have fun?” His words sounded bitter to your ears, but you decided to ignore it for the moment. If he continued with this attitude, then you would ask him what was going on. Maybe he had just woken up on the wrong side of the bed today.

You scratched your neck, thinking for a moment how to answer. “I don’t know if fun is the right word. It was like a vent session more than anything.” Chat looked at you. Apparently that had grabbed his attention. “Marinette told me her boyfriend died during the Hawkmoth war. Do you know what happened? She seemed upset, so I didn’t want to ask.”

Chat’s cat ears were held back as he looked at the figurine and returned it to its place. All the irritation from before seemed to have left him. “I don’t… know. Mari told me it was Hawkmoth’s fault. I don’t know the details.”

You sat on the arm of the sofa. So Chat didn’t see it happen. “Ladybug couldn’t bring him back?”

Chat shook his head. “She tried, but from what I know, he died weeks before the war ended. Lady’s power has a limit.”

“I see.” You grimaced. Poor guy. “And the war lasted weeks?”

Chat nodded, his shoulders hunched and his eyes trained on the ground as if the memories were consuming him. “It was a dark time here in Paris.”

You shifted on the arm of the sofa. You wanted to know more about the war. Your head was filled with too many questions and you could only get the answers you craved if you dared to ask. Chat seemed open to talk, so you decided to continue with the questioning until he put an end to it.

“What happened to the first Hawkmoth?” You tried. Chat raised his head to look at you. “I know that he stayed at a rehab clinic for some time, but there’s almost no information about him on the internet. Or about the war, for that matter.”

Chat stared at you, his green eyes searching your face, and you knew he was deciding whether or not to answer. Finally, he opened his mouth. “He erased his own memory.”

Your eyes widened. “He what?”

“Me and Lady tried to stop him at the time, but he still managed to do it.” Chat opened and closed his fist a few times. “He’s alive, but the process was too aggressive. He has never been the same and his condition only keeps getting worse as the days pass.”

Your mind was reeling as you tried to connect the pieces together. “That’s why you and Ladybug asked for his identity to remain hidden?”

Chat nodded. “Lady still believes his punishment is worse than prison and death itself.”

There was a moment of silence, and you reminded yourself that Chat was talking about his own father. You could only imagine how hard it was for him to talk about this, especially if he still had contact with the man and saw his current state. “How did he erase his own memory?”

Chat raised his right hand and looked at his ring. “All the miraculous can do that.”
You gaped at him. “You could erase your memory right now?”

Chat gave you a somber smile. “Yours as well.”

You stared at his ring in a mix of awe and fright. How could one small thing like that hold so much power?

“That’s terrifying.” You muttered, eyes searching Chat’s.

He was staring back at you, sadness apparent in his gaze. “I know.”

The look in his eyes made a bad feeling settle in your stomach. Would Chat erase your memory? A shiver went down your spine. Had he done it already?

*He wouldn’t do that,* you told yourself and tried to believe your words. Your eyes unfocused as you stared at his ring. *Would he?*

“Did you erase my memory at some point?” You blurted out.

Chat’s eyes widened, and the dread in his gaze made obvious his regret of ever telling you about the mind erasing power of the ring.

“You’ve got to be kidding me.” You gaped at him in disbelief. *Chat—*

“I didn’t want to, *chérie.*” Chat stepped closer to you and took your hand in his. You tried to take it away, but he grabbed your palm again. “It was the ring’s fault. I’m sorry.”

You were silent as you looked down at his hand on top of yours. When had it happened? You tried to search your mind for a clue, but you knew it was in vain. A light pain made your temples throb and you cursed to yourself. You couldn’t remember.

You glared at the ring, transferring all your frustration to it, instead of the blonde in front of you. You took a deep breath to contain your anger before asking, “Why?”

“It’s a defense mechanism. You were too close to find out my civil identity.” Chat sighed. “The ring realized it and stopped you from gathering your thoughts.”

You pressed your lips into a thin line, finding it difficult to wrap your head around what he was telling you. So you had been this close to discovering his secret and now you were back to square one?

“Can’t you just tell me who you are?” You said, suddenly exhausted. It was like the tiredness from yesterday had caught up with you again.

Chat shook his head. “It isn’t the right time.”

You let out a long sigh. “Chat…” You knew it was his decision to make, but it was still frustrating. Things would be so much easier.

He shook his head again, taking his hands away from yours. “It’s better like this, my love. Please, trust me.”

You sighed and looked away, feet fidgeting. “Fine.”

At least he had thought about telling you his identity. Maybe he’d trust you enough eventually, but you didn’t know *when* that would be. You pursed your lips. You would probably leave Paris before
that happened.

“Oh, I have something for you, princess. I almost forgot.” Chat said in an upbeat voice, but you barely glanced at him, still sulking about having your mind erased.

You trusted your muse when he said it wasn’t his fault, but you couldn’t help feeling upset about it. What would happen if you found out his identity for real? Would the ring erase your memory then?

Chat opened a zipper near his ribcage and your attention peaked at that. You had always thought they were just for decoration. He pulled out two small devices from his pocket.

“What’s that?” You tilted your head a little, shifting on the sofa’s arm.

“I should have given you something like this a long time ago. Here,” he gave you one device and you turned it around to have a look. It was almost the size of your palm and looked like a small pager. It had two buttons on it, one red and the other green. “With this you can contact me and Ladybug if you need. When you press one of the buttons, it’ll alert me or Lady and send us your current location.”

Even if you were still distressed from all that mind erasing talk, you couldn’t help but get excited. This was such an improvement from the past months, when you had no way of contacting him. You turned the pager around. This wasn’t a cellphone, with which you could talk to him freely, but it was still something.

“I suppose the green button is yours?” You pressed the button, expecting the other device on his hand to make a sound or something, but it only lit up a small screen.

“Oh, wait, I’ll take it off silent mode.” Chat pressed something on his device before looking at you. “Alright, chérie, do it again.”

You pressed the green button and heard a loud beep. Chat grinned, but you furrowed your brows.

“What if I call you and yours is on silent mode?”

His device beeped again and Chat pressed a button, making the sound stop. “I’ll only put it on silent mode when I’m near you.”

“Alright then.” You smiled at him. Maybe you would be able to sleep better at night now, knowing that you could call for help if you needed it. You hoped it wouldn’t get to that, but you knew it was possible, with Hawkmoth still targeting you. “Thank you, Chat. I’ll feel more at ease now.”

Chat gave you a bright smile back. You almost chuckled at his genuine response. It seemed that he had enjoyed your reaction.

“And if you for some reason press it accidentally, just press it twice, and we’ll know it was a mistake.” Chat said.

You hummed and got up from the sofa, heading towards a shelf. It was better if you put the pager in a safe spot. “I can only press it when I’m in danger?”

You heard Chat chuckle. “Preferably, yes.”

When you turned back to him, you saw his eyes were narrowed, trained on the table.

“Nice flowers.” He said, crossing his arms over his chest.
You followed his gaze to the bouquet. “Oh, thanks. A friend gave them to me.”

“A friend, huh?” Chat hummed, and you noticed how his gaze shifted from the flowers to the top of the table, where your sketchbook was.

He tilted his head and you felt your blood run cold. The drawings you had made of Adrien. You had forgotten about them.

‘I thought I was your only muse.’ Chat’s words from months ago, after he had frightened Kostas, came back to you like a slap to the face. He had been so upset when he thought you wanted the Greek as your muse at that time. If he saw the amount of drawings you had of Adrien in your sketchbook, you couldn’t imagine what his reaction would be.

“But, Chat, what if I miss you?” You said, your voice rising a bit in desperation as you stepped in front of him to grab his attention. “Can I press the button then?”

“I won’t let that happen, princess.” Chat winked and went past you.

You followed him with quick steps, your heart in your throat as he grabbed the closed sketchbook.

‘Promise me you won’t have other muses.’ His words came back to your mind again to haunt you.

But Adrien wasn’t your muse. He just made inspiration bloom in your creative mind and… You clenched your jaw tight when you realized what you were describing. That was exactly what a muse did. Shit.

“Can I see it?” Chat asked, the black mask shifting on his face as he raised one eyebrow at you.

You had made a promise to him. He couldn’t see the drawings. He just couldn’t.

You bit your lip and shrugged, despite your inner turmoil. Maybe if you sounded disinterested he’d give up on the first pages. “Sure, just a little though. Most of them aren’t finished.”

“I don’t mind.” He chuckled. But I do, you wanted to scream at him. He opened the sketchbook and began to flip the pages. “Is this from the fashion show?”

You hummed. With each page he flipped, you got more and more anxious. Would Chat leave after he saw the drawings? You didn’t want him to leave anymore.

“They’re just scribbles, nothing interesting.” You said and tried to grab the sketchbook from him before he could see the rest.

Chat turned away from you, stopping you from reaching the drawings. “They’re lovely, ma belle,” He said with a grin.

You bit your lip until it began to hurt. You just wanted Chat to stop flipping the damn pages, otherwise he’d see your huge collection of Adrien drawings and he would question you about it and —

“Oh,” His eyes lit up as he stopped at a page full of portraits of the said blonde model. You winced. Too late. “Isn’t this the Agreste boy?”

You nodded, looking away from the drawings. “Yeah, this was my first time seeing Adrien’s modeling work. He’s pretty good at it.” You shuffled from foot to foot. “Did you see the show?”

“No… I didn’t see it.” Chat flipped another page and his eyes widened a bit. More drawings of
Adrien. Oh boy.

You breathed in and out. It was just a matter of time until Chat would ask. You knew you wouldn’t be able to hide it from him. You had broken your promise, not intentionally, but you still had broken it.

“The show was great, full of details.” You forced a smile. “It’s a shame that Gabriel Agreste is retiring. His designs are amazing, don’t you think?”

Chat hummed and flipped another page. “Adrien was your favorite out of the models then?”

You almost groaned out loud. Why was he coming back to this subject? You bit your lip again; at this rate you would soon draw blood.

“Yes, he was.” You finally said in a resigned voice. “He looked like a real angel. It was—” You stopped yourself from saying ‘inspiring’. “It was great.”

You could feel Chat staring at you, but you kept your gaze on the various Adrians on the paper, the guilt in your heart making it impossible for you to face him.

Chat closed your sketchbook and you jumped, startled at the sudden noise.

“I have an idea.” He said with an excited voice and you looked at him, puzzled. He was gazing at the flowers again with a determined face. He wasn’t going to say anything about the drawings? Chat noticed you staring and gave you a sly look. “Can you draw me, chérie?”

Your eyebrows rose as a sense of déjà vu overcame you. These were the same words he had said to you when you first met.

Receiving no reaction from you other than stunned silence, Chat continued. “Seeing all those drawings made me realize I haven’t posed for you in a long time.” He stepped forward and gave you a look that made your pulse quicken. “I miss seeing your drawings of me.”

You searched his face to find the reason for this impromptu idea, but all you could see were his flushed cheeks, apparent even under the mask. He truly didn’t care about the drawings?

“So?” Chat tilted his head, a smirk on his lips. “What do you say, love?”

It was like a weight was lifted from your chest. He wasn’t upset.

You grinned and looked at the clock on the wall. You still had some time before you had to meet with Adrien, and besides, you had put an alarm on your phone. It’d be fine.

“Sure,” you said, mimicking your actions from that fated day last year when you had met your muse for the first time.

You pushed the guilt away, but it was still there, lurking. You knew it wouldn’t let you rest. But you couldn’t crumble under it now. Leave that to the night, when you were alone. Only then would you let the guilty of the broken promise envelop you and close its jaws around your mind.

But for now… Chat slowly walked to the middle of the living room and looked back at you from over his shoulder. You licked your lips. Now you had other things to worry about.

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It had been a few months since you had last drawn your muse. You had missed focusing on every
detail of Chat’s face, capturing how his soft hair tickled his cheeks and how the suit shaped his muscles oh so nicely. You had missed it.

Ever since Chat had chosen to stimulate you in other ways, you hadn’t drawn him from observation. It felt like a long time had passed. But now you could focus solely on him and forget about everything else, which also meant shutting out any thoughts about Adrien from your mind.

However… There was a small problem. Everything had been fine during the first 10 minutes, but now Chat couldn’t stay still in a pose for longer than a minute. He’d choose a sensual pose, but then he’d keep fidgeting and stealing glances your way when he thought you were concentrating on drawing. You had given him some pillows so he could lie down on them and relax, but that didn’t help. He just began to leave soft sighs when he moved.

“Alright, let’s take a break.” You said after Chat went out of the pose for the fifth time.

His cheeks were flushed, his cat ears twitching, and even his tail was moving from side to side. You put your sketchbook and pencil down and got up from the armchair you were seating on. Maybe he wasn’t feeling well?

You put a hand on his forehead to check his temperature and Chat tensed before leaning on your palm. Before you could decide if he had a fever or not, he jerked back, making you arch a brow at him. “What’s up with you today, cat boy?”

He scoffed, averting his eyes. “There’s nothing wrong, chérie. I’m fine.”

You checked his cheeks again, seeing they were still flushed. If he wasn’t sick, then maybe… You touched one of his cat ears and he let out a moan. A loud one. He put a hand over his mouth, as if that would make the sound go back inside his body.

The corners of your lips curled into a smirk.

“Oh, so you’re sensitive today.” You got closer to his ear and whispered, “Are you in heat again?”

Chat spluttered, getting away from you. “What?” You watched with amusement as his face got even more flushed. He chuckled, as if that would cover his embarrassment. “I can’t go into heat, princess, you know that.”

“Yeah, but remember that day on the terrace—”

He groaned. “How do you still remember that? It was months ago!”

“I can’t help it. That day left a strong impression on me. It was… really something,” You let out a dramatic sigh. “With you begging and—”

“Chérie …” He warned.

“Did you really come in your suit just from me touching your cat ears?” You went to touch his ears again, but he grabbed your wrist.

His face was red all over. “That’s enough.” He got up and walked away from you, going to the kitchen.

“You don’t like talking about it?” You asked, but he ignored you. You raised your voice. “You should’ve asked for the ring to erase that memory from my mind then!”
He sighed and turned around. “Chérie, this isn’t funny.”

“Neither is having your memory erased.” You flashed him a seemingly sweet smile that was sharp as broken glass.

He glared at you before sighing and going to the kitchen. “Alright, fine, I deserved that one.”

You heard him fill a glass with water and chuckled to yourself, pleased with your teasing and his reactions to it.

When Chat came back from the kitchen, you tilted your head. “So… You’re not in heat then.”

“I can’t—” Chat put his palm over his face and sighed. “You know what, love? Let’s continue. Break’s over.”

You grinned, putting your hands up in defeat, and went back to your chair. When you sat down and looked back at him, Chat had opened the zipper of his suit and was taking off the upper part, letting it pool around his hips.

“Whoa, hey, warn the artist first, will you?” You let your eyes wander over his torso, admiring how the afternoon light from outside highlighted his defined muscles. You cleared your throat. “Are you feeling hot or something? I can open a window.” You shifted on your seat, pretending not to be affected by his body.

Chat winked as he sat down on the ground. “I’m always hot, love.”

You rolled your eyes. Why did you even bother. “Alright then, dearest.”

The blonde laid down in a seductive pose, pushing his hair back and allowing you to fully see his neck. You licked your lips, images of biting and kissing his skin filling your mind. And then from his neck you would kiss his chest, his navel, follow the v line until— You slapped yourself mentally and crossed your legs, hoping to stop the heat beginning to pool between them.

“Is something the matter, ma belle?” Chat pointed with his chin to your feet tapping on the ground.

“You’re distracting me.” You said, glancing at him before going back to the drawing.

“Oh?” Chat made a surprised expression, but you didn’t buy it one bit. “My apologies, princess. That wasn’t my intention.”

“Sure it wasn’t.” You muttered and kept drawing.

You would just finish this one, and then you would take another break. And in that break, you would make sure to bite his neck hard enough to leave a mark, and also kiss those damn lips of his, just for good measure.

Chat went quiet for a moment and you managed to concentrate on the drawing again, even if your mind was bubbling with images of what to do with Chat during the next break. You just needed to finish the shadows. Just that, and the cat boy would be yours.

“You know, love, I was thinking…” Chat began. You hummed, working on the gradient of a shadow on his chest and not looking up from your drawing. “I never posed naked for you.”

Your pencil hovered in the air. Had you heard it right? You tentatively raised your head to look at Chat. He was taking his shoes off. Oh, god.
“It’s important for you to practice human anatomy from time to time, right?” Chat glanced at you as he unbuckled his belt. *Oh sweet Apollo, have mercy.* Your eyes widened and Chat smirked. “We should work on that.”

He pushed his tight leather-like pants down and you closed your eyes, pinching the bridge of your nose. This *asshole.*

You opened your eyes slowly and saw the blonde was lying down on the pillows in nothing but his mask, the cat ears and the bell around his neck. He stretched his body, making his muscles shift in a lascivious way. You followed the line of his muscles, from his chest to his thighs and then to his crotch…

You closed your sketchbook and put it on top of your crossed legs. “Alright, Chat, what do you want?”

“Hmm?” He stretched again, letting out a low and entirely sexual sound that went straight to your core. “I don’t think I understand, *chérie.*”

“Oh, you do.” You chuckled low, desire running hot through your veins. “Why are you doing this? Because if you keep this up, I think we’re going to practice something *else.*”

You smirked and Chat’s green eyes lit up, something burning bright in the green of his eyes. It finally clicked. You didn’t even need to see the eager expression on his face to understand his motives.

“Oh, you naughty cat.” You crossed your arms over your chest, a grin on your face. “This is what you wanted all along, isn’t it?”

“What do you mean, love?” The feigned innocence in his voice was amusing. He was a good actor, you had to give him that.

“You were trying to tempt me, just like a siren luring pirates to the water,” You gave him a knowing smirk. “Waiting to see if I’d fall for your charms.” You chuckled, shaking your finger at him. “You almost got me.”

“I don’t think I follow, beautiful.” Chat shrugged, but the small smile lifting the corners of his lips gave him away.

“Alright.” You put your hands up and got up from the armchair, sketchbook in hand. “If you don’t want to talk, you won’t get it.”

“Where are you going?” Chat sat up, and it took all your determination not to look back at him and let your eyes wander over his body.

“I’m going to read a text for my cinema class, I have a test soon.” You didn’t spare him a glance as you put your sketchbook on the table and lingered a bit to see if Chat would take the bait.

“You’re just going to leave your muse naked on the ground?” He asked, using his best convincing voice. The siren comparison had been spot on apparently.

“If said muse keeps being a tease, then yes.” You shot him a crooked smile.

You turned around to go to your bedroom when a hand wrapped around your wrist. You smiled to yourself as Chat positioned himself behind you, his body pressed against your back. The bait had been taken.
“Why do you have to be so stubborn, woman?” Chat said in a low voice before kissing the side of your neck. “Can’t you just say you want me already?” His mouth ghosted over your ear. “Say it and I promise I’ll be yours, body and soul.”

An involuntary shiver went from your arms to your legs at his words.

“What if I don’t say it?” You whispered, wanting to see how much you could tease him before he snapped.

Chat spun you around to face him and you put your hands on his bare chest for support. His pupils were big, openly showing his lust for you. “Then we won’t have a deal. Because I’m not doing anything until you say you want me—”

You interrupted him with a kiss. A strangled moan left Chat’s lips and he began to kiss you back. You put your hands on his ass and pulled his naked body to you, earning another moan from him. When you licked his lips to get entrance, he pulled away, a string of curses leaving his mouth.

“This isn’t fair.” He said, breathless.

“You know what else isn’t fair?” You got closer to his flushed face and whispered. “Having your memory erased.”

Chat gave you a deadpan look. “You’re never going to let this up, are you?”

You only grinned at him and went to kiss him again, but he stretched his neck away from you. “C’mon,” you let your hands wander on his bare back, scratching his skin, and pulling him even closer. You could feel him hard against you. “I know you want this.”

“I know what I want, but what about you, chérie?” Chat put his arms around your torso as well. “Tell me, you want me to say it first? You want me to say how much I want you right now? How I’ve always wanted since I saw you in that damn park? Is that what you want, chérie?” His hot breath ghosted over your ear. “Or do you want me to beg for it?”

Your breath hitched in your throat and he chuckled.

“C’mon, love. Make me yours.” Chat then whispered in a quiet voice, “Please.”

You knew you shouldn’t be doing this, you knew you didn’t have the time, but why, was beyond you. Your mind was filled with Chat, everything was him, and the desire in your veins spurted you further.

So before he could back off again, you put a hand on the back of his neck and pulled him to you, bringing your mouths together. Chat hummed approvingly, apparently forgetting about making you say you wanted him. He cradled your face in his hands and you deepened the kiss while your hands roamed his body. Your palms caressed and touched his skin until they arrived at his crotch.

You grabbed his length and Chat moaned into the kiss, his spine curving. You began to slowly move your hand, making more lewd sounds leave the blonde’s mouth, until a sound caught your attention. It was your phone’s alarm.

A furrow creased your brows and you broke off the kiss, earning a whimper from Chat. Why did you set up an alarm again?

“Leave it.” Chat said and went to kiss you, but you dodged his lips and let go of him. You knew this
was important somehow.

“Wait, Chat.” Your eyes shifted to the clock on the wall and you gasped when you saw the time. “Oh my god, Adrien.”

Chat froze, eyes widening. “What?”

You ran to your phone and turned the alarm off. Shit, shit, shit. You had completely forgotten about your meeting with Adrien.

Chat was looking at you dumbfounded.

You grabbed his suit from the ground and threw it on his arms. “I need to leave. I have a meeting with Adrien in 15 minutes.”

Chat’s eyes widened even more, his eyebrows shooting up. “Merde.”

The curse was all that left the blonde’s mouth before he was dressing himself in a fit of desperation even greater than your own. He didn’t even question you or anything, which you were thankful for. You didn’t have time to explain to him about the project.

You shoved your things inside a backpack and made yourself presentable and ready to face the cold outside as much as you could in 5 minutes. You passed by the living room’s shelf and after giving one look at the pager, decided to put it inside the bag along with your other things.

Near the sofa, Chat was jumping on one foot as he tried to put his other shoe on. It was almost comical how frantic he looked. You rushed by him and opened the window-door, glancing at the clock again. You had less than 10 minutes now.

Chat passed a hand through his disheveled hair and breathed deeply as he stopped in front of you, chest heaving. He tried to adjust his suit over his hard on and you stifled in a laugh. You weren’t in a better state, but at least it wasn’t that obvious.

Green eyes narrowed at you. “This isn’t over, love.” Chat gave you one last smirk before jumping to the roof.

You mimicked his smirk as you closed the window-door and rushed to leave your apartment. No, it definitely wasn’t over.

---

Adrien’s studio was much easier to find than his house and it was just three metro stations away from your flat, which you were thankful for.

You ran across the street, receiving an exasperated shout from a cyclist, who just kept shaking her head as you apologized. Arriving in front of a wooden door, you checked the number carved on it before pressing the intercom button.

You looked around as you waited, examining the calm residential street and the beautifully decorated balconies, full of plant vases. They’d look stunning when spring came. Letting out a deep breath, you put a hand over your heart. It was still beating rapidly. You tsked, knowing that it wasn’t just because of your haste to get to the studio. You were still horny, thanks to you wonderful muse.

The sound of him saying ‘please’ to you in such a wishful voice was still haunting you. Damn you, Chat. You pursed your lips, knowing that you should have taken a cold bath before leaving. It’d be
better than being like this.

A sound came from the intercom and you got closer to it. “Hey, Adrien, it’s me.”

The door opened and you waited for a moment, but the intercom was silent. Was Adrien still mad at you because of Julien’s teasing? You hadn’t talked with him after the fashion show, so you had no idea. With a shrug, you went inside the building. There was no use in staying outside pondering about it. You would soon find out.

After following a corridor, you climbed a flight of stairs and reached a black door. When you raised your hand to knock, the door flung open, and it was in that moment you realized you had made a huge mistake.

It was obvious Adrien had just taken a bath. His blonde hair was damp, pushed back from his face, and he was wearing a dark tank top, which showed off his toned arms. A towel was around his shoulders, and even from where you were, you could smell his perfume. Your aroused mind swooned in appreciation, but you knew better.

“This isn’t good. You told yourself as you lowered your hand almost in slow motion. This isn’t good at all.

“Hey, I’m glad you made it!” Adrien smiled and kissed your cheek. You mimicked the gesture, still stunned by your misfortune. Would it be too rude if you just turned around and bailed? “C’mon in.”

You swallowed before stepping inside, sealing your destiny. Warmth was the first to greet you, caressing your cheeks that had been frozen by the cold wind.

The studio was bigger than you had expected. It was a large loft apartment, twice as big as your flat. The dark grey walls acquired an orange glow thanks to the light coming in from large windows that decorated the only brick wall to your right.

Adrien’s sculpture studio and the living room seemed to blend in together, since there were no partitions that separated the different spaces. As you took off your coat, your eyes followed a black metal staircase and you saw a bed on the smaller second floor.

“You sleep here often?” You asked, looking around and trying to distract yourself with the place. Anything to stop yourself from looking at Adrien too much.

“Yeah, a lot of times, actually.” Adrien stopped by your side. “Sometimes I get home late or I need to stay up until morning sculpting something. It makes life easier.” He shrugged. “It also helps when I want to bring someone over, you know.”

Your eyes widened a little at that, treacherous thoughts filling your mind. Great, now you were thinking about Adrien bringing his lovers here. Just great.

You cleared your throat. “Did you have any ideas for the project?”

You had tried to come up with something, but everytime you tried to think about the project, your thoughts shifted to Adrien and you had given up.

“Straight to business, huh?” Adrien chuckled and you felt a pang of guilt. In your nervousness, you hadn’t even asked how he had been after yesterday’s events. “I was thinking that we could do something about the Greek Muses.” He walked to a table full of sculpting tools and sat down on a stool, motioning for you to sit by his side.
“The Nine Muses?” You sat down, but pulled your stool a little to the side, leaving a safe distance between you. Why would he choose the Muses?

“Yeah.” He cleared the table, putting the tools to the side. “The teacher said we’re free to do whatever we want as long as it has to do with the human body, so I was thinking that we could both design the Muses and sculpt them.”

His knee brushed against yours and you tensed.

“But…” You tried to move your leg away from Adrien’s slowly without him noticing. “But I don’t know how to sculpt.”

“I can teach you. It’s not that hard.” He winked and you were taken aback for a moment. You couldn’t remember if he had ever done that to you before. “And you can teach me how to draw.”

“Pfft, you already know how to do it.” You playfully rolled your eyes. Adrien was already great at drawing, he didn’t need your help.

“But you’re much better at it.” He said, making you roll your eyes again, even if your chest was swelling in delight from the compliment.

You thought about his idea for a moment. Learning how to sculpt would help you to understand the human body better and visualize the forms in a tridimensional way, and if you could help Adrien somehow, then it would benefit the both of you.

“Alright, sounds good.” You grinned.

Adrien’s face lit up. “Great! Start thinking about a design for Erato while I get us some clay, ok?”

You nodded and grabbed your sketchbook and pencil case, carefully choosing a blank page to avoid the drawings of Adrien. If he saw them, you had no idea what he would do. Probably tell Nino. And then you wouldn’t hear the end of it.

You glanced at Adrien as he shifted through some cabinets. A new muse. Just what you needed to make your life even more complicated. It seemed that your creative mind had a type: a blonde with green eyes. But then, why hadn’t it chosen Julien as well? You shook your head. It didn’t matter. Even if Adrien was your muse as well now, it was platonic, nothing else.

After a quick search on the internet to know which Muse was Erato, you began to make a rough drawing of her. Apparently, she was the Muse of love and erotic poetry. You sighed, letting your pencil glide on the paper. The universe surely was conspiring against you today, using every opportunity it had to poke fun at you.

“Here we go,” Adrien appeared by your side again with a package of clay.

He was holding it too close to his clean shirt, and years of ruining nice clothes because of art supplies made alarms go off in your head.

“Wait,” you grabbed his arm and motioned to his shirt. “Shouldn’t you take it off?”

Adrien blinked. “You want me to take my shirt off?”

His lips began to curl up in a grin and you felt your cheeks heat up like a furnace. “No! I just— I mean, it’s a nice shirt, you could ruin it.”
“Right.” Adrien gave you a knowing look and you rolled your eyes, getting more mortified by the second.

“Alright, you got me.” You put your hands up, deciding to play along. “I just wanted to see your abs again.”

You regretted saying that the moment the words left your mouth. Adrien laughed, and it was a beautiful sound. You tried to tell yourself you weren’t turned on by it, but the heat between your legs didn’t lie. That definitely wasn’t good.

It was Chat’s fault for arousing you and leaving you like this. There was no other explanation. Your relation with Adrien was platonic and nothing else.

Adrien gave you a crooked smile and winked. “You could’ve just asked, you know.”

You wanted to let out a hysterical laugh; you almost couldn’t believe your ears. As if your state wasn’t bad enough, Adrien was openly flirting with you now. You could only hope it was just a simple banter, but you weren’t sure of anything anymore.


Adrien asked to see your design of Erato, and after you showed it to him, he began to work on a piece of clay.

The light coming from outside hit one side of his profile, creating a bright halo that contoured his face and hair. The blonde strands seemed almost made of liquid gold. You couldn’t stop a soft sigh from escaping your lips. He was so beautiful. You just wanted to draw him like this, to immortalize in a drawing the image you were seeing.

Adrien glanced at you, a glint of amusement in his eyes. “What is it?”

You swiftly turned your face away and stared at his hands. “Nothing.”

He snorted, focusing back on the clay. His palms enveloped the material with ease, molding it with the expertise of someone that had been doing this for years. You noticed he didn’t have his ring on this time, a lighter patch of skin on his finger showing were the jewelry usually was. He probably didn’t want to dirty it.

Adrien explained to you the steps he went through for creating a sculpture, and you pointed out some design ideas you had for Erato, drawing more details in the sketchbook as you talked.

After he had finished the base of the form, the blonde picked up some clay and handed it to you. “Here, try it out for yourself.”

You hesitated for a moment before remembering what you had to gain from learning how to sculpt.

“Alright.” You put your pencil down and grabbed the clay from him. It was cool and humid, leaving your palms dirty in just a second.

“Now, see how I do it and try to follow me.” He picked a new piece of clay and molded it into a ball.

You tried following his steps for some minutes, but when you compared the two pieces of clay, his looked much more humanoid than yours, which resembled much more a deformed Chimera than a Greek Muse.
You huffed, rubbing your eye with the back of your hand. “This is hard.”

“I know something that’s also hard,” Adrien said with a smirk.

You turned to him, mouth slightly agape in shock. Oh, he didn’t. Adrien gave you a sly look, his hooded eyes piercing into yours. Before you could stop yourself, you had already glanced down at his crotch.

He then grinned. “Painting.”

You shook your head, going to pinch the bridge of your nose, but stopping when you remembered how dirty your hands were. “I can’t believe you said that.” Adrien let out a hearty laugh, throwing his head back. “Who are you and what did you do to the sweet model boy I knew?”

The blonde leaned in closer to you and batted his lashes. “He’s still here.”

“O…kay.” You leaned back, your heart hammering against your ribcage. Something was definitely up with Adrien. “I think I give up for today.”

He chuckled and went back to sculpting while you washed your hands in a small sink near the table. You took your time, reveling in the moment of distance from the blonde. If Adrien kept blurting out sexual innuendos things would get much more difficult.

Thankfully, it didn’t happen again. As fluorescent lights replaced the sunlight, you created the first Muse together, with Adrien sculpting and you back to drawing. The city seen outside the windows was covered in darkness when the blonde had the figurine of Erato in his hands.

“The next one I can draw and you can sculpt.” He said, putting the sculpture down on the table before stretching. You grimaced, glancing at the deformed Chimera you had sculpted. You already felt sorry for the next Muse.

You looked down at Adrien’s shirt and saw a grey stain on it. You pointed the dirty spot out to him. “Told you.” You gave him a cocky grin while you stretched as well, muscles sore from sitting on the stool for so long. “You should’ve listened to me, model boy.”

“Oh,” Adrien said, looking down. “It worked exactly as you planned, huh?”

Before you could utter a ‘what?’ he was already taking his shirt off.

“Oh, goodness, you’re doing it.” You looked away, eyebrows shooting up. You didn’t know what had gotten into Adrien. Was he doing this to somehow punish you for Julien’s teasing? Was he horny as well today? You had a feeling you would die due to heart palpitations before you found out.

The model laughed. “I thought you wouldn’t mind.”

You shrugged, stealing glances his way. “You’re fine— I mean, it’s fine.” You cursed under your breath, wanting to put your hands over your face and hope they’d make you disappear forever. “But it’s still winter and you can catch a cold, model boy.”

You heard him chuckle as he got up from the stool. “If you insist, I’ll get a new shirt.” He motioned with his head to the left and you forced yourself not to look down and gawk at his exposed torso. “You can wait on the sofa if you want.”

“Alright, good.” You got up as well and grabbed your things, walking to the sofa. “I don’t want my
group partner to get sick because he’s an exhibitionist.”

“You’re the one who wanted to see my abs.” He pointed to his toned stomach, making you glance down, and you sighed.

“Just go, Adrien.”

He laughed, and you let your eyes wander over his back as he climbed the staircase.

Another sigh left your lips as you sprawled on the sofa. That was it. You had to leave. You couldn’t be around Adrien anymore, not in the affected state you were in. What would Chat say if he saw you right now? You put your arm over your face. It was already bad enough that Adrien had become a muse to you.

You glanced at your backpack, remembering about the pager inside it. A part of you wanted to press the green button and see if it made a sound, but you knew it was ridiculous. Adrien wasn’t Chat, and you were just trying to make yourself feel better.

You could hear the blonde muttering something, like he was arguing with himself about which shirt to choose. You shook your head, a troubled smile on your lips. You would just wait for him to come down, and you’d leave before you could make things worse. It was wrong to give Adrien hope. You shouldn’t encourage the flirting, even if it was harmless for now.

“I forgot to ask,” Adrien walked down the stairs, a black turtleneck now covering his torso. You wanted to throw your hands up in frustration. Why did he have to look good in everything? He got closer to you before asking, “How was your night yesterday?”

“It was great.” You smiled, preferring to omit the angsty parts. “It was a shame you couldn’t come with us. What about yours? How did the interview go?”

“Boring as always.” He huffed. “Say, we should go out sometime one of these days.” He gave you a suggestive look. Uh oh. Was he subtly asking you out?

You forced out a laugh. “Sure, I’ll talk to Marinette and Alya, I’m sure they’ll love to go too.”

His shoulders sagged a little and you tried not to feel bad for him.

You cleared your throat and got up from the sofa. “Anyway, I should be going, it’s getting late.”

“What? No,” Adrien’s face fell. Now he just looked like a kicked puppy. “I was just going to make dinner for us.”

As much as you would love to taste his food— and other things, a little conniving voice in your head suggested, but you slapped yourself mentally before it could take over your mind with other impure thoughts. No. This is platonic, purely platonic.

“I really have to go, Adrien, I have an appointment tomorrow.” You gave him a strained smile.

You really did have an appointment, but it was today and with your bed. Where you would ponder about your life and how much of a terrible person you were.

He opened his mouth, probably to protest, when his phone ringed. With furrowed brows, he fished it from his pocket. “Allô?”

You let your eyes wander around the place, not wanting to intrude in his conversation. You hadn’t
noticed the amount of plants he had before, and there were little bowls with water and what seemed to be pet food near the windows. You furrowed your brows, remembering you hadn't seen any pets in the studio.

“I’m at the studio doing a project,” Adrien kept talking on the phone and then glanced at you. “No… Nothing happened.” He huffed. “I’m not lying!”

You arched a brow at him, amused. Who could he be talking to?

Adrien cleared his throat. “Did you find the place? Alright, wait for me, I’m going.” He ended the call and gave you an apologetic smile. “The dinner will have to wait, sorry about that.”

You thanked the person on the phone in your mind. “Don’t worry about it.” The model accompanied you to the door, and as you walked you couldn’t help your curiosity. “Do you have any pets?”

He tilted his head a little. “No, why?”

“The bowls.” You pointed to the food and water bowls.

“Oh, those are for stray cats.” A fond smile graced Adrien’s lips as he looked to where you had pointed. “They come here often.”

You could swear your heart melted a little more for the blonde model in front of you. You bit down on your lip hard before giving him a smile. “See you on Monday, then?”

“Yeah, see you.”

You and him leaned in at the same time and almost knocked your heads together.

“Oh, sorry—” You began to say when Adrien leaned in again, making your voice get caught in your throat.

He looked at you through half lidded eyes before leaving a kiss on your cheek, far too close to your mouth. “À bientôt.”

Hours later, you were lying on your back in your bed, staring motionless at the ceiling. You were doomed.

It had been a while since you’ve had a day as chaotic as this one. Your skin was still warm from the long bath you had taken. It had helped you to relax a bit, but it hadn’t been enough, your mind was still reeling.

First it had been Chat with his mind erasing talk and teasing, and then there was Adrien. You groaned in embarrassment, putting an arm over your face as you remembered what happened at the studio. The blonde was usually so composed around you, even stuttering sometimes, but then it was like a switch had been flipped and boom, he became a hot flirting mess.

His flirty behavior was almost like… Chat’s. Your temple throbbed, and you massaged the area. The fault was probably yours anyway. You knew Adrien was interested in you, and instead of telling him you already had Chat, you didn’t. You even flirted with him back, even if playfully.

You turned around, letting out a muffled groan on your pillow. It was frustrating. Adrien was frustrating. Even if your mind was back to normal now, you couldn’t stop thinking about him. His
flirting, the damn sleeveless shirt.

You grabbed your phone, the device almost slipping from your hand in your rush. You had to find something to occupy your mind with. No more Adrien.

You opened the internet and typed Chat’s name. It had been a while since you had searched something about him online.

Many sites appeared in the blink of an eye, and you checked the news. Some talked about Chat’s appearance at the fashion show, and others talked about his involvement with you. You rolled your eyes. Now that they had new photos of you, the media decided to revive last month’s drama. How wonderful.

After distracting yourself with some articles about Chat, which were basically just people lusting after him, you got curious and opened one that talked about the clothes you had been wearing for the show, using the pictures the paparazzi had taken of you as examples. Surprisingly, it was comprised mostly of compliments, so you stopped there, deciding to end on a good note before some other article ruined your night.

You opened YouTube and searched for ‘Chat Noir’, hoping a video would help you to forget Adrien. The first result was an ongoing stream from the Ladyblog titled ‘LIVE: NEW INTERVIEW WITH FAMOUS PARISIAN HEROES LADYBUG AND CHAT NOIR’. You clicked on it as fast as you could, and tapped your finger on the back of the phone as you waited for the video to buffer.

The chat was already bustling with life, people commenting in different languages, mostly French and English. Most comments were variations of ‘Chat/ Ladybug I love you’ and people saying what time it was in their country.

The video finally loaded and you instantly forgot about the chat.

“…the gang?” Alya had just finished a question. You checked the time bar and saw the stream had been going on for 40 minutes already.

“We’re working closely with the police to make sure the boss is arrested soon.” Ladybug said with a curt nod. She and Chat were sitting side by side in a room, and Alya was on their right, conducting the interview.

“We’ll make sure they don’t get away this time.” Chat stated in a cold voice, and you didn’t miss the disapproving glance Lady threw his way.

“Now, let's put the serious talk aside and change the subject a little, shall we?” Alya smiled and Chat and Ladybug shifted on their seats, sharing a curious look with each other. “Everyone and their mother know you had a huge crush on Ladybug in the past, Chat,” Alya began and Chat laughed, shaking his head like he wasn’t expecting that question. “But then one day, puff, it was gone! What happened?”

You remembered Alya had said something similar to you last year. How Chat suddenly had stopped trying to win Ladybug’s heart, and nobody knew why. Apparently Alya was just now being able to ask Chat that question. From the smile on her face, she was probably really excited about it.

“Who said I still don’t have a crush on her?” Chat batted his lashes at Ladybug. The brunette snorted, and Chat let out a laugh. “Ok, but seriously, there’s not much to say.” He shrugged, shooting an apologetic smile at Alya. “When we first met I had an idealized version of Lady in my
head. I thought she was like a guardian angel or something. I kinda still think she is.”

Ladybug waved a hand in front of herself. “Oh, stop it.”

“Just saying the truth, my lady.” Chat grinned and bowed a little in her direction before continuing. “And as the time passed, I realized that what I felt was more admiration than infatuation. That’s all.”

You felt that there was more to this story than Chat was letting on. Maybe he didn’t want to expose himself so much. After all, there were almost… You checked the number of people watching the stream. There were almost 30,000 people watching. He probably wouldn’t say anything too revealing.

Alya nodded, seeming content with the answer. “And what about you, Ladybug? How did you feel about Chat Noir?”

“He has always been like a brother to me.” Lady smiled, touching Chat’s arm. “I always have to take care of him, get him out of trouble, put some sense into his head.”

Chat rolled his eyes. “I just called you a guardian angel, and you call me irresponsible. Thank you, my lady.”

Ladybug squeezed his arm a bit as she laughed. Alya joined, and you could swear you even heard the cameraman chuckle.

“And now, what everyone wants to know…” Alya glanced at the camera, a mysterious look on her eyes. “Are the rumors true, Chat Noir? Are you or are you not single?”

Your eyes widened a little. Oh.

“Oh.” Chat said, glancing at Lady, who crossed her arms and raised an amused brow at him. “Well…” Chat extended the word.

Your grip on your phone tightened. What was he going to say? You and him hadn’t talked about making anything public. Maybe he thought it was better to let it remain a secret? After all you had just gotten together and—

“I’m not single anymore.” Chat raised his shoulders in an apologetic shrug. “Sorry everyone.”

You could see the YouTube chat going crazy with messages, it was almost making your phone freeze. You glanced at the messages and saw most of them were keyboard smashes and chaos of emojis.

“How does it feel?” Alya asked, crossing her legs. “To be with someone after years of being single?”

“It’s… weird.” Chat laughed. “But in a good way.” He looked at Ladybug. “If I say she brings out the best in me, is it going to be too corny?”

Your heart flutterted, and you cradled the phone closer to you.


The blonde shrugged. “Well, she does.”

You were smiling so hard that your cheeks were beginning to hurt. How more precious could Chat get?
Alya gave the cat hero a warm smile, eyes wrinkling at the sides. “If she was watching this stream right now, what would you tell her?”

You were glad Alya hasn’t asked for a name. Even if Chat had said he wasn’t single anymore, people didn’t know he was talking about you. They could wonder, but it was better if they didn’t know for certain. You had a feeling you wouldn’t be able to walk around Paris normally if they did.

Chat pursed his lips as he pondered. “I would thank her for being in my life. I know I’m purfect,” Chat gave the camera a look and Ladybug sighed by his side. “But it can be hard to deal with all that perfection at times.” Chat then fully turned to the camera, and it was like he was staring straight at you, making you forget how to breathe for a moment. “And I’d like her to know that she’s a wonderful person and that if Fate allows, we’ll be side by side until the stars decide we’ve had enough.”

You almost dropped your phone as you put a hand over your mouth. Oh, Chat. You curled in yourself and touched the phone’s screen briefly as the hero turned to the girls again, wishing you could reach out and touch him. Had he truly said that? In front of more than 30,000 people?

Alya and Ladybug were both staring at Chat in silence. Alya then shook her head and chuckled. “What a declaration of love. I expected nothing less from you, Chat.”

The YouTube chat became so insane that it was freezing your phone. Still in a daze, you deactivated it before it ruined the interview.

Ladybug nudged Chat in the side with her elbow, a grin with a hint of melancholy on her face. “That’s what love does to you.” Chat rolled his eyes playfully, his cheeks a light pink.

Alya went on to thank the heroes for the interview, but your mind was elsewhere. You locked your phone and lay down on your back, staring at the dark ceiling. Chat’s words were repeating over and over in your mind. And as they did, a pained smile curled the corners of your lips. You closed your eyes and a single tear ran across your right cheek.

There Chat was, declaiming his feelings for you publicly, and you, on the other side, were breaking promises and flirting with someone else. And to make it worse, a part of you didn’t seem to mind. It kept telling you that it was alright, but you couldn’t understand.

You rubbed the tear from your cheek, before turning on your side and curling in on yourself. What a great person you were.

Just like you had predicted, you could feel guilt’s jaws closing around your mind, enveloping you like a harsh blanket that seemed to suffocate you. You knew one thing. You had to do something about your feelings for Adrien.

Chapter End Notes

More drama!!! (even the title of the chapter is really dramatic, even for my standards) I know you guys are probably going mad about the identity reveal, but don't be ok? Trust me on this. It's gonna be good.

This semester will be more chaotic than usual for me thanks to a big college project, but I'll do my best to keep updating every month. I might be even more inactive, but I'll
make sure the new chapters are written properly. We'll see!!

Oh, and we've surpassed 50 coffees, which means Chat's/Adrien's POV for Chapter 13!! Yay!! Kitty sinful thoughts! :D You can know more about the rewards here.

Also, this story is more than 2yo now ;-----; I can't believe it. I'll stop now before I get too emotional.

Thank you guys for all the support!! See you next month!
Ch. 13: Dance to the Music of Time (Chat's/Adrien's POV)

Chapter Summary

Lewd meter: (°_°)(°_°)(°_°)(°_°)

Chapter Notes

Here it is everyone, Chat's POV of the infamous Chapter 13... I hope you all are ready, because I decided to add more things and, well, that lewd meter is there for a reason, you know? /cough

Please forgive my inability to answer to everyone's comments, I truly appreciate every single one of you (*¯ ³¯*)♡ but until the end of this semester I'll be really busy with college stuff. It was kinda a miracle I was able to write this chapter tbh haha

Enjoy! :D

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

A strong gust of wind made Chat’s hair cover his face, and he pushed the rebel strands back with his hand. He looked up and took a deep breath. Rain. The smell was faint, but he knew it wouldn't take too long for the tempest to arrive. From his spot on the roof, he could see the sky over all of Paris getting darker and duller.

Ladybug made a small noise as she landed a few meters away from him, but he didn’t flinch. He was used to her sudden appearances by now.

“Are you ready?” She asked, looking around as she walked closer.

Chat knew she was making sure no drones were near them. People liked to film the heroes with the flying devices, so they had to be careful, especially when having more private talks.

“Almost ready,” Chat said. “I need to check on my dear one first. It won’t take long.”

Ladybug had found some information about where the missing teacher might be, so they’d go there to check. But before that, Chat had to visit the artist. He didn’t want to alarm her, but Hawkmoth could target her again, and he couldn’t let that happen.

“Alright. Just don’t freak out if she’s not there this time, ok Romeo? Come back and we can search for her together.” Lady said. Chat flushed as he remembered how desperate he had become when he didn’t see the artist in her flat yesterday. Lady continued, “I doubt anything will happen for now, but that guy can get akumatized anytime. And that will be trouble.”

Chat sighed. “I know.” He just wanted to catch the man already, but it was like he had become a ghost, a hidden threat, lurking and waiting for an opportunity.

“Just don’t get carried away.” Ladybug poked him on the chest. “I don’t trust you near her after what
happened yesterday in my own bedroom.”

Chat felt heat creep up his neck as the memory came back to him. It wasn’t the first time that he thanked the black mask for covering the display of his embarrassment. Why did Lady have to remind me of that? Now he was thinking about the artist’s lips and hands on him. How was he supposed to concentrate like this?

He let out a chuckle and shrugged. “I can’t help it.”

“Have you guys done it yet?” Lady blurted out and Chat almost choked on air.

He gave the brunette a look and she laughed, throwing her head back. Marinette’s level of bluntness skyrocketed when she became Ladybug, and while Chat was used to it, her words still caught him off guard sometimes.

“Not yet.” He mumbled, hoping she would just change the subject. It wasn’t because he didn’t want to have the artist all to himself. Dieu, how he wanted her to do anything she wanted with him—

“Are you serious?” Lady interrupted his thoughts with an astonished voice. He huffed. Couldn’t he at least daydream in peace? “That’s not you.” She continued, sounding way too shocked, and Chat wondered if he should feel offended. “I mean, people usually fall in love with you within seconds.”

A huff left his lips. People didn’t fall in love with him, but the idea of him; it wasn’t the same. And with the artist, it was like her art had become enamored with him, but not her. It seemed that she was trying to do everything to keep any feelings away from her heart.

“It’s different with her, my lady.” Chat shook his head. “She keeps pushing me away, denying she wants—” He motioned to his body. “All this. Can you believe it?”

“What a tragedy.” Lady rolled her eyes, a smile pulling at her lips.

“She wants me, but won’t admit it.” Chat crossed his arms over his chest, trying not to pout. He didn’t like thinking about this, it only made him want his dear one more. “She seemed a bit jealous yesterday, so that’s a bit of a progress, at least.”

“Isn’t she leaving soon?” Lady asked as another gust of wind swept over the rooftop, and Chat winced at the question. “You don’t have much time to win her heart.”

He opened and closed his fists. His mood was getting darker by the second, much like the sky in front of him. He knew he didn't have much time, but he also didn't want to force his feelings onto his dear one.

“I don’t know. In a few months, I guess.” Chat passed a hand through his hair, adjusting the strands again. “I just—” He sighed, looking at the horizon. “I just wished she’d see me differently.”

“Chat Noir’s having love problems. Would you look at that.” Lady shook her head and chuckled. “Ji Yong would be ecstatic.”

Chat snapped his head in her direction and was able to see when the meaning of the brunette’s words downed on her. Her face dropped and she looked away.

For a moment, the only sounds came from the busy city under them and the pigeons that flew by, probably going home for the day. Chat let the silence stretch out, as uncomfortable as it was. Lady seemed to need it.
It took her a few moments to talk again.

“\textquote{I should have erased his memory when he found out.}” Ladybug muttered. Chat’s chest tightened at the anguish in her voice. “\textquote{I should have, but I just couldn’t do it.}” She sighed and stared forward, as if the blue Parisian roofs could soothe her pain.

“Lady…” Chat got closer to her. This was still a sensitive topic, and the blonde knew his friend blamed herself for her boyfriend’s death. Even if she said that Hawkmoth was the reason Ji Yong was gone, she still believed it was her fault that he got into this mess, since she let him keep his memory when he found out her secret identity.

“If I had done it, maybe he’d still be here.” She said and let out a humorless laugh filled with despair.

“My lady, stop.” Chat put a hand on her shoulder. “\textquote{Thinking about the ‘what ifs’ won’t change what happened. It will only make things worse, and I know Ji Yong wouldn’t want to see you like this. He’d want you to be happy.}”

Lady gave him a somber smile and put a hand over his. “I know. It’s just… difficult sometimes.”

“\textquote{Let’s focus on the present, right meow.}” Chat grinned, squeezing her hand. “\textquote{I’m pawsitive things will get better.}” As expected, Lady groaned, pushing his hand away. But she was smiling, and that’s all that mattered. “\textquote{I’m feline good about this, my lady, trust me.}”

She shook her head and gave him a thankful look.

“What if… Your ‘dearest one’ finds out who you are?” Lady said with in a careful tone. “Have you decided what are you going to do?”

“She won’t find out.” Chat blurted out and gave a step back, not letting his brain think about any other possibilities. “I won’t get too close to her as Adrien.”

The look in Lady’s blue eyes told him she didn’t believe that. Chat averted his gaze. He also didn’t believe himself sometimes, but he had to do this. He and Lady had discovered each other’s identities because they were close, but most importantly, that was also how Ji Yong had found out about Lady; because Marinette spent a lot of time with him. And look what happened.

Master Fu was right about this; the miraculous identities should be kept a secret from loved ones and family. It was for the best.

“You really like her, don’t you?” Lady asked.

The sudden question made Chat turn to her and blink for a couple of seconds as images of his dear artist flooded his mind. Images of her laughing, concentrating while drawing, treating his wounds…

He shrugged with a smile. “I guess.”

“I guess? You can’t fool me, chaton.” The brunette nudged him on the side, wiggling her eyebrows. “And if that’s the case, why don’t you try talking to her about how you feel?”

Flashbacks of yesterday’s talk with his artist came back to Chat’s mind then. She was adamant in not involving feelings in this muse and artist thing, for whatever reason, and Chat wasn’t going to risk losing her. Especially since he didn’t have much time with her before she went away. His chest tightened, and he put a hand over his heart. Why did she have to leave anyway?

“This isn’t about me, my lady.” He finally said. “She asked for my help. I can’t push my feelings...
Lady let out a sigh. “What a stubborn chaton.” He opened his mouth to protest, but she held up a hand. “No, you’re stubborn and you know that. Now go before I leave without you.”

He hesitated for a moment, afraid of leaving Lady alone after the way she had talked about Ji Yong. But he had to check on his dear artist. He wouldn't be able to relax if he didn’t go to her flat.

“I’ll be back soon.” Chat said and started to walk backwards. Lady waved him off, choosing a spot on the roof to sit down and watch the city.

He gave her one last look before jumping to another building. She didn’t look that good. A soft sigh left his lips. He hoped that one day Lady would be able to forgive herself and live in peace.

Chat jumped from roof to roof, light on his feet as he made way to his artist’s flat.

*Check on her and get out. Check on her and get out.*

He kept repeating those words to himself like a mantra. He couldn’t stay and he knew that, but he also knew that once he saw her, it would be almost impossible to leave. So he had to focus. Focus was the key word here.

He arrived at the location with ease, the path memorized by now. After checking the surroundings to make sure the teacher wasn’t around somewhere, Chat opened the window, announcing his presence with a loud, “Princess!”

He found out a second later that doing that had been a terrible idea, and the catalyst of his – almost – doom.

The bowl his artist was carrying flew from her hand, making water fall all over her shirt. The piece of clothing stuck to her skin, making Chat’s brain forget about everything that he had been repeating to himself a minute ago. Focus? What was that?

Chat covered his mouth, saying a muffled ‘sorry’. He wanted to laugh at her ‘so done with your bullshit’ face, but that’d only make her angrier. He also tried not to stare too much at her chest, where the shirt was clinging to her skin, but it was difficult.

She turned around, muttering angrily to herself, and Chat could breathe a little. She seemed okay, which meant he could go meet with Ladybug.

His dear one turned back to him when he was about to say goodbye. “Aren’t you going to come in?”

His eyes went to her shirt again. *Focus, Chat, focus.* He cleared his throat. “I’m already leaving. I was just passing by and decided to greet my dearest one.”

It took her a moment to process that he was talking about her, but after she did, the coy look on her face almost made him want to proclaim his burning feelings for her right there. He had to leave before he did exactly that and ruined everything.

The artist teased and even flirted with him, trying to make him stay, and he almost did. Oh, how he wanted to stay. If the patrol with Lady was a normal one, he wouldn’t think twice, but it wasn’t. It was to find the missing teacher, to keep his artist safe.
That was the only reason he was able to leave. He was kinda horny and kept grumbling all the way back to Ladybug, but he kept his word.

Lady turned around when he landed on the rooftop and got up. She raised her eyebrows at him. “You’re back.”

“You seem surprised, my lady.” Chat narrowed his eyes.

She checked his face and neck. “And no red lips or hickeys. I am surprised.”

Chat tightened his jaw. He could have come back with those. The artist was flirting with him and everything, but no, he had to find that crazy teacher. He was going to punch the guy in the face when he found him. It was all his fault.

Lady gave him a funny look. “How did it go?”

“Fine. She’s safe.” Chat said, crossing his arms. He didn't want to talk about what a lost opportunity that was.

Lady sniffed the air. “You smell of sexual frustration.” He glared at her and she barked out a laugh. “If only you had that talk with her…”

She didn't need to complete the sentence; Chat already knew what she was implying. If he talked to the artist about how he felt, he could have her to himself. Potentially. And, mind you, Chat was a natural risk taker, but in this case, he just couldn’t do it. He’d try and win her heart the safe way.

So he shook his head to get the images of his dear one out of his head and prepared to jump. “Let’s just go, my lady.”

In the next three days, the situation seemed to repeat itself. Chat would go check on the artist, and she’d flirt with him, trying to make him stay longer. He considered those moments as tests of his willpower. He was able to leave each time, but barely.

If he and Ladybug hadn’t found more information about the teacher, he would have thrown everything up in the air and stayed, but they had. They found recordings of the guy in the metro’s security cameras and followed his trace until the Gare du Nord, one of the biggest train stations in Paris.

Chat was walking from side to side on the roof of said train station, droplets of rain dripping down his hair to his suit. Ladybug had just come back after talking with the security. She found out that the teacher had taken a train to London, and Chat was fuming. Why hadn’t the police stopped him?

Loud thunder sounded in the distance as Chat continued to pace around. At least the weather seemed to mirror his mood at the moment.

“I’m going to call Juleka.” Ladybug said by his side, her wet short hair sticking to her forehead. “She’s in London and I’m sure she’ll keep an eye out for anything strange.”

“That guy is pissing me off.” Chat said through gritted teeth, pushing his wet hair away from his face. “And why didn’t the station’s security stop him? This is ridiculous.”
Lady stopped in front of him, making him stop his frantic walking as well. “Juleka’s kwami is a flying dragon, remember? She’ll find him in no time.” Chat took a deep breath, and Ladybug touched his shoulder. “We did everything we could, chaton.”

His shoulders sagged. She was right. Now there was nothing else they could do besides wait.

“Why don’t you go home for now?” The brunette suggested. “Get out of this rain, take a nice bath, and try to relax a little.”

His body reacted immediately, begging him to take her offer. He was exhausted and stressed from this ridiculous chase, and he also hadn’t been able to see his artist for more than a few minutes, which was frustrating and only added to his agitated state.

“Alright, I’ll do that.” He nodded, and Lady smiled at him, the tiredness in her eyes evident. “Go take a break as well, my lady.”

She nodded, wiping some raindrops from her face. “Yeah. See you, chaton.”

Chat prepared to jump when he heard Lady’s voice, “Tell your dear one I said hi!”

He looked over his shoulder at the brunette, who was grinning at him. He shook his head, smiling. She already knew that he’d go visit his artist as soon as he could.

Well, she wasn’t wrong.

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It was like his whole body was on fire. The cool mattress under Adrien’s bare body didn’t seem to help, neither did the contact with the artist’s wet clothes. Her shirt clung to her body, showing off her figure as she sat on top of him, looking down with hooded eyes.

“You’ve been bad, Adrien.” She said, leaning over a little and applying friction to his arousal. He closed his eyes, a soft whimper leaving his mouth. “I saw you lusting after me, you know.”

Adrien licked his dry lips and tried to focus, but his mind had turned into mush. Why was she doing this?

He swallowed dry as he looked up at her. “I thought you only liked Chat Noir—”

She leaned even closer and put a hand on his throat, making him cease all attempts of talking. “I’m selfish, Adrien,” she whispered and licked a stripe up his neck. A shiver went down his whole body.

“I want you both. All to myself.”

Adrien wasn’t able to stop the purring that began in his throat and chest. She wanted not only Chat, but him as well? “You can have us,” He said.

She hummed and tilted his head upwards. Her lips met his in a bruising kiss, hungry and rough. He tried to move his arms to touch her and heard the sound of chains as something cold bit into his skin. He couldn’t move.

She broke the kiss and smirked.

“Let me out, let me touch you.” Adrien managed to let the words out between pants.

She shook her head with a slow movement. “No.” Her nails scratched his chest and he hissed. That would definitely leave a mark on his fair skin. “You’re all mine now. To do as I please.”
It only took a moment for her to take off her clothes. The feeling of her bare skin against his was already making Adrien melt, but when his artist lifted her hips and put him inside her, allowing her weight to drop down hard, he nearly lost his mind.

A loud moan left Adrien’s mouth and he threw his head back, the chains bounding his wrists rattling with the movement.

“That’s it, model boy.” She moved up and down, and he closed his eyes, tight. She kissed his neck and his skin seemed to burn where her lips touched. His body was getting warmer and warmer, his muscles contracting. Her voice was quiet near his ear. “You’re mine.”

Adrien’s eyes shot open and weak light greeted him. He drew in a breath and looked around, feeling dazed and sluggish. His eyes finally focused on the windows of his studio, which were dotted with raindrops.

Another dream.

He put a hand over his rapidly beating heart, and then touched his neck. The artist’s presence was fading, like incense smoke, but he could still feel her lingering touches on his skin. Adrien shook his head. It was all in his mind, unfortunately. He stretched and felt something sticky on his skin. He pulled the covers away and saw his sheets were wet. Merde, not again.

He looked around, searching for Plagg. He couldn’t see the mess Adrien had made. The kwami had already teased him too much for his previous dreams.

After making sure the kwami wasn’t anywhere near, Adrien got up and grabbed the sheets, making sure to hide the evidence in the middle of the bundle.

He strode to the washing machine as fast as he could manage. A shiver went through his whole body as his bare feet touched the freezing ground. He wished he had slept in pajamas yesterday. Or with any clothes. He wouldn’t have to be going through this if he had. He’d just change his boxers and voilà.

He sighed. What was up with that dream anyway? Being tied up, hopeless. It seemed that being Chat was still affecting him, even after all this time. It was all Plagg’s fault.

He got the washing machine to work and turned around, almost bumping into the kwami.

“You had another accident?” Plagg tilted his head. His tone was innocent, sweet even, but Adrien knew better.

He stared at him with a neutral face. “No. I just drooled.”

Plagg gave him a toothy grin. “You’re a terrible liar, I hope you know that.”

Adrien could feel his whole face get warm. He grabbed a fresh towel and walked to the bathroom. “Go eat some Camembert, we’re leaving in a few minutes.”

He hoped Plagg wouldn’t argue with him about that. The rain had finally stopped and he had to see the artist. The teacher might be in London by now, but Hawkmoth was still around. It would be difficult to concentrate with the dream still haunting his mind, but he had to check on her. And if by chance, something else happened while he was there, he wouldn’t complain.

“Oh,” Plagg’s face lit up when he understood where they would be going, and then he schooled his features into one of complete boredom. “Again?”
The blonde smiled. The kwami wouldn’t fool him. He knew Plagg wanted to go as much as he did.

“You’re a terrible liar, I hope you know that.” Adrien said, his smile turning into a grin as he opened the shower glass door.

Plagg rolled his eyes, but didn’t deny it. “At least tell me we’re staying longer this time. It’s a pain to keep moving so much.”

“We have patrol today.”

“Again?”

Adrien hummed and focused on turning the shower on, hiding the smile that was pulling at his lips. Marinette hasn’t said anything about patrolling the city, in fact, she had told him to take a break, but it seemed that Plagg had forgotten about it.

“Let Ladybug deal with those petty criminals. She can handle them.” The kwami insisted louder this time, making sure he was heard above the sound of the falling water. “And your girlfriend is in the middle of making a project, isn’t she? We—you should help her.”

*Girlfriend*… Adrien sighed dreamily. If only.

“Did you hear me?” Plagg, now the embodiment of impatience, asked.

Adrien chuckled and wondered why the kwami was so desperate. He thought back to his *chérie* and his heart fluttered. Well, he couldn’t blame him.

“I’ll think about it.” The blonde said and got into the shower, closing the glass door.

He could hear Plagg mumbling something, probably insults, but the kwami soon left the bathroom, leaving Adrien alone with his thoughts.

He closed his eyes as the warm water hit his skin. The erotic dream drifted back into his mind, and Adrien shook his head slightly. He couldn’t keep thinking about that when he had other things to worry about, like the end of the year party. He still had to organize the food, the gifts… He still didn’t know which present he’d give his dear one. Adrien hummed to himself, and then smiled. Maybe some sort of cat.

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Chat stared at his reflection on the glass storefront of a fancy clothing store. *Damn this wind.* He fixed his hair a little and grinned at his reflection. *Alright, looking good.* He looked to the side and saw a group of passersby staring at him. He cleared his throat, finger gunned at them, and used his baton to jump to the top of a building.

After jumping over a few roofs, he landed on the parapet of the artist’s window. The curtains were open, which meant he could see her lying on the sofa, busy eating something out of a paper bag. Her easel was not too far away, meaning she was probably taking a break. Good, he wouldn’t be distracting her from her work.

Chat took a deep breath and knocked on the window. He had learned his lesson, no more bursting in.

His dear one smiled when she saw him. “Oh, you knock now?” She said in a teasing tone.
Chat rolled his eyes, opening the window and getting inside the room. “Hello to you too, chérie.”

“Are you staying longer today?”

“Maybe,” he glanced at the unfinished painting as he passed a hand through his hair, wondering if he would get in the way if he stayed. “Are you busy? Do you want me to leave?”

*Please say no, please say no.*

She shook her head, putting the paper bag down on the little coffee table and standing up. “It’s okay, I’m almost finished.”

“Good,” he grinned from ear to ear. “Because I wasn’t leaving.”

The artist got closer to him, saying she had to tell him something and Chat’s body tensed. *What can it be? Did something happen?*

“What is it, princess?” He asked, and got even more confused when she grinned at him. “Why are you looking at me like that?”

“I’m staying for another six months.” She said, and it was like a lightning bolt hit Chat’s body.

“What?” His eyes widened and he took a tentative step forward. “Really?”

“Yes!” She exclaimed and Chat took her in his arms, hugging her tight.

He had more time. They had more time. She wasn’t leaving yet. He thanked whoever was responsible for this in his mind while his arms held his dear one’s body close. He wished he’d never have to see her leave.

“But now I just have to finish the project for Monday and I can finally have my winter holiday!” She sighed, relieved.

“I’m happy for you.” Chat smiled as he finally let her go, his hands traveling down her arms. He still couldn’t believe his luck.

“Thank you, Chat.” She smiled back and kept staring at him with a look Chat couldn’t decipher. He tilted his head slightly and she looked away. “Now they only have to resolve the situation with the teacher and I’ll be at peace.”

At the mention of the teacher, Chat almost growled. He had almost ruined everything for her. The artist grabbed the paper bag again and plopped down on the sofa, tapping the spot by her side and making Chat forget about that awful man for now.

He didn’t waste time in jumping on the sofa, and his chérie glared at him as he almost made her drop the food on her hands. He only smirked at her and put his head on her lap, too happy that she was staying longer to feel bad about his actions.

She began to eat the sweets and he opened his mouth, wanting her to feed him. *Just like a couple would do.* He giggled to himself. He knew he was acting like a teenager in love, but whatever. It was the first time he was experiencing something like this, and he’d enjoy every second of it.

He tried to stop himself from smiling too much when she finally sighed and gave him the half eaten macaron. He, of course, sucked on her fingers when she did that, but wasn’t too pleased when she cleaned his saliva on his own suit.
“Hey!” He complained, munching on the food, but his dearest only smirked and grabbed another sweet. The cat hero let out a happy sigh. This is what he had missed all week, to be close to her like this.

“Say, Chat,” the artist offered him a piece of another macaron and he took it. “That day when you knew about my project for Monday, was it because of Marinette?”

His eyes widened a little, and he looked at his claws, trying to hide his face from her gaze. “Yes.”

She hummed. “And those sweets from the balcony. You said they were from a little boulangerie near the Seine.”

His heart began to beat faster. Oh, no. He picked at one of his claws. “Yes, chérie. Marinette helped me out.”

He felt her fingers touch his hair. “You’re really good friends then.”

He could hear his heartbeat in his ears now. This wasn’t good. Mari didn’t have many blonde friends, the artist could easily suspect him. Chat prayed that the miraculous magic would do its thing. Please help me out.

He looked up at his dear one and shrugged. “She gives great advice.”

She nodded and began to scratch his scalp. Chat hummed as he felt a shiver go down his spine, it felt like his whole body was becoming jelly.

“And how did you two meet?” She asked.

The question made him tense up a little. What was he supposed to say? Oh, we studied together! In fact, we still do, princess! He couldn’t do that.

But fortunately, his dear one didn’t push the issue. He apologized to her, and she seemed to understand. His heart swelled. She always understood his boundaries, and he adored her for that.

Her hand began to scrap his scalp again and Chat’s eyes almost fluttered closed this time. It was just too good.

“So, Mari wants me to go to an end of the year party.” The artist said as she offered another sweet to him, and Chat’s attention perked up at that. She was talking about his party!

“Aren’t you going?” He said as nonchalant as possible as he took a bite off the macaron.

“I don’t know,” she looked at the window, and Chat followed her gaze, seeing that the rain had started again. “The person organizing it didn’t invite me.”

Chat tensed up. What? He had invited her, hadn’t he? He scanned his memories, trying to find evidence for that, but didn’t find anything. Oh, mon dieu. “He didn’t?”

“How do you know it’s a he?”

Oh, merde. Chat’s heart seemed to stop for a moment. He had fucked up. She hadn’t mentioned it was a guy. In his panic, he blurted out, “Marinette told me.”

She narrowed her eyes at him, and he looked away, hoping she wouldn’t question him about that. When she rolled her eyes, he could breathe again. Okay, it had worked. He was fine for—
He looked at her and saw she was licking her fingers. Why hadn’t he thought about that? He could be licking her fingers right now if he hadn’t been so desperate in trying to cover up his mistakes.

She looked at him with an amused look on her face. “What?”

“Nothing, princess,” he shook his head. “Just observing a lost opportunity.”

She snorted and went back to touching his hair, but Chat’s mind began to wander to other parts of her body he could be licking.

“I brought more food from Mari’s boulangerie, do you want to eat anything else?” She asked, but Chat wasn’t really listening. The image of her spread legs in front of him had embedded itself into his mind, and the fact that she was almost touching his ears wasn’t helping. Chat swallowed dry as he felt his face and other parts of his body heat up.

“I got pain au chocolat, fresh strawberry tart…” She continued, and Chat chewed on his bottom lip. He wanted to touch her so bad. All that want from before was resurfacing and right at this moment. He needed to touch her. “Brioche, croissant aux amandes—” She was mid sentence when he couldn’t take it anymore.

“Everything seems amazing, my dear, but,” Chat sat up and glanced at the almost finished painting before focusing back on his dearest one. His lips curled up in a smile. “I’d rather eat something else.”

The artist chuckled, a knowing look on her face. “That sounded really dirty.”

Chat only smirked at her reaction.

“You’re serious.” She gaped at him and then recomposed herself, wiggling her brows. “Well, we could try it while I paint.”

His stomach jumped in anticipation and he got up from the sofa. “Alright.”

She stared at him with wide eyes. “You mean now?”

“Yeah. You need to finish the painting, don’t you?” He shrugged. “It could help.”

He saw her throat move as she gulped. Was she going to back off? He had given her the painting excuse, so she had no reason to say no, right? He looked at her through half-lidded eyes and licked his lips. He hoped not. He really wanted to taste her.

She glanced at his lips for a moment before she nodded. “Sure, let’s try it out.”

Soon his artist was sitting down on her chair, naked from the waist down, busying herself with organizing her brushes. Chat put her easel a little to the side and sat in front of her. He licked his lips, not trying to contain his excitement. It wasn’t a dream this time, it was happening.

He pulled her to the edge of her seat and spread her legs wider. “That’s better.”

She looked down at him and shook her head. She was embarrassed. He could easily tell by the way she kept averting her eyes. “I can’t believe you.”

“You don’t have to believe, beautiful, just feel it.” He put his gloved hands on her thighs for support and leaned in.
She sucked in a breath when his tongue made contact with her core. He looked up and saw she had closed her eyes. She opened them and looked down at him.

“Feeling good, princess?” He gave a long lick. She tightened her jaw and nodded. “You should start painting.”

“Yeah, yeah. I know.” She said and began to paint with careful movements.

Chat chuckled and focused on his work, moving his tongue up and down with ease. It was working; she was getting wetter by the second. He drank it all up, savoring the taste of her. It was much better than he had imagined.

He looked up again and saw his dear one was pressing her lips firmly together. Her brows were furrowed in concentration as she made little strokes on the canvas in front of her. He sucked on her most sensitive spot and she cursed under her breath, stopping her hand for a moment before continuing.

Chat smiled. He had done this before, to strangers whose faces he could barely remember, when the lonely nights got too much to bear. But he never felt like this. Each sound, each movement she made was because of him, and it made him proud. He was the one making her feel like this. And he could do much more... If only she realized that.

“Shit.”

He heard when the curse left her mouth this time.

“How’s the painting going, chérie?” He asked, his mouth still against her, and she gripped his hair, making a wave of pain and pleasure go straight to his groin.

“Dammit, don’t talk.” She said in an ushered tone. She was barely keeping it together now. Chat chuckled. This is so much fun.

Her phone began to ring, but she somehow wasn’t hearing it. She probably had too much to pay attention at the same time.

He squeezed her thighs to get her attention. She looked down at him slowly, almost if she was afraid of what she’d find. Her mouth was parted and she had this dazed look in her eyes. Chat licked his lips. He really wanted to kiss her right now.

But instead, he smirked and motioned with his chin to the sofa, “Your phone’s ringing, princess.”

She sighed and he decided to give her a small break. He got up, grabbed the phone and turned it around to look at the screen.

The corner of his mouth lifted up in a lopsided grin when he saw who was calling. “It’s Marinette.”

If only Mari knew what was happening right now.

His artist didn’t seem happy to hear that, but accepted the phone with a resigned nod.

He sat down again, ready to go back to his meal and the promise of soft pants and muffled groans. He sighed just thinking about it.

But the artist crossed her legs, making him look up at her in shock. What?

“Wait, Chat, let’s stop for a moment.” She said.
He couldn’t help pouting as he got up and turned around with crossed arms. If he knew taking that
phone call would mean they had to stop the fun, he wouldn’t have said anything about the phone.
His artist was going to ignore him? Just like that?

“Hey, Mari, what’s up?” He heard her composed voice behind him.

No, she couldn’t ignore him. He said he’d help her, but he didn’t have much time. He looked at his
ring. Well, it might still have three dots, but they didn’t have time to lose. Chat’s mouth slowly curled
into a smirk as an idea popped into his mind. Marinette could call another time.

He turned around and sat down on the artist’s lap, trying his best to distribute his weight on her and
the chair. He moved, trying to get comfortable, and received a glare for his troubles. Which he
ignored as he began to kiss her neck. Her eyes fluttered and he grinned. It was something.

“That’s… great,” she said to Mari. He gave her skin a light bite. Her throat moved as she swallowed
dry, but she kept talking on the phone.

The blonde then put his hands on her waist and began to move them to her thighs slowly, hoping she
wouldn’t care.

“The painting is going…” she grabbed his hand when he was inches away from his objective.

"Merde. “…Pretty good.”

She narrowed her eyes at him and he stared back, daring her to do something. She could talk to
Marinette later.

‘Wait a minute’ she mouthed to him, and he shrugged in return, he couldn’t wait. And there was also
the fact that teasing his dear one while she was on the phone made things much more interesting. His
tail twitched, displaying his excitement. He really couldn’t wait.

She gave him a last warning look, which he ignored once more, and went back to leaving innocent
little bites on her neck.

She shook her head, still talking with Mari. “I’m almost finished.”

He chuckled into her ear and whispered, “You sure are.” She would be soon, when Chat had
finished what he had started.

She swallowed again, but ignored him. Chat huffed. Alright then. That was it.

While she was talking, he sneaked his hand to the middle of her legs and pressed his palm to her sex,
hard. She was in the middle of a phrase when it was cut off by a beautiful breathy moan. He wished
he could remember that sound forever.

Her eyes went wide when it dawned on her what she had done. Chat let a smug smile pull at his lips
when he heard Marinette screaming on the other end of the line.

“Is Chat Noir freaking there with you?!”

He grabbed the phone, deciding to end this. He had won and Marinette had lost – even if she didn’t
know they were competing in the first place. It didn’t matter! The artist’s attention would be all his
now.

He gave his dear one a victorious look while saying on the phone, “She’s busy now, Marinette. Call
later. Bye.” Before Mari could recompose herself and curse him to no end, Chat hung up. He sighed,
throwing the phone on the sofa. “She can really be a pain sometimes.” He hoped nobody would call again. But if they did, he’d make sure they got the message that his artist was busy.

“Oh my god,” she hid her face on his shoulder, letting out a dry laugh. “She’s never going to forgive me.”

Chat felt a little bad for embarrassing her like this, but she had ignored him.

“She’ll get over it soon.” Chat huffed, touching her hair to try and calm her down. “Don’t worry about it.”

She raised her head and glared at him. “You couldn’t wait a minute, could you?”

He furrowed his brows. “You were ignoring me,” he realized that sounded way too childish, so he swiftly added, “And you have a painting to finish.”

She gave him an exasperated look, “A minute, Chat.”

“I also don’t have much time, chérie,” He showed her the ring for a brief second, not letting her see how much time he had left. She would kill him if she found out. “And what’s done is done.”

She shook her head, still in a state of shock. He looked down at her bare thighs under his and bit his bottom lip.

“So…” He squeezed her thighs to get her attention and felt her jump a little. He hoped he hadn’t nicked her with his claws. “Where were we?”

She narrowed her eyes at him again, and for a moment he thought she was going to tell him to leave, but then a smile made way to her face and she deadpanned, “You were on your knees.”

Chat felt a flutter in his stomach and blinked at her blunt response. Oh, how he adored this woman. “That’s right, mon ange.” He purred and leaned in until he was close enough to kiss her. “And you were a pretty moaning mess.”

She let out a low chuckle that went straight to his core. “You wish.”

Chat got up from her lap, before kneeling on the ground with a smirk. He knew a challenge when he heard one. “We’ll see, chérie.” She got her painting tools again, and Chat spread her legs apart. He was ready to win.

He took off his left glove and she arched a brow. He didn’t waste time in putting a finger inside her and she gasped. Chat let her start painting before he began to lick her as well, making a broken moan leave her mouth and her hand grip his blonde strands.

“Focus, ma chérie. The painting.” He said without looking at her, a proud feeling in his chest.

“I know.” She said through gritted teeth.

The blonde added another finger and the artist cursed under her breath, gripping his hair tighter and making him groan. Each little moan she let out made his body feel hotter and his suit tighter. Chat knew he’d have to take care of himself when he was done.

Soon, his dearest began to move her hips from one side to another, seeking more friction, and her muscles were tightening around his fingers. He knew she was close.

“C’mon, princess,” he said, still moving his fingers, and she pulled him closer by the hair. “Let me
see you come on my fingers.”

He curled his digits upwards while sucking on her, and she moaned loudly, her body twitching as her climax hit her. The last time she had come, Chat hadn’t been able to watch, but now he could keep his eyes on her as she threw her head back and sank her teeth on her bottom lip. She gripped his hair with one hand and the painting brush with the other. It was touching the canvas, probably making a mess, but he wasn’t going to interrupt her now to say that.

She breathed heavily and slumped against the back of the chair, chest heaving. “I’ll never be able to look at this painting again without remembering this.” She squinted at the canvas and put a hand over her mouth. “Oh my god. How did this happen?”

Chat already knew how it happened without even knowing what had happened. He got up and leaned over to see. Her painting now had a harsh red paint stroke in the middle of the canvas.

“It looks great, chérie. Quite modern.” Chat said. She gave him an incredulous look, but he was being honest. It actually looked great. He gave her a smug smile and winked. “See, I totally helped.”

He saw his dear one’s eyes glance at his crotch. She bit her bottom lip. “You… Want help with that?”

Yes. Yes.

Chat wanted to scream it out, but he looked down to the bulge on his suit and shrugged, trying not to look too eager. “Well—”

His ring began to beep and he rolled his eyes. Really? Didn’t it have three dots just now? Had the time gone by so fast while he was eating his dear one out? He was going to consider calling this ring ‘cockblocking ring’ from now on.

“Another time then.” His artist said with a chuckle. She got up from the chair with a soft groan and put a hand on the back of his neck, pulling him to her. She kissed him for a long moment before letting go and whispering, “Thank you, kitty.”

“I…” Chat swallowed dry. She’d definitely be the death of him one of these days. “Anytime, beautiful.”

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Adrien checked his phone, seeing he still had a few minutes to get to his class. The corridor was empty; all the students were probably inside classrooms already. He turned to another corridor and almost bumped into Marinette.

“Sorry—” Her blue eyes widened for a moment before she glared at him and promptly turned the other way around, walking away in long strides. “Don’t talk to me.”

“Mari, c’mon.” Adrien laughed and jogged to keep up with her.

She threw him another glare, but didn’t stop. “You did that on purpose, didn’t you?”

He knew exactly what she was talking about, how couldn’t he? He shrugged with a bashful grin. There was no use in lying.

She huffed. “You’re the worst. I hate you.”

“I think it was pretty funny.” A little voice said and Adrien saw Tikki poke her head out of
Marinette’s purse.

“Tikki!” Marinette stopped walking, almost making Adrien bump into her.

Mari looked around, but there was no one in this corridor beside them. Adrien knew Tikki wouldn’t appear or say anything if that wasn’t the case. She was responsible, unlike other kwamis. Plagg, most specifically. He was snoring in his jacket’s pocket; otherwise he’d have already said his two cents by now.

“You should have seen her face.” Tikki snickered, putting her paw over her mouth.

The kwami got inside fast before Marinette could catch her, but Adrien could still hear her faint laugh coming from inside the purse.

Mari glared at Adrien once more. “This isn’t over, Agreste.”

Adrien grinned as he watched her walk away. He tried to feel guilty, but he couldn’t. Yesterday had been one of the best nights of his life.

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“What did you do to piss Marinette off so much?” Nino asked as they left the university’s building for the day.

Adrien tried his best not to smile. “Me? Nothing. I’m totally innocent.”

“Yeah, right.” Nino snorted. “You might be dashing, dude, but your charm doesn’t work on me, alright? So I really don’t believe you.”

Adrien couldn’t stop the smile now. Mari still wasn’t talking to him, but he knew that she’d go back to normal soon.

“Did you invite your crush to the party?” Nino asked, nudging him on the side.

“Not yet.” Adrien shook his head, trying not to get lost in memories of yesterday at the mention of his artist. “And she’s not my crush.”

He couldn’t get too close to her as Adrien, which meant he had to hide his feelings from his best friend as well or Nino – part time wingman – would do everything to make Adrien and the artist end up together.

Nino gave him a look, one eyebrow arched and everything. “You never invite anyone besides us to the party. Why is she different then?”

“I just want to help her feel more at home, that’s all.” Adrien shrugged. That wasn’t the only reason he was inviting her, but that’s all Nino needed to know.

“Sure.” His friend said, the word dripping with sarcasm. He then looked to the side. “Oh, and there she is.”

Adrien followed his gaze and his eyes locked on the artist walking a few meters ahead. His stomach fluttered at the sight of her. She was probably going home for the day.

“Go talk to her, man.” Nino nudged him on the side.

Adrien stepped to the side. “Now?”
“Of course, dude!” Nino grinned, crossing his arms over his chest. “If you don’t have a crush on her, you, international super model Adrien Agreste, should be able to invite her to the party without a problem, right?”

Adrien tightened his jaw. *Goddamn you, Nino.*

The blonde knew he had to do it. He glared at Nino before walking in the artist’s direction and calling her name. She stopped and turned around. Adrien took a deep breath and kept walking.

*You got this, Agreste. It’s easy. Just imagine she’s just like any other girl and talk to her.* He nodded to himself. *Yeah, that’s right. Imagine you’re talking to her as Chat Noir as well. Easy peasy. Don’t fuck this up.*

“Just remember that this is a one of a kind opportunity to know her. If you mess this up, it’s over.” Plagg mumbled from inside his pocket before going back to sleep.

Adrien’s whole body tensed up at that. *Great, just great, Plagg.* Of all the times the kwami could offer his pieces of wisdom, he had chosen right now. Nice.

Adrien stopped in front of the artist. He could swear his hands were sweating. “Hey,” he smiled. “How are you?”

She smiled back, “I’m finally on winter break, so I’d say I’m pretty good right now. You?”

“Good, good…” Adrien’s eyes went to her lips for a moment and he began to panic. *Merde.* He looked away. *Keep yourself together!* He cleared his throat. “Huh… So, I wanted to know if you, if you wanted…”

“Just say it already!” Nino yelled and Adrien froze. He looked back at his friend, fuming. *What the hell was he doing?* Adrien called his name, and he turned back to her, feeling his whole face burning.

It seemed that the artist already knew he was going to invite her to the party, which surprised him a bit. Was he that predictable? And then, a few seconds later, he managed to embarrass himself even more when she asked for his house’s address.

She was holding her phone as she said, “Just tell me the address.”

To which Adrien dumbly replied, “I can send it to you, but I don’t have your number.”

“Ahn…” She slowly looked up at him from her phone. “I meant it like you could tell me the address and I’d type it down.”

“Oh,” Adrien let out a dry laugh, feeling his stomach sink. “Of course.”

“But you can send me the address too if you want. What’s your number?” His dearest asked, probably trying to make the situation less awkward.

He sighed, feeling mortified. How come every time he tried to talk to her like Adrien he acted like a complete buffoon? He hoped Nino didn’t hear the conversation, otherwise Adrien was done for.

“There we go.” She said after adding him to her contacts. “See you in a few days then.”

“Yeah,” Adrien managed to give her a smile. Somehow, the sight of her was worth being a total buffoon. “See you.”
When he turned around, he knew that Nino had heard everything. Why else would he be laughing like a complete madman? Adrien felt all his blood go to his face and ears as he approached his friend, getting ready for the teasing that would certainly follow.

“I-I don’t have… Y-your number.” Nino said in between laughs. “Best pickup line… I’ve ever heard!”

“Oh, shut up.” Adrien began to walk away, determined to leave his annoying friend behind, but Nino followed him and put an arm around his shoulders.

“Aw, c’mon dude, it wasn’t too bad!” Nino tried to stop laughing, but failed. Adrien’s body shook from the strength of the laughs. It hadn't been bad, it had been terrible. “She accepted, didn't she?”

He sighed, his shoulders slumping. “Yeah.”

“Woohoo!” Nino cheered with enthusiasm, as if she had accepted to be Adrien’s girlfriend or something like that. “High five, man!”

Adrien rolled his eyes, a small smile pulling at the corners of his mouth, and high fived his friend. Nino bumped his shoulder with his and laughed. Adrien shook his head as he did the same, feeling all the previous nervousness leave his body.

The other students were staring at them now as they left the university, but Adrien didn’t care. His artist was going to his party and although he couldn't get too close to her as his civilian self, he could know more about her and spend time by her side. And that’s all that mattered.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you to everyone who made this chapter possible by buying me a coffee! If you want more chapters like this, please consider helping me out :D

Also, I made a new playlist for the story! People have asked me to add songs to the existing playlist made by Alex, but I don't want to bother them with this, so I made one. You guys can send me any songs you think go with the fic, but please don't send the ones already used in Alex's playlist alright?

I'll also add songs that were used in past chapters and others that will be used in future ones :^) I made the playlist only on Spotify for now, but I can also make it on Youtube if you guys want. Please let me know!

oh, on a side note, I know Juleka's kwami might be the tiger one, but I really want her to have the dragon, so..... yeah. Dragon it is.

Thank you for sticking with the story and see you guys next month! The next chapter will be intense ;)}
Wounded Eros (Part 1)

Chapter Notes

Hello my dear readers, I'm back with another chapter! Sorry for the delay, I missed you all so much ♡ Time went by so fast, and the year is almost over???? It's insane. Now that my finals are basically done, I'll be able to focus more on this fic, and I'm so happy! We're finally getting to a point in the story that I've been looking forward for so long. Do you guys still enjoy the story even after all this time? hahah I hope so!

Enjoy!

You walked as fast as you could through the college’s halls, attracting some odd looks. Lateness wasn’t the reason for your hurry since you were 15 minutes early for your class, but still, you kept going. Your reason was much more urgent.

After what happened at Adrien’s studio yesterday, you had come up with a plan. The first part had been to hide his sinful magazine; you couldn’t risk looking at those poses and losing the rest of your feeble sanity. The rest of the plan basically consisted of having as minimal interactions with Adrien as possible, until you got your feelings under control.

That meant you couldn’t sit near the blonde today.

Arriving at the entrance of the classroom, you took a deep breath and peeked inside, scanning the room. A relieved sigh left your lips when you saw Adrien wasn’t there yet. Good.

You walked in and began to choose where to sit, when you noticed Julien slouching on a chair near the wall, staring at his phone. You thanked the gods for your luck, and made a beeline to the seat by his side, only to see it was occupied by his leather bag.

“Hey, Julien, ¿ca va?” You gave him a strained smile. “Can I sit here?”

You glanced at the door. More students were arriving, but still no Adrien. You had to be quick.

Julien looked up from his phone and blinked at you. “Oh, of course.”

He moved his bag to the ground and you sat down, making the chair rattle. Julien arched one brow at you.

A beautiful, hearty laugh came from the entrance, and your stomach lurched. You would recognize that laugh anywhere. You couldn’t help glancing at the door as Adrien walked in, talking to someone else. Gulping, you turned back to Julien before your eyes made contact with the model’s.

“So, Julien, how are doing after the weekend?” You propped your chin on one hand. “Better?”

Julien stared at you, and then at Adrien. “You’re avoiding him?”
Your eyes widened a little, but you managed to control your expression and scoff. “No, I’m not.”

“Did something happen?” Julien insisted, his curious gaze now turning serious. It seemed that he was ready to punch Adrien straight in the face if needed.

You tried to give him a reassuring smile. Although you appreciated him worrying about you, the last thing you needed now was Julien making a scene. “Nothing happened, alright? There’s no need to get overprotective.”

Julien huffed. “If you say so.” He threw a glance over his shoulder. “He’s staring a whole lot though.”

You swallowed dry, fighting the urge to look over your shoulder as well. “He is?”

Julien nodded. “He’s probably jealous again.” He snickered and you sighed, dropping your head on the table.

Maybe sitting near Julien wasn’t a good idea. You should’ve chosen someone else, to avoid attracting more attention. How were you going to be able to avoid a jealous Adrien?

“Oh, here he comes.” Julien nudged you, an amused tone in his voice. “And he doesn’t look happy.”

You let out a groan. Your plan was already falling apart.

“I should’ve just skipped this class today,” you said to yourself as you raised your head and got ready to face Adrien.

“Bonjour, everyone.” Like an angel coming to your calling, professor Boucher arrived, and the students went to their seats, Adrien included. You sagged in your chair, sighing in relief. Your plan was still up, for now. Boucher continued, “In today’s class we’re going to draw a live model.”

A guy walked in, and the first thought that crossed your mind was that Marinette would be less than pleased if she were here.

“I believe most of you already know my son, Marius.” Boucher made a gesture to the guy by her side. “He’ll assist me in the next classes.”

“Bonjour à tous.” Marius said, his gaze going around the class. It seemed that he was analyzing each and every one of the students.

“Please make a circle and we’ll start soon.” Boucher addressed the class again as Marius began to take off his clothes.

The class was soon filled with sounds of tables and chairs being dragged around.

“Well, it seems that we just got lucky,” Julien muttered as he moved his table to the side. You followed his gaze to Marius’ naked back. You let out a snort as you moved yours. “If all the classes are like this, I won’t miss a single one.”

You chuckled, looking at Marius. The guy’s body was lean and beautiful, and it was obvious that he worked out in some way, but you preferred a certain cat’s body. Images from Adrien walking down the catwalk then came to your mind, as if forcing you to admit you liked the blonde’s body as well. You almost choked on air.

Julien leaned in and whispered, “You’re staring.”

You blinked a few times. There was a smug smile on Marius’ lips as he walked to the platform in the
middle of the room. You averted your eyes and grabbed your chair, feeling your face grow hot. Goddammit. Marius was already full of himself, you didn’t need to give him more reason to feel that way.

Julien snickered and you hit him on the arm. “Shut up.”

After everyone had settled down, the teacher gave instructions for the next drawings. You had to focus on the negative forms, and then just on the lines, and so on. Soon the class was filled with sounds of graphite scratching paper.

Marius kept changing poses every 15 minutes. Your hands began to sweat a little, but the reason didn’t lie on the exercise. Adrien was seated directly in front of you in the circle, and every time you had to look at Marius to draw, which were a lot, you ended up looking at Adrien too.

*How am I supposed to ignore him like this?* You cried to yourself after you made eye contact with the blonde again.

Time dragged out as you tried to make yourself occupied with your drawings. Marius was pretty comfortable with posing, and it seemed that he was used to it. Sometimes you caught him looking your way, but after a few minutes, you realized he was staring at Julien. You gave your friend a look, but he refused to look your way, focusing on his drawing with a small smile on his lips.

“That’s enough, everyone.” Boucher clapped her hands. “Now get up and take a look at your classmate’s drawings.”

Marius stretched and got down from the platform. Julien was still staring at him, so you got up, shaking your head, and walked around the circle. You admired the other works, the different styles and ways of drawing.

You stopped in front of one table. The drawings had a symmetrical feeling to them, it seemed that the person had paid close attention to proportions. Some parts were darker like they had put too much force on the pencil. It looked almost like a sculpture on paper…

“That’s it.”

The voice made a shiver go down your spine. Of course you had stopped at his table. Of course.

Feeling like a trapped prey, you turned to the blonde by your side.

“Ça va?” Adrien gave you a sweet smile, which did nothing but worsen your situation.

“Ça va.” You mimicked the smile, hoping that it didn’t show your unease.

You breathed in deep, noticing the amazing smell coming from him. Had he put on more perfume today? Or were you just going insane?

The other students began to stop by your side, trying to look at Adrien’s drawings, and you realized you were in the way. You moved, continuing along the circle and hoping to put a stop to the incoming conversation, but Adrien followed you.

You bit the inside of your cheek, feeling his fine perfume fill your nostrils again.

“About the project,” Adrien said as he walked by your side. “Can we meet up today?”

You almost tripped on your feet. *Oh, no.*
“I’d love to, but I’m kinda busy today, Adrien.” You walked back to your table, trying not to look at
him too much as you crafted your lie in word form. “If you want, we can do it separately. You can
send me the design and I’ll model the next Muse.”

You hoped he would accept. That way you wouldn’t have to stay near him and risk the mess from
yesterday repeating itself.

“…” Adrien stared at you, searching your face for something. “I prefer working on it when we’re
together. I like your company.”

You swallowed dry as alarms went off in your head. This was dangerous. The plan, follow the plan.

You were preparing yourself to say something, anything, when a hand touched your shoulder.

“Don’t worry, you can go with him,” Julien said with a smile. “I’ll tell Louise and Zoe that you can’t
come for dinner.” You stared at him with a puzzled look. What was he even talking about? He
squeezed your shoulder a little. “It’ll be a shame though, since they’ve been looking forward to this
for so long.”

Something clicked in your head and you understood. He was trying to help you out.

Julien then turned to Adrien, who was staring at you both with an unreadable look on his face,
eyebrows furrowed. “My roommates invited her for an afternoon snack. It’s quite rare to gather all
the international students together in one place, you know?”

Adrien’s face lit up in understanding, and he nodded. “Oh, alright.” He gave you a small smile, a
faint shadow of the sweet one he had given you minutes ago. You could see he wasn’t happy about
this, but he would back down for now. “We can work on the project another day, then.”

“Yeah, thanks, Adrien.” You smiled, feeling lighter, like a huge weight had been lifted from your
shoulders.

“Is tomorrow okay?” The model asked, and the weight dropped down on you again.

“Oh, err…” You looked around, trying to think of something. Julien seemed stunned, like he had
also been taken by surprise.

“Is everyone finished?” Boucher, a true savior angel, addressed the class and people nodded, going
back to their seats.

You smiled at Adrien. “We can talk about it later, okay?”

“Yeah, sure. I’ll text you.” He smiled back. He then stared at Julien for a brief moment before going
back to his seat.

Julien sat down on his chair, and you did the same, letting your body relax.

“There’s no way nothing happened between you two.” Julien shook his head. “No way.”

You shushed him and whispered, “I’ll tell you later.”

“You better.” He shook his index finger your way. “Oh, and by the way, you’re actually invited to
have an afternoon snack at my house today.”

You laughed. Julien was full of surprises. “Alright.”
The rest of the class was free from more awkward interactions, thankfully. Mrs. Boucher got some of the students’ drawings and talked about them, asking for students to give critiques. Marius was seated by her side, legs crossed, stealing glances at Julien again. Was something going on between them? You really wanted to ask Julien about that.

“Next class we’re going to use the metal easel, so don’t forget to bring yours.” Boucher got up from her chair. “À la semaine prochaine.”

It took your brain a few moments to process what she had said, but when it did, you put a hand over your mouth. You had completely forgotten about the metal easel! The lady from the office had told you to talk with the teacher on the first day of class, which had been a week ago. You could only hope that there were still easels available.

You grabbed Julien’s arm to get his attention. “I have to talk with the teacher.”

He grabbed his bag and threw it over his shoulder. “Alright. I’ll take a smoke real quick and meet you at the resto U.”

It took your brain a second longer than normal to process that resto U was the university restaurant. You nodded and walked to Boucher, who had just finished talking to a student, and explained your situation. Her amber eyes gazed at you with full attention, like they wanted to crystalize you in them. You hadn’t talked to her so close before, so her intense gaze was almost making you stumble over your words.

“You’re lucky, there’s just one available.” She said, and your whole body relaxed. “You can use it, but you can’t take it home. That means you’ll have to come to the university to do homework.”

“That’s okay, I don’t mind.” You smiled at her, happy that you wouldn’t have to buy an expensive easel just for this subject. “Thank you, professor.”

“Don't mention it.”

You said a rushed ‘see you next class’, and almost sprinted to the exit before Adrien could come talk to you again.

As you turned to the corridor, you bumped into Marius.

He grabbed your shoulders to steady himself. “Whoa, in a rush, sweetheart?”

“Actually, yes. Sorry about that.” You glanced over your shoulder to see if Adrien was anywhere near. You almost sighed. It was only the first day of your plan, and you were already stressing too much over this.

“Are you going to the resto U?” He let go of you and put his hands in his pockets. When you nodded, he smiled. “What a coincidence, me too!” He made a gesture to the corridor. “Shall we?”

“Sure.” You shrugged and began to walk side by side with him.

Marius was silent for a couple of seconds. You could feel that he wanted to say something, like the words were bubbling inside of him, wanting, begging to come out. Maybe he’d say something about Julien? Gabriel’s fashion show? You couldn’t know. And when the words finally left his mouth, a few moments later, they were completely different from your expectations.

“Say, do you like cats?”
You raised an eyebrow at the random question. You really weren’t expecting that. “Hum, yeah, why?”

“Just curious.” Marius shot you a pearl white grin. “I actually like them too, especially the black ones.” Images of Chat Noir flooded your mind, and you felt your whole body tense. Where was Marius going with this conversation? “They’re really mysterious, don’t you think? It seems like they’re always hiding a secret.”

“Is that so?” You asked, trying to maintain a neutral expression as you searched your mind for a reason for this talk. Marius didn’t see you with Chat at the fashion show, did he?

He hummed. “Yes, but if you know where to look,” he raised his eyebrows as if to emphasize the word. “You can figure out their secret.”

You stared at him, a crease forming on your forehead. This couldn’t be just regular small talk about cats.

“You’re a smart cookie, I know it won’t take long for you to find the door to wisdom.” He opened his arms in a dramatic move.

You rolled your eyes, getting tired of this. “You don’t have to talk in riddles, you know? Just say what you want to say.”

“But where’s the fun in that?” He winked and stopped walking.

You did the same, noticing the sound of chatting and cutlery. The restaurant’s double doors were a few meters ahead, and Julien was waiting by the side.

Marius put a hand on his forehead. “Oh, I just remembered I need to talk to my mom about something. See you, doll.” He winked at you and looked Julien up and down before turning around.

You watched, speechless, as he walked back. Did Marius know something about Chat that you didn’t?

“Hey, you coming?” Julien asked.

“Yeah.” You turned, walking with him to the resto U. He glanced behind his shoulder at Marius, and your curiosity was too much. “Is there something going on between you and Marius?”

Your blonde friend shrugged. “I already tapped that.” He then muttered, “Wouldn’t mind doing it again.”

Memories of him and Luan laughing together hand in hand in Barcelona came back to your mind, and you wondered if Julien was already over the Brazilian boy or if he was planning on using Marius to forget him.

“I know what you’re thinking,” Julien said. “What about Luan?” He mimicked your voice, making you chuckle. He shrugged with one shoulder. “Well, he left. Two days ago.”

“Can’t you visit each other?” You asked.

“I already broke it off with him, can’t go back now.” He put a strand of hair behind his ear, sighing. “But I still did it too late. With so little time, he got himself a place inside my heart, my soul.” He looked down. “And now all I have is a hole inside me.”
You winced. All you wanted was to make his pain go away. You touched his shoulder and squeezed a little. “I’m sorry.”

He put a hand on top of yours. “It’s not your fault.”

But in a way, it was your fault. Thanks to your encouraging, Julien went to talk with Luan. You didn’t feel bad for that, though. You just wished they had been able to work things out.

The blonde cleared his throat and pointed with his thumb to the line of students waiting to get their food. “Anyway, we should go before that line gets longer.”

Laugh filled the air around you. Your friends were in a good mood today, especially Alya, thanks to the interview with Chat and Ladybug. Even Nino was there, which was a rarity since he studied in another building. You were sitting in front of him, with Marinette by your right and Julien by the left. Safe from sitting too close to another certain blonde.

Said blonde didn’t seem so happy with that, throwing not so subtle glares at Julien. But your friend kept eating his pizza, completely ignoring Adrien.

You gazed at the campus grounds through the large windows in front of you, pretending not to notice what was going on. You just wanted to finish your food so you could stay as far away from Adrien as possible and stop noticing how great he smelled.

You kept your hands occupied with your knife and fork. They were begging you to grab a paper, anything, and draw your newest muse. And when you ignored those pleas, they went on to beg for you to touch him. Which was less than ideal.

“The Saint Valentine party is going to be sick. They even managed to get the boat!” Nino exclaimed, eyes shining behind his designer glasses. You tried to focus on the conversation to avoid hearing your dangerous thoughts.

“I bet the tickets are going to be a fortune.” Alya sighed.

“Fear not, mon amour.” Nino fished something out of his pocket and slammed it on the table. Everyone leaned in to see what it was.

Colored papers with barcodes: tickets. At least 15 of them.

Alya squealed and shook Nino by the shoulders. “Oh mon dieu! You’re the best!”

“I know, I know.” Nino smiled, his cheeks turning a faint red when Alya kissed them.

“You’re going to be the DJ?” Adrien asked, turning one of the tickets in his hands.

“Yep.” Nino grinned, proud. He and Adrien fist bumped, laughing.

“I knew you could do it, man.” Adrien patted his friend on the back.

“That’s so cool, Nino!” Marinette laughed, grabbing a ticket as well. “I’m so proud!”

You and Julien congratulated him as well, and with each praise, Nino seemed to inflate with pride. “You guys can take more than one if you want.” He slid a few tickets in Julien direction. “You know a lot of cool people, Julien, so feel free to invite them.”
“Deal, thanks.” Julien took the colorful papers, probably wondering who he was going to invite.

“All of you guys are going, right?” Nino asked, eyeing the remaining tickets.

Affirmative words came from all your friends, but not from you. Valentine’s day was a big thing in Paris, with the city being the ‘City of Love’ and all that, but just the thought of seeing all those couples together without being able to be with the one you longed for by your side, made your mood sour.

“Aren’t you going?” Mari nudged you.

“I don’t know.” You shrugged, eating the rest of your lunch. “Not really feeling it.”

“C’mon! You won’t truly know Paris until you’ve been to a St. Valentine’s party.” Nino insisted. “And it’s on a boat on the Seine, dude. How cool is that?”

“I have to agree with Nino,” Alya said, holding Nino’s arm and leaning on his side. “It’s a great party.”

“For couples.” You huffed.

“Single people as well,” Julien said, wiggling his eyebrows.

“I’m not s—” You began to say ‘single’, and then stopped, looking down at your food. “Never mind.”

You ate the last bit of your lunch, the food tasting bland. If you went to the party, you knew you’d spend the whole night wishing that Chat were there with you. Would you be able to have fun like that?

“I could be your date if you wanted,” Adrien suggested and you choked on your food, coughing like crazy. You grabbed the glass in front of you and gulped the soda down while the whole table turned to look at Adrien. His eyes darted from face to face, wide. “I-I mean, not like a real date, just so you don’t feel alone.”

Julien put a hand over his mouth, and you knew he was trying not to laugh.

You took a deep breath, refusing to look Adrien in the eye until your heartbeat went back to normal. “I’ll… think about it. The party, I mean.”

“Here’s your ticket.” Nino gave you the piece of paper. “It’s next week, so you have a few days to decide.”

You nodded, putting the ticket in your pocket. You doubted you’d change your mind, but it wouldn’t hurt to keep the ticket. You would give it back to Nino at the end of the week, so he could invite someone else.

“Oh, Alya, I heard the interview was a success?” Mari asked, subtly changing the subject.

It was like an energy switch was flipped inside Alya. “It was a blast!” She laughed, clasping her hands together. “We never had so many people watching the stream, right Nino?”

Her boyfriend nodded. “Yep, it was crazy. It almost froze the server.” You hadn’t thought about it before, but Nino had probably been the one filming.

“You finally got to ask those questions you wanted?” You asked after taking another sip of your
“Some of them, yes.” She leaned a little over the table. “Did you see the live?”

“I saw the end of it.” You smiled, remembering the interview. You almost got lost into your own mind as Chat’s words came back to you, but the memories of love confessions were mixed with the awareness of green eyes gazing at you from across the table. You did your best not to look back.

“Oh, then you saw the love declaration, right?” Alya put a hand on her chest, sighing dramatically. “Oh, the passion in his words! Chat Noir had never, I repeat, never, talked about anyone publicly like that before.” You scratched your neck, feeling your face grow hot. “I thought he wasn’t going to answer the questions, to be honest.”

“Me too, he always dodged your love questions in the past.” Nino laughed. “The dude’s completely smitten this time.”

Julien and Mari nudged you from both sides, and you rolled your eyes, chuckling quietly and telling them to stop.

In the middle of the commotion, you heard Adrien mutter, “Can’t really blame him.”

Your fork hit the plate, making a loud sound. Your eyes locked with Adrien’s green ones, the ones you had been trying so desperately to avoid, and you felt trapped. Not like in a cage, but as if an intense energy was pulling you closer. You couldn’t break free from his gaze. You could only stare back at him, seeing adoration clear in his eyes and fondness in his smile.

You had to leave; you knew your mind was telling you to get up and run away, but your heart didn’t want to.

Julien got up from his seat, getting your attention.

“Well, look at the time! We have to go to the supermarket, right?” He squeezed your shoulder, making you blink and brake away from the trance.

“Oh, yes, of course!” You grabbed your backpack and food tray from the table.

Alya and Nino still seemed stunned by Adrien’s words and just kept staring at you. Marinette, on the other side, gaped at Adrien as if he had said something outrageous.

You tried to avoid looking into the model's eyes, fearing getting lost in them again and smiled. “I’ll think about the party. See you guys.”

“See you!” Julien pulled you by the arm.

After putting your food trays away, you left the resto U, grateful of having Julien’s presence by your side to anchor you to reality, since all your mind wanted to do was drown in doubts.

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You turned the green macaron in front of your eyes before eating a piece of it.

“Alright,” Julien said, wiping his chocolate covered hand on a napkin. “So you’re telling me that you have two muses.”

You nodded. It was just you and Julien sitting on the table at the dining room, the dim afternoon light not being enough to light up the place and leaving part of it in shadows. Zoe was out with the others,
and only Louise stayed home, working on a college project in her room. Julien’s indie playlist was playing in the background as you talked.

“One of them is Chat Noir, *the* Chat Noir, and the other is Adrien Agreste, a famous supermodel.” Julien twirled the wine inside his glass. “And you’re *also* telling me that they both seem to have an interest in you.” You nodded again, and Julien looked at you with eyes full of pity. “What a terrible life you have.”

“Oh, shut up.” You slapped him on the arm and he laughed.

“Don’t you want to share?” He batted his eyelashes at you.

“No.” You deadpanned.

A moment of silence passed before you both began to laugh. You wanted to say that Julien could have Adrien, but you couldn’t bring yourself to do it. And you hated that.

Julien waved a hand. “Don’t worry, they’re not my type.”

You sighed, eating the rest of the macaron and hoping your problems would disappear like the sweet. “I’m trying to stay away from Adrien for now, to see if I can stop feeling like this and see him only as a platonic muse.”

“You should just tell him you have someone else and are happy like that.” Julien took a gulp from his wine. “Just, *boom*, drop it on his face.”

You laughed quietly, grabbing another macaron. “He’s not really the problem. *I* am. I shouldn’t be feeling like this in the first place.”

“But the flirting makes it worse, no?” Julien raised an eyebrow.

You pursed your lips and ate your macaron in silence. Yeah, it did make it worse. The flirting was making it almost impossible to keep your feelings at bay.

“By what I saw today, and what you’ve told me, it seems that the flirting will only get worse.” He gave you a sympathetic smile. “He seems really into you.”

You put your hands on your face and groaned. “Why me?”

“Are you talking about Adrien?”

You both turned around at the same time, Julien almost dropping his wine glass on the ground. Louise was standing on the doorway, an empty water bottle on her hand.

You and Julien shared a look, and the blonde asked, “What do you mean?”

“If there’s someone ‘really into’ her,” Louise made quote marks with her fingers. “It has to be Adrien.”

She went to the kitchen, and you and Julien looked at each other. ‘*What?*’ Julien mouthed to you. You shrugged in response and he did the same.

You heard Louise footsteps and she appeared again, the water bottle now filled. She looked at you with a serious expression, the dark circles under her eyes accentuating her gaze.

“He never pays attention to anyone else in that university besides you.” Her words had a slight
bitterness to them, and you wondered if a romantic interest in Adrien was the reason for that. “It’s pretty obvious.”

With that, she walked to her room and closed the door.

You and Julien turned back to one another in speechless silence as the sound of acoustic guitars and soft vocals coming from the portable speaker filled the room.

Julien cleared his throat. “Well then. That was something.”

“Does she like Adrien or…?” You asked, resuming eating your macaron.

“No idea.” Julien downed the glass and grabbed the half empty wine bottle, offering it to you. “Wine?”


####

You tried to keep your balance on the way back to your apartment. The metro seemed to shake more than usual today, but you were fine. Just fine. After that random moment with Louise, Julien had advised you to also talk to Chat about the situation. He had told you that the cat hero would understand, that it wasn’t your fault, but still, you were afraid of telling Chat about a second muse and the feelings that came with it.

If things got worse, you’d do that. But for now, you’d stick with your ‘avoiding Adrien’ plan. It can work, right? You asked yourself, but your inebriated mind only shrugged in response.

“This is the sixth civilian kidnapping after the gang hideout was discovered by Chat Noir and Ladybug.” The sound came from an old lady’s cellphone. She was hearing the news without earphones, making some people stare at her in disapproval. “Rumors say that they’re gathering money to flee the country, but the police still have no leads on where the boss, Claude Genova, might be. Our reporter is at the place—”

You got out at your stop, leaving the voice of the news anchor behind you. Kidnappings? You had no idea this kind of thing was happening in Paris. Chat and Lady had a lot of work on their hands. It seemed serious, and you hoped that they could help those poor victims.

When your feet made contact with the last step of the stairs to your apartment, you were already daydreaming about your soft, comfortable bed. Thanks to that, it took you a moment to notice someone standing in front of your door.

“Adelaide?”

The landlady turned around and smiled at you. “Oh, there you are, dear!”

After you greeted her with cheek kisses, you rushed to unlock the door. “Were you waiting for long? I’m so sorry.”

You didn’t know Adelaide was going to come today, she didn’t even warn you. She was lucky that you had gone to the bank, otherwise, the poor lady would’ve walked all those stairs for nothing.

“I just got here, don’t worry,” Adelaide said, adjusting the purse on her shoulder.

“Come on in!” You motioned for her to enter, and followed after her to the hall. “I'll go get the money, just a second.”
You got your wallet and counted the money, making sure it was the right amount. You had to count twice, due to the wine still in your veins.

“Here you go.” You said, handing her the bills.

“Wonderful.” Adelaide smiled and began to count the money quickly. Her eyebrows furrowed and your heart seemed to stop for a moment. Had you counted it wrong? But then the lady’s expression brightened. “Oh, of course. I had forgotten.” She giggled and put the money inside her purse.

“Is it the right amount?” You asked, checking your wallet to see if any bill had stayed behind.

“Yes, yes! My old memory was just playing tricks on me. Don’t worry about it, sweetheart.” Adelaide waved a dismissive hand in front of her face as she walked outside. “Have a wonderful night. Au revoir!”

“Au… revoir.” You said, a frown creasing your forehead as you watched her go down the stairs. You hoped you had given the right amount.

----

Cute model boy: *Bonjour!* are you free today?

It was almost lunchtime when you received the text. You stared at the words until the smell of burning food reached your nostrils. A string of curses left your mouth as you turned off the stove.

What were you going to tell Adrien? Yesterday you were so tired that you weren’t able to come up with an excuse to not meet with him. You could come up with something elaborate, but decided that simple and vague was better.

You: sorry, I have to study for a cinema test and I’m going to be really busy

You: another day?

You hadn’t lied exactly. You *had* a cinema test. Sure, it was still next week, but Adrien didn’t need to know that.

The answer was almost instantaneous.

Cute model boy: :(  

You: sorry :( start thinking about the design for the next Muse, ok?

Cute model boy: alright. Don’t over exert yourself

Cute model boy: miss yokjhdkaajshdkjyosk

You stared at your phone, trying to decipher what in the world Adrien was trying to say.

You: what?

Cute model boy: my phone fell, sorry about that

Cute model boy: see you soon

You: see you, model boy
With your plan going smoothly, you spent your very busy day watching series, scrolling through social media, and occasionally reading texts for your cinema test. You decided it was better to stay at home since you could bump into Adrien if you went out. What would you tell him then? Part of you knew you were being paranoid, but the other major part ignored it.

A gust of wind almost took your text about Stanley Kubrick with it and you gripped the papers hard, wrinkling them. Grumbling, you adjusted yourself over the chair and looked up at the sky from your balcony. It was getting darker, the clouds taking over any blue part. It’d probably rain soon.

You went back to your text, but it was taken from your hands again.

“Goddamn you, wind—”

You reached for the pages but stopped when you saw it hadn’t been the wind this time.

“Kubrick spent the next four years making 2001, a Space Odyssey.” Chat read the exact same paragraph you were reading just a second ago. He put the text on the table and shot you a bright smile. “How interesting.”

“Chat!” You grinned as you got up from the chair and threw yourself at him, hugging him tightly. You heard the papers flying to the ground, but you could care less at the moment.

“Whoa, love, missed me that much?” He laughed, hugging you back.

“Yes. Yes, I did.” You pulled away a little and gazed at his masked face for a brief moment before bringing your mouths together in a kiss. Chat hummed in surprise, and you pulled him closer by the neck. “I missed you so much, kitty.” You whispered against his lips and felt a shiver go down his arms.

Spurted by his reaction, you licked his upper lip, asking to deepen the kiss. Chat allowed you, and you didn’t waste time in kissing him harder.

This was the first time you were seeing the cat hero after his love declaration during the interview yesterday, and you wanted to tell him in words how much his words had meant to you. But first, you’d show him with actions.

When you began to kiss his jaw, Chat let out a breathy chuckle. “Wait, princess, we can’t do this out here in the open. There could be drones around.”

You opened the window door behind you, letting the wind rush inside. “Come inside, then.”

He laughed, shaking his head. “I wish I could.” You pouted and he caressed your cheek. “Oh, please don’t look at me like that, chérie. Ladybug and I are trying to solve the issue with the gangs here in Paris before the situation gets out of control.”

“Alright, I understand.” You closed the door again, your mood dampening. “Were you able to rescue the people they kidnapped?”

“Some of them. The families of the other ones panicked and made the payment before we could do anything.” His face fell, and you could see he felt bad for not helping those people.

“I’m sure you did your best.” You put your hand on top of his, and his lips curved into a small smile.
“It’ll be over soon, love.” Chat stroked your cheek with his thumb. “Oh, wait, I have something for you.”

“Oh?” You crossed your arms over your chest as Chat jumped to the roof. You had no idea what he was doing up there, but you waited like he asked.

He then came back with… flowers.

“For me?” You asked, turning the bouquet of red roses on your hands.

Chat grinned. “So you can change those on your table. They’re getting old already.”

You glanced back at the flowers Julien had given you at the fashion show, two days ago. They were still perfect.

“Do you have any plans for Valentine’s day?” Chat’s words made you look back at him, your heart speeding up.

Was he going to invite you to go somewhere?

“Mari and my other friends want me to go to a boat party at the Seine.” You shrugged. “But I don’t see the point if you’re not there.”

“Ah, princess, you’re so cute.” Chat cooed, putting a hand on his chest. “But who said I won’t be there?”


“You’ll see.” He winked. “But for that, you need to go to the party.”

“Will you meet me there?” You asked, already feeling adrenaline in your system. How exactly was Chat planning to attend the party? Would he go as his civilian self? Was he finally going to share his identity with you?

“We’ll see.” Chat gave you a look full of mischief, and you wondered if you should be alarmed.

“You better appear on that boat, kitty.” You shook your index finger at him. “But alright, I’ll go.”

“Great!” He took your face in his hands and gave you a quick peck on the lips, making you lean in a bit, hoping that it’d last longer. “I’ll come back soon. We have some… unfinished business to deal with.” He said the last sentence in a low voice that sent shivers down your spine.

“Oh, we do.” You whispered, leaning closer. You watched as his Adam’s apple bobbed up and down, and bopped his nose. “Be careful.”

Chat laughed. “Don’t worry, my love, we’ve dealt with something like this before. Everything will be alright.” He kissed your forehead. “À bientôt.”

He jumped off the balcony and you walked to the parapet, watching him disappear in the distance. You grabbed your text about Kubrick from the ground and hugged it close to your chest, like the paper could give you some sort of comfort against the worry you felt.

----

You rubbed your eyes as you left the classroom, hoping to take the sleepiness out of them. The cinema class had been about noir movies, but the projector wasn’t working, so the teacher only
talked instead of showing visual examples, telling the students to watch the movies at home as homework. You had dozed off a few times. It was too early for this, even if it was afternoon. Still too early for this.

One of your classmates walked by, yawning, and you felt better knowing that at least you hadn’t been the only one bored out of your mind.

You were heading for the exit of the building when you heard a voice calling your name. You tensed as you saw Adrien walking up to you. You weren’t supposed to see each other so soon.

“Adrien, hey, ça va bien?” A strained smile made way to your lips. It seemed that ignoring him would be more difficult than you thought.

You took a look at his outfit and wished he hadn’t seen you. Adrien was wearing a black leather jacket today, and he looked too good for his own good. Black suited him.

“Ça va. Are you going home?” The question made you snap your eyes to his face.

“Ahn…” You panicked a little, hoping he hadn’t noticed your staring. “Yes, yes I am.”

“I already created the design for the next two Muses.”

“Two?” You gaped at him as guilt surfaced in your chest. While you were worrying about your own problems, Adrien was already doing his part of the project.

“I was inspired.” He rubbed his neck, a bashful smile on his lips. “Why don’t we work on the project today? I’m free this afternoon. We can go to my studio—”

“No!” You exclaimed, but quickly pressed your lips together. Adrien tilted his head to the side and you swallowed dry. You’d have to stop following your plan for today. You couldn’t avoid working on the project anymore; it wasn’t fair to let Adrien do everything, but you had to find a way not to be alone with him. That meant you couldn’t go back to his studio. “I mean, don’t they have a practice room at the sculpture building? I’d love to see it.”

“Oh,” Adrien seemed to deflate, his shoulders slumping a little. “We can go there, but it’s usually busy at this hour…”

“I don’t mind!” You grinned. That’s exactly what you wanted. With so many people, Adrien wouldn’t be able to flirt with you so much. You motioned to the path on the grass in front of you. “Lead the way, model boy.”

The smell of clay and what seemed to be glue filled your nostrils as you entered the large room. You and Adrien managed to find an empty workbench near the large windows, big enough for the two of you. The place was filled with sounds of metals being hit and sandpapers on wood, all mixed up with classic rock played from some speakers. You hadn’t expected such a chill atmosphere.

There were pieces of unfinished sculptures around the whole place. It’d probably look terrifying at night, and hopefully, you wouldn’t find out if that was true or not. You didn’t want to leave so late.

The next Muses were Urania and Thalia. Adrien’s designs were beautiful, reflecting the muses origins, astronomy and comedy, respectively. You made some suggestions about the drawings, and Adrien was eager to accept them. When he was done, he put away his leather jacket and grabbed two aprons.
He handed you one. “I’ll try not to get my shirt dirty this time.”

You eyed his smirk. He was probably remembering what happened at his studio. You wanted to be able to forget about that, about his body, but you already knew it was in vain.

“Exhibitionist.” You fake coughed as you grabbed the apron, and he laughed.

Adrien went over the same steps from the other day when he taught you how to sculpt. You realized you had forgotten everything, so you had to start from the beginning. The blonde didn’t seem to mind, and you had to admit he was a great teacher, but you still hoped nobody was paying attention to what you were doing. You didn’t want them to see the disaster in form of clay in your hands.

“I suck.” You stated, glaring at the humanoid thing you were holding.

“C’mon, you’re doing great! Here, let me help a little.” Adrien took the sculpture from your hands, his fingers lingering on your skin for a little bit too long.

A shiver went up your arm, and you rubbed your skin, ignoring the gray clay mark that was left behind. You could wash it later.

Adrien gave you the sculpture back after fixing the proportions a bit. His phone vibrated on the table, and he leaned in to look at the screen.

An annoyed groan left his lips.

“What’s the problem?” You asked.

“It’s Marinette. She won’t leave me alone.” He huffed, ignoring the still vibrating phone. “Always wanting to talk about the gang—” His eyes went wide and he snapped his mouth shut. He stared at his hands with furrowed brows, seeming mad for whatever reason.

“The gang? From the news?” You insisted. Was it the same gang Chat and Lady were taking care of?

He drummed his fingers on the table. “Yeah. I’m sure Mari’s just worried. I guess she thinks I’m an interesting target for the kidnappers or something like that.”

Your eyes widened a little, remembering the richness in Adrien’s house. He’d definitely be a great target. You put a hand on your chest, feeling something tighten inside it.

“Anyway,” Adrien folded his hands. “Have you decided about the Saint Valentine's party?”

“Oh,” you said, taken aback by the sudden change in subject. Your talk with Chat surfaced from your memory and you smiled. “Yeah, I’m going.”

“Really? That’s awesome!” The model laughed, not even trying to hide his excitement. “We can meet there, then.” There was a hint of smugness in his grin, and you squinted your eyes. What was he planning?

“Chat Noir is going as well.” You blurted out, careful not to say it too loud. Even with all the noise, people could still hear you, and you didn’t want that. “That’s why I changed my mind.”

You hoped to gain a strong reaction from Adrien after mentioning Chat, but all you got was a smile.

“Really?” Adrien looked at you, completely unperturbed by your comment. Goddammit. “Are you two going to meet there?”
“I hope so.” You bit your lip. This was your chance to hint at your relationship with Chat and see if Adrien would tone down his flirty attitude. “It seems to be a ‘couple party’, so I really want to go with him. Since we’re, you know… together.”

You searched the model’s face for a change in his expression but found nothing. His smile only seemed to grow with each sentence you said.

“I see.” He nodded.

You looked down at the sculpture in your hands, fingers pressing the clay a bit too hard. Why wasn’t he reacting? You expected something more aggressive, like when you were near Julien. You couldn’t understand Adrien and that was infuriating.

“Aren’t you going to take someone with you?” You asked.

“Maybe.” He shrugged and leaned closer to you a little. “Will you be jealous if I do?”

There it was again, the flirting. Your rapidly beating heart was telling you to stop this before it escalated. You should’ve brought Julien or someone else with you, since even with the room with other people, Adrien was still managing to make your heart race like this. You knew if it were someone else, their words wouldn’t affect you so much, and that worried you.

You did your best to let out a convincing snort. “As if, model boy.”

Adrien laughed hard, making strands of hair cover his face. You felt an urge to grab the blonde locks and pull on them, bringing him closer… You averted your eyes to the sculpture in your hands and bit the inside of your cheek hard. It was better if you didn’t look at the model too much.

He went silent, drawing on his sketchbook while you worked, and you felt your body relax, enjoying the sudden peace. Except for those flirty moments, this wasn’t so bad as last time. You were able to get your feelings under control, even if once or twice you’d steal glances Adrien’s way.

“He’s a lucky guy,” Adrien blurted out after a few minutes. “Chat Noir.”

Your hands froze on the figurine and you stared at him, noticing he was looking down at his sketchbook. From where you were, you couldn’t see what was inside.

You slowly went back to sculpting the Muse’s face, careful not to ruin it with your fidgety hands. “I’m the lucky one for having someone like him.”

Adrien made a strangled noise in his throat. You tilted your head and noticed another sound coming from him. It seemed like a… vibration?

He got up, startling you, and pointed to a cabinet. “I’m going to get more clay.”

You nodded, staring at him with a raised brow as he left. You couldn’t understand the vibrating sound, so you gave up and focused back on sculpting.

“Well, that backfired.”

You shrugged, glancing at Adrien on the other side of the room. You hoped he had understood your love for Chat and would stop with the flirting. The urge to touch him was getting stronger with the
proximity already, and you didn’t need the flirting making things worse.

The flirting did stop, but mostly because Adrien didn’t seem to be able to focus when he came back with the clay. Talking about the party and Chat had done something to him, you just didn’t know what exactly.

Less than fifteen minutes had passed when Adrien blurted out, “I have to go.”

You arched one brow as he got up from his stool. “But we didn’t finish the sculptures.”

“They just need some simple touches. I can finish them for you later.” He motioned to the unfinished Muses. “Can I?”

“Uh, alright.” You watched as he put the sculptures inside a box and wrote his name on it.Didn’t he say that he was free this afternoon?

He left the box on a shelf with similar looking ones. “Are you going home after here?”

“Yeah, sucking at sculpting really tired me out.” You got up and stretched, your muscles sore from sitting on the stool.

Sculpting had actually been a great distraction, what you were tired of was policing your behavior near the blonde for almost two hours. At least now you knew that you had to follow your plan for a bit longer. You still weren’t ready to be near Adrien for long periods of time.

“Cool. See you!” Adrien kissed you on the cheek and bolted to the door.

You blinked a few times, a hand over the spot where his lips had touched your skin. Yeah, you definitely weren’t ready.

----

You were eating a late afternoon snack when you heard rapid knocking on the window-door. A grin made way to your lips when you saw Chat waving at you from the balcony, but it gave way to raised eyebrows when you noticed Ladybug by his side.

You opened the door, stepping outside. “Well, hello there.” You looked from one masked hero to the other. “Did something happen?” They had never visited you together, and you didn’t have a good feeling about this.

“Nah, nothing happened. I just tagged along to make sure this fool wouldn’t get distracted.” Ladybug pointed to Chat with her thumb. “We have a lot of work to do, but he insisted on coming here first.”

Chat huffed, taking a step closer to you. “I told her I wouldn’t take long, but she didn’t listen.”

“You’re too agitated.” Ladybug crossed her arms over her chest, and Chat rolled his eyes.

“Did you come to check if I’m okay?” You asked before they began to argue. “I promise I’m fine, cat boy.”

Chat licked his lips and then gave Lady a look. The brunette turned around, mumbling something under her breath as she glared at the nearby buildings.
You arched one brow at Chat. What was going on?

“I came not only for that, ma chérie.” His voice seemed to drop an octave as he stepped closer, your chests almost touching. Your heart reacted in an instant, beginning to thump against your ribcage. “But also for this.”

He tilted your chin and slid his lips against yours. You grabbed his biceps for support. Now you understood why Lady had turned around. Chat put a hand on the small of your back and you wrapped your arms around his neck, pulling him closer. His hands traveled from your back to your hips, his palms caressing your skin under your shirt.

The blonde pulled away a little to whisper, “I missed you.”

You let out a small chuckle. He had seen you yesterday. “Missed you too,” you whispered back before biting his bottom lip. Chat moaned and kissed you again.

“Oh mon dieu, get a room.” Ladybug groaned.

Chat brushed his tongue against yours one last time before leaning back with a breathy laugh. He pulled you to his chest and buried his face on your neck, sighing happily.

“I have a room right here.” You said lowly in his ear, and he let out another moan, bringing his hips closer to yours.

“Alright, that’s enough! Let’s go, chaton.” Ladybug turned around and pulled Chat from the back of his suit, separating him from you.

“Wha— Lady!” Chat glared at the masked girl, receiving an icy poker face from her. He tsked and turned to you. “I’ll come back soon, princess.” He kissed the top of your hand.

“I’ll be waiting.” You grabbed his gloved hand before he could leave and left a kiss on top of it as well. He gawked at you, and you smiled, looking at the two of them. “Be careful, you two.”

——

“You can’t go there!”

“It’s the only way, Marinette.”

You heard the altered voices as you were walking through the corridors, going to the printing service to get more texts for your cinema class. You slowed to a stop and looked outside the window. Adrien and Marinette were in the gardens, and they didn’t look good. Dark circles under their eyes, tired gaze. Although they were dressed impeccably as always, their faces betrayed their exhaustion.

Marinette passed a hand through her short hair and sighed. “I know you’re worried, and I know why, but we need to wait for the police—”

“We waited enough,” Adrien said with a voice that didn’t give any room for discussion. They just stared at each other for a few seconds, and even with a wall separating you, you could feel the tension between them.

The blonde then turned around and left without a word. Watching him leave, Mari cursed under her breath and marched off in another direction.

You stood still for a moment before continuing on your way in silence. You had never seen your
friends talking to each other like that; they seemed to be in such good terms. Could they be talking about the gangs like Adrien had mentioned? He said Marinette was worried, but you didn’t think it was this serious. Could Adrien be in real danger?

You had many questions, but no answers to any of them.

You didn’t see Adrien at lunch, and Mari kept zoning out every minute or so. Even Alya noticed and asked what was wrong, to which her friend replied it was nothing.

You worried your bottom lip. You wanted to ask what had happened with Adrien at the gardens, but you didn’t want to intrude. You had eavesdropped after all.

The journey back home was quiet. Your questions remained unanswered, and all you could do was hope that your friends worked things out and that Adrien was safe from the kidnappers. Thunder sounded in the distance, and the humidity in the air indicated it wouldn’t take long now for the rain to arrive in Paris.

With a heavy heart and a strange feeling in the pit of your stomach, you watched as raindrops hit the windows of your apartment with force. You couldn’t even see the buildings outside. Everything was tinted grey like a curtain was covering the city.

You stayed awake until a bit past your normal bedtime to see if Chat would appear, but the balcony stayed empty. You took one last look at the roses he had given you, now on top of the table beside Julien’s, and decided to check the news for one last time before going to sleep.

Chapter End Notes

As I mentioned on tumblr, I have 4 chapters ready (this was one of them) and to make up for my absence, I'll post one chapter per week. It's going to be 26k words full of drama, doubts, sin, discoveries and more drama! So brace yourselves! (☆ω☆)
Wounded Eros (Part 2)

Chapter Summary

Lewd meter: (°₃°)(°₃°)(°₃°)(°₃°)(°₃°)(°₃°)(°₃°)

Chapter Notes

As promised, here's the second chapter of the four that I have prepared! I'm so happy to see that you guys still enjoy my writing. Thank you all so much for the comments here and on tumblr, your support really means a lot!!

This chapter is not that big, but as you can see from the lewd meter things are going to get... heated. So, prepare yourselves? :D

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Something wasn’t right.

Your breath fogged up the glass of the window-door as you yawned. Last night had taken its toll on you. Weird dreams, that you could remember nothing of, had made your sleep restless. When you woke up, it was with a strange sense of urgency and a nasty headache. Your body was begging you to sleep again, but you couldn’t do it, not without knowing if Chat was okay.

You looked outside, to the wet chairs on the balcony. You didn’t have any classes today, so your morning and early afternoon had been spent checking the news for anything about the gangs. But they were now focused on the heavy rain and the imminent risk of flooding. Some explained how Ladybug was out helping people, but none of them answered what you really wanted to know. Where in the world was Chat?

The pager he had given you was on the shelf, and you had contemplated pressing the green button many times during the day. But you weren’t in danger, and pressing it could make Chat worry without reason, or if he was hidden, it could denounce his position to an enemy. So, you waited.

You checked your phone again, the message you had sent to Marinette a few hours ago glaring at you.

You: Mari, do you have any news from Chat?

She hadn’t answered yet.

You felt your throat closing up and looked away from the screen with a tsk. You took your laptop with you as you walked to your bedroom. You had to distract yourself with something.

----

A big yawn left your lips, making you close your eyes in the process. You rubbed them and squinted at your laptop screen. It was getting hard to watch the noir movies your teacher told you to,
especially with the lights turned off like they were. You weren’t even paying attention to what was going on anymore since you kept stopping the movies and checking the news every five minutes.

Part of you hoped to see something about Chat, but the other was afraid of what you would find if that happened.

You checked the news page again and saw a different headline. ‘GANG BOSS IS LEFT TIED IN FRONT OF POLICE STATION’. You clicked on the article to read more when you heard it.

A thud had come from your balcony.

It had been faint, due to the sound of the rain, but you had heard it. You got up from your bed and ran to your bedroom window, stumbling over a pair of shoes on your way. Your eyes searched outside until they fell on Chat, slumped against the wall. Your blood ran cold and your mouth went dry.

“Oh my god,” you muttered to yourself.

You ran to the living room, feet sliding on the ground and almost making you fall.

Chat raised his head when you unlocked the door.

“Bonsoir, my love,” he said with a crooked smile. “How are you tonight?”

You stood there under the rain, eyes widening as they darted over his body. His suit was torn in various places and the puddle of water under him was red with blood.

“Oh my god, what happened?” You grabbed his shoulders, trying to pull him up, but froze when he hissed and moved his gloved hand over his stomach. “I need to get you inside. Can you walk?”

He nodded, pushing a few wet strands of hair away from his face. “Yeah.”

You went to help him, but Chat stopped you before you could even touch him again. “Wait, chérie, you’re gonna get blood on your clothes.”

“I don’t care.” You declared and put his arm around your shoulders. “’C’mon.”

You took him to the living room and laid him on the ground on top of the rug.

“The rug is going to get dirty as well.” Chat moved a little and groaned in pain.

You ignored his warning, your mind reeling. “What happened to you? Do you want me to take you to a hospital? Where’s Ladybug? I’m gonna call her.” You went to grab the pager Chat had given you.

“No!” He pleaded with labored breath, raising a hand to stop you. “She can’t know about this. She’ll kill me.” You walked back to him and Chat sighed, putting his hand over his stomach again.

You grabbed a cushion from the sofa and put it under his head. You could hear your heartbeat in your ears as you looked at his bloodied form. He was soaked too, from staying under the rain for who knew how long.

“What happened?” You repeated the question again, getting more preoccupied by the second. His injuries seemed serious, and he was bleeding a lot. “Wait, I’ll go grab a first aid kit.” You got up, but then stopped and checked his legs; the suit seemed to be intact for the most part. No bleeding, just a few superficial cuts. “Take the upper part of the suit off, ok?”
“Wanting to undress me so soon, princess?” Chat wiggled his brows.

“Do it, Chat Noir.” You stared at him with a serious gaze before shaking your head and going to the bathroom.

You opened the cabinet and grabbed the first aid kit with trembling hands. It slipped and fell to the ground with a thud. Curses left your mouth as you gripped it with force this time. You closed your eyes for a moment and took a deep breath. Alright, calm down. You can do this.

After washing your hands, you went back to the living room, seeing Chat had already undressed like you had asked.

You winced, feeling bile rise up to your throat when you saw the state of his chest; it was all covered in bruises and cuts. But the worst was his stomach. A deep cut stretched from the side to the middle, near his belly button. Blood covered most of his skin. You swallowed with force and sat down by Chat’s side.

You grabbed the gauze from the first aid kit and breathed deeply. “I already told you I’m not qualified to do this.” You had seen some videos on Youtube, but this was on another level.

“If you manage to apply pressure and stop the bleeding, that's enough, chérie. The magic will help me heal the rest.” Chat gave you a weak smile. “Thank you for helping me.”

You bit your lip and put the gauze over the biggest open cut, your hands still trembling. Chat winced and put his hand on top of yours.

“I’m going to be okay, ma belle. I heal super fast, remember?” You knew he was trying to calm you down, but it wasn’t working. “Don’t worry.”

Your eyes threatened to fill with tears, your throat burning. “Of course I’m going to worry! You disappeared without saying anything, and then you— You can’t just——” You took a deep breath, closing your eyes for a moment to calm yourself. You could do this. Chat would be fine. You opened your eyes again, and said in a calmer voice, “Tell me what happened.”

“You’ve heard about the gangs and the kidnappings, right?” You nodded and he continued. “Lady wanted to wait for the police, but I knew the boss would leave the country soon. So I went to their hideout by myself. The boss was preparing to leave and I couldn’t let it happen so…” He clicked his tongue. “Things got a little hairy.”

“A little,” you muttered.

“I think I broke a rib or two,” he said, making your eyes widen. He saw your reaction and added, “But I’ll be fine!”

“You got the guy then?” You continued to apply pressure to the bigger wound. It was still soaking the cloth with red, but the amount of blood seemed to be reducing.

“Yeah, the police are going to take care of the rest,” Chat said, seeming proud of what he had done. Apparently, he didn’t care that his body ended up like this.

Silence fell between you, and you could see Chat was struggling to stay awake.

“Stay with me, cat boy,” you said, pushing wet strands away from his face.

“Always,” he mumbled, a small smile on his lips.
You took the gauze off his skin to take a look, and saw, with pleasant surprise, that the bleeding had stopped. Chat really healed fast.

Upon eyeing the rest of his skin, your heart sank. Now you had to clean all his wounds and patch them. You poured antiseptic on another gauze and began with cleaning the blood from the blonde’s face. Some deep purple bruises were covering his jaw.

Your eyes met, and you couldn’t take it anymore. Tears began to fall, and you weren’t able to stop them.

You rested your forehead on his shoulder, hiding your face. “Why didn’t you go to a hospital?” You sniffled. “Or at least to someone that could help you better?”

“I— Chérie, are you crying?” He squeezed your hand. “Please, don’t cry. I’m sorry.”

You raised your head and brushed aside the tears with your arm. You gave Chat’s bruised face another look before resuming to clean his wounds with slow movements.

“Why did you come here, Chat? Why didn’t you go to a hospital?” Your voice was barely above a whisper. You were tired, so tired. The worry was draining all your remaining energy.

Chat sighed. “When I managed to catch Claude and get him to the police, I could only think that I had to get home before I passed out.” Your hand froze above his skin. “And… here was the first place that came to my mind.”

You raised your head to look at him. He had turned his face away and was staring at the wall, cheeks and face red. You could feel your throat closing in again, and the tears wanted nothing more but to be freed from your eyes.

Home? You were home to him?

“I… I didn’t want you to see me in this state.” He sighed, still refusing to look at you. “I’m sorry for putting you through this. I—”

You touched his cheek and turned his face to you. “You’re my home too.” His green eyes widened and you caressed his cheek slowly, feeling the warmth from his skin. “You know I love you, right?”

“You… love me?” He pronounced the word ‘love’ as if it was something foreign to him, even though he called you that so many times in the past days.

You nodded. “I do, Chat. So much. And that’s why it pains me to see you like this.”

He whispered your name as he put a hand on the nape of your neck, and you let him pull you down until your noses were barely touching. You gazed at each other, time and space lost for a moment.

“I love you too,” Chat’s whispered words touched your ears before his lips touched yours.

You cupped his face with your hand and closed your eyes. It was a slow, but powerful kiss, and you tried to pour your feelings in every moment, every brush of your skin against his.

You heard sniffling and pulled back, searching Chat’s face. His green eyes were blurry, wet with tears. He blinked and they rolled down the side of his face.

“Aw, kitty, don’t cry.” You brushed the tears from his skin. “I’m gonna cry too, and I can’t clean your wounds with blurry eyes.”
“Désolé.” He laughed as he rubbed his eyes. “It’s just…” He sighed. “I’ve never felt like this before. It’s overwhelming.”

“Not even with Ladybug?” You grabbed the gaze and resumed cleaning the cuts spread across his chest. If you paid close attention, you could see them slowly closing. He still had a lot to heal, but he was getting better.

“Lady’s love has always been destined to a greater cause. It has always been, except for one time.” Chat seemed lost in his memories for a moment. He shook his head and a small side smile curled his lips. “It has always been me loving someone, not the other way around.”

You bit the inside of your cheek, wishing that you had met earlier.

“You deserve all the love in the world, cat boy.” You stroke his cheek with the back of your fingers, and Chat leaned in your touch.

You put the bloodied gauze away and grabbed a fresh one to put around his torso.

“Can you sit up?” You asked.

“Yeah, princess, I’m not that bad.” He chuckled.

“But you sure look like it,” you said as you helped him sit up, and then wrapped the gauze around his torso and abdomen. You had no idea if you were doing it the right way, but you hoped so.

Chat lay down again with a groan and looked up at you. “Would you love the one behind this mask too?”

Your forehead creased in confusion. What kind of question is that? His civilian self couldn’t be so different from the hero one, could it?

“Of course, silly cat.” You bopped his nose, and he grabbed your hand, nose scrunching up. “Mask or not, you’re my muse, and the one I want by my side.”

Chat chuckled and closed his eyes, rubbing circles on your hand with his thumb. “I didn’t know you could be so romantic, princess.”

“Just for you.” You kissed his forehead and leveled your eyes with his. “If you tell anyone, I’ll deny it.”

Chat laughed, and then groaned, touching his stomach. You winced; making him laugh wasn’t a good idea.

The miraculous ring began to beep, making you jump. You had forgotten about the ring altogether.

“Can I sleep a little in your room, ma belle?” Chat began to sit up. “It’ll help me heal faster.”

“Sure. I’ll take you there.” You supported his body as he got up from the ground, and began to take him to your room. “The ring’s powers still affect you even when you’re not using them?”

The blonde nodded. “Yeah, Pl— the ring entity and I, we have a magical bond of some sort.”

You pulled the covers, took off his shoes, and helped him lay down on your bed. “You need cheese, right? Camembert?”

His eyes lit up. “You remembered.”
“Of course.” You motioned to the kitchen with your thumb. “I always have some in my refrigerator, for emergencies like this. I’ll go get it.”

A minute later, Chat was under the covers, and a plate with cheese and snacks was on the bedside table by his side.

“I feel pampered.” Chat yawned, his eyelids already dropping. His ring was still beeping in alarm, reminding you not to stick around too long.

You chuckled. “I’ll be in the hall, ok?” You ran a hand through his hair, brushing it away from his forehead. It was still a bit damp from the rain. “Call me if you need anything.”

“Merci, mon amour,” Chat muttered.

You glanced at his form in the dark before closing the door behind you.

With your phone in hand, you slumped on the sofa, letting out a long sigh. You looked at the rug, seeing the bloodstains all over it. Adelaide is going to kill me. A look down your shirt showed you that the rug wasn’t the only thing covered in Chat’s blood.

You closed your eyes to rest for a deserved minute when your phone beeped. You squinted at the screen.

Mari: I haven’t heard of Chat in a while, I’m kinda worried

She was typing another message, but you typed one first.

You: he’s here in my apartment
You: he’s ok now

She stopped typing and started again.

Mari: what happened?
You: he went after a gang boss by himself and got pretty beaten up
Mari: gang boss????
You: yes, Claude, I think? I was so worried
You: thankfully he heals fast

It took a while for the next message to arrive.

Mari: Chat is so goddamn stubborn sometimes
Mari: thanks for taking care of him
Mari: I’m gonna have a talk with him when we meet up
Mari: try to rest, I bet you’re tired after all this. À plus

You: I’ll try, merci Mari
You: à plus
You decided to follow Mari’s advice, but first, you had to clean the mess in your hall. You threw away the bloodied gauzes and put the first aid kit on the table, in case you needed it again. You hoped it wouldn’t be necessary anymore. The rug would have to wait until tomorrow because you didn’t have any energy left to scrub it right now.

After grabbing some dry clothes from the clothesline, you went to take a shower to get rid of the blood and the cold of the rain. The scalding water helped your muscles relax a little, but your mind was still occupied with thoughts of Chat. You hoped the miraculous magic would cure him fully.

Your eyes shot open when you heard a call from your room. Shit, had you fallen asleep? You leaned on your elbows and looked around, squinting at the light. The clock on the wall told you five hours had passed since Chat had gone to sleep in your bedroom.

“Chérie?”

You got up from the sofa, your senses now in alert mode. “Coming.”

You opened the door and peeked inside. The dim light from the corridor illuminated Chat’s form on the bed. His suit was back in place, and it seemed to be back to normal, no shredded pieces.

“Hey, how are you feeling?” You walked inside the room.

“Chérie…” Chat looked up at you, his green eyes shining in the dark. “I don’t think I’m gonna make it.”

“What are you talking about?” You frantically searched his body for anything wrong. Did the injuries get worse? You put a hand over his forehead to check for a fever, but his temperature was normal. “I’m taking you to a hospital right now.”

You went to grab your pager. Ladybug could help you to carry Chat. You had seen her do it before.

“No, there’s no time.” Chat grabbed your arm, stopping you. “You… must say you love me again.”

What? You opened and closed your mouth, not knowing what to do or say. Chat continued, “And that I’m the most handsome guy you’ve ever seen.”

The grin on his face told you he was making an absolute fool out of you.

You hit his arm. “You asshole!” Chat began to laugh. “How dare you?”

Chat tried to say something, but he was laughing too much. You tsked and climbed on the bed, straddling him. He was still laughing, making your body move on top of his. How dare he make you worry like that?

You leaned over him, putting your arms on each side of his head. The blonde turned his head to you, his laughter dying down to a chuckle until it stopped altogether. From this distance, you could see that the purple bruises weren’t coloring his face anymore.

You motioned with your head to his chest. “Let me see.”

Chat pulled the zipper down to his stomach without a word, his eyes trained on yours.

His skin was smooth, like the cuts and bruises were never there to begin with. You ran your fingers over his chest, barely touching the skin. How is this possible?
Chat shivered, and your eyes met his in the dark. His constant breathing made your body go up and down, making a sinful image install itself in your mind. You could feel your cheeks heat up along with the rest of your body.

“How do you feel?” You licked your lips and saw Chat’s eyes follow the movement. You had to make sure he was alright before trying anything.

“Purrfect as always,” he said.

You hummed. It was all you needed to hear.

You leaned down and kissed his cheek, then the corner of his mouth. “I want you, Chat,” you whispered.

The blonde blinked a few times, and then his eyes began to widen. “You… You what?”

“I said I want you.” You tilted his chin up. “Now.”

He swallowed. “You do?” He didn’t seem to believe your words.

“But,” You leaned back, sitting on his hips. “I guess you need more time to heal.”

“I don’t!” He exclaimed. You gave him a smug smile, and he averted his eyes. “I’m fine, princess. I promise.”

“Show me, then.” You crossed your arms, smile still on your lips.

His eyes widened a fraction, but then he smirked. “Of course.” He slipped his suit off his shoulders, letting it pool around his hips.

“Everything.” Your heartbeat was drumming in your ears, the anticipation of what you were about to do making your head spin.

Chat bit his bottom lip and nodded. “As you wish, princess.”

You got up enough for him to get rid of the rest of his suit, and sat down again, admiring the view of him. The light from the corridor touched his muscles, creating beautiful shadows across his skin.

Your own shadow projected on top of him as he stared up at you, with only the mask, cat ears and the bell on. And the ring, of course. You had no idea how Chat was able to take off the gloves without taking the ring off as well, but oh well, magic.

“See?” The cat boy passed a hand across his bare chest. “All healed.”

“I don’t know… I need to check for myself.” You began to caress his chest where the cuts once were. Slowly, you moved to his nipples and played with them until Chat was squirming under you.

Leaning down, you licked a line up his neck and bit down hard, making a loud moan leave his lips. “This is for worrying me sick.” You bit on the other side of his neck. “And this is for saying you weren’t gonna make it.”

“Ah, princess—” Chat put his hands on your hips, but you took them off you and pinned them above his head. You saw his Adam’s apple bob up and down.

“How much do you want this?”

Chat let out a mix of a growl and a whine. “Chérie…”
You squeezed his wrists a little. “Tell me.”

“So much. I want you so much that I can’t even think.” He arched his back a little, applying friction to your core and making you grind your hips down.

You let go of his hands and began to kiss his chest, nipping the skin. “Keep talking.”

He swallowed as you went lower. “I had dreams, _ah_, about you, since we met.”

You kissed the inside of his thighs. “What kind of dreams?”

“Where you did whatever you wanted with me.” He breathed out.

You hummed, eyeing his arousal. You had done so little, yet he was already ready for you.

“Please,” Chat said, breathless. He looked so alluring, obediently waiting for you.

You squeezed his thigh. “Say pretty please.”

He bit his bottom lip, and you could hear a purr coming from his chest.

You put your other hand around your ear. “I can’t hear you, kitty.”

“Please, _chérie_, pretty please.” He whined.

You smirked. “Good boy.” He threw his head back when you began to stroke him. “How many minutes do we have?”

Chat furrowed his brows, struggling to focus. “I, _ah_, don’t know. 30 minutes more or less. The ring gets,” he swallowed. “Unstable when I’m aroused like this.”

You pressed your tongue against your cheek. That meant you didn’t have too much time for foreplay. “I have an idea.”

You took your clothes off, feeling Chat’s eyes explore your body as if he had never seen your bare skin before. You changed positions, leaning on your elbows, and Chat put his hands on your hips. He probably understood what you were about to do.

“I bet I can make you come first, love.” He said. You felt his breath against your core and your skin was filled with goosebumps.

You licked the tip of his length and he let out a groan. “You’re on.”

You took him into your mouth and he began to lick you. It was difficult to concentrate when Chat was so good with his tongue.

You were making him buckle his hips up when, without warning, he slid two fingers inside you, and you arched your back as a low moan left your mouth. You could hear Chat groaning thanks to the vibration from your throat.

The blonde increased the pace and you lowered your head for a moment, the stimuli being too strong. “Shit.”

Taking advantage of your weak moment, Chat put another finger inside, and you felt your muscles begin to contract.
“Wait—” You began to say when Chat curled his fingers upwards and sucked. A jolt of electricity went through your whole body and you closed your eyes tightly as waves of your orgasm hit you. Chat kept licking you until your elbows gave out, forcing you to lay down on the bed.

He squeezed your hips. “I won.” You could hear the smug grin that was probably plastered on his face.

You turned around, looking up at him and almost losing yourself in the raw desire present in his dilated pupils.

“I want a rematch.” You breathed out, chest heaving.

Chat laughed and dipped his head to kiss you, his tongue languid in its exploration of your mouth. You felt like you could melt into him completely.

“I wish I could take my time with you.” He moved to your neck, leaving open-mouthed kisses along your skin while his hands explored your body.

“You could if you wanted to…” You trailed off. He could let the magic wear off when the time came, but you knew he wouldn’t do it.

Chat hummed. “Tempting.”

You huffed and sat up, forcing him to do the same. “Alright then, lay down.” His eyes widened, and you put a hand on his chest. “I said, lay down, kitty.”

“Wait, I should get a condom—”

You pushed him down on the bed. “I take the pill.”

You climbed on top of him, balancing yourself on your knees. The feeling of his skin brushing against yours was already making you wet again. You positioned Chat at your entrance, and waited, looking down at him with hooded eyes.

You heard your name slip past his lips before he said, “Please.”

Satisfied, you slowly sat down, letting him sink into you. Chat’s eyes rolled to the back of his head, and your chest heaved as you watched his blissed out expression. Your thighs touched his and you could feel every inch of him filling you.

He held himself still to allow you to adjust to his size, and you could see the effort it took for him to resist moving. His eyes were screwed shut and his breathing labored, a restrained moan rumbling in the back of his throat.

You rolled your hips and the moan left his lips, filling the silent dark room. You leaned in and touched Chat’s face as your hips undulated back and forth. He looked stunning lost in pleasure, with his eyes glazed over and cheeks hot to the touch. You tried to preserve this image in your mind, locked in a precious chest with other memories of him.

Chat put his hands on your waist and began to move his hips upwards to meet yours. The sound of skin against skin filled your room along with your combined moans.

“I need to keep telling myself I’m not dreaming.” Chat chuckled between pants. “I wanted to be inside you for so long.”
His lips met yours in a sloppy kiss. You massaged his cat ears and he shuddered, a broken moan leaving his throat.

“I love your moans so much. Ah— I want this whole building to hear you, kitty.” You whispered in his ear, grinding your hips down and eliciting another loud moan from him. You laughed, breathless. “They might be hearing you already.”

Chat growled. He put a hand on your ass, the other gripping your waist, and pounded into you. You squeezed your eyes shut, feeling your abdomen contract and your toes curl. He murmured your name, and the sound of his raspy voice made you lose it. With his own name slipping past your lips in a chant, you arched your back and sunk your nails in his chest. Chat slowed his pace a little, watching as you came undone again in front of him.

You slumped against him, and Chat wrapped his arm around you. “You okay, love?”

“Yeah.” You managed to say, still coming down from your high, and he began to move again. “C’mon, kitty. Come.” You kissed his neck as you pulled on his hair. “Come.”

His thrusts became erratic and his teeth sunk into his bottom lip in an effort to muffle his groans. Chat pushed into you roughly one final time, kissing you hard before his movements finally stilled. You closed your eyes as you felt his release filling you.

He pulled out of you, and you lay down by his side. Even in the dim light, you could see the fair skin of his chest was printed with red marks from your nails.

“Why did we take so long to do this?” You put a hand on your chest, feeling your heart thump against your ribcage.

“Hmm, you’re pretty stubborn and I wanted you to see me more than just a muse. It took some time.” Chat put an arm across your stomach and buried his face in your neck. “I wanted it to be special.”

You laughed, caressing his hair. “Well, it was pretty damn special.”

“I’m glad.” Chat said and turned his head to you. You held each other and shared a languid kiss, enjoying the remaining time you had together.

You felt Chat grind his hips against your leg, and felt him hard against you. You arched one amused brow at him. “Are you serious?”

He shrugged, and in the dim light you saw his smirk. “If it depends on me, I’m not stopping until this goddamn ring makes me.”

A laugh left your lips and you scratched his scalp. Unbelievable. “Ah, kitty, what am I going to do with you?” You could feel sleep already calling your name, but the heated look in Chat’s eyes kept it at bay.

“Anything. Anything you want.” Chat rubbed circles on your stomach. “And hopefully, doing me is on the list.”

“It definitely is.” You licked your lips and pulled him by the bell around his neck.

Your skin was sticky with sweat as you lay your head on Chat’s chest. The only sound in the room now was the combination of your labored breaths, and you could hear his heart thumping under your
ear. You thought you wouldn’t be able to come again, but Chat had proved you wrong. You could feel your core throbbing; you didn’t know he had that much energy.

You turned your head to look up at him. He had his eyes closed, a satisfied smile on his lips. You would kiss him again if you weren’t so tired. You glanced at the ring on his right hand, surprised that it had cooperated for the first time. *Hah, first time.*

You untangled yourself from his embrace, the sticky feeling on your skin bothering you. You huffed, knowing you wouldn’t be able to sleep without a shower.

“Chat, I’m gonna take a shower, do you want to come?” You asked, getting up from the bed. You squinted at the sheets; you’d have to change them tomorrow.

“Hmm, tomorrow, *chérie.*” Chat mumbled, and you shook your head. *Now* he was tired.

You tossed him a damp towel. “Here.” He groaned when the cloth hit his face. You snickered, going to the bathroom on the other side of the corridor.

You let the water hit your skin while the past minutes repeated themselves in your head. Just thinking about it had your body reacting again, but you were spent for the night. After drying yourself, you got under the covers again, relishing on the feel of Chat’s bare skin against yours.

You put your sleep mask over your face and kissed the nape of his neck, hearing him murmur something in his sleep. You chuckled as you wrapped your arm around his torso, feeling happiness irradiate from your heart to the rest of your body. You were so lucky to have him by your side like this. An image of Adrien flashed before your eyes and you leaned your forehead on the back of Chat’s neck, tightening your grip on him. You wouldn’t let your feelings mess this up.

You took a deep breath, feeling your mind walk on the fine line between reality and the land of dreams. Your muscles relaxed and you began to lose control over your conscience. A barrier seemed to be broken, and a wave of energy pushed forward, bringing a dream with it.

Chapter End Notes

I’ve been working on this scene for more than a year HAH I wanted their first time to be exactly like this, but getting to this point in the plot took some time. I bet you guys thought I’d create a lot more drama with the gang, am I right? lmao

Anyway, I hope your thirst has been quenched, and if not, there’s more to come :3c (pun intended)

P.S.: I’d like to point out that every time Chat or Adrien begs in this story is an homage to all the sex scenes I’ve read in fics where the reader/protagonist begs for the D. LOL there are not enough fanfics with guys begging. A shame, truly.
Mist (Part 1)

Chapter Summary


Chapter Notes

The third chapter of the bunch, everyone! We're slowly getting there, but first, more drama and sin :D

I'm so happy to find more dom readers here! And for my submissive readers, I already prepared something for you, so do not fret. There won't be begging on the artist's part, but I hope you can cope with that haha

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

You flew from one side to the other, eyeing the lights from the sugar mill from afar. Where is he?

You heard footsteps behind you and a boy appeared behind the dense foliage, his skin dark as the night sky. “It’s time, Plagg. We need to go.”

“This is dangerous, Gana.” You flew closer, checking the tropical forest behind the boy to make sure no one had followed him. “Even with my power, there are too many guards around the farm. They’re waiting for you.”

“I need to get the others out of there, Plagg.” Gana stared forward at the large farm on top of the hill. “They’re my friends, my people.”

Since getting the ring and being able to escape the sugar plantation, Gana hadn’t stopped talking about going back. You had been able to convince him to wait, to find another way, and he listened for a while, going around the state freeing other slaves. The law was already on your tails thanks to your last operation, a few days back. Cat demon, that’s what the slave owners called you.

“You could die,” you said, your voice sounding small.

Gana looked at his hands for a moment, calloused and scarred palms from working under the harsh sun every single day. Scars marked his dark skin, painful remembrances of how his life used to be. The boy raised his head, and from his furrowed brow to his fierce gaze, you could see his determination. He wouldn’t back down.

“That’s nothing. If I die, it’ll be for the freedom of my people.” He closed his hands in fists, the miraculous ring glinting in the moonlight. “And I’m ready to make that sacrifice.”

With a sigh, you looked up at the night sky, asking the stars to weave the threads of destiny differently this time. You doubted they would listen. They never did.

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You slowly opened your eyes, your head spinning. The sleep mask had fallen from your face, but all you could see were blobs of color. You rubbed your eyes and squinted at your surroundings. The first rays of sunrise were touching the curtains and the empty spot on the bed by your side.

You touched the cold sheets. Chat was gone, but the dream you just had… It had been about Plagg, hadn’t it? How was it possible? You hadn’t touched the miraculous ring this time, Chat wasn’t even by your side.

Your head throbbed and you put a hand on your temple, massaging the spot. Your whole body felt exhausted, like you had run miles and miles non-stop. With a groan, you lay down again, hoping sleep would get rid of the upcoming headache.

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“That’s an excellent drawing,” Mrs. Boucher said behind your shoulder.

You turned around to face her, stopping the pastel pencil from touching the paper. “Oh, thank you, professor.”

You were standing in front of a metal easel while Marius posed in the middle of the room. The chairs and tables had been pushed to the corners of the classroom, leaving space for the students to arrange themselves.

Mrs. Boucher motioned with her head to the right. “You and Mr. Agreste over there are doing very well. I look forward to seeing your final project.”

You let out an awkward chuckle, glancing at Adrien. He was lost in his drawing, a smile playing on his lips.

“Congrats!” Julien said in a small voice to you, giving you a thumbs up. It was quite rare to receive a compliment from Mrs. Boucher, so you understood his excitement.

“Thanks.” You mouthed to him with a smile, adjusting the scarf around your neck. It was better if he and the others students didn’t know the reasons for your sudden spike in creative inspiration.

You looked back at your drawing. It was one of the best, if not the best drawing you had made in this class. It seemed that yesterday had inspired you more than you thought. You didn’t know how you were able to even pay attention to the class with memories of Chat surfacing in your mind every so often, and your legs begging you to sit down. But somehow, it was working, and you wouldn’t complain.

“For the next exercise, you’ll need to pair up. Be quick.” Mrs. Boucher spoke to the rest of the class.

You glanced at Julien and he nodded.

Mrs. Boucher put a hand on your shoulder, “Since you and Adrien are doing so well, you can be partners.”

“But—” You opened your mouth to protest, but she started to walk away, talking to another student.

You tightened your jaw. Great. Now even the teacher was trying to ruin your ‘ignore Adrien Agreste’ plan.

“You okay?” Julien whispered. “I can intervene, create a bit of drama or something.”
You chuckled, imagining the situation in your mind. “Don’t worry about it. It’ll be fine.” You just wished the confidence with which you said those words matched how you felt.

“I guess we’re partners now?” Adrien walked to your side, bringing his easel with him.

“I guess.” You focused on getting a blank paper and putting it on the easel. You already knew what would happen if you stared at Adrien for too long. You had learned your lesson.

“You don't seem too happy about it.” He said.

The upset tone of his voice made your stomach churn. “Oh, I’m just tired.”

“Rough night?”

You nodded. You have no idea.

“Me too.” The model chuckled, and you couldn't help but glance at him, going against your own advice for the umpteenth time. You hadn’t learned your lesson.

Your eyes searched his face, and truly, he had dark circles under his green eyes and his hair was messy, like he been outside on the wind for too long. That combination gave him a rough, bad boy look that made your already weak legs feel like jelly.

Weewoo, emergency! Your mind seemed to scream at you while you leaned on the metal easel for a bit of support.

“It was worth it though.” Adrien sighed and stretched, making his shirt pull up a little and expose his abdomen.

From the corners of your vision, you saw other students look his way before averting their eyes. One gave you a frown, and you wondered if the girl wanted to be in your place. You’d gladly change places with her.

Pfft. No, you wouldn’t. A small voice in your mind said, and you tsked but didn’t argue.

You resumed your ignoring plan, but Adrien didn’t seem to notice. He was quiet today, and every time you would glance at him, he’d have this elated look on his face.

‘What a great day’, he kept saying, grinning at you. You’d look out of the window, to the dark gray sky and promise of rain. Maybe he liked rainy days like this? You didn’t know rain could make someone so damn happy.

After exchanging drawings and letting the other complete it in a different style, you and Adrien sat on the chairs on the corners to rest your legs and wait for the others. Adrien yawned, making you yawn as well, and laid his head on the table, closing his eyes.

Poor thing, he really looks exhausted, you said to yourself as you watched him.

His hair covered his face like a curtain of gold threads, barely showing the small smile pulling at his lips. You wished you could know what he was thinking about. Reaching out, you pushed the blonde strands back, putting them behind his ear.

Your fingertips brushed against his fair skin, and the feeling made you pay attention to what you were doing. And what on earth did you think you were doing? Adrien was staring at you with wide eyes, and you could almost see your panicked reflection in them.
You retreated your hand quickly. “I’m— I’m sorry.”

“It’s okay,” he said in a low voice. “I don’t mind.”

You averted your eyes from his, holding your hands close to your chest. Your gaze met Marius’ for a moment before he looked away.

“Time’s up everyone, please hand over your drawings!” Mrs. Boucher exclaimed.

You got up before she even finished the phrase. You needed to get some distance from Adrien. Why did you have to touch him like that? You thought you were getting better with your fixation on him, but you had been wrong. It was getting worse.

“For next class, you need to bring studies with pastel pencils made with the easels.” The teacher continued. “For the ones who want to use the classroom, it’ll be open tomorrow and Thursday.”

You pressed your tongue against your cheek as you gathered your things, putting your papers inside a tube case. That meant you’d have to come to the university to do the homework.

A shadow covered your frame and you looked up to see Julien.

He cleared his throat, looking anywhere but at you. “I’m going to have lunch with Marius today.”

You looked at said boy, who was on the back of the classroom, putting his clothes back on. “Alright then.”

“I’ll talk to you soon, ok?” Julien said as Marius walked up to him, a proud smile on his face.

“You did great today, sweetheart.” The brunette winked.

“Do you have another riddle for me today?” You asked as you got up.

“Riddle?” Julien glanced at Marius.

“Yeah,” you began to explain. “He told me—”

“I don’t think it’s necessary anymore.” Marius grinned. “See you.” He began to pull on Julien’s arm when Adrien walked to your side. And although the smile didn’t leave his lips, Marius’ eyes narrowed a little. “Agreste.”

Adrien nodded. “Boucher.”

The pair left after that, leaving you behind with the blonde. You sighed, remembering how Mari had spoken about Marius. You hoped Julien knew what he was doing and that Marius didn’t break his heart even more. You’d kill the guy if that happened.

“What do you think about Marius?” You asked Adrien as you left the classroom. You had hoped to leave alone, but he had followed you.

Adrien shrugged. “He’s okay, I guess. He doesn’t like me much though.”

“Why?”

“Family...” Adrien stopped walking, staring forward. “… Stuff.”

You followed his gaze and saw Marinette leaning on a wall on the corridor. She had crossed arms
and a frown on her face.

“Mari!” You waved at her. Her face lit up when she saw you. “How are you?”

“Great.” She nodded with a thin smile. Her eyes fell to a point on your neck and you adjusted your scarf, hoping she hadn’t seen any incriminating marks. She then turned to Adrien with a serious gaze. “We need to talk.”

Oh. You looked from one of them to the other. You had forgotten they had that argument.

“Sure.” Adrien smiled. You admired his ability to remain unfazed when Mari was staring at him like that. “Sorry for leaving you like this.” He said to you, leaning a bit too close for your poor heart.

You leaned back a little, trying your best not to let his perfume contaminate your nostrils. “It’s ok.”

You could only breathe properly when their figures got smaller and smaller down the corridor.

“It’s a beautiful day, isn’t it?” Adrien sighed, walking with his arms folded behind his head.

Mari stared at him. “What has gotten into you?”

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“Can someone explain to me why Adrien is acting like a weirdo today?” Alya asked as she put her food tray on the table. “I tried to talk to him before class and he hugged me, saying how life was great. I think he finally lost it.”

It was just you, her and Nino, this time since Mari and Adrien didn’t appear for lunch.

“He was acting different in class today too.” You said, twirling your unidentified purple juice inside a plastic cup before taking a sip.

“I think I know the mystery.” Nino scratched his chin. “He was smiling all the time? Seemingly happy for no reason? Dopey ass look on his face?” You and Alya nodded, and Nino smirked. “That’s the face of someone who just got laid.”

The purple juice almost spurted from your nose, making your nasal passages burn.

“Nino!” Alya cackled, hitting her food tray, and Nino laughed as well.

“You thought about that too, admit it!” He exclaimed.

You coughed, struggling to catch your breath. You’d die from asphyxiation one day.

“My, are you jealous?” Alya wiggled her eyebrows at you.

You scoffed, feeling blood rushing to your cheeks. “Why would I be jealous?”

Alya just gave you a look, like she could see through all your carefully constructed walls, before changing the subject to the Valentine Day’s party.

You gripped your plastic cup as images of Adrien in someone’s bed invaded your mind; baring his neck to them, curving his spine, the smell of his perfume filling the air… It made something in your chest ignite. Something that you were so desperately trying to bury deep within the confines of your heart.
Goddammit.

Your wrist hurt from drawing.

You turned another page, welcoming the blank paper with a deep sigh. Still not enough.

The news anchor’s voice filled the silence in your apartment, along with the patter of the rain outside. You couldn’t let your mind wander too much, so you let the woman speak about Claude Genova, who would be transferred to a high secured prison tomorrow. Chat and Ladybug were busy finding the rest of the gang.

Graphite scratched the paper. Another drawing.

With news like that, you weren’t surprised to see that Chat wasn’t there in your balcony. You had heard what seemed to be footsteps on the roof hours ago, but he didn’t appear. Maybe it had been your mind playing tricks on you.

You gripped the pencil harder after finishing another sketch. Why isn’t this working?

You took a deep breath and continued. You wondered if Chat and Ladybug had talked things out. Was she mad with him for risking his life like that? You could only imagine her reaction.

You were in the middle of another drawing when the graphite broke. You slammed the pencil on top of the table with a curse and closed your eyes, holding your face in your hands.

‘My love, bonjour. I hope you had a lovely night, I know I had one.’

Chat’s note from this morning came back to you. You could almost hear his voice.

‘I wish I could stay more and watch this sunrise by your side.’

You opened your eyes, looking down at the sketchbook in front of you. Adrien stared back from every corner, every space available on the paper. And still, the burning within you didn’t want to cease. You had gotten to a point of no return.

‘Soon, chérie. Soon. Bisous, Chat’

You sighed. You had no other option. You’d have to talk to Chat.

Chat, I have another muse. You shook your head as you picked another pastel from your pencil case. No, that’s too harsh.

You glanced at the reference image in your phone before making more lines on the paper. Chat, I’ve been a terrible person. A student laughed near you, as if mocking your melodramatic choice of words. You sighed, averting your eyes to the large windows for a moment.

You had come to the university to make the homework drawings Mrs. Boucher had asked you to. It was better to get this over with as soon as possible, but your progress had been slow thanks to your state of mind. You had no idea how Chat would react if you told him about Adrien, and the anxiety had been making your stomach hurt all day.

Something caught your attention in the landscape. A string of smoke rose from some buildings in the
distance. A second later, the noise of a loud explosion rattled the windows and made the ground shake. The students in the room gasped.

You walked up to the windows to get a better view of what was happening, but the only thing you could see was the smoke far away. When you turned back around, all the others had gathered their things and were leaving the classroom. Outside, you could see people filling the corridors in a rush.

If people were reacting like that, it had to be serious.

You ran to the door and tried to get one of the student’s attention. “Hey, what’s happening?”

A girl turned back to answer you, but someone beat her to it.

“It’s an akuma attack.”

You snapped your head in the direction of the voice. Marius.

“Is the villain coming here?” You asked. If they weren’t this seemed like a good place to hide until Chat and Ladybug resolved the issue.

“We don’t know, but it’s better not to risk it.” Marius saw your lost expression and explained further. “The university buildings have been destroyed in akuma attacks in the past, and no one likes being squished to death. It feels weird from what I’ve heard.” He shrugged. “And who knows if Ladybug’s power will be able to bring you back?”

Your eyes widened. You definitely didn’t want to know what the feeling of being squished to death was.

You ran back to the metal easel you were using.

“Here, let me help,” Marius said as he approached and grabbed your pastel pencils, helping you to put them back in the case.

“Thank you.” You gathered the rest of your things, lamenting the fact that you weren’t able to finish your homework.

You followed Marius to the corridor. Everything was chaotic. Students and teachers were running down the corridors, bumping into each other in their haste. You didn’t even know where to go.

Another explosion sounded, making the ground tremble, and people screamed. Marius put a hand on your shoulder.

“Go to the south entrance, it’s the one furthest away from the front gate!” He shouted above the commotion. “It’s near the multimedia building! You’ll be safe there!”

“Aren’t you coming?” You asked.

He shook his head. “I need to see if my mom left yet. Go!”

You nodded and ran down the corridor, dodging people on your way until you got to the exit of the building. You followed the grass path to the south entrance, seeing fewer people as you went. The other students were probably going to the main exits.

When you arrived at the gate, you almost couldn’t believe your eyes. In just a few moments, the city had transformed completely. Cars were crashed into one another, blocking the streets; people were running away, and helicopters flying above.
To your right, in the distance, you could see a large group of people walking in the direction of the Seine, shuffling their feet like zombies. That had to be the akumatized person’s power.

In your peripheral vision, you saw a movement. Your heart jumped in your chest when you saw Chat landing on a nearby building.

“Oh, there he is!” A girl screamed by your side, making you flinch in surprise. “Raise the posters, girls!”

You had been so overwhelmed with the situation that you hadn’t noticed these girls approaching. There were six of them, all carrying colorful posters.

“Chat! Here!” One of them cried out, shaking a paper above her head that said ‘CHAT NOIR I LOVE YOU’. You didn’t even have to think about who they were because they had a poster for that too: ‘Chat Noir #1 fan club’.

You watched for a moment as they shook their posters, hoping that Chat would look their way. They didn’t even care about the battle or the zombie-like people. Shaking your head, you began to walk in the other direction, wondering how would you get home from there.

“Hey, isn’t that the girl from the news?”

You heard one girl ask and looked back. A grave mistake. All the others were staring at you. Your heart began to speed up. You thought people had forgotten about that drama with Chat already.

The girls’ faces darkened, and one of them said between gritted teeth. “It is.” Apparently they hadn’t forgotten about the drama.

You gave a step back before starting to run. There were six of them, and from their faces, they weren’t happy to see you. Talking with them would be useless, and fighting, impossible.

“Hey, come back here!” One shouted.

“Get her!”

“We just want to talk!”

If you weren’t running for your life, you would’ve let out a hysterical laugh. Talk, yeah, of course.

You turned to a narrow street, trying to mix with the other people running away. Running from your muse’s fangirls during an akuma attack was not how you expected your life in Paris to be like. Why did you have to meet those girls exactly at this moment?

Your backpack was heavy on your back as you ran through the streets, the shouts of the girls getting more distant with each corner you turned. Damn, they’re persistent. Not being able to go any further, you stopped on a small street to regain your breathing. You slowed down and leaned on a wall, your chest heaving from the effort of running.

You looked around and tried to localize where you were. The street was empty, besides a few bikes and trash on the ground. You grabbed your phone to open the map app when the sound of pigeons flying got your attention.

“Look what I found.”

You sucked in a breath, your whole body tensing. A bald man was at the entrance of the street. He
was shirtless, and his whole body was covered in dark blue tattoos that moved around his skin. A necklace in the form of a clock was around his neck.

He grinned at you. “What’s Chat Noir’s little dove doing here all by herself?”

You gave a step back, adrenaline pumping in your veins and your instinct telling you to run. You just had the best luck, didn’t you? You didn’t want to be kidnapped again! If only you could grab the pager in time, you could call Chat or Ladybug.

“I can take you home, little dove.” The man said, his voice smooth like a viper coiling around your ankles. His face was somehow familiar, but you couldn’t recognize him. “Just keep looking at me.” His tattoos began to move, twirling in many circles.

You tried to look away, but realized you couldn’t. The circles were shining and taking over everything else in your vision.

“She’s not interested!” You heard Ladybug’s voice coming from above you.

She kicked the guy in the face, making him hit the ground hard, and landed in front of you.

“Ladybug?” You blinked, regaining the control of your mind.

“That’s me. Don’t look at him when his tattoos move in circles or he’ll hypnotize you.” Lady said as she put an arm around your waist. “Let’s go, I’ll take you out of here.”

You heard the guy growl as Lady jumped in the air, taking you with her. You held onto her, hoping you wouldn’t fall down to the street. She ran on the roofs and you closed your eyes, getting dizzy with the speed.

“Merde, he’s still following us!” Lady exclaimed. You felt her turn around in the air and throw her yo-yo. You opened your eyes to see the guy falling down on the ground in a mess of limbs.

“How’s this man?” You raised your voice for her to be able to hear you.

“Hypnos, aka an akumatized Claude Genova, the gang boss Chat Noir captured.” Lady said, jumping on another roof. She said it calmly, as if she had already been expecting Claude to get akumatized.

“Where is Chat?” You asked, looking around for any sign of the cat boy. You were near the Louvre Museum now; you could see the glass pyramid from above.

“Hypnos was trying to rob the Bank of France with his hypnotized minions. He created an illusion of himself that disappeared moments later.” She said. “I left Chat dealing with the minions and went after Claude.”

She landed on a big square and looked around frantically. “Chat should be here somewhere.”

The place was a mess. The Greek columns were broken and scattered on the ground, and the carefully maintained bushes were now trampled.

“I need to find him so I can distract Hypnos while Chat takes you away from here.” Lady let you go but kept touching your arm. “Stay close to me.”

You adjusted your backpack on your back, hating to be such a burden. You had tried to stay away from the fight so you wouldn’t be a nuisance, but you ended up in the middle of the storm anyway.
You stayed quiet, your eyes roaming around the destroyed square. The only sound came from ambulance sirens in the distance and a constant shuffling. You paid close attention to the latter and noticed it was actually the sound of footsteps. The zombie-like people you had seen earlier appeared, coming from every street around you, their eyes a deep blue, like the color from Hypnos’s tattoos. They marched in your direction, and you took a step closer to Ladybug.

“Lady!” You heard a familiar voice exclaim. It called your name next in a mixture of surprise and exasperation. Chat landed by your side, eyeing your face with a concerned gaze. “Chérie, what are you doing here?”

“Genova went after her,” Ladybug said before you could explain. “I’ll distract him while you take her to a safe place. How’s the bank situation?”

“Controlled, for now.” Chat said, standing by your side. You leaned closer to him, his presence already making you feel safer. “All the hypnotized people left the bank and came in this direction. I didn’t know what they were about to do, so I followed them.”

In the middle of the mob, Hypnos appeared, walking confidently in your direction. His tattoos weren’t moving in circles, but you looked away just in case.

“I’ll go after him, and you take her out of here,” Lady said as she began to run.

“I’m sorry for getting in the way again,” you said as you both watched the brunette leave.

“I’m the one who should be sorry for involving you in this.” Chat shook his head, his eyes fixed on Ladybug as she jumped over the minions and hit Claude on the face.

“Let’s go—” Chat began to say when Hypnos disappeared in a puff of smoke. “Wait, what?”

Ladybug screamed, “It isn’t him!”

You felt an arm snake around your neck from behind and screamed, trying to get free. Chat turned around, your name slipping past his lips. His face turned blank, his mouth parting slightly. You could only watch as his eyes got darker and darker until there was no green left, only a dark blue.

“No!” You cried out. Behind you, Hypnos chuckled as he let you go. You touched Chat’s face. “Chat?” He kept staring forward, motionless, waiting for Hypnos’ command.

“He’s gone, little dove.” Hypnos laughed. You tightened your jaw, but kept your gaze on Chat, not daring to look back. “Now, Chat Noir. Be a good kitty and show your love and the whole world your real identity. Go to the middle of the square where everyone can see you.”

Chat nodded and began to walk.

“Wait, Chat, stop!” You grabbed his arm.

Hypnos pulled you back, throwing you on the ground. You closed your eyes tightly when he tilted your face up. “It’s useless, little dove! Just give up already.”

“Chat!” You heard Ladybug call. You opened your eyes to glance at her. Ladybug was running, dodging the minions who tried to block her way. She had a red mirror in her hand.

“Ladybug, dear, it’s your turn now!” Hypnos said, stepping away from you.

Taking advantage that he was focused on Lady, you got up and ran to Chat, who was almost at the
middle of the square.

“Chat, wake up!” You exclaimed, grabbing his arm. “Please!” Chat frowned and took his arm away
from you with a brusque movement. You tsked and stopped in front of him, pushing him back.
“Stop!”

He pushed you to the side with ease, making you fall to the ground, and continued walking. Your
shoulders slumped. He wasn’t listening.

He stopped in the middle of the square and you saw a helicopter flying above. It was probably
recording everything that was going on and showing it on every television here in Paris. You looked
back and saw Ladybug was fighting against Hypnos and his minions, using the mirror to not look at
him directly.

Chat began to take his ring off and you got up, running to him. Lady wouldn’t get the akuma in time.

*The ring. Touch the ring.* Something urged you to act in your mind, and you complied. You closed
your hand over Chat’s, and he looked at you, eyes dark and emotionless.

He tried to get rid of you, but you tightened your grip. “Wake up, Chat Noir. Please, come back to
me.” You pleaded to him in a whisper. “Plagg, bring him back to me. *Please.*” You felt something
stir within you, like a filament of energy was being shared between you two. It was weak, but you
focused on it and sent your pleas through the connection.

The ring glowed green and Chat gasped for air as if he had just resurfaced from under water. He
blinked many times and with each blink, his eyes went back to the beautiful emerald green you
adored so much.

“Chat?” You put a hand on his cheek, seeing his gaze was still unfocused and lost.

“No!” Hypnos screamed. A wave of purple energy left his body, making Ladybug and the minions
be thrown a few meters back on the ground. He turned to you, his tattoos moving in a frenetic way.
“You had to ruin it, hadn’t you? I’m going to break your little wings for that, dove.”

The hatred in his voice made you want to run and hide as far away as possible, but you let out a
shaky breath and stood in front of Chat, knowing you had to buy the heroes some time.

You felt a hand on your shoulder.

“I don’t think so, pal.” Chat stood by your side, baton in hand. “And don’t you *ever* talk to my girl
like that ever again.” You beamed at him, putting a hand on top of his and squeezing.

Hypnos’ eyes widened and he bared his teeth. “Pathetic.” He turned around and began to run.
“Minions, get them!”

“Oh no, you don’t.” Chat threw his baton forward. It hit the villain straight on his back, making him
fall on the ground with a thud, before returning to the blonde’s hand like a boomerang. Chat ran to
him and stepped on top of Hypnos, bringing his arms behind his back.

You watched from where you were, spikes of adrenaline still pulsing through your veins. You
weren’t sure if your legs would be able to move if you tried.

“Good job, *chaton!*” Ladybug said, now up from the ground. She dodged minions as she tried to get
to the villain. “Can you get the akuma?”
“He’s struggling too much, I can’t reach it!”

While they talked, the hypnotized people Lady had avoided turned your way. Your mouth went dry after seeing their fixed gaze on you.

“Chat? A little help?” You cried out, voice cracking a little. You walked backwards as the minions began to head your way.

The cat hero raised his head, eyes widening. “Lady get the akuma! Quick!”

“I’m trying!” She exclaimed, pushing people out of the way.

Your back hit a wall, and you looked around, realizing the hypnotized people had surrounded you. Panic began to rise in your chest.

Chat cursed, raising his right hand. It glowed green, and black particles began to surround his palm. “Cataclysm!”

The minions were almost on you when Chat’s hand touched the ground. A large crack appeared under his palm and began to spread further, transforming the ground in a mess of debris and taking the minions down a huge crater.

You pressed yourself against the wall as the crack reached your feet. It stopped suddenly, and you slumped back, a hand over your heart.

What on earth was that? Cataclysm?

“That’s enough trouble from you, Mr. Genova.” Ladybug said as she crushed Hypnos’ necklace, freeing the dark butterfly. “You’re going straight to jail after this. Lucky charm!”

Chat ran to you as Lady’s power returned the place back to normal.

“Chérie!” He wrapped his arms around you, burying his face in the crook of your neck. “You saved me again. Merci, mon ange. Merci.”

“You saved me too, we’re even.” You hugged him back, pressing him tightly against your body as the hypnotized people woke up around you. Ladybug began to help some of them.

Chat sighed and leaned back a little to look at you. “You didn’t get hurt, did you?”

“No.” You shook your head. “But what was that?” You asked, motioning to the ground, now perfectly back in place.

You felt Chat tense in your arms. “My power.”

“How come I’ve never seen you use it before?”

He avoided your gaze. “I don’t like using it.”

“Why?”

The noise of the helicopter flying above you seemed to get louder, reminding you that you were probably appearing on TV right now.

Chat glanced up and his expression darkened. “We need to leave before those vultures arrive.”

The reporters. You closed your eyes for a moment. Now that they had filmed you with Chat, the drama would start all over again.
“I’ll try to get their attention.” Ladybug walked over to you. “You two should leave now.”

“Merci, my lady.” Chat said, putting an arm around your waist.

“You ok, chaton?” Lady asked before Chat could jump.

He gave her a bright smile, but from up close as you were, you could see the fragileness of it, “Yeah, I’m great as always.”

Lady gave him a serious look before turning to you. “Good job today.” She patted you on the shoulder. “We couldn’t have done it without you. Again.” She chuckled. “Take care.”

“That power of yours, cataclysm, how does it work?” You opened the door to your apartment, and Chat stepped inside. It was the first time he entered your place from the front door. It seemed almost wrong somehow.

You had taken a little longer to arrive at your place to make sure no one was following you, but you were finally away from that square.

The cat hero dropped down on your sofa, and you thought he wasn’t going to answer your question when he said, “I destroy things, make electronics malfunction…” He stared at his claws, picking at them. “I’m bad luck, while Ladybug…”

“She’s good luck.” You murmured, feeling like a whole new world had been open before your eyes. They were opposites. Black cat themed hero, his talks about bringing you bad luck… It all made sense now!

Chat snorted, still staring at his claws. It didn’t seem that he liked this power of his very much.

You sat down by his side and touched his hands, stopping his fidgeting. “You should use your power more often, it’s amazing.”

He stared at you for a long moment before shaking his head, a grin curling the corners of his lips. “Ah, ma chérie…” He sighed, caressing your face with the back of his hand.

You leaned into his touch. “I’m serious. It is amazing.”

You could see the fondness in his gaze as he looked at you. “I was so worried.”

You looked down. “I’m sorry for getting in the way and making you get hypnotized. I was trying to leave the area, I swear.”

Chat lifted your chin. “It wasn’t your fault.”

You averted your eyes from his green ones. It had been your fault. “I almost made you share your identity. I’ll be more careful.”

You could feel Chat’s gaze on you but refused to look at him. He let out a deep breath. "After Ladybug and I found the gang hideout and called the police, Genova sent a message, threatening to hurt the loved ones of everyone in the operation." You sneaked a glance at the blonde, but he wasn’t looking at you anymore, his gaze lost somewhere behind you. "I decided not to tell you because I didn’t know if he knew about us, and I didn’t want you to worry. But I also didn’t want to find out the hard way, so I went after him before he could escape." He opened and closed his hand in a
restless manner. "I should've known that he'd go after you when he got akumatized."

You grabbed his hand and twined your fingers together. "Ok... We can share the blame then." A low chuckle came from Chat's throat. "But please warn me next time, alright?"

He bit his lip and nodded. "Alright." He got closer and sat in the space between your legs on the sofa, gazing at you with half-lidded eyes. "In times like these, I ask myself if I'm doing the right thing." He traced your bottom lip with his thumb, his touch delicate on your skin. "But then I see you, and I can't bring myself to let you go."

Your eyebrows furrowed a little. Was he still having doubts about this?

You bopped his nose. "Then don't."

His long blonde hair tickled his cheek when he smiled, and the memory of you touching Adrien’s hair flashed before your eyes. Guilt closed its jaws around your heart and you felt sick to your stomach. You took a deep breath, remembering Julien’s words about testing the waters first. *It's time."

"Chat..." You began, sliding your hands to his hips as his face inched closer to yours. "How would you feel if I had another muse?"

Chat narrowed his eyes a little. "I don't like sharing, my love." His face inched closer to yours. "I thought I made that very clear before."

"I-I know! You wouldn't have to share." His eyes bored into yours and you swallowed. This wasn't going well.

"Are you trying to make me jealous?" He whispered, voice low. "Because let me tell you love, it's working."

"I'm not—" Chat cut you off with a kiss.

His lips slid roughly against yours as he pressed you back on the sofa. He bit your bottom lip before pulling away, making you gasp for air.

Chat glanced at the table. "Is it the friend that gave you those flowers?"

"No! It was just a question—" His lips silenced you again.

His hands sneaked under your shirt, his claws scratching your skin. Chat broke the kiss and bit your earlobe. "It's him, isn't it?"
“Chat.” You breathed out, your spine curving without your consent.

“Just say it, chérie.” He bit your neck, making you cry out in a mix of pain and pleasure.

“It’s Adrien!” You blurted out, hoping that if you said the words fast enough, they’d do less damage.

Chat took a sharp intake of breath, his whole body going rigid.

You turned your face to the side, feeling it burn with shame. “It’s Adrien Agreste.”

The blonde was silent, and you could feel his eyes on you as his hands slid to your hips.

Your voice was barely a whisper when you said, “It just happened, I couldn’t stop it.”

“Adrien Agreste is your… other muse.” He pronounced the words carefully, as if he was trying to make sense of them.

You stole a glance at him, wishing you could know what he was thinking. “I won’t let it escalate to something else, Chat. I promise.”

The blonde just stared down at you, his pupils moving quickly from one part of your face to the other.

You swallowed dry. “Are you angry?”

“No.” He smiled and you almost sighed in relief. You just wished you could decipher what was behind that smile. “Why would I be?”

You searched his face, but you didn't see any signs that he was messing with you. “You asked me not to have any more muses, and I asked you not to inspire anyone else. I broke my part of the promise.”

“Don’t worry about it, love, I’m not mad.” He chuckled and began to kiss your neck. Gentle, slow. You almost forgot what you were talking about. “Since when?”

“I… I don’t know.” You averted your eyes. This was too embarrassing. “I’ll stay away from him.”

“There’s no need for that.” Chat said, eyebrows shooting up.

“But—”

“Chérie, it’s alright.” He laughed, his nose almost touching yours. “It’s alright.” He whispered before his lips met yours again.

He grabbed your face between his palms and pulled you close, sighing in the kiss. His lips slid against yours while your mind raced with questions. You didn’t think he’d accept it so easily, and part of you didn’t want him to. You didn’t feel like you deserved it.

His hips began to move on top of you slightly, and any thoughts that didn’t have to do with the feel of his body against yours were pushed to the back of your mind. You were so distracted with him that you almost didn’t notice the sound of the zipper of his suit being open.

You pulled away, not without difficulty, since Chat didn’t want to let you go, and grabbed his hand, looking at his ring. “Your ring only has one dot.”

“So?” He took his hand away and took the top part of his suit off.
“So,” you licked your lips as you eyed his broad shoulders. “It means you’re gonna leave me here like a horny mess in a few minutes, cat boy.”

“Ma belle, please.” He kissed a spot under your jaw and let out a soft moan against your skin. “I need you.” He basically whined the last sentence, and it made all your bones turn to jelly inside your body.

Marinette’s scarf, the one she had given you for Christmas, hit the ground first. You took the rest of your clothes off as well and pulled Chat down with you. He prepared you with his fingers while his mouth made you feel like you were lying down on soft clouds up above. When he entered you, his thighs brushing against yours, you closed your eyes. The feeling was better than the fragments your mind was able to save in your memories.

It didn’t take long for the ring start to beep.

You groaned, pulling away from Chat’s mouth. “Told you.” Now he was just going to leave you to finish this by yourself.

“Turn around.” Chat leaned on his elbows on top of you. “Turn around, princess, please.”

With a bit of reluctance, you did what he asked, lying on your front on the sofa arm and letting him position himself behind you. You chewed on your bottom lip as you leaned on your elbows, seeing Paris’ landscape in front of you. You liked to look at Chat, to see his expressions when he lost himself in you.

The blonde grabbed your scarf from the ground and went back to moving his hips.

A low moan rumbled in your throat. “What are you doing?”

“Don’t look back, alright?” Chat breathed out, bringing your hips up. “Promise you won’t look, love.”

You turned your head around to gape at him. “Are you serious?” He stared at you with big pleading eyes, waiting for an answer. You swallowed dry, turning your head back. “I… I promise.”

The ring beeped one last time before there was a flash of light. You felt the hairs on your arms stand up and a shiver go up and down your spine as a wave of energy ran through you. You glanced at Chat’s suit on the ground, but the bundle of clothes wasn’t a suit anymore. It was now a pair of black jeans, a grey shirt, and a jacket.

Oh my god. You breathed out. This is really happening.

“You’re insane.” A voice chided, and your stomach gave a leap. Something in your chest flared, the same energy from before coming alive. And in a second you knew this voice was the one from your dreams. Plagg. This voice had to be Plagg’s.

“Shush.”

You heard a noise coming from the kitchen and raised your head. “Chat?”

“Yes, love?” He rolled his hips into yours, entering you fully, and you arched your back, a loud groan slipping past your lips. Your mind went blank as pleasure took over your thoughts.

You tried to turn around, but Chat pulled on your hair, keeping you in place. “Ah, ah, chérie, you promised.”
You growled. "Fine."

"Good girl." He squeezed your hips. "But I think I'll have to use this, just in case." He put the scarf on top of your eyes and you felt him tie a knot behind your head.

"I see you’re as kinky as your hero self." You muttered, closing your eyes. He laughed and you felt him get closer, his lean torso touching your back. You bit back a moan and said in between breaths, "How should I call you? Can’t you at least tell me your name?"

"You can call me Chat, handsome, love of your life. Whatever you want is fine." He said in your ear. "You could also call me like your other muse, if that gets you off. What was his name again?"

You stopped breathing for a second. He wanted you to call him Adrien? Adrien? You shook your head, feeling an intense discomfort in your temples. Imagining Adrien with you like this would do a huge damage to what was already fragile enough. You had to stop that idea before it could install itself in your mind.

You let out a shaky laugh. "Ah, I see the poor sense of humor and narcissism are still the same as well."

A chuckle rumbled in his throat. He kissed your ear and whispered, "You know me, babe." The new pet name made the skin on your arms erupt into goosebumps.

This guy, whoever he was, was different, that much you could tell. His movements were rougher; his bites, deeper; but his moans were still loud, and your name kept escaping his lips as his hips collided with yours. Your skin still hadn’t healed completely from the last time, and you were certain you would end up with even more marks on your body.

With your eyes in the dark, you could focus on your other senses, and although you wished you could see Chat, you thanked him for this. Because in this darkness, you could focus on the touch of his skin, slightly wet with sweat, brushing against yours; the way his fingers held onto your hips; the purring coming from his chest mixed with his moans, getting more broken with each passing second; and his perfume combined with the musky scent of his skin.

You raised your arm and searched back until your hand found Chat’s hair, pulling him closer. "Harder." You demanded.

He moaned and did as you asked. You grabbed onto him as the sensitivity became too much, your heightened senses making your core implode and then explode, blinding each one of your cells with pleasure.

"You look gorgeous when you come, love. I can’t get enough." Chat slowed down and kissed your back as you slumped on the sofa arm, your arms giving out.

You tried to regain your breath, but it was difficult with him still moving, making your head spin. "You look gorgeous too, so let me see you now."

A shaky laugh left his lips as his movements got more erratic. "You want, ah, to see the mess you’ve made of me? Is that it, beautiful?"

Before you could say that, yes, that’s exactly what you wanted, he grabbed your chin, turning your head back, and crashed his lips with yours. His hands gripped your hips as he pushed into you roughly a few more times before stopping.

His labored breaths touched the nape of your neck, his chest heaving against your back. You felt him
get out of you, and turned around, lying on your back. He lay by your side, partially on top of you. You touched his face, feeling his skin without the mask and running your thumb over his eyes.

He leaned in and your parted lips met. It was like you were floating on a calm ocean, feeling your body completely relaxed. Chat was like the sun above you, bringing warmth to every part of you.

He pulled away a moment later. Too soon, your whole body seemed to complain.

“You’re going to leave me like this?” You said, your raspy voice sounding strange to your ears.

“Unfortunately, yes.” The blonde kissed a spot in the middle of your chest and left kisses until your stomach. “I have to go.”

You grumbled, turning your head away. “I can’t believe you.”

His laugh filled the silence of your apartment. It was already too silent and he hadn’t even left. “We’ll see each other soon, my love. I promise.” He said, still a little breathless.

You heard him shuffle around for his clothes.

“Chat? About the Adrien thing.” The sound stopped for a moment before continuing. “Are we cool?”

“Do what your heart tells you, love.” He kissed your forehead, lips slightly wet. “And don’t forget about the Valentine’s party.”

The sound of keys on the door reached your ears, and you stayed there on the sofa for a long moment after the door closed. Your eyes were open behind the blindfold, but you could only see darkness in front of you.

Chapter End Notes

Is Adrien being a little shit? Yes he is.

oh, and to anyone who's feeling that the reveal is taking too long, sorry, but not sorry. It will happen, and sooner than you think! :) but I wanted to experiment with the artist's feelings for Adrien a bit more, and you know, it's my fic LOL

Next chapter is the Valentine's party. What will happen? Stay tuned *eye emoji*

P.S.: I'll be traveling next week, but I'll try to post the next chapter on Sunday as promised!
Mist (Part 2)

Here we go, the last chapter of the bunch and of this year! I'm posting this real quick because I have to leave in a few minutes, so forgive me for any mistakes. I'll also answer everyone's comments soon!

Enjoy! :3

You didn’t expect Marinette to look so surprised when you mentioned her earrings.

“How come I haven’t noticed them before?” Alya said, leaning to take a closer look. “They’re beautiful.”

You nodded. You had been meaning to compliment Mari about her earrings since you saw them at the fashion show, but only remembered about it now.

The Valentine Day’s party was happening around you. Pink and red decorations filled the inside of the large boat’s cabin and deck. Paper hearts hanged from the ceilings as well as little cupids.

Marinette took a step back from you both, laughing. “Merci, I bought them yesterday.”

You felt a frown crease your forehead. Yesterday? But you had seen her use them at the fashion show, two weeks ago.

“Oh, they look like Ladybug’s!” Alya exclaimed.

You took a better look at the earrings, and truly, they were really similar to Ladybug’s. You remembered Marinette saying once that she had been a fan of the miraculous heroine as a teenager. Maybe she was still a fan now.

“Yeah,” Mari laughed, scratching her neck and looking around. “Err, anyway, I need to go to the bathroom. Be right back!”

“C’mon,” Alya put an arm around your shoulders. “Let’s get something to drink while we wait.”

Your eyes darted left, to the blonde guy near the door. No, Blue eyes. They then looked right, seeing another blonde near the flagpole. Too short. They spotted another one on the deck, but you pursed your lips when you saw his hair was dyed. Not him either.

Someone walked in and your eyes followed. Blonde hair, green eyes, same height. Your heart jumped in your chest, but it was just Adrien.

You ducked behind the drink counter. You had been successfully avoiding the model since you arrived at the party, half an hour later, and you didn't want to fail now.

“What are you doing?”
You looked up to see Alya staring at you with a raised brow, her drink in her hand.

You contemplated lying to her for a moment, but then sighed. “I can’t let Adrien see me.”

People passed near you, watching you with curious eyes. They were probably thinking you were already drunk.

“Alright,” Alya stated, simply.

You heard Adrien’s voice and held your breath. He asked Alya if she had seen you and she said you were probably downstairs, on the first floor of the boat.

After a few moments, she told you it was safe to get up and held out her free hand for you.

“Thanks a lot, Alya,” You said as she pulled you up.

She waved a dismissive hand. “Everything to help a sister in need.” She took a sip from her drink, eyeing you over the rim of her glass. “Now, why are you avoiding Adrien? Did he do something?”

“It’s nothing serious, it’s just...” You looked down, feeling completely stupid when thinking about your situation. “I can’t be near him right now.”

Alya was silent for a moment. “Is he still flirting with you like he did at the resto U?”

You rubbed your neck, letting out a sigh. “Yeah.”

“You should have a talk with him,” Alya said and took a sip from her drink. “Avoiding him will only make things worse.”

“I’ll do it.” You looked away from her. Julien had also said that you should talk with Adrien. “I will, soon.” You would deal with this situation, just not now. Today was about you and Chat.

“AAlright, c’mon then.” She put a hand on your shoulder. “I’m gonna go check on Nino downstairs and bring him this drink, since Marinette probably ditched us for a pretty face. You should come, it’ll be more difficult for Adrien to find you at the dance floor.”

Alya was right. The dance floor was packed with people, mostly couples dancing together, and you could blend in easily. Nino was on the left side, headphones on and a bright smile on his face as he pressed buttons on the complex machine in front of him. Alya’s face brightened when she saw him, and you smiled. They were so cute together.

People were staring at you more than usual as you passed by, and you blamed the news for starting to talk about you and Chat Noir again. After the akuma incident, you were expecting it. Thankfully, you still didn’t have any problems with reporters, but you knew it was just a matter of time.

For a moment, you could swear you saw Marinette talking to a girl in the crowd, but when you looked again, she was gone. You heard someone call your name as you threaded through the sea of people and turned to look, expecting to see Mari. But it was Julien who was waving at you, motioning for you to come closer. After telling Alya where you were going, you walked up to him.

Julien was with a small group of friends. You recognized Marius, Kostas, and Louise. When she saw you approaching, Louise walked off, saying she was going to get another drink. From the way she walked you could see she already had a few. Kostas gave you an apologetic smile and went after
her, probably to make sure she didn’t overdo it.

You greeted the remaining people, and then Julien and Marius.

“Enjoying the party?” The blonde asked over the music, adjusting his button-down shirt.

You shrugged. “It’s alright, I guess.” It’d be better if Chat was here as he had implied he would be.

“Marinette was looking for you just now,” Marius said, putting an arm around Julien’s hips. “She’s on the deck, near the front.”

He kissed the side of Julien’s neck and you averted your eyes, realizing you’d be third wheeling the rest of the night if you stayed with them. “I’ll try to find her. See you guys.”

You sighed with relief when you managed to arrive outside. The music was less oppressive, and you could breathe better. The night was chilly, so there weren’t too many people outside. Just a few couples lost into each other.

“Get your pairs, everyone, it’s slow dance time!” Nino’s voice boomed from the speakers as you made your way to the front of the deck.

You looked around, but Marinette wasn’t there.

You glanced back to the dance floor and saw Marcus and Julien dancing together inside. You sighed, leaning on the cold metal railing. Well, it seemed like you’d stay outside for a while.

Even with the boat anchored, the wind was strong, ruffling your clothes and hair. You watched the illuminated buildings on the other side of the riverbank as the boat rocked slowly with the rhythm of the water. Your skin itched to feel the warmth of someone, but only the cold met your skin. Did Chat lie to you about appearing at the party? Almost one hour had passed already, what was he waiting for? You thought about the pager in your pocket, contemplating pressing the green button and say the emergency was that you felt super lonely.

The song changed, and it took you a moment to notice it was Can’t Help Falling in Love with You by Elvis. You snorted, staring down at the dark waters of the Seine. Nino was really going full romantic.

“Enjoying the view?”

Your hands gripped the railing until your knuckles hurt. You didn’t have to look to the side to know who it was.

“Yeah, I’m taking a break from all that love and PDA.” You kept staring forward.

Adrien chuckled, leaning on the railing as well, and you could feel the heat of his body. “It’s quite cold out here.” He said.

You hummed. All you wanted was to get closer to him, to the warmth.

Shall I stay? Would it be a sin... Elvis kept singing in the background, his smooth voice somehow louder than your rapidly beating heart. If I can't help falling in love with you?

“Can I ask you something?” Adrien’s arm touched yours, and you couldn’t bring yourself to move.

You swallowed dry and nodded, your vocal cords not wanting to work, as if frozen by the cold.
“Do you like me?”

You closed your eyes, a shaky sigh leaving your lips. “Adrien…”

*Take my hand, take my whole life too...* The song continued, the lyrics seeming to mock you. *For I can’t help falling in love with you.*

The blonde touched your hand, and you could feel his breath on your neck with how close he was. “I just need an answer. That’s all I need.”

A shiver went down from your neck to the small of your back, and you pulled away a little to look at him. At his hair being pushed back by the wind, at the way the string lights illuminated part of his face, leaving the rest in shadows. You already knew the answer. Your muscles quivered, and it wasn’t due to the cold.

“Why are you doing this to me?” You took your hand away from Adrien’s, feeling your eyes begin to burn. Shock crossed the model’s face, and you continued. “You know I’m with someone else, and you keep doing this as if it was nothing.”

“I—”

“I know you like me, Adrien.” You interrupted him. You didn’t want to have this talk, not right now, but since you had started, you had to finish it. “I know, and I—” The words got stuck in your throat. You wanted to lie and tell him you didn’t like him, but the words didn’t want to come out. You averted your eyes from his green ones before you told him the things you heart wanted you to. “I can’t. I just…”

*For I can’t help falling in love with you.* You sighed as Elvis sang the last verse and people cheered.

Adrien said your name in a small voice, but you refused to look at him. You couldn’t.

Someone cleared their throat behind you.

Marinette was standing there, arms crossed and tapping her feet on the ground. Her red lipstick was a little smudged and her cheeks matched the color of her mouth.

“M-Mari, hey.” Adrien flashed her a smile.

“Come with me.” She narrowed her eyes at him. “*Now.*”

“What? Why?” He tried to argue, but she grabbed his arm and began to drag him inside. “Wait, Marinette! I need to talk to her!”

The brunette didn’t listen to his pleas, and soon they disappeared in the crowd.

You slumped on the railing, letting a puff of air out through your mouth and thanking Marinette in your mind for appearing when she did. *I hope Chat arrives soon,* you said to yourself. Then you could leave this goddamn party.

“You don’t know when to stop, do you?”

You raised your head to see Louise. She had a can of beer on her hand and her eyes didn’t seem focused.

“First Chat Noir,” she said, the words slurred. “Now Adrien.”
You rolled your eyes. “Go back inside, Louise, you’re drunk.”

“No! It’s not fair!” She stumbled a little, dropping a great amount of beer on the ground. “Leave Adrien alone. You already put your claws on Chat Noir.”

You tightened your jaw, trying to control the anger that began pump through your veins. “Adrien is my friend.”

She laughed. “It didn’t look that way just now!”

You pushed away from the railing. “If you like him so much, why don’t you just tell him?”

She gave a step back and glared at you. “He only has eyes for you.”

“How do you know?” You gave a step forward. “Did you even try talking to him, Louise?”

She was silent, but her gaze was full of drunken anger.

You huffed. “What are you waiting for then? Go after him!” The words left your mouth with difficulty, part of you didn’t want Louise to go.

“Fine!” The blonde girl said through her teeth and took a gulp from the beer, throwing the can on the ground. She turned around and wobbled in the direction Adrien and Mari had gone moments ago.

“Louise!” Julien called from the door, but she kept going. “My goodness, what happened to her?”

Julien walked on the deck, stopping by your side.


“Bathroom.” He said, a little bashful. He was probably expecting you to comment about him and the brunette, but you wouldn’t do it. You just wanted him to be happy, and if Marius did that, then it was all good.

You began to walk along the deck and Julien accompanied you.

“What did Louise say to you?” Julien asked.

You explained what had happened to him as you walked.

“Mon dieu, she really has lost it.” Julien pushed his hair back. “I think being away from her family for so long really fucked her up.”

“I’m surprised she hasn’t been akumatized yet.” You watched the string lights and paper hearts above you, seeing them swaying in the wind.

Julien sighed deeply. “Me too.”

As you neared the back of the boat, you heard familiar voices. Mari and Adrien were arguing about something.

It was difficult to make out what they were saying with the music and chatter around you, but you could understand part of the talk.

“…Saw the earrings.” Marinette said. Adrien said something in return that you couldn’t catch, and the brunette threw her hands in the air. “Doesn’t matter! You can’t do this to her!”
“What else can I do?” The blonde asked, his voice filled with anguish.

“Trust that she’ll like you for who you are and just let things work out.”

Adrien let out a hollow laugh. “What if she doesn’t? She’s leaving in 4 months, Marinette, I don’t have time for that. I can’t lose her.”

“How can you be so blind?” Mari shook her head. “You’re just making things worse, and you know that.”

You stopped walking and looked away from them. They were talking about you, weren’t they?

“Julien, let’s go back.” You touched your friend’s arm. Why did Adrien have to like you so much? He could choose anyone he wanted, someone better for him than you.

“Adrien Agreste!” Louise’s exalted voice sounded above the noise.

“Oh no.” Julien murmured.

She approached Mari and Adrien, who stopped talking when they saw her. The music got louder and you couldn’t hear anything of what they were saying.

Louise stood on the tip of her toes and crashed her lips against Adrien’s, wrapping her arms around his neck. Your heart skipped a beat and you heard Julien gasp.

You turned on your heels and began to walk away, heart racing. You heard Julien call your name, but you kept going. You had to be away, far away from there. You couldn’t know if Adrien was going to kiss her back or not, and you didn’t want to know.

Don’t be jealous, you don’t have any reason to be, you told yourself as you walked inside and squeezed past people as fast as you could, a heavy feeling in your stomach. You can’t be jealous. You tightened your jaw. It’s better like this.

But your heart didn’t seem to agree with you.

You washed your hands and patted some water on your cheeks. The bass of electronic music made the walls vibrate around you. Your fatigued reflection on the bathroom mirror stared back at you and you sighed. What a mess.

You just wanted to go back home to your warm and comfortable bed. It didn’t seem Chat was going to appear anyway.

“Crazy night, huh?”

“Yeah.” You nodded to the stranger’s voice. But… this wasn’t a collective bathroom and you were by yourself.

Snapping your head to the side, you looked around for the source of the voice when your eyes landed on a small black creature flying on your eye level.

You screamed and stumbled back, your back hitting the door. The creature watched you with amused green eyes. It had cat ears and a tail as well. Your eyes widened as you puzzled the pieces together. You had heard that voice before too. It’s …
“Bye.” The creature said and flew out of the window.

“Wait!” You called out, but it was already gone. You leaned on the sink, putting a hand on your forehead. Had you drink so much to the point of hallucinating? Maybe someone had put something in the drinks?

Someone knocked on the door, startling you and clearing your thoughts. You threw the door open, ignoring the shocked girl in front of you and ran outside, bumping into people on the way.

You couldn’t have imagined that. There was no way. And if Plagg was on the boat, then Chat had to be as well, right?

You searched on the first and second floor, and found nothing. People watched you as you went, probably thinking you were drunk out of your mind. You thought you heard someone calling your name once or twice, but you ignored them. You had to find Plagg.

You saw a movement from the window; something had just flown upstairs. Climbing one more flight of stairs, you arrived at the third, and last, floor of the boat. You looked around frantically until you saw the black thing moving again. You leaned on the railing to see better and squinted when it approached the light. It was a bat. You cursed under your breath. *A bat!*

“You!”

You turned around and saw Louise marching your way. There were tears streaking down her face. The tears had mixed with her mascara, creating a black mess on her face. She looked like a crazy gothic clown.

“You ruined everything!” She cried. People began to whisper around her, looking at the both of you.

“Louise, calm down.” You put your hands in front of you in a placating manner and took a step back.

“No!” She shoved you backwards with force.

As you stumbled and lost your balance, you wanted to tell yourself that you should’ve seen it coming, and that you shouldn’t have stood so close to the railing. But your mind was blank as gravity pulled you down, towards the water.

The sound of people screaming was cut off by the noise of water pressing against your eardrums. The river was freezing. The cold seeped into your clothes and went straight to your bones.

You began to swim up, desperately needing air, when you felt an arm sneak around your waist, making the ascent much easier. When you breached the surface, you gasped, filling your lungs with precious, precious air.

“Are you okay?” A familiar voice asked. You looked to the person and saw Chat staring back at you. You blinked, trying to take some of the water off your eyes, and Chat wasn’t Chat anymore, but Adrien. “Can you swim?”

You nodded, but he helped you get to the riverbank anyway. Two security guards pulled you up, and then aided Adrien.

You sat down on the ground, coughing thanks to the foul water you had ingested, and closed your eyes. None of the tourist guides had warned you about the taste of the Seine. Maybe no foreigner wanted to share that information and have to explain how the hell they ended up drinking water from
the river. The wind blew and you shivered, your teeth beginning to chatter.

A towel was wrapped around you, and you opened your eyes. Adrien kneeled on the ground in front of you, another towel on his shoulders. His clothes and hair were sopping wet. “Did you hit anything when you fell? Are you feeling anything? Any discomfort? I'll take you to a hospital if you need.”

You shook your head, holding the towel closer to your body. “I'm fine, Adrien. I didn't hit anything. Thank you for the help back there.” He was the one who helped you, not Chat. You had imagined for a moment that the arm around your waist was your muse’s, but it seemed that Chat wasn’t at the party after all.

You fished inside your pockets for your things and saw they were, unsurprisingly, all wet. Your phone wasn’t turning on; your wallet and your documents inside, soaked; only Chat’s pager seemed to be ok. You let out a deep sigh, putting the things inside your pockets again.

“I'm sorry,” Adrien said in a small voice. He went to touch your cheek, but stopped mid-air and dropped his hand.

“It’s okay,” you murmured. You wanted to ask him if he had kissed Louise back, but, thankfully, managed not to.

“It wasn’t my fault!” You heard Louise scream and saw she was being taken away from the boat by a security guard.

“Oh, really?” Alya said, and the next thing you knew, Louise was on the ground and Nino was holding Alya back.

“Alya, calm down!” Nino said as she struggled.

“This bitch just pushed my friend in the goddamn river! I’m not going to be calm!” Alya exclaimed.

You thanked Alya in your mind for doing what you wished you could and got up with a groan. Adrien kept watching you, ready to catch you if you needed it. Your friends approached you and the model gave a step closer. It seemed that your fall had activated his protective side.

Mari hugged you. “I'm so glad you're okay.”

“You didn’t hurt anything, did you?” Nino asked.

“That lunatic could’ve killed you!” Alya hugged you after Marinette. “Imagine if you had hit your head on the side of the boat?”

You winced. You preferred not to imagine it.

“I’m so sorry about this, I should’ve kept an eye on her,” Julien said, brushing a water drop from your cheek. “I’ll take her home now. If you need anything, just call me okay?”

You thanked him and waved as he left. Kostas was carrying Louise, who kept thrashing around. People watched the show from the boat, trying to see what was happening.

“You can take her home in my car, Marinette. I’ll stay here to help Nino. He still needs to be the DJ until the party ends.” Alya said, fishing for something in her purse.

“She’s staying with me,” Adrien said.

You looked at him with furrowed brows. “No, I’m not.” Like hell you’d stay near him after that talk
“Chérie, please.” Adrien pushed wet strands away from his face. It surprised you that the pet name didn’t sound weird coming from him. “This was my fault, please let me make it right.”

You averted your gaze from his worried one. You couldn't explain it, but even after all that, you wanted to be close to him. You didn't want to be alone in your apartment or face Chat, if he appeared. You bit the inside of your cheek, realizing you were going completely insane. Maybe you already were.

“All right, but if you ask any weird questions, I’m leaving,” you said in the most serious tone you could manage. “Understand, Agreste?”

He beamed at you. “Deal.”

Your friends shared a look between each other.

Adrien turned the heat of the car on and you thanked him in your mind. You hadn’t spoken to each other since you got into his black sports car. You were pretty sure someone had snapped a picture of you two leaving together, but it was the least of your worries right now.

You sneezed, and Adrien glanced at you. “I’ll prepare you something hot to drink when we get there.”

You nodded, watching the city pass through the window as the radio played a soft melody in the background.

The car stopped on a red light and Adrien muttered, “I’m sorry.”

You glanced at him, seeing the red from the traffic light illuminating his face. “I already said it’s—”

“I know.” Adrien interrupted you, his hands gripping the steering wheel. “I know, but… I’m sorry. I truly am, for everything.”

You brought the damp towel around your shoulders closer to you, understanding the underlying meaning of his words.

“Okay.”

Your reflection on the mirror showed you looked exactly as you were feeling. Like shit.

Adrien had lent you some of his clothes, saying he’d wash your wet ones. It reminded you of when you slept in his manor last year. When you were feeling lost and exhausted, like now.

You exited the bathroom, releasing the steam from the scalding hot shower you had taken into the rest of his studio.

“Feeling better?” Adrien asked from the kitchen. He was still using his damp clothes, and you really tried not to stare and notice how they were stuck to his skin.

“Yes.” You averted your eyes from his frame. “It’s your turn now.”
“I forgot to ask what you wanted to drink, so I made coffee, tea, and hot chocolate. They’re on the counter.” He said, making you raise your eyebrows. Wow.

“Thank you. You really feel bad for what happened, huh?” A small chuckle left your mouth.

The model looked down. “I’m—”

“If you say sorry one more time, I’m leaving.” You stated, pointing at the door.

A smile pulled at the corners of his mouth. “Just knock on the door if you need anything.”

You nodded, an image of a wet Adrien answering the door appearing in your mind. The image changed and it was Chat at the door instead. You shook your head, feeling your thoughts merging with each other. You had really gone mad.

As Adrien closed the bathroom door, you yawned and walked to the sofa. You could get something to drink after you rested a little. You put your wallet and pager on the ground. Adrien had gotten your phone and documents, and put them on a towel to dry. You didn’t know if that would work, but you let him help anyway. He was still feeling guilty for what happened.

The sound of the shower being turned on filled the silence as you lay down.

You looked up at the ceiling. What a crazy night. Adrien had asked you if you liked him, you had possibly seen an ancient magical creature, and then you were pushed into the Seine, and all in the span of a few hours.

And still, Chat Noir hadn’t appeared. Had he even gone to the party? You closed your eyes, shuffling on the sofa. The cat boy had some answering to do.

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A small part of your mind was still clinging to reality when you heard a voice near you. Your body wasn’t answering anymore, as it had already gone into a deep slumber.

“Did she fall asleep already?” A sigh, and then the voice got closer. “I guess we can talk tomorrow then.”

You barely felt a soft touch on your cheek as your mind let go of reality and granted you unconsciousness.

A grey wall filled your vision.

A small bookshelf and a clay sculpture of the Egyptian goddess Bastet were in front of it. The location was familiar somehow. You could feel something within you that recognized it, but still, you couldn’t pinpoint where it was.

When you stepped closer, the statue moved, meowing happily at you. You caressed the cat under the chin and a sound came from behind the wall. You gave a step forward, raising your hand, but instead of touching something solid, your palm passed through. Your body followed and everything went dark for a moment.

Something pulled you forward.

You opened your eyes when you heard footsteps outside. It wouldn’t take long for her to arrive now. You looked around the run down house and closed your hand a little, pressing the man’s throat more
firmly. His blood was tainting your white gloves with red, but it wasn’t important now. You felt the
guy breathe with difficulty and brought him closer to you.

His features were distorted, moving as if he was underwater.

“Please,” he said, the volume of his voice inconstant. “You’re stronger than this.”

You grinned as a loud sound took over everything. You were pulled back to the darkness again as it
got louder and louder.

Your eyes fluttered open. Bright light filled your vision and you closed them again, feeling your head
pounding. A doorbell rang and you groaned, pulling the covers over your head. Whoever was
calling at this time could wait; you wouldn’t get up now.

The doorbell didn’t ring again and you took a deep breath, shuffling on the bed and getting
comfortable. How dare this person wake you up after the night you had?

Your eyes shot open as memories of yesterday filled your mind all at the same time.

You threw the covers away and leaned on your elbows, searching around frantically. You saw a
plant, a large window, and some postcards on the wall. This wasn’t your room, and this bed
obviously wasn’t Adrien’s couch. Where am I? You asked yourself, shuffling around on the bed.
From the edge, you could see the bottom floor, and your eyes landed on the sofa you had laid down
yesterday.

You slumped back on the bed and took a deep breath to calm yourself. Alright, so you were still in
Adrien’s studio. You had probably fallen asleep on the couch and Adrien had carried you to his bed.
You touched the empty part of the mattress, wondering if he had slept by your side. It didn’t seem
like it.

You sat up with a groan, your head feeling like lead. You glanced down at yourself, seeing you were
still wearing the blonde’s clothes. You put a hand on your forehead. This was bad. You shouldn’t
have come here. Why did you think this was a good idea?

You pushed yourself out of the bed and closed your eyes, feeling dizzy as flashes of the dreams
came back to you. They seemed to be getting stronger, but if they were trying to tell you something,
it wasn’t working. You couldn’t understand anything. They didn’t seem to be about the past Chats
this time. Where was that door? Was it a symbolism? Was this related to Chat as well? And who was
the person with the white gloves? It was the second time you had that dream. It had to be important.
You shook your head, feeling it protest with the sudden movement. You wondered if you’d ever
make sense of these dreams one day.

When you were about to get up, you saw a glass of water on the bedside table.

Adrien. With a small smile on your lips, you downed the glass, feeling the cold water passing
through your body. You took a deep breath and got up.

You rubbed your arms as you walked down the stairs, the cold metal sending shivers up your bare
feet. Your footsteps were the only sound in the place. It seemed to be early morning, and soft
sunlight illuminated the studio. A cat was near the windows, drinking water from one of the bowls. It
ran away when it saw you.

You looked around when you reached the bottom floor. Adrien didn’t seem to be home. It was better
like this. You would leave, and you’d never talk about that party ever again.

You found your clothes folded on a counter along with your dried phone and documents, but you couldn’t see your wallet and pager anywhere. Maybe they’re still near the couch?

You walked to the sofa and stepped on the rug that covered the ground near it. It was soft and warmer than the ground, and you almost sighed in happiness, relishing on the feel of it. A sudden sharp pain on the sole of your feet made you yelp. You were jumping on one foot while massaging the spot when you saw something glow on the ground.

Crouching down, you saw it was your pager. Your mouth went dry when you saw both the red and green buttons had been pressed. You did not want Chat or Ladybug to see where you were right now, especially considering the clothes you were wearing. Your relationship with Chat would probably crumble to dust.

You grabbed the pager and pressed both buttons at the same time. Chat had told you to push the button again if you did it by accident. It didn’t work, they were still glowing. You cursed under your breath and pressed only the red button again. It went dark. You were halfway into pressing the green one when you heard a beep.

It was soft and barely noticeable, even with the silence in the studio. You took your finger away from the button slowly as you looked to the side. You knew that beep.

“Chat?” You called as you put your pager on the sofa, almost afraid of hearing an answer. Was he already here?

But there was no other sound besides the insistent beep. You followed it across the studio until you reached the other side, past the kitchen area.

You stopped in front of a grey wall with a bookshelf and a Bastet sculpture in front of it. The beep came from somewhere behind the wall, and your heart seemed to beat in synchrony with it. Your dream came back to you like a bubble being pulled to the surface. As if in a trance, you put a hand under the chin of the cat figure. Your fingers trembled as they found a bump.

You sucked in a breath, your mind racing. Your thoughts were crashing into one another, making it impossible to focus on anything. You could only grasp a little of what they were saying. Chat. Adrien. Ring. Same. It was like your mind was fighting with itself. The headache was getting worse, but you pushed the pain back the best you could.

You pressed the button and the wall slid to the side, revealing a dark room. The beep got louder, filling the whole studio now. Without hesitation, you walked forward, feeling the room call for you, urging you to get closer.

When you gave the first step inside, lights turned on, blinding you for a second. But as you were able to see again, your eyes focused on a glass structure in the middle of the room, similar to a museum’s. A paper was exposed like an expensive artwork inside. With your eyes never leaving the glass, you walked closer. The beeping seemed to come from there as well. With each step, your head hurt more. Your mind seemed to stretch like it was about to snap in two.

A shuddering breath left your mouth when you saw what was on the paper. It was the drawing you had made for Chat on the day you had met him. You put a hand on your mouth as you stumbled back. If Adrien had the drawing, then…

You felt a sharp pain in your head. No. It can’t be.
You looked around you and articles cut out from newspapers and magazines covered most of the walls. Most of them had Chat’s face printed on the paper. You glanced to the other side and a line of sculptures greeted you. Some were completed, others not. But you knew two of them from your dreams. From Plagg’s dreams. The boy that was burned alive and Gana.

In an instant, your mind seemed to let go, making the pain vanish. It bombarded you with memories you knew you had, but couldn’t access, like dreams long forgotten, and mixed them with the ones you already had.

‘Can you draw me, ma chérie?’

‘Princess, look at me. Do you think I’m Adrien?’

You fell to your knees, struggling to breathe. You closed your eyes tight as images of Chat and Adrien merged together.

‘He’s a lucky guy, Chat Noir.’

You held your head between your hands as your heartbeat pounded in your ears. It had been him. It had been Adrien all this time.

The beeping was still blaring in the room. With shaking legs, you got up and followed the sound to a cat bed on a large Egyptian pedestal, seeing the pager inside of it. You grabbed the device and pressed the only button there. The sound stopped, letting silence and your thoughts engulf you at once.

‘Do you like me?’ Adrien’s words from yesterday came back to you and you gripped your chest. Why had he done that to you?

“So you found out.”

You turned around, almost losing your balance.

The black creature from the boat was floating near the entrance, his green eyes looking at you with the same amusement from before.

“Plagg.” Your voice was barely a whisper.

He shot you a grin, his fangs poking out. “It was about time, honestly.”

Chapter End Notes

I wasn't going to end this chapter on a cliffhanger, but you guys know me. I couldn't resist lol But there you go, the really anticipated (for some) reveal! What will happen now? :D Stay tuned for the next update!

Thank you all for another year, for your overwhelming support and kindness. Happy holidays and a happy New Year! \(^{(*⌒▽⌒*)}\)
Surprise! I know I'm late, my darling readers, but please forgive me. I got sick during my trip and remained sick until I got home, and then I had more health complications during the month. To sum it up, I was a mess both physically and mentally. I still am a little. Even answering people and being on social media makes me anxious. Hah. That's why I disappear from time to time, it gets too much for me sometimes. I apologize. I actually finished this chapter in January, but I just couldn't post it.

Anyway, it's here now! I was going to split it into two parts, but I think you guys deserve to read everything after all this wait. Enjoy!

The cat-like creature in front of you didn’t seem real, it seemed like a 3D effect from a movie, and just looking at it was making your head hurt.

Plagg flew closer to you, and with him, came another memory.

The fashion show, the way Chat kissed you when you talked about how nice Adrien was. How you asked him if he was jealous because of your words. Your stomach churned in anger. It was so obvious. Black dots filled your vision and your legs wavered.

“Careful!” Plagg flew around you as you leaned on the Egyptian pedestal for support. “This first moment is always the worst. You should sit down.”

Your body obeyed his words before you could even process them. Instead of sitting, you sprawled on the ground, the cold of the floor like an anchor holding you to reality.

Chat had been on the boat yesterday, just like he had promised. Why didn’t he just tell me?

You struggled to breathe.

“Take deep breaths, it should help.” Plagg flew above your head, looking down.

You filled your lungs with air and let it out slowly a few times. It helped, but not much. Your heart was still hammering against your chest, your thoughts screaming at you.

“It was him. It was him all this time. It was so obvious.” You let the words out, not being able to keep them inside you any longer.

Your gaze was fixed on the glass ceiling, which let you see the soft blue color of the sky. Another wave of pain brought another memory. The black cat figurine Adrien had given you for Christmas. ‘You said you liked him, right?’

With a groan, you put the heels of your hand over your eyes. “Ugh, I was so stupid!”

You heard Plagg sigh. “Sometimes I think I should make an informative pamphlet so I don’t have to explain everything every 200 years or so. It would make my life so much easier.”
You took your hands off your face when you felt Plagg sit on your stomach. He didn’t weight more than a stuffed toy.

“Listen, you couldn’t have known. Don’t you think that after almost 10 years, somebody should have figured it out that a famous model like Adrien has a striking resemblance with Chat Noir? And that the two are never at the same place at the same time?” He crossed his little arms, looking at you quizzically.

You opened your mouth to question him, but he continued before you could ever utter a word.

“It’s magic. Witchcraft, sorcery mambo jambo, whatever you want to call it.” He waved his little paw nonchalantly. “It makes it almost impossible for anyone to discover the miraculous heroes’ identities. Only when someone is sure of it, it’s over. But, if they’re not really sure, if they don’t have proof, the magic makes the person forget.”

“But—”

“No buts,” Plagg interrupted you again. “It wasn't your fault. End of story.”

You pursed your lips, looking away from him. It still felt like it was your fault. You had been so close to Adrien and Chat all this time, how had you not seen it? Yesterday your mind had begun to blend the two together, but you thought it was only because of stress. Maybe you could’ve found out about this on your own? You had no way of knowing anymore.

The sculptures on the sides of the room seemed to watch you from above, and you saw that some of them were quite familiar. Not because you had seen them in your dreams, but because you saw those features in the mirror every day. Adrien had sculpted statues of you just like you had made drawings of him.

You imagined the blonde sitting in front of the clay or marble, thinking about you as he used your face for reference. Your stomach gave a leap just thinking about him.

“Where’s Adrien?” You asked. He still hadn’t come back from wherever he was. What would you do when you saw him? What would you say? What would he say? Everything would change now and you weren’t sure if you were prepared for it.

“He had to go out to run some errands and asked me to look over you.” Plagg was watching you with attentive eyes as if to prove his point. “He also said he was going to buy you some breakfast. The sap.”

Your body relaxed a little. You felt a little better knowing you wouldn’t have to face Adrien now. You didn’t have the energy or the peace of mind to deal with him.

You sat up and winced as your temples throbbed in pain. You closed your eyes tightly and waited for it to stop.

“The headache should stop in a few hours.” You heard Plagg say. “I think.”

You opened your eyes and finally took a good look at him. He was hovering at your eye level, his long tail moving in the air.

“What are you exactly?” You asked.

He puffed his little chest out in a proud pose. “A kwami.”
“A kwa— what?”

“Kwami,” he said the word slowly, like a foreigner teaching you how to pronounce their name. “The entity that gives power to the miraculous ring.” He shrugged. “It’s more complicated than that, but you get the drill.”

A kwami. You repeated the word many times in your head. It was surreal to think that such a magical creature was in front of you like this. It still felt like you were dreaming, like Plagg was nothing more than a creation of your brain. You felt an urge to touch him, to prove to yourself that you weren’t going mad.

You raised your hand and the kwami stayed still, eyeing your movement. Your fingers brushed the top of his head and you felt the softness of his short fur. A tingling sensation went from the tip of your fingers to the rest of your arm. It felt familiar, comforting.

“You sent me the dreams, didn’t you?” Your voice was small in the large room.

Plagg had to be the one that showed you this place. Even if you had begun to mix Adrien and Chat, discovering about a secret room was on a whole new level. You couldn’t have thought about all this on your own.

“You got more than one?” His ears perked up.

Doesn’t he know about the other dreams? You asked yourself as you nodded. The kwami’s eyes lit up.

You caressed his head. He was so small, about the size of your palm, which almost made you forget that he was a powerful ancient being.

“You talked to me on the boat and you showed me this room. You… wanted me to find out.” You tilted your head. “Why?”

The kwami averted his eyes. “Adrien was being… Difficult.”

Your expression hardened, your hand stopping its movement for a second. Difficult was an understatement. Adrien had made a complete fool out of you. It was one thing not to tell you his identity, but it was a totally different one to play with your emotions like he did. And why? Didn’t he trust you?

Plagg cleared his throat. “Err, what did you see? In the other dreams?”

“Past Chat Noirs, fragments of the Hawkmoth war,” you said, noticing how Plagg’s green eyes widened at your words. You let your fingers brush the tip of his ear, and he shuddered. A chuckle left your mouth. “I see where Chat gets his ear sensitivity.”

An alarm blared in the room and you jumped, looking around until you realized it was coming from your phone. You squinted at the screen.

‘Cinema test’

When the words dawned on your fatigued mind, it was like a bolt of lightning hit you, feeling you with dread and anxiety. The test! It was worth a lot of points, you couldn’t miss it!

“I have to go.” You got up, wobbling a little as you did so, and made your way to the entrance of the secret room. You gave a quick look around. You wanted to explore more, but you didn’t have time.
I'll come back later.

“What? Where are you going?” Plagg flew by your side, following you as you grabbed your clothes on the kitchen counter.

“I have a test in half an hour.” You took off the clothes Adrien had lent you and quickly slipped into your own.

You didn’t care about Plagg watching. If the kwami could see as Chat, then he had already seen you naked, and even if he couldn’t, he had probably seen you naked as well, when Adrien blindfolded you. Your face grew warm at the memory, but you shook your head to get rid of it. You didn’t have much time and you still had to run to your flat to get properly ready for the test.

You folded Adrien’s clothes, putting them on the counter, and walked to the entrance of the studio with large steps.

Plagg’s ears fell to the sides and he pouted. “How unfortunate. I was expecting some drama.”

“Oh, there will be drama.” You opened the front door, your things clutched in your arms. This was far from over. Adrien would get a taste of how he made you feel. “Don’t tell Adrien I found out.”

A wicked grin pulled Plagg’s mouth. “Deal.”

Your feet tapped on the ground as you moved your pen between your index and middle finger. The class was quiet, everyone paying attention to their own papers. The test wasn’t difficult, but you had already read the same sentence at least 10 times.

‘Elaborate on why Citizen Kane was important for the history of cinema.’

You began to write where you left off.

... And the word, Rosebud, remains a secret until the end of the movie.

A secret. Why did you take so long to find out about Chat and Adrien? His hair, his voice. It was the same! ‘It’s magic’, Plagg had told you. You huffed. It didn’t make you feel any less stupid.

Someone coughed in the other side of the room, and you blinked. Citizen Kane. Right.

The movie introduced new camera techniques that remain in the memory of Hollywood since today.

You could finally understand why Gabriel’s memory was so damaged. You had seen in your dreams that Hawkmoth was Chat’s father, Adrien’s father. Everything made sense now.

Another memory rushed to the surface of your mind, making your whole body warm. Chat’s torso flush against your back, his breath hot on your nape.

‘You could also call me like your other muse, if that gets you off. What was his name again?’

Goddamn you, Adrien! You cursed under your breath and kicked the chair in front of you. The girl seated in said chair looked back with a frown, and you gave her an apologetic smile.

“Sorry,” you whispered, going back to your test.

You massaged your temples, trying to ease the discomfort. How dare Adrien do that to you? You
just wanted to be done with this stupid test. You didn’t know exactly what you’d do with your muse, but you’d come up with something.

The answer to your dilemma didn’t take too long to come to you. It began with seeing Julien in the corridor after the test. The blonde’s eyes widened when they landed on you, your name slipping past his lips.

“Hey, how are you feeling?” He gave you a tight hug, and you held onto him, wishing his arms could give you some peace of mind. “You didn’t get a cold, did you?”

You sighed into his shirt. “No, I’m fine.”

“You don’t sound fine to me.” Julien pulled back to take a look at your face. “What happened?”

A voice carried down the corridor. “Have you seen her?”

You froze in Julien’s arms and glanced behind you. Adrien was at the end of the corridor, looking for someone. Probably you. He talked to another person and said your name this time. Alright, so definitely you.

Your mouth went dry as you turned back to Julien.

“Did Adrien do something?” Julien tightened his hold on you. “If he hurt you, I swear—”

“He didn’t do anything,” you said quickly as you pulled Julien behind a pillar. “He’s not flirting with me anymore.”

“But you’re still avoiding him?” The blonde arched one eyebrow at you, and you bit your bottom lip.

You just wanted to confide in Julien, to tell him everything, to share this frustration you had inside of you. The secret was suffocating you, but you couldn’t do this to Chat. It wasn’t your secret to share with others.

Pain surged in your head, although considerably less from a few hours ago, and a string of memories surfaced. The way Adrien always acted strange when you were around Julien. And hadn’t Chat marked you for the first time after you had met him? Your eyebrows shot up, the beginning of an idea forming in your tired brain.

“… I told you to talk to him, didn’t I?” Julien sighed. You realized you had lost quite a bit of what he had said. “This can’t keep going—”

“Julien.” You gripped his arm and he stopped talking. You peeked around the pillar and saw Adrien was still walking down the corridor. It wouldn’t take him long to arrive at your spot. You turned back to your friend. “Can you help me?”

“Sure, but with what?” He furrowed his brows.

“Stay still,” you said and rubbed your neck and face on his shirt the most you could. Some students gave you funny looks as they passed by.

Julien pulled you back by the shoulders and looked at you with amused eyes. “Are you sure you’re okay?” He put a hand on your forehead. “Did you hit your head on the side of the boat yesterday?”

“Ah, there you are.”
You took a sharp intake of breath as Adrien’s low voice made goosebumps rise on your forearms. He was dressed in all black today, surely a play of the Universe to mock you, as if saying ‘see how obvious it was all this time?’

“You’re with Julien… Of course.” The model crossed his arms, watching as Julien took his palm off your forehead. The jealousy in his voice was palpable.

“Lovely to see you too, Adrien,” Julien said, the hint of sarcasm in his tone apparent enough for the model to narrow his eyes.

*I’m not prepared for this. I’m not prepared for this*— Your mind kept screaming at you, but you focused on your muse and gave him a large smile.

“*Bonjour, Adrien.*” Your voice was calm, but your thoughts… Not so much. You kept going over Adrien’s features, seeing Chat in each one of them. You were torn between wanting to punch him and kiss his mouth.

You stepped closer to the model and greeted him with a cheek kiss, lingering long enough for him to be able to smell Julien’s perfume on you. Adrien’s jaw tightened and he grabbed your waist, his fingers pressing into your skin.

You arched one brow at him and saw a blush creep up from his neck to his cheeks. He averted his eyes and let you go.

“You… didn’t see my texts?” His voice was strangled like he was struggling to keep control of himself. And if you knew Chat well, you knew he was. “I was worried about you.”

You grabbed your phone, seeing that you had 10 unread messages from Adrien. “Oh, I was taking a test. Sorry about that.” You tilted your head, a small smile pulling at your lips. “Did you miss me?”

“I…” His hands opened and closed by his side. “I need to talk to you.”

You stomach gave a leap. What could he possibly want? Was he already going to confess about his identity? Had it been that easy?

Neither you nor Julien moved, so Adrien glanced at your blonde friend. “*Alone.*”

You almost shook your head. *Oh, Adrien, I’m not done with you yet.* The payback plan began to take a more solid form in your mind. If Adrien wanted you to like him, you’d like him alright.

You gave him a sultry look. “You want me all to yourself?” His eyebrows shot up and you smiled at his reaction. It was a good start. “Can it be after lunch? I’m starving.” You put a hand on Julien’s arm. “What about you, Julien?”

Your friend looked from you to Adrien, and you tightened your hold in him a little in a silent request. He put his arm around your shoulders and grinned. “I’m famished.”

Adrien refused to leave you and Julien alone as you went to the resto U.

He sat on your right as Julien sat on the left. You knew being this close to you without being able to mark you was probably torture to the model, but he was hiding it pretty well. He was quiet while you talked with Julien about yesterday’s party. Marius was nowhere to be seen, and you were thankful for that, since he could end up ruining your plan before you even put it in motion.
“Can you believe Liz almost jumped into the Seine too?” Julien laughed and you did the same, touching his arm as you cackled.

Adrien let out a chuckle, but you could see in his eyes that he didn’t find anything funny. “I didn’t know you two were such good friends.”

“How, Agreste. Are you jealous?” Julien put his arm around your shoulders, bringing you closer to him, and you chuckled as you leaned into his chest.

“What if I am?” Adrien smiled, eyes narrowed. Everything about him screamed danger.

“You have no reason to be, you’re not her boyfriend.” Julien shrugged.

There was a moment of silence as the two stared each other down, and you held your breath.

Adrien glanced at you and then averted his eyes, going back to his food. He had barely touched it. “No… No, I’m not.”

“Aww, don’t be like that, Adrien. I love you too.” You grabbed his face and gave him a kiss on the cheek.

He dropped his fork on the plate and the sound echoed in the room, mixing with the noise and chatter. You didn’t move as he turned his face to you and you stared at each other, your half-lidded eyes contrasting with his wide ones. Adrien was easy to read when you got close enough to him, just like Chat. You could see all his emotions in his eyes. Confusion, frustration, excitement…

Someone whistled.

“Damn, did we arrive at a bad time?” Alya put her plate on the table, Marinette joining her.

“Oh, hey girls.” You leaned away from Adrien and heard him take a deep breath.

“That line was enormous today.” Mari sighed, sitting down. You looked at her and felt an involuntary surge of anger rise in you.

She had known that Chat was Adrien all this time. She knew you were suffering, but she didn’t say anything. But how could she? A part of you considered. Just like you, the secret wasn’t hers to share. Your shoulders sagged, your anger dying down. Now her talk with Adrien at the boat made sense. She had tried to put some sense into his head and stop him from confusing you even more.

You glanced at the blonde, remembering his words at the party. He seemed so afraid to lose you, as if you would stop loving him when you found out he who he was. How foolish.

“Are you feeling better?” Mari asked, bringing you back to the present.

“Yeah, Adrien took really good care of me.” You grinned.


Your grin got bigger. “He even carried me to his bed. Right, Adrien?” You put your hand on the blonde’s thigh and he jumped a little, staring at you with wide eyes. You squeezed his leg. “Right?”

He just kept staring at you, and you thought you had broken him. He then shrugged. “It was the least I could do.”

“You’re a sweetheart.” You caressed his thigh, raising your palm really close to his crotch. He
glanced down quickly before giving you a baffled look.

“You didn’t hit your head on the boat, did you?” Mari let out a laugh, but there was real worry in her gaze.

You removed your hand from Adrien’s thigh, making sure to let your fingers linger as you did so, and went back to your plate. “Maybe I did, I’m not sure.” The others, especially Adrien, seemed alarmed at the statement, so you added, “Maybe not. It was probably that awful water.”

Julien pulled on your arm and whispered in your ear, “You slept with him?”

“I just slept in his studio,” you whispered back. Julien gave you a scandalized look. You leaned closer, putting a hand on his arm. “It’s complicated. Just go along with this for now, please.”

Adrien called your name. His tone was serious, and you quickly suppressed the smile pulling at your lips before turning to him.

“Yes, love?” You leaned closer to him, invading his personal space.

He blinked as a deep blush spread over his cheeks. “Love?”

“We should take her to a hospital,” Alya whispered to Mari, not so subtly. “Maybe she really hit her head.”

Adrien cleared his throat and leaned back, away from you. His cheeks were still a beautiful red, and you felt proud of yourself. “Can we talk now?” He motioned to your empty plate.

“Oh.” You put a hand on your forehead as if checking for a fever. “I think I don’t feel too well, Adrien.”

“What are you feeling? Do you need help?” He eyed you, half suspicion, half worry.

“It’s okay, Julien will help me out. Right, Julien?” You gave the other boy a look and he promptly got up, picking up his empty plate.

“Of course.” Julien nodded with a solemn face.

You grabbed Adrien’s chin with a light touch, keeping him in place, and kissed him on the cheek, close to his mouth. “See you, model boy,” you whispered to him and got up. “See you later, girls.” You waved at Alya and Mari as they kept staring at you with dumbfounded looks.

“Go see a doctor!” Marinette exclaimed as you walked away.

Julien put his arm around your waist, pretending to support your weight as you left the restaurant after returning your plates. When you arrived at the other side of the door, he pulled you to a corridor and began to laugh hysterically.

“What was that?” He struggled to breathe and you grinned. “What the hell happened in his studio?”

“Nothing much.” You looked at your nails. “I’m just getting him back for all his teasing.”

Julien stared at you for a moment before another laugh left his mouth. “Mon dieu, you’re insane. I don’t know what happened, but I love it.” He gave you a tight hug. “If you need any more help with this madness, count me in.”
You didn’t go back to your flat after that. With the state you left Adrien in, you knew that he’d try to talk to you as Chat, and you were having none of that. He was going to suffer for a little longer. Julien had a date with Marius, so he couldn’t accompany you on your stroll around the city.

The weather was slightly warmer, humidity filling the air. You took the metro and went to a region near the Luxembourg gardens to buy some art supplies, but you didn’t go too far and tried to avoid streets filled with too many people. There could be paparazzi around and you didn’t want to appear in any more gossip articles. You already had your fair share of those.

A poster caught your attention as you passed by a small cinema, your hands hurting from holding the plastic bags with your new supplies. It showed a couple holding each other and in the background, in the midst of a destroyed Paris, were Chat Noir and Ladybug. ‘Time of War’ was written at the top.

*An indie movie about the Hawkmoth war?* You didn’t know such a thing existed! You were almost vibrating with excitement as you approached the entrance.

Your phone ringed when you were waiting on the line to buy a ticket. You were expecting to see Adrien’s name on the screen, but it said Mari instead.

“Allô?” You said as you adjusted the plastic bags on one of your arms.

“Hey, are you okay?” Marinette asked.

“Yeah, why?” You took one step forward as the person in front of you left the line.

“Just checking.” There was a pause, and she continued. “Where are you?”

“I’m going to watch an indie movie right now.” You dodged the question, not wanting to reveal too much.

There was a noise in the background and you heard a familiar voice say ‘ask her if she’s going alone.’

You smiled. Adrien. So that was the reason for the call.

You heard Mari let out a quiet tsk before she asked, “You’re going by yourself?”

“What? I didn’t hear you.” You lied, pulling the phone away from your ear. “Oh, the movie is about to start. Talk to you later!” You hung up and turned your phone off. Adrien would have to try harder than that.

The sky was colored a beautiful pink when you left the small movie theater. The movie hadn’t been what you expected. It focused more on the romance between the main protagonists than on what was happening in Paris at the time. Chat Noir and Ladybug only appeared once, to make an announcement at the end of the war. It was similar to the one they had made at the New Year’s Eve.

The guy who played Chat looked nothing like him and kept finger gunning to all the ladies. He reminded you of that embarrassing scene in the Spider-Man 3 movie. Who knew? Maybe Chat had really been like that in the past.

You began your walk home when you heard someone call your name. You tensed for a moment before you saw Alya waving as she walked up to you.
“I didn’t know you were there as well!” She exclaimed. “We could’ve watched the movie together!”

You looked around. “You’re alone? Didn’t Nino come with you?”

Alya scoffed. “He doesn’t like war movies. He says it makes him sad and lose faith in humanity.” A gush of cold wind ruffled both of your clothes and Alya rubbed her hands together. “Where are you going? Home?”

You thought back to your apartment and the possibility of Chat appearing to talk to you. “I… don’t know. I don’t really want to stay by myself.”

“Come to my flat then! It’ll be just me and Leon since Nino will work at a party tonight.” She smiled. “We can take care of you if anything happens.”

“Thanks, Alya.” Your chest warmed up at her words. She was still worried about you. “And who’s Leon?”

Leon lay down on your lap and you ran your fingers through his light brown fur. He sighed deeply as Alya tried to find a video on her computer.

“That movie was completely inaccurate.” The only noise in the room was of her frantic mouse clicking. “They could’ve used my blog as a reference, or used any reference for the matter.”

You pushed your small handbag to the side with your feet and slid your chair closer to the desk. Before leaving, you had packed a few things you were going to need for the night and let a post-it note on the balcony for Chat saying, ‘I’m at Alya’s. I need some time to think.’ It was dramatic enough to make him think something was wrong, but reassuring enough to not let him worry that you were kidnapped or something like that.

“I thought there was almost no information about the Hawkmoth war,” you said.

Alya shook her index finger. “Hah, almost!”

You leaned closer to the monitor. “You know what happened?”

“I have a few videos, but they don’t show the bigger picture.” She sighed. “I’ve been trying to use them to find who the new Hawkmoth is, but no use.”

She opened a video and the sound of a huge explosion filled the room. You jumped as well as Leon, who began to bark to the air.

Alya scratched his ear. “Shh, Leon, it’s alright.” The dog calmed down, laying on your lap again.

The video showed a younger Ladybug rescuing people from under debris. The street was covered in dust, the colors dull. With the help of a group of people, Lady was able to save some kids trapped under the pillar of a building. An explosion sounded in the distance and the video became shaky. People began to scream. ‘He’s here! Get out of here and get cover! Now!’ Ladybug shouted, and the footage ended.

“That was all Hawkmoth’s doing?” Your voice sounded small to your ears. How was he able to cause so much destruction?

Alya opened another video that had a wicked laugh in the background. You had seen that one
“No, it was mostly…” Alya stopped for a moment. “Mostly…” Her eyebrows furrowed and her eyes unfocused. You watched as she blinked and then looked at you with a smile. “What were we talking about?”

You opened your mouth and closed it, not being able to find your voice. You just stared at her, eyes wide.

“Oh, yeah.” Alya nodded as if she was having a conversation with herself. “So, I only have these videos, but they don’t help much with finding Hawkmoth.”

You swallowed dry, your pulse quickening. “Alya. Who did this to the city?”

“It was…”

You watched as she went through the same process as before. She couldn’t say who had done it. Her memory had been erased.

Your mouth was dry. But why? Who did this to her? Hawkmoth?

“Alya, your memory was erased.”

A crease formed on her forehead. “How do you know?”

“Alya asked, bringing you back to reality.

“Your memory,” you muttered. “Alya, your memory was erased.”

“Alya pondered for a moment. “That would explain a lot of things. What did you ask me?”

You took a deep breath. This isn’t going to work. But you let the words leave your mouth anyway. “Who destroyed the city during the Hawkmoth war?”

She seemed determined at first, but then her expression relaxed and her eyes glazed over. A second later her gaze went back to normal. “Did I show you the video of Ladybug saving Leon? Here, let me find it.”

You let air out through your mouth slowly. Shit, this is bad. Leon raised his head to look at you as if sensing something was wrong. You patted him on the head.

Your phone rang, startling you. With a tsk, you looked at the screen. Adrien’s name was there to greet your eyes.

You bit your lip before taking the call. “Hey.”

“What—” Alya turned to you and interrupted herself. “Oh.”

Adrien’s voice came from the other side of the line. “Oh, hey. I, uh, I just wanted to ask if everything is okay.” You could feel the unease in Adrien’s voice. Hadn’t he seen the note you left on the window door?

You got up and put Leon on the ground, much to the dog’s dismay. You scratched his ear as an apology and motioned the corridor with your thumb to Alya. She just nodded.
“You there?” Adrien asked.

“I’m here,” you said as you walked to the kitchen, on the other side of the small flat. “And I’m okay. Why?”

“No, it’s nothing. I was just checking since, you know, you’re still recovering,” Adrien said.

You rested the back of your head on the cold tile wall. “I know you love me, model boy, but I just fell into a river. Don’t worry too much.”

“If you need anything, just let me know, ok?” He said, and you hummed in response. The line was silent and you thought he had hanged up when he asked, “Is… Is everything okay between you and Chat Noir?”

Oh, so he had read the note. You closed your eyes, a smile pulling at your lips. “Why wouldn’t it be?”

“I don’t know.” He said, and you heard him sigh, the sound warped by the phone. “Sorry, I shouldn’t have asked that.”

“It’s alright. Chat and I…” You let out a long, dramatic sigh. “I need some time to think.”

He was silent for a moment. “I see. Well, sorry if I bothered you, I just wanted to make sure you were okay. Goodnight.”

“Goodnight, Adrien.” You said, looking out of the window to the dark street.

You were almost regretting your plan of teasing him. You missed him, and you wanted answers. You wanted to know who did that to Alya and what happened during that goddamn war.

“You’re still there?” Adrien said in a quiet voice, startling you. You thought he had hanged up already.

“…Yeah,” you muttered.

“I really need to talk to you.”

A small chuckle filled the silence around you. “You’re talking to me right now.”

“In person.”

“Oh my,” you said in a suggestive tone.

You heard him groan. “I’m serious.”

You sighed, scratching your neck. “Is it about the Nine Muses project?”

“No,” he replied quickly. “It’s something else.”

You hummed. “Are you going to ask me weird questions again?”

“No! It’s not that either, I promise,” he said. “It’s important. Maybe we can talk tomorrow while we work on the project?”

You wetted your lips. “I planned to go out with Julien tomorrow.” Poor Julien, he didn’t even know you were making up fictional plans for him. But you doubted he would mind.
“Did I mention it’s really important?” The impatient tone of Adrien’s voice made you smile.

“Alright, I’ll talk with Julien,” you said. “I’ll meet you at your studio after lunch.”

Adrien let out a relieved sigh. “Alright, cool, thank you.” His voice sounded much brighter now.

“See you tomorrow then, goodnight. For real this time.”

A chuckle left your mouth. After the first initial shock and feeling of utter betrayal, you were relieved that Adrien and Chat were the same person; you loved both so much.

“Goodnight, Adrien. Dream about me,” you said in a quiet voice and hung up before he could reply.

With each step you took up the stairs, your heart seemed to beat faster. You’d probably die of a heart attack before you even made it to Adrien’s door, and that couldn’t happen. Today was hopefully the day you’d get the answers you wanted and Adrien would get the punishment he deserved.

Yesterday you had managed to make Alya understand that she had her memory erased without making her forget about it. What you had to do was not to mention the question about who had destroyed the city, because when you did that, her brain simply erased the conversation that lead to that from her mind. After you managed to make her see the problem, Alya was ecstatic. You had lost her to her computer after that. She said she’d find answers, and you really hoped she was right.

The door of the studio opened, showing a flustered and freshly showered Adrien at the doorstep. His cheeks were already red and you hadn’t even done anything.

“You came,” he said in a mixture of eagerness and relief.

The sight of him reminded you what you were here to do and a grin stretched your lips. “Of course. Julien agreed to meet later tonight, so it’s all good.”

His earnest expression fell for a moment, but he quickly composed himself. “I see. Thanks for coming.”

“It’s nothing.” You greeted him with a kiss on the cheek and let your lips linger for a moment before walking past him.

You heard him take a deep breath and mutter something under his breath as he closed the door.

“Well, here we are. All alone, just like you wanted,” you said in a low voice as Adrien turned to you. You opened your arms, trying to make the movement appear nonchalant. You couldn’t let him see your own eagerness. “What did you want to talk about? I’m all yours.”

The blonde just stood there, eyes trained on you for a moment before pressing his lips together. “Uh, I’m… I’m going to get the supplies so we can talk.” He almost sprinted to the other side of the room.

You watched with amusement as he basically ran away from you. If you managed to maintain your composure and follow the plan, this was going to be fun.

“Psst.”

You turned around to the source of the sound and found Plagg sitting on the kitchen counter, motioning for you to get closer.

You glanced at Adrien before you walked up to the kwami, who went inside the bathroom.
“Adrien, I’m just gonna wash my hands, alright? Be right back!” You raised your voice for him to hear.

“Sure, make yourself at home!” He shouted back.

You closed the bathroom door behind you and caressed Plagg’s chin.

“Hey,” you whispered. The kwami leaned on your touch, purring softly.

You opened the faucet, hoping the sound of falling water would cover your voice.

“You didn’t tell him, right?” You whispered.

Plagg shook his head. “Of course not. What’s the plan?”

You glanced at your reflection in the mirror. “Do you think he’s going to tell me the secret today?”

Plagg nodded. “Yeah, that’s all he has been talking about.”

Butterflies erupted in your stomach and you smirked, turning the water off. “When he takes the ring off, hide it.”

Plagg mirrored your expression and nodded. When you opened the door, he flew away. You smiled as you followed him out of the bathroom. You had known the kwami for a day, but you already felt like you had known him for a long time.

You walked to Adrien’s sculpting table, but stopped when a movement near the window caught your attention.

It was the same cat you had seen when you had slept here. You tried to get its attention, but the cat just looked at you and disappeared behind a plant vase. Your shoulders sagged. You just wanted to pet it.

“Kitty?” You called, looking behind the vase.

“Yeah?” Adrien answered.

You froze on the spot. A heavy silence hung in the air as you turned around slowly to look at the model, a wicked grin stretching your mouth. He hadn’t done that. He hadn’t. It wasn’t possible.

“What?” You asked.

Adrien had turned his whole body away from you, going back to organizing his tools. “Oh, I thought you had called me.”

“I didn’t know you liked to be called like that, Adrien.” You walked up to him, the cat now forgotten, and put your bag on the table. “How kinky.”

“It’s a pet name of mine, didn’t you know?” He shot you a crooked smile, but his cheeks showed his embarrassment.

Your eyes narrowed a fraction. Was he hinting at being Chat already?

You hummed as you grabbed a stool and put it right beside him. “No, I didn’t know.”

“Now you do.” Adrien winked as he put the clay on the table. “It’s your turn to make the design this
time.”

Adrien had chosen Melpomene, the Muse of Tragedy, for today. Dramatic, but fitting for the situation. Everything could go wrong in a matter of seconds, and your plan would crumble to dust.

You opened your sketchbook in a blank page and began to draw. You already had an idea for the character design; you just had to put it on paper. It was difficult to concentrate when you had so much on your mind, but you did the best you could.

While you drew, Adrien got ready to sculpt. He took off his ring and put it on the table, away from the clay. You kept stealing glances at the jewelry. The ring that he used as Chat was identical! It was a different color, but the shape was the same. You shook your head slightly. This is absurd.

You glanced to the side, wondering if Plagg was ready to act. Adrien put an apron on top of his clothes before beginning to model the sculpture. You had to take the blonde’s attention away from the table. You took a deep breath and channeled your inner actress.

“You’re not going to take off your shirt this time?” You let your eyes slowly wander over his torso.

Adrien let out a snort.

“What?” You asked.

“You got mad at me for flirting with you two days ago, and now you’re here, asking me to take off my shirt.” He shook his head, a small smile on his lips. “I can’t understand you. Maybe the girls are right and you did hit your head on the boat.”

“Oh maybe I just changed my mind.” You put your sketchbook down and leaned closer to him. “What if I want you to flirt with me?”

He pressed his lips firmly together. “What about Chat Noir? Aren’t you together?”

You pulled your stool as close as you could to his and turned your body fully to him, so your chest was pressed against his side.

“Well, he ditched me on a boat on Valentine’s Day. He promised he’d appear, and he didn’t.” You caressed his shoulder and arm, leaving light touches on his skin. “So, screw him.”

Adrien swallowed as you pushed his long hair back, the tip of your fingers brushing against his neck.

You tucked the strands behind his ear. “I’m interested in someone else now.”

“I’m sure Chat Noir had a legitimate reason to not appear,” the model said in a strained voice.

“I don’t care,” you whispered. You leaned in and let an open-mouthed kiss on his jaw.

Adrien jumped from the stool and gave a few steps back away from you like you were some sort of feral animal. His chest was heaving while he rubbed the spot you had kissed.

You got up as well and walked up to him with slow steps. “What’s the problem, model boy? Isn’t this what you wanted?” To each step you took, Adrien gave one back until his back hit the wall. You put a hand on his chest, making sure that his attention was all on you. “I like you, Adrien.”

You leaned in to kiss him, but he swiftly moved away, almost making your lips meet the wall.

He put a safe distance between you and cleared his throat, refusing to look your way. “We need to
“This is the important thing,” he said between gritted teeth.
“Oh.” You nodded. “Well, it was a funny joke, I can give you that.”

“It’s not a— Chérie, listen to me.” He went to touch your arm, but stopped when he glanced at his dirty hands. “I am Chat Noir.”

“Prove it, then.” You crossed your arms over your chest.

“Alright, I’ll show you.” Adrien took off his apron and quickly washed his hands before standing in front of you, determination in his eyes. “Plagg, transform me!”

Seconds passed, but nothing happened.

You nodded, unimpressed. “Wow.”

Adrien glanced at his right hand and let out a coy laugh. “Oh, the ring. You see—” His gaze went to the table, but the ring wasn’t there. “What the…” He looked around for a moment and then stopped as many emotions passed through his face. His expression settled on anger. “Plagg! This isn’t funny! Come here this instant!”

“Who’s Plagg?” You asked, but Adrien wasn’t listening anymore. He looked around the table and inside the cabinets.

As he began to climb the stairs to the second floor, you got up from the stool. *Time for the other part of the plan.*

You put your bag on your shoulder and began to walk in the direction of the front door. “This was fun and all Adrien, but I need to go. Julien is waiting for me.” You waved. “We can finish this Muse another time. À plus .”

“No, wait!” He ran back down the stairs and grabbed your arm, stopping you. “I swear I’m telling the truth. I’m Chat Noir.”

“Well,” you gently took his hand away from your arm and gave him a look. “If it really has been you all along, it means that you played with my feelings and made a fool out of me. On purpose.”

He visibly flinched and had the decency to look guilty. “Alright, we can talk about this, but please, you have to believe in me first.”

“I’m sorry, Adrien, but I’ll only believe if you become Chat in front of me.” You looked at your phone screen and showed the time to him. “If you can’t do that in five minutes, I’m leaving.”

Your eyes followed Adrien across the whole studio as he tried to find the ring or Plagg. He kept calling the kwami’s name, seeming sure that he had the jewelry. He wasn’t wrong. Plagg was hiding, and sometimes you saw him fly away in a hurry when Adrien got too close to his hideout. He seemed to be enjoying himself.

When the five minutes were almost over, Adrien walked back to you, shoulders sagged and hair in disarray.

“I can’t find it.” He let out a hollow laugh, pushing his hair back. “Putain, je suis foutu.”

“It’s not that bad, Adrien.” You shrugged. “It was funny while it lasted.”

“Chérie, look,” a long sigh left his lips. “I know I should’ve have told you about my identity sooner, but I wanted to be sure that you’d love me for who I was.” His voice cracked a little, which made
your eyes widen. He was actually being honest. The blonde continued, his voice losing strength as he talked. “I was so afraid that you wouldn’t love me as much as you love Chat and I didn’t want to lose you, so I…” A shaky breath left his mouth. “I fucked up. I’m sorry. I was so blind that I didn’t see the pain I was causing you. If you give me more time—"

You put a hand up and Adrien stopped talking. “I can give you one more chance.” His apology had made your dedication to your plan waver for a moment, but… You weren’t done yet. “Chat is my muse. If you really want me to see if you’re him or not, I can touch you and find out if it feels the same way.”

The model’s eyebrows shot up, and you could see he was interested. He was probably thinking that this could work.

His green eyes narrowed. “How will I know if you aren’t touching me just because you want to feel me up?”

You shot him an innocent smile. “You won’t.” He pressed his lips together, and you could almost see his brain working. You tilted your head. “So?”

He bit his lip and nodded. “Alright, deal.”

You grabbed his hand in yours. “Come.” You could hear your rapid pulse in your ears as you led him to the sofa. “Now sit down.”

He just stood there, so you rolled your eyes and pushed him back, making him fall on the cushion. You got on top of him, your knees on either side of his legs. He took a deep breath, clenching his hands on top of the sofa. The smell of Julien’s perfume on you was probably making him uncomfortable, and you wondered how long he’d last without trying to mark you.

You let your hands go from his large shoulders to his toned chest, where you stopped. His heart was beating fast against your palm.

“So? Anything yet?” Adrien swallowed and you watched as his Adam’s apple moved up and down. “It should be pretty obvious.”

“I’m still not sure.” You pulled away from him a little. “You’re my muse as well, so it’s difficult to know the difference.”

“We’re the same person! There’s no difference!” Adrien exclaimed and you felt his heart beat faster. You hummed. “Take off your shirt.” He laughed, but you just stared at him. “I’m serious.”

He clenched his jaw. “You want me to take off my pants as well?”

You smirked. “Maybe later.”

Grumbling under his breath, Adrien removed his shirt, throwing it somewhere behind the sofa. You felt a pulse of heat between your legs at the sight of his muscles moving.

“Much better,” you murmured as your thumbs slid over the indentation of his abs.

You leaned in and let an open-mouthed kiss on his neck. His stomach contracted under your palms and he sucked a sharp breath.

“This isn’t fair.” His hands grabbed your waist. “I should be the one touching you and showing you
I’m Chat Noir.” He pulled you closer until his lips brushed your neck. “I know what you like, love, let me show you.”

You trembled as a strong shiver ran down your body. Focus. You pulled away from him and gave him a leveled stare. “Not gonna happen, model boy, unless you want me to leave. And Chat is an obedient kitty, so if you’re him, I expect the same from you.”

Frustration burned like fire in his green eyes. He let go of your waist and turned his face away from you, letting his head drop on the back of the sofa. “Fine, but don’t get too close. I can smell that guy on you, and it’s driving me insane.”

“You mean Julien’s perfume?” You tilted your head down to try and smell your shirt. You didn’t feel anything. “It’s quite strong, isn’t it?”

Adrien only grunted in response, still looking away from you.

You smiled and continued to leave soft kisses on his neck. A quiet purr sounded from the blonde’s chest when you touched a spot under his jaw, but you pretended not to hear it. So he had some of Chat’s characteristics. Fascinating.

“You hear that?” He wetted his lips.

You glanced at his green eyes. “I don’t hear anything.”

“You’ve got to be kidding me,” he muttered under his breath but allowed you to continue.

Your fingers carefully touched his face, going from his cheekbones to his jawline, and then to his bottom lip. It was surreal to think that you had all the time in the world; you didn’t have to worry about a ring dictating how long you could touch your muse.

“We have the same eye color, the same hair, the same body,” Adrien murmured, voice tense. “How can you not see it? I even confessed—”

You put your fingers on top of his mouth, silencing him. “I can’t concentrate if you keep talking, model boy.”

He averted his gaze as you ran your fingers through his messy blonde hair, pushing it back. You ran the tip of your fingertips over his ears and he shivered. Oh, so not only Plagg and Chat had sensitive ears. You wondered how else Adrien was similar to the cat boy.

The blonde looked back at you, studying your face, and you schooled your features into a neutral expression.

“Let me search for the ring then,” Adrien began to say. “I can show you—”

You pressed your lips against his and saw his eyes widen. You cupped his face and deepened the kiss, tilting his head upwards for better access to his mouth. He closed his eyes, a deep groan rumbling in his throat, and gripped your waist.

For a brief second, you almost let yourself get lost into him. You were a millisecond from forgetting everything and just focusing on how amazing kissing Adrien was. It was so easy. You could just relax and let his touch take you to a place where there was nothing else but the two of you. The blonde moaned and began to kiss your neck. When he gave the first bite, your eyes snapped open.

You pulled away from him, pushing his shoulders back with your hands. He was not going to mark
you. He cursed, trying to get to you again, but you pushed him back into the sofa with force.

“That’s enough,” you said as your chest heaved.

His grip on your waist tightened. He wasn’t happy for being interrupted, that much you could tell.

“See?” Adrien panted, a lazy smile pulling at his lips. He looked so much like Chat now. “It’s me, love.”

You raised yourself on your knees until you were looking down at him. “I’m sorry, Adrien, but… I didn’t feel anything. You’re not Chat.”

The way his eyes widened, like he didn’t know how to react, would be forever etched into your mind. His hold on you relaxed, his hands falling at his side. “I can’t— I… I don’t get it.”

“Don’t worry, I don’t mind that you’re not Chat,” you whispered and leaned down, bringing your lips together once more.

Adrien pulled you back by the shoulders and stared at you. You had never seen him so lost. “I need to find the ring. I’ll prove it to you.” He gently pushed you to the side of the sofa and got up.

You blinked at him, watching as he passed a hand over his face as if trying to pull himself together. He had given a few steps away from the sofa when you felt a laugh bubble from within you, and you couldn’t stop it from leaving your mouth. It began with a chuckle and then it escalated. You couldn’t do this anymore.

“What’s so funny?” The blonde’s eyebrows furrowed as he looked back at you. “Why are you looking at me like that?”

You put a hand over your mouth, trying to stop the laughs from coming out. “Oh, Adrien…” You shook your head and took a deep breath to try and calm yourself.

“What?” He asked, exasperated.

“She already knows, Adrien.” Plagg flew from his hiding spot in the kitchen and landed on your shoulder.

He was eating something that had a strong smell. *Cheese.* Something lit up in your mind. The Camembert! It had always been for Plagg!

Adrien looked from you to Plagg, mouth slack. It took him a few seconds to find his voice. “*What the fuck?*”

You snorted, lying down on the sofa and fanning yourself. Your body was too hot thanks to all that touching. Plagg adjusted himself on your shoulder again, and you caressed his head, hearing him purr.

“Wha— When? How?” Adrien narrowed his eyes to the kwami. “Plagg, did you tell her?”

Plagg huffed. “I didn’t do anything. You left your pager in the secret room when she slept here. She pressed hers accidentally when she woke up and found out by herself.”

Adrien looked to the right, face twisted in concentration. “No, I didn’t leave it there.”

Plagg grinned. “Yes, you did.”
The blonde opened his mouth to protest, but you put a hand up. “It doesn’t matter, Adrien. I know now, and that’s it.”

Adrien paced from one side to the other. “Mon dieu, why did you do this to me? I almost had three heart attacks in the span of 48 hours. My heart is still beating like crazy!”

“Don’t act like you’re the victim here.” You narrowed your eyes, glaring at him, and saw him flinch. “You should be thankful that I went light on you, Agreste. You tortured me for months with your flirting. This is nothing.”

He stopped walking and pushed his hair back. “Yeah, I suppose I deserved all of this. I was an asshole, wasn’t I?” You nodded and he sighed, shoulders sagging. “Merde, this wasn’t supposed to happen like this.” You watched as he paced around again, noticing how nice his back muscles looked as they moved. “I wanted to tell you, but then I got scared and— fuck.” A long string of curses left his mouth.

“You almost made me go mad.” You crossed your arms over your chest. “‘You can call me like your other muse if that gets you off.’ Really, Adrien?”

He rubbed his neck. “It was in the heat of the moment. You said I was your muse too and I just couldn’t control myself.”

“That was completely inconsiderate,” Plagg said and munched on a piece of his cheese. “You were this close to fucking everything up, boy.” Plagg showed him a really small hole on the cheese.

“You patted the kwami’s head. “Thank you, Plagg. I’m glad someone understands me and doesn’t make me feel like I’m a terrible person.”

“Alright, I get it! I’m sorry.” Adrien put his hands up in a sign of surrender. “Can you both stop teaming up against me?”

You and Plagg shared a look.

“I have one condition.” You sat up, and Adrien looked at you with expectation. “I want to see it. The transformation.”

“But I don’t know where the ring—” Adrien began but stopped when Plagg pointed to the coffee table in front of the sofa. The ring shinned under the afternoon light. The blonde gritted his teeth. “It wasn’t there before.”

You only smiled at him. His green eyes went from you to Plagg.

“You both planned this together, didn’t you? Bon dieu.” Adrien put the ring back on. “Fine, this depends on Plagg.”

The kwami shoved the rest of the cheese inside his mouth and shrugged. “I’ll do it.”

Adrien shook his head, chuckling. “Plagg never cooperates unless it has to do with cheese or you, apparently. Unbelievable.”

You scratched Plagg under the chin. “I like him.”

“Great.” Adrien rolled his eyes.

“Don’t be jealous, Adrien,” Plagg said.
The blonde only narrowed his eyes before exclaiming, “Plagg, transform me!”

This time, it worked. In one second, Plagg was on your shoulder, and in the other, he was being pulled to the ring. A shiver went from your head to your legs as energy filled the room and green particles began to gather around Adrien, covering his figure. You felt a pull in your chest as you watched the green light reflect on the walls. The light got too bright and you had to close your eyes for a moment, and when you opened them again, the green was fading, showing a black suit underneath it.

You didn’t try to contain your adoration and awe as you stared at Chat in front of you.

He opened his arms. “Do you believe me now, princess?”

You put a hand over your mouth. This was it. This was the moment you had been expecting for so long. You never knew you’d see him transform one day, but here you were, with the remaining energy from the transformation still making your body vibrate.

Chat was looking at you with his characteristic smug face, his tail going from one side to the other. Even with the mask, now you could clearly see Adrien’s features on him and it was fascinating. It was like you could truly see him for the first time.

You schooled your expression and put a hand on your chin. “I’m still not sure.”

His face darkened and he pointed his finger at you in warning. “You stop that right now.”

You leaned back on the sofa with a smile.

Chat wrinkled his nose and groaned. “God, that guy’s perfume on you is making me dizzy now.”

“Julien.”

“Yeah, that’s his name.” Chat sent a glare your way. “What’s up with you and him anyway?”

You glared back. “He’s going out with Marius, you oblivious idiot.”

“Oh.” His gaze softened as realization dawned on him. “You... You just did that to make me jealous.”

You shrugged, there was no denying it.

He rubbed his neck. “Hm, can I...?”

“Mark me?” You tilted your head, allowing him to have a better view of your neck. His eyes lit up and you deadpanned, “No.”

He scrunched up his face, almost pouting. “Why not?”

You looked at your nails. “Payback.”

Chat threw his head back and let out a loud groan. “Can’t you just tie me up or something and punish me? This is torture.”

“No, because you’d like it.” you said, already seeing in your mind how that would play out.

The blonde shrugged and murmured, “Can’t deny that.”
“You owe me some answers.” You crossed your arms over your chest. “And I have a lot of them.”

A sudden flash of green blinded you for a moment. The black suit disintegrated into light particles that disappeared in a few seconds, and a shirtless Adrien appeared where Chat once was.

“I know.” The blonde slumped on the sofa by your side as Plagg flew around.

The kwami snuggled against your neck and Adrien gaped at you.

“How come you let Plagg mark you, but not me?” He said through gritted teeth.

“Plagg didn’t make a fool out of me.” You gave him a pointed look.

You kept staring at each other until Adrien averted his eyes. He massaged the bridge of his nose. “Alright, I’ll answer your questions.”

“Good, then what happened—”

He put a hand up. “But first, let’s talk about this.”

You tightened your jaw. You wanted answers now, not to ‘talk about this’. You could do that later.

A song began to play and you looked around, recognizing the melody.

“Goddammit,” Adrien muttered and fished his phone from his pocket.

The music got louder and you realized it was an instrumental version of ‘Everybody Wants to Be a Cat’ from the Aristocats. You gaped at Adrien as he rejected the call. Could he be any more obvious? The worst part was that if you had known this was his ringtone before knowing his identity, you still wouldn’t have made the connection.

“Anyway,” he began to say. His phone rang again and he tsked, rejecting the call once more. He glared at the device, but then his expression lit up and he turned to you. “You know what, let me make it up to you.”

“What do you mean? Who was it?” You asked as Plagg sat on your shoulder and quietly hummed the Disney song.

“It’s just a model agency.” Adrien turned his phone off when it began to ring again. “Run away with me for a few days. We can go somewhere where no one knows who we are, and I’ll answer all your questions.”

You furrowed your brows. “Can you just leave like that?”

“It’s just for a few days. We’ll be back for Monday’s class.”

You searched his green eyes as you thought about it. The idea was tempting, even if you were going to miss some classes. The past days were chaotic and you really needed a break, a change of pace. And if that meant Adrien would tell you what you wanted to know, then why not?

“Where would we go? I can’t afford a big trip.” You scratched Plagg’s ear and he purred. Adrien sent a glare his way, but the kwami was unfazed.

“Don’t worry about that for now,” he said, making you arch an eyebrow. “Please, let me make things right,” the blonde continued, a hint of agitation in his voice. “It’ll be just me and you.”
“And Plagg,” you added, giving the kwami’s ear another scratch.

Adrien glanced at Plagg and let out a long sigh. “… And Plagg.”

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter is going to be Chat's/ Adrien's POV of Chapter 9 since we hit the mark of 60 coffees! Wooo! (╯° ▽ °）oorny Just 10 more coffees and I'll do another survey to choose new POV’s :D

Love you all ♥♥♥ and I'll do my best to answer everyone, but I'm sorry if I can't!

p.s.: if you can't understand the phrase in French that Adrien said, I suggest you look it up, but only if you want to learn a way to curse in French lmfao
Chapter Summary

Lewd meter: ( ° ﾋ  ﾋ °)

Chapter Notes

BOOM, SURPRISE! I live! (fortunately? unfortunately?) I know I always give some sort of long excuse or explanation these days for being late, but to put it simply this time, I'm not well. I'll keep writing because that's what keeps me alive, so don't worry about the story being discontinued. But I'm not going to be active on tumblr or instagram, at least until I get better (or when college stops suffocating me).

Thank you all so much for staying with me even in the middle of all this chaos. I love you, really.

Enjoy :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The balls of Adrien’s feet almost didn’t touch the ground as he strolled across the manor’s long hallways. The morning sun rays entered through the windows and he felt like a ballet dancer, always on demi-pointe, so light that he was almost flying. And all that because of one single person. How was this possible? He had been alone for so long that his heart didn’t seem used to all these feelings coursing through his body. If only he had met the artist five years ago, when he was lost and tried so desperately to find the remedy for his loneliness in strangers. Maybe then his father wouldn’t have been able to akumatize him. Adrien closed his eyes for a brief moment, clearing his mind. He had to stop thinking about the ‘what ifs’.

“That fence teacher of yours was right, you could’ve been a great ballet dancer.” Plagg flew by his side, doing a pirouette in the air.

“I guess.” Adrien chuckled, imagining the long hours he’d have to spend practicing. He wouldn’t be able to be Chat Noir like that. “But I probably wouldn’t have met her.”

It took Plagg a few seconds to realize he was talking about the artist. The kwami then shrugged. “Who knows, maybe you two are meant to be and would’ve met anyway.”

A spark of happiness ignited in Adrien’s chest. “You think so?”

Plagg rolled his eyes as if he regretted saying his previous statement. “C’mon Romeo, let’s get something to eat. I’m starving.”

Steps echoed on the other side of the long corridor and Adrien gave the kwami a look. When Marie, his father’s nurse, appeared around the corner a second later, Plagg was gone.
“Mr. Adrien, bonjour.” The young woman gave him a faint smile as she approached. He had told her many times to just call him Adrien, but she didn’t seem to be able to. At least she didn’t call him Mr. Agreste.

“Bonjour, Marie.” He slowed to a stop in front of her. She was shifting from one foot to the other, and Adrien had a bad feeling in his gut before she even opened her mouth to speak again.

“Your father, he…” She wriggled her hands together in front of her. “He found a photo.”

The sound of cutlery hitting plates filled the dining room as Gabriel sat at the head of the table. He was so absorbed into the photo in his hands that he didn’t notice Adrien and Marie standing at the entrance. The nurse touched his arm, and Adrien almost jumped.

“I tried to convince him to give it to me, but he refused,” she whispered.

“Thank you, Marie. I’ll take care of it,” Adrien whispered back.

Marie nodded and gave a step back, standing outside the double doors, cell phone in hand, as if preparing herself for the worst.

Adrien took a deep breath and walked into the room.

“Father?” His voice echoed against the white walls, making him feel small and alone, like being in the manor always did.

His father looked up from the photo and blinked a few times. Adrien stopped breathing for a moment, but then his father said, “Oh, Adrien, bonjour ! Look what I found.”

Adrien inhaled deeply again to calm himself and kept walking. He was always waiting for the moment his father would forget about him too, but, fortunately, today didn't seem to be that day.

Adrien could hear his pulse in his ears as he walked to his father, eyeing the man with caution. Gabriel seemed stable, so maybe the photo hadn't triggered any memory. Yet.

“Look what I found, Adrien.” His father showed him the photograph. “I asked the nurse if she knew who this woman was, but she said she doesn’t. I feel like I know her.”

The photo was taken at a fashion show, 6 years ago. His father, still healthy, was standing near a woman, and he was smiling. Something rare in those days. To Adrien, it seemed wrong that Gabriel smiled more after the mind erasing process than he did when he was sane. Perhaps losing most of his memories took away the anguish that they brought.

Adrien’s mouth went dry as his eyes focused on the woman standing by his father’s side. It hadn’t been long that he had seen her at the university.

Adrien extended his hand. “Let me see.”

His father hesitated for a moment, but then handed him the photo. Adrien’s fingers were shaking as he grabbed the paper.

Gabriel still remembered Adrien’s mom and him, and some days he also remembered Marie and important people from the company, like Aimée. The woman in the picture, however, he couldn’t recognize. He had tried to before and it ended in Adrien having to call an ambulance and rush him to
the hospital. Gabriel almost didn’t make it and Adrien didn’t want to go through that again, so he had taken all the photos in the manor and hidden them.

“I don’t know who it is.” Adrien tried to use the most lighthearted tone of voice he could manage. “Where did you find this?”

“In the library,” Gabriel said, and Adrien made a mental note to check the library again and see if there were any more photos there.

Gabriel extended his hand to get the photo, but Adrien put the picture in the back pocket of his jeans and pulled a chair, sitting by his father’s side.

“I’ll try to find out who she is for you,” Adrien said.

His father’s eye lit up and Adrien felt dread slowly going down his stomach, like acid. It wouldn’t take long for Gabriel to forget about the woman and the photograph, and then Adrien would put it away along with the others.

He always told himself that one day he’d burn them all. He just had to gather up the courage to do it, but that same courage walked side by side with the hope that one day his father might get better. That one day, Gabriel might look at all those pictures and recognize the faces instead of asking questions about presumed strangers. But deep inside, Adrien knew that was just a dream.

Adrien’s steps weren’t as light as they were in the morning as he walked down the university corridors to the sculpture workshop. He had told everyone that worked in the manor to call him if they found any other photos. His father should be okay for the time being.

“Adrien.”

The familiar voice sent shivers down his spine, and not the good kind. When he looked up, it was like he was still looking at the photo his father had found. The woman in front of him hadn’t changed much in the 6 years that had passed.

He sent a curt nod her way. “Ms. Boucher.” His voice cracked a little and he cleared his throat. “How’s Marius?”

“He’s doing okay. He just got a new project at the company, Aimée herself chose him.” Boucher smiled. “He said he hasn’t seen you there much.”

*I hate that place.* Those were the words that Adrien really wanted to say, but he settled for, “Oh, I’ve been busy.”

The woman seemed satisfied with the answer. “How’s your father?”

Adrien’s throat threatened to close, but he managed to answer. “He’s better.”

She didn’t believe him this time, he could see it in her eyes. The hurt and worry were still there, even after these 5 years.

An image of his father lying unconscious on the ground of his hidden lair in the manor rushed to the blonde’s mind.

*Chat carefully cradled the man’s head on his lap. He had a deep cut on his forehead.* Why did you
do this, father? Why?

“He erased his own memory, Nooro is gone, and we don’t have anything from the book,” Ladybug said, her voice emotionless as she stared down at Gabriel.

She passed a hand over her face, looking away, and Chat thought she was about to cry. She wasn’t handling the past hours well, but it was understandable after all that had happened in the past weeks.

Ladybug squared up her shoulders and turned back, her expression cold.

“Lady—” Chat began to say.

“You should get him to a hospital.” She interrupted him in a monotone voice. “I’ll try to find Nooro.”

“Adrien?” Boucher’s voice brought him back to the present.

Adrien realized he was breathing with difficulty. He put a hand in his chest, feeling his heart hammering through his shirt. His eyes locked with the woman’s in front of him and he just wanted to leave, to get away from her judging eyes. He muttered a rapid ‘excuse me’ and let his feet take him away.

Adrien stared at his hands as he washed them. The cold tiles of the men’s bathroom surrounded him, but he didn’t remember walking there.

“Adrien.” He heard Plagg calling him, but he couldn’t bring himself to look up.

The water under his hands was red, like blood. He kept washing his hands, but the color didn’t vanish.

His phone rang in his pocket and he blinked a few times. The water was clear.

When he took the call, he heard Nino’s voice on the other side of the line. “Yo, Adrien! Where are you, man? You’re going to miss Marinette’s presentation.”

Adrien’s eye widened. Crap. Nino still thought that Adrien was going to the presentation because of Mari, but actually, he wanted to support the artist and ask her the name of her painting. He couldn’t miss it.

“I’m going, wait for me!” He said, turning the faucet off. Nino told him to meet him at the entrance of the presentation room and ended the call.

“Are you okay?” Plagg flew in front of Adrien.

“Yeah, I just… had some flashbacks, that’s all,” the blonde said with a reassuring smile.

Plagg didn’t seem completely convinced but got inside his pocket anyway. Adrien checked himself in the mirror, adjusting his hair a little, and went to the presentation room. He couldn’t wait to see his dearest one and expel any thoughts about his past from his mind.

Painting easels were scattered across the room, nervous-looking students standing in front of them.
The last test of this subject was open to other students to watch, so the room was a little crowded. Adrien had heard about this class before. People usually said that the teacher was really strict. Adrien wasn’t a fan of painting, so he never considered enrolling for it.

He scanned the room and his pulse quickened when his eyes stopped on the artist, focused on the painting in front of her. He had been with his chérie yesterday, but his heart still screamed with joy every time he saw her.

“Do you know her?” Nino asked and Adrien realized he was staring.

“Oh, yeah, um, she’s a friend.” The blonde scratched his neck, averting his eyes. He, Mari and Alya had told Nino about her, but his friend didn’t know what she looked like.

“Aren’t you going to talk to her?” Nino tilted his head slightly.

“O-oh, yeah.” Adrien nodded and began to walk in the artist direction, Nino following him.

As he got close to her, the blonde’s hands began to sweat. When the artist tilted her head to the side, Adrien grabbed Nino’s arm and pulled him to another painting. “You know, let’s take a look at the other paintings first.”

Nino arched one brow at him and Adrien pretended not to see it.

“Alright, then,” Nino said. Adrien could hear the suspicion in his voice, but thankfully, his friend dropped the subject.

Adrien didn’t want to be this nervous, but he couldn’t help himself. He always seemed to embarrass himself in front of his chérie as himself, and he didn’t want that to happen again.

He and Nino walked around the room for 5 minutes or so, making small comments about the paintings, and Adrien managed to calm down. When they got close to the artist again, Marinette was already by her side, talking to her.

“I really like this one too,” Adrien said to Nino in a nonchalant voice, hoping that his nervousness didn’t show. His friend gave him an amused look, to which Adrien returned with a warning one. Play along, he wanted to say.

The girls turned around and Adrien smiled at them. He really wanted to keep staring at the artist, but he forced himself to look at Nino. “What do you think, Nino?”

His friend hummed, looking closely at the painting. When Adrien looked at it, he was reminded of the night when he inspired her with his touch, and his body got warm all over. He stopped that train of thought before he got too worked up.

Nino then nodded, grinning. “I love the raw passion that’s behind it.”

Adrien blinked, staring at the canvas with wide eyes. Raw... Passion? Chat Noir had been the artist’s inspiration for doing the painting. Did... Did she feel that way when she painted it?

“I... had never thought about that. Thank you.” The artist gave Nino a bashful smile.

“Have we met before?” Nino asked.

Adrien’s stomach gave a leap. Oh, no. Before he could stop her, Marinette introduced the two of them.
“Oh, they always talk about you!” Nino laughed and glanced at Adrien with a look of understanding on his face. “Also Adrien keeps bothering me—”

“Nino!” He and Marinette exclaimed in unison. The artist couldn’t know the rest of that phrase. She couldn’t know that Adrien had talked and talked to Nino, or anyone who would listen, how amazing she was.

His friend shrugged, a questioning look in his eyes. Adrien knew that once they were out of that room, he wasn’t going to leave him alone. The artist was staring at Adrien with a confused expression, so he gave her an apologetic smile as he rubbed his neck.

“What he meant to say,” he quickly sent a glare at Nino, warning him to stay quiet, before continuing. “It’s that I was curious and wanted to ask what’s the name of your painting.”

The artist searched his face for a long moment, eyebrows furrowed. Adrien tried not to squirm under her gaze. What was she thinking about? Did she suspect him?

When he was about to say something, she gave him a hesitant smile and said, “It’s called ‘Lovers’ Embrace’.”

It was like she had just slapped him across the face. He glanced at the painting. She was in his arms when she had the idea to create it. Lovers’ Embrace. Could it be that she was finally seeing him more than as a muse? Adrien felt such a surge of happiness within him that he wanted nothing more but to hug his chérie tightly and kiss her right there, in front of everyone.

But he controlled himself and let his emotions bloom into a smile. “That’s… wonderful.”

Adrien kept looking at her, his heart soaring with nothing but affection for this precious being in front of him.

She averted her eyes, scratching her neck. She was so cute. “Hmm, thank you,” she said and then put a hand on her face, a shy smile on her lips. “You guys seriously need to stop flattering me. My heart can’t take it.”

Adrien and the others laughed. She really was precious.

Adrien and Nino waited on one side of the room with the other spectators as the teacher walked around grading the paintings. He wanted to be by the artist’s side to support her, but he had to settle for cheering from afar. Not that she really needed it. Her painting looked amazing, so she was definitely going to get a good grade.

He waved at her and when she looked his way, he smiled and gave her a thumbs up. She smiled back and nodded before looking away again. Nino nudged him with his elbow and Adrien tsked, pushing his friend back slightly.

“You call this a painting?” The teacher’s voice echoed in the room and the whole classroom went quiet.

“Pardon me?” The artist asked. The teacher was in front of her painting, a scowl on his face.

Adrien watched with shock as the guy dissed his dear one’s painting, the one she had spent so long making and with so much care.
“Zero.” When the words left the teacher’s mouth, Adrien bolted back to reality. He curled his hands into fists as he walked forward. That guy couldn’t do that.

A hand on his shoulder stopped him. Adrien looked back and saw Nino give him a warning look. The blonde tightened his jaw but remained by his friend’s side.

The teacher was already leaving to check another painting when the artist said, “Excuse me, teacher, I’m sorry, but that doesn’t make sense–”

“I will not change my mind.” The man interrupted her, rudely. “Now take this… thing out of my sight.”

Adrien gaped at the guy as people gasped around him. How dare he? A teacher shouldn't do that to a student! He didn’t even tell her what she had done wrong!

He looked at his dear one and saw she was stiff, hands balled in fists by her side. She grabbed her things and left the room in a hurry, Marinette by her side.

Adrien could feel his whole body grow hot from the anger pulsating in his veins. He walked up to the teacher, ignoring Nino’s calls.

“What part of ‘I will not change my mind’ you didn’t understand, Mr. Agreste?” The man said, coldly. Adrien wasn’t surprised that he knew who he was. Almost everyone in the university did.

He narrowed his eyes at the guy. He wasn’t going to give up so easily. “She was the only one to receive a zero. Why?”

“Mr. Agreste, you’re perturbing my class. I’ll have to ask you to leave.” The teacher glared at him and Adrien glared back. He could feel everyone’s eyes on them.

“Adrien.” Nino grabbed his arm, breaking the tension, and began to pull him away. “C’mon, man, let’s go.”

The blonde glared at the teacher one last time before letting his friend take him to the entrance.

“I hadn’t seen you that worked up in a while,” Nino said as they walked side by side down the corridors.

Marinette had told them his artist was at the Administration’s Office, so Adrien couldn’t even go and comfort her. He didn’t have a class now, so he was accompanying Nino to the Multimedia building.

“That guy is a joke.” Adrien scoffed. He still hadn’t calmed down. He just hoped that his dear one would manage to solve the situation. She had worked so hard on that painting! It wasn’t fair.

“Relax, man. I’m sure your crush is going to get a good grade.” Nino shrugged.

“I hope so,” Adrien muttered, putting his hands inside his pockets.

“You didn’t deny it.” Nino’s voice had a dangerous hint of mischief in it.
Adrien arched one eyebrow. “…What?”

“You didn’t deny that she’s your crush.” Nino gave him a shit-eating grin.

The blonde felt his cheeks grow hot and he looked away. “I have no idea what you’re talking about.”

Nino clasped his hands together and laughed. “Wait until Alya hears about this—”

“Nino, don’t you dare.” Adrien hissed.

His friend only laughed harder. “That’s why you were staring at her with that stupid look on your face earlier!”

“Stupid?” Adrien spluttered.

The ground shook, and the two shared a look between each other. Not even a second later, screams reached Adrien’s ears.

“Akuma!” A guy screamed as he ran past them. Other students began to run as well.

*Merde.*

“I need to find Alya!” Nino shouted above the commotion.

“Alright, be careful!” Adrien shouted back, looking around. He had to find a place to transform.

“Where are you going?” Nino asked, like he always did. And Adrien had to come up with an excuse, like he always did.

“I’ll try to warn the girls!” The blonde began to run.

There was a bathroom on the second floor that no one ever used due to some rumor about a moaning ghost. It was his favorite spot for transforming at the university. As he sprinted through the corridors, he peeked inside his jacket’s pocket, seeing a small form inside. Next came the most difficult part: waking Plagg up.

Chat stretched as he stood on top of the main building of the university. From there he could see the huge commotion happening under him. Everything was grey around the toppled statue in the middle of the campus. The trees, the grass, the zombie-like students… Everything. Apparently, another student had been akumatized and was now a color vampire who brought paintings to life. They were probably akumatized due to the stress from the classes. Chat stepped on the edge of the building. He couldn’t blame them.

Someone screamed and Chat narrowed his eyes, looking down. One of the painting creatures, a naked dude with a bow and arrow, was carrying a guy to the akumatized student. That blue jacket… Chat’s eyes widened.

*Nino.*

The cat hero jumped from the building to a tree and used his baton to land with ease on the ground. As the akumatized student began to take the colors off Nino, Chat hit the naked dude with his baton, making him release his friend. Without missing a beat, Nino nodded to him and ran away.
“Why suck people’s colors when you can suck other things, lady?” Chat smiled with his usual confidence. He just wanted to finish this fight quickly so that he could offer his dearest one his support and love.

The naked guy prepared to shoot him, but the villain held up her hand.

“Hello, kitty cat.” She turned around with her arms open, a grin stretching her lips as she looked down at him from her pedestal. “Finally decided to join me, I see.”

*That voice.* Chat’s stomach churned as he stared at her face, recognizing the features of his artist. *No... Mon dieu. No.*

He whispered her name, but she just rolled her eyes. “That weakling is gone, Colormancer suits me more now.”

His eyes widened as anger bubbled inside him. He was going to make Hawkmoth pay for this.

“Join me, kitty,” she extended her grey hand to him, and Chat felt a shiver go down his spine from hearing she call him that again. “And let’s destroy this place, together.”

He looked from her hand to her face. How did this happen? Did she feel so hopeless and angry that Hawkmoth was able to get her?

Chat jumped when something collided with her hand, making her hiss and bring it to her chest.

“Don’t let her touch you,” Lady said as she landed by his side on the grass. He blinked at her. Where did she come from?

The artist smiled at Lady. “Hello to you too, Ladybug.”

“Stop this, it isn’t going to solve anything,” Lady said, echoing Chat’s thoughts.

“Aww, c’mon, I’m not doing much.” The artist shrugged. “I just want to completely obliterate this place.”

Ladybug got into a fight instance and Chat swallowed dry. He didn’t want to fight against his *chérie.*

As if she had heard him, she extended her hand in his direction. “Last chance, kitty cat. We could have so much fun together.” She looked him up and down with a sultry gaze, licking her lips. Chat felt his whole body grow hot, eyes widening. He wasn’t supposed to be feeling horny in a moment like this!

“So who are you going to choose? Me,” she put her stretched hand on her chest and then pointed with her chin to Ladybug. “Or her?”

*Why is she doing this to me?* Chat’s shoulders sagged. Why couldn’t she ask that when she wasn’t akumatized? He said her name in a pleading voice, as if that would make her change her mind. But he knew that’s not how it worked.

A bitter laugh left her lips. “I knew it.” Her cold words hit him like stones.

She raised her hand and colors flew past Chat and Ladybug, going to her. She closed her eyes and grinned. Before the heroes could react, bright light began to shine from the color palette on her forearm.

“Stop her!” Ladybug shouted and threw her yo-yo at her, but a tall, armored woman blocked it with
Chat dodged the woman, but when he tried to get close, another one appeared and pointed her rifle at him. This one he was able to recognize. She represented Liberty in that famous painting. Her rifle didn’t say ‘liberty’ though, so he stopped, raising his arms in mock surrender.

Whatever creature his artist was trying to bring to life, it was powerful. Chat’s body vibrated with the energy before a huge explosion of color made him blind for a few seconds. When he was able to see again, a tall man wearing a red cape was in front of his dear one, the ground around him like a volcano, ready to spill. Liberty got distracted and Chat jumped away from her as the artist gave the new creature a command.

“The akuma must be in her palette. Destroy it and I’ll stop the monster!” Ladybug screamed as she used her yo-yo to follow the man to the university building.

Chat turned to his artist, his heart beating rapidly against his chest. Things were getting worse by the second. He didn’t want to fight her, but he had to put a stop to this.

“Finally alone.” She smirked at him, her voice sweet and inviting.

Chat could feel his body begging him to submit to her. She looked so powerful and amazing, like a goddess. *His* goddess. He groaned internally. Why did she have to be akumatized?

He shook his head to get rid of those thoughts and focused on her again. “I don’t want to hurt you.”

“Is that so?” She chuckled, seeming amused. “So let’s play a game then.” Chat tilted his head. He couldn’t help but be interested. She continued with a smile. “A game where I pin you down and make you scream my name as you come.”

If someone asked Chat later on how he had felt at that moment, he wouldn’t be able to answer. Scared and turned on seemed like a good one, but it didn’t come close to the array of feelings that coursed through him at that moment. He had never, not even in his wildest dreams, thought that he’d hear his *chérie* say something like that.

He didn’t even know how he managed to regain his composure enough to smirk. “Just give me the palette and we can play as much as you want, princess.”

She put a hand on her chin, and his body began to tremble. “That’s really tempting, but I’m afraid I cannot accept it.”

Chat saw the naked man and a centaur running up to him at the same time, and his instincts kicked in. He quickly jumped above them and used his baton to get to the other side of the statue’s base, making sure to wink at his dear one as he did so.

The artist didn’t seem happy that he evaded her minions, and her stern expression made him even more turned on. God, he had to control himself, otherwise his hard on would be visible to everyone.

He licked his lips and began to approach the statue’s base. He had to put an end to this right now before he lost his mind completely.

“You know, kitty cat, I’d love to play, but I’m afraid Hawkmoth won’t let me,” his *chérie* said with a sad voice, and he halted without thinking. “He desperately wants me to get your miraculous because he’s a big *coward* who is too *weak* to do the job himself.”

Chat took in a sharp breath. Akumatized people weren’t able to go against Hawkmoth. Was she
fghting against him?

The artist screamed and fell, her knees hitting the ground. The cat hero shouted her name and ran to her. Hawkmoth must have hurt her for what she had said. Oh, how he was going to make him pay.

When Chat got by her side, she raised her head to look at him. Her face was still contorted in pain.

“Hawkmoth,” she chuckled and then hissed. “He didn’t like that.”

Chat tsked, worry seizing his chest. “Why would you even do that, ma chérie?”

He put a hand on her shoulder to help her get up when she whispered, “Now.”

It happened fast, so fast, that even his quick reflexes weren’t able to save him. If his chérie had wanted to kill him, he’d be dead now, instead of being held by two strong women on the ground.

“Don’t let him touch you, Jeanne. This kitty cat can be quite dangerous,” the artist said to the armored woman, who nodded in response. She smirked down at him and Chat squirmed under her gaze, completely enraptured by her.

“Tsk, tsk, tsk.” She shook her head as she crouched by his side.

The cat hero tried to get free, but the women’s grasp on his hands and feet didn’t budge. Well, he was completely fcked. He tried to tell himself that the situation was bad and that he should be concerned, but the majority of his mind was enjoying this way too much.

“You deceived me,” he said, a little out of breath. “You did that on purpose.”

“You think so?” She smiled down at him and got up, looking at the fight happening near the university buildings.

“Chat! A little quicker would be nice!”

Ladybug’s voice reached Chat’s ears, making them perk up. He tried to look around, but he couldn’t see Lady from his position. Could she see him helpless and at the artist’s mercy? He closed his eyes for a moment, groaning in his head as his body reacted to those words. He really had to control himself.

“I’m trying, my lady!” He did try once again to get free, but the women were strong. He could use his power to end this, but he didn’t like using it and... He bit his lip, feeling his cheeks warm up. He didn’t want this to be over yet.

“There’s no need for that kitty cat,” his dear one said, and before Chat’s mind could process what was happening, she sat down on his stomach, making his breath get caught in his throat. She leaned down, close to him and whispered, “You’re mine now.”

Chat’s eyes almost rolled back into his head, shivers going down his body, and he felt a deep growl come from his chest. He saw she was smirking at him and he bit his lip hard. He had to control himself; she wasn’t in her right mind. But it was hard, especially when she put a hand on his throat. He had to do his best not to let out a moan.

He licked his lips, a smirk playing on his mouth. “Getting kinky, are we?”

She gave him a leveled look and slowly rolled her hips in a circle. Chat couldn’t stop the moan from escaping his throat this time. His whole body ignited. This was exactly what it had wanted from the
moment she called him ‘kitty cat’.

She hummed, seeming pleased, her hips still moving against his. “Moan for me kitty cat,” she whispered close to his ear and a strong shiver went down his spine. She didn’t even have to say that. He was already losing himself in her touch and in the pressure of her body against his. His mind was drowning in thoughts of her, of the touch of her mouth against his. He wanted to feel her lips against his, against his skin.

“Merde.” Chat closed his eyes tightly and swallowed dry. They were in the open and people were definitely seeing this. He cursed under his breath at the thought.

“Bring his right hand closer, Jeanne.”

Chat’s eyes snapped open when he heard his artist speak. She was going to get the ring. He had almost forgotten that Hawkmoth was the one controlling her. His heartbeat was hammering against his chest and he began to panic. He tried to get free from Jeanne, but he couldn’t. He would have to use his power on the woman, and he didn’t want to do that. The artist was too close. What if he touched her? He banished the thought from his mind before it could gain form.

“Wait, princess!” Chat pleaded, but the artist only stared down at him, unmoving. “Wait, ma belle, we can—” She moved her hips into his and he groaned, throwing his head back as his toes curled inside his boots. *Merde*, *merde*, *merde*. He couldn't focus like this!

When he was about to warn Ladybug about the ring, he saw her from his peripheral vision. She had just defeated the lava creature with a bottle of oil and was now getting ready to fight the other four minions. Her eyes met his and she nodded. Chat relaxed, knowing that she had the situation under control. He wouldn’t have to use his power after all.

“You know,” his *chérie* leaned down and whispered, “I could make you come right here and now, in front of everyone.”

She rolled her hips once more, and Chat’s eyes almost fluttered closed. His back arched against his will and a loud groan rumbled in his throat. *Please*, his thoughts seemed to scream to him.

He breathed with difficulty, realizing in his foggy mind that he would have lost if Ladybug weren’t there with him. He would let his *chérie* do anything she wanted with him. That was dangerous. If Hawkmoth knew about that, he’d be doomed.

“Even Hawkmoth would see you coming undone.” The artist touched his magical ring and he stared up at her. She leaned in, her mouth close to his and all he wanted was to kiss her. But he didn’t. She wasn’t herself, and she wouldn’t even remember their first kiss. She ran her thumb over his bottom lip and whispered, “And you’d like it.”

Chat stared up at the artist and slowly sucked on her thumb to distract her as Ladybug used her power in the background. “I’d love it, *ma chérie,*” he swallowed dry at the heated look in her eyes. She began to slide the ring off his finger, but he was unfazed. “But what’s the point if you won’t remember anything?”

She stopped, a crease forming on her forehead, and a sad smile formed on Chat’s lips. The fun was over. Ladybug used a rubber hose to throw oil over the remaining minions, who melted away in a puddle of colors.

“No!” His dear one screamed when she got drenched in oil as well.

When Chat was free to move, he acted fast, even with the oil dripping into his eyes. He got out from
under the artist and grabbed the color palette from her forearm.

“Sorry, princess,” he said with an apologetic smile and broke the palette with a loud noise. The akuma got free and the artist’s body went limp, her eyes rolling inside of her head. Chat grabbed her before she fell to the ground. The connection had probably been strong for her to faint like that before the akuma was even purified.

He saw the akuma trying to fly away. “Lady—”

“I see it.” Ladybug caught the dark moth with her yo-yo before it could escape and purified it.

Chat watched as the pink energy began to spread. He touched the artist’s face with the back of his hand, pushing a lock of hair away from her face, ignoring the fact that anyone could be watching right now. It was a pity that his dear one had to be akumatized for her to treat him like that. But soon they were going to play again, and this time… She’d remember it.

Chapter End Notes

So, I’ve been writing a lot to compensate for my lateness and I have 3 more chapters ready. They were part of a huge chapter, but I decided to split it up and post little by little for dramatic effect. I'll be posting one each week!

Here's the posting schedule:
20/04 - Ch. 37 - The Triumph of Truth (Part 1)
24/04 - Ch. 37 - The Triumph of Truth (Part 2)
30/04 - Ch. 37 - The Triumph of Truth (Part 3)

See you soon!♡
The international airport was fairly empty as you dispatched your luggage. The early morning sunlight entered the place from the ceiling, creating a ghostly atmosphere. A few tourists were getting ready to leave, all carrying plastic bags filled with souvenirs. A child ran across the large corridor, their steps echoing as their father chased after them. You gave the kid a smile as you passed by them. Maybe Adrien’s plan wouldn’t be needed after all.

Said plan was fairly simple. You would get into the plane first and pretend you didn’t know the model. All that to make sure that you weren’t involved in another scandal. If even one photo was leaked of you beside Adrien in an airport, things could go downhill quickly. You preferred not to have a bunch of paparazzi and reporters running after you again, so you had agreed with the plan. Why does Adrien have to be a famous supermodel? You let out a sigh as you walked to the boarding gate entrance, where you were supposed to meet him. When you found out Chat and Adrien were the same person, you had felt an array of different emotions, but at the time, you hadn’t thought about how that would affect your life. It was just after he mentioned his plan that you realized: you’d have to keep your relationship a secret. If the press found out that you were going out with Adrien and Chat Noir, both of your lives would become hell. They could even begin to speculate that they were the same person and that wasn’t good. The ring would stop them from finding the truth, but what if they stalked Adrien around and caught him transforming?

It was dilemma after dilemma. If you had known last year that having the cat boy as your muse would bring all these complications in your life, you probably wouldn’t have asked him to pose for you. The moment this thought took shape, images of Chat came to your mind. The way he laughed, the softness in his gaze when he looked at you… You shook your head, a small smile on your lips. Who were you kidding? You would have asked him anyway.

Your steps slowed to a stop when you spotted a commotion ahead of you. Five or six paparazzi were taking pictures of a familiar blonde as he posed for a selfie with a girl. Well… Apparently, the plan was needed after all.

Adrien’s eyes met yours for a brief moment and he gave you a curt nod. You nodded back and turned away as he began to walk in the direction you came, leading the paparazzi away from you.

You took a deep breath as you headed to the international boarding gate, hearing the clicks of the cameras fading away. This is insane.

A yawn left your lips as you got comfortable on your seat and looked through the small window of the plane, seeing workers walking around the runway. The trip would be quite long, so you hoped
you would be able to sleep. The old lady by the window seat was already snoring and the plane hadn’t even taken off yet.

You glanced at the torn flight ticket in your hand. Adrien had bought the ticket for you after insisting that he had to make things right after what had happened. You had refused for half an hour, but finally gave up and let him buy it. He said it wasn’t expensive, but looking at the location printed on the ticket in your hand, you doubted that.

Mauritius Islands.

You had no idea why Adrien had chosen the place, but he had organized everything: the hotel, the food, the transportation, everything. ‘Leave it to me’, he had said with puppy eyes, and so you did, but you warned him that it would be the last time. You liked to pay for your own things. There was something rewarding in being able to provide for yourself. You felt like you were in control of your own life and it gave you confidence that you could succeed being an artist, unlike your family insisted.

“Sorry, that’s my seat,” a guy said, pointing to the place by your left.

“Oh, of course.” You got up and looked around as you waited for the guy to accommodate himself.

The flight was getting full and no sign of Adrien yet. Where’s he going to sit? For a moment you had thought that he’d sit by your side, but the guy was there now, and also, that would go against his plan.

The flight attendant greeted someone and your eyes darted to the end of the corridor. Your heart gave a small leap when you saw Adrien appear, being the last passenger to arrive. You quickly sat back down, feeling your face warm up. Almost a year looking at the model boy, masked or not, and you still weren’t used to his pretty face. How embarrassing.

He sat on the right side of the plane, one row in front of you. After putting his luggage on the upper compartment, he glanced back and shot you a smile, which you ignored. You might have forgiven him to a degree for what happened, but not completely.

You thought about the handcuffs in your luggage and your lips curled upwards a little. They would be put to good use soon.

Images danced in front of your eyes. You were beginning to lose control of your thoughts and a dream was pushing forward. You saw white gloves covered in red, but it all vanished when a flight attendant tapped your shoulder, making you look up at him and blink due to the light. He was carrying a food tray and the smell that came from it made your stomach growl.

You took your earphones off. “Yes?”

“Someone ordered this for you, Miss.” He gave you a smile, amusement dancing in his eyes. Or maybe it was just the light. “Would you like it to have it?”

You had a good idea of who that someone might be. You wanted to refuse, but your stomach was begging you to keep it. The food really smelled amazing. Much better than the simple lunch that they had served some time ago.

You nodded. “Sure, thank you.”

The man left the small tray with you before walking away. You glanced at Adrien as you grabbed the plastic utensils. His eyes were closed, but you still could see the small smile on his lips.
The ride to the hotel was quiet. The driver seemed content in listening to his reggae music in peace, so you admired the view through the window and dozed off a little. Adrien had taken another car and would meet you at the hotel, so you were alone for now. You wondered if that much caution was necessary, but didn’t question the blonde since he probably knew what he was doing. You just wished that at least Plagg were there with you.

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The afternoon sun was harsh on your skin when you got out of the van. There was no autumn at the Mauricio Islands, just an endless summer and then winter. You got under the entry arbor of the hotel, glad for the flowers that blocked the sun, and thanked the driver when he put your luggage by your side.

“Mr. Malan will escort you inside,” he said before going back to the car.

You looked around, filling your lungs with the salty air, when your eyes stopped on a middle-aged man wearing a printed shirt walking in your direction.

“Bienvenue!” He opened his arms and smiled. “You must be the lovely angel Adrien told me about.” His French had a lovely accent to it, and you found yourself smiling back at him as you shook hands. “It’s a pleasure to know you, mademoiselle. I’m Leonard Malan, at your service.”

“The pleasure is all mine.” You introduced yourself before looking around. Adrien was nowhere to be seen. “Mr. Malan—”

“Please call me Leonard, there’s no need for formalities here.” He grinned.

You were taken aback for a moment before you nodded. “Alright, hum, Leonard, is Adrien here already?”

“Oh, yes, he’s already in your room.” He grabbed your luggage before you could stop him and began to lead the way. “Come, I’ll accompany you.”

The hotel was enormous. Even from the entrance, you could see the light green sea sparkling under the late afternoon light. You passed by palm trees, pools, and many canopy beds as you walked to the accommodations. With each step, you felt more out of place. Even a one-day stay at this hotel would probably cost a fortune. God, Adrien had really gone all out.

“I always told Adrien he’d come back one day with his fiancée, and here you are.” Leonard laughed as you entered a large corridor with tall arches.

“Oh, I’m not—”

“I always told Adrien he’d come back one day with his fiancée, and here you are.” Leonard laughed as you entered a large corridor with tall arches.

“Oh, I’m not—”

“Here you go.” He stopped in front of a door, almost making you bump into his back, and gave you a card. “If you need anything, just tell me or my son, Raphael, and we’ll arrange it for you. À bientôt!”

You blinked as he walked away, leaving you alone with your luggage. Fiancée? You shook your head, putting the card in the slot. And what did he mean with ‘come back’? Adrien had already been in this place before?

You opened the door and your eyes widened. Not only due to the size of the room or the expensive furniture, but because of the flowers, books, and food that covered the bed and the coffee table. What's all this for? Did Leonard do this?
You walked with slow steps inside the room. It almost looked like a whole apartment. It had a lounge area and a suite. You put your luggage beside the bed and went to the balcony as if in a trance. The tall glass door was open and a cool breeze entered the room, ruffling the beige curtains. You could see the sea a few meters ahead, and it didn’t seem real. All you had to do was to walk across the well-kept grass and you’d be at the beach.

You passed a hand over your face. Everything in the place screamed money. This room alone must have costed a fortune. You had forgotten how rich Adrien was, but this was a reminder that shook you back to reality. You were from completely different worlds.

“You’re here!” Plagg flew in front of you, a piece of cheese in his little paws.

“Plagg!” You exclaimed, rubbing his chin. He let out a purr, and you chuckled. “Where’s Adrien?”

“Taking a shower,” he said while chewing.

You pointed to the bed. “What’s all this?”

“Oh,” He swallowed. “It’s for you. Adrien bought it.”

You grabbed one grape and put it into your mouth. The blonde was really trying to get on your good side, huh? But it still wasn't enough. You wanted answers and you would get them.

“How was the trip?” You asked as you flipped through a book.

Plagg shrugged. “I slept most of the—”

The door of the bathroom opened and Adrien stepped out, only a towel around his hips. You stared at each other and you didn’t try to stop your eyes from wandering over his body. Droplets of water from his hair were falling onto his skin, traveling down his torso.

Plagg huffed. “We’re trying to have a conversation here, Mr. Model.”

“I’m not doing anything.” Adrien had a smug smile on his lips as he walked to his open luggage. He held a bigger piece of cheese in the air and Plagg gasped, flying to him. The blonde chuckled as the kwami took the food and lay down on the pillows, seeming satisfied.

Adrien glanced back at you. His expression had a hint of smugness in it. “How was the trip?”

“It was fine.” You pretended to be interested in the book in your hands. “But you said this wouldn’t be expensive.”

“It’s not that bad. Leonard is basically giving us the hotel stay. I used to come here often as a child with my father and… my mom.” His voice got quieter and you looked up from the book. He was staring at the clothes in his hands. “Anyway, don’t worry too much.”

You gazed at his back until your eyes unfocused. This hotel was probably full of memories for him, but you didn’t know if he thought of them with fondness or not.

“If you want me, you can just say it, love.” His voice brought you back to the present. Adrien had fully turned to you and had this heated look in his eyes. You were probably staring for too long.

“I want you…” You got up and walked up to him, getting closer until your noses were barely touching. His skin was still humid and hot from the shower. “To answer my questions.”

He glanced down at your lips. His jaw tightened and his breathing was audible, as if he was trying
hard to control himself. “After we talk about what happened.”

“There’s nothing to talk about, Adrien. You already explained why you made a fool out of me and I understood.” You turned to walk back to the bed, but his hand curled around your arm. You looked down at the grip he had on you and then back up at him, raising one eyebrow. The sadness you saw in his eyes startled you.

“I’m sorry. I truly am,” he said in a small voice as he let you go. “Not long ago I said I wouldn’t let anyone hurt you and I ended up hurting you instead. I…” He sighed. “I wish I could say that it won’t happen again, but… I will do my best and… and I—”

“I understand, Adrien.” You pushed a lock of wet hair behind his ear. “I believe you.”

“I’ll be better for you,” he muttered, looking down.

You touched his chin and made him face you again. “Then don’t hide things from me anymore.”

“I—” His eyes widened a little and he bit his lip. You saw a blush creep from his neck to his face and noticed his stiff shoulders.

“Oh, am I too close?” You leaned a little closer to him.

He turned his face away and you chuckled. It was cute that he was trying so hard not to mark you when you knew he desperately wanted to.

You opened your mouth to tease him when he looked at you again, cheeks a bright red. “I’ll answer your questions.” You clasped your hands together as a huge smile spread across your face. He held up his index finger. “About Chat Noir. I can’t reveal anything about the other heroes.”

You nodded quickly and sat down on the bed to wait for him. Finally!

He shook his head and turned to his luggage. “I’ll just put some clothes on and we can talk.”

“You can stay like that if you want, I don’t mind.” You looked him up and down, appreciating how the light coming from the door accentuated the curves of his muscles.

The corner of his mouth curled into a half smile. “I won’t be able to focus with you looking at me like that.”

You tilted your head, already imagining how that pose would look great on your sketchbook. “Like what?”

“Like you want to jump my bones.” He threw a smug look over his shoulder and let the towel drop.

You watched as he slowly got dressed, putting each piece of clothing as if it was made of the finest material. He glanced at you and you averted your eyes, looking at the book in your hands again. You were finally going to get the answers you wanted and you couldn’t get too distracted.

The bed dipped and you felt Adrien get closer to you.

“So—” You turned and saw his hair was up in a bun. You froze as you stared at him, feeling something hot going down your body straight to your core. A few strands were falling over his face and his cheeks were still a bit red. Oh.

“If you keep looking at me like this, I’ll lose my mind,” he said in a low voice.
“Right.” You looked away, all the questions you had prepared for him gone in the wind. A mess of curse words passed through your mind before you were able to concentrate again. “Oh, I know! What happens when you transform? Is Chat a mix of your and Plagg’s personalities?”

He hummed. “Plagg influences me to a certain degree, but I’m still in control. It’s like I’m driving a car and Plagg’s in the passenger seat guiding me.” He sent the kwami a look, but Plagg was too invested in his cheese to notice. “For example, being a creature of chaos, he secretly likes to be dominated, so Chat likes as well.”

“Hey!” Plagg stopped eating and sent the blonde a furious look.

Adrien shrugged. You could see he was trying hard not to smile. “Just saying the truth.”

“And you don’t like it?” You tilted your head. “Being dominated, I mean.”

His eyebrows shot up and he averted his eyes for a moment before scoffing. “No.”

You smiled, letting out a long hum. That answer wasn't really convincing. The blonde did seem different than Chat in that regard, but how different could they be?

“What?” His green eyes narrowed.

“Nothing.” You chuckled at the suspicion in his voice. “How many miraculous are there?”

“Plagg?” Adrien turned to the kwami, who sent him a dirty look. He still seemed salty about what Adrien had said.

“A lot,” Plagg answered. “They’re around the world, taking care of other countries.”

“There is one for the Mauritius Islands?” Your eyebrows shot up when Plagg nodded.

“She takes care of South Africa and Madagascar as well,” he said.

You gaped at the kwami. The curiosity to know more was bubbling inside you, but you knew they wouldn’t tell you anything specific since this was about another hero. “How come I’ve never heard of any of them?”

“They decided to remain anonymous after the war,” Adrien answered this time. “They might be known as urban legends though.”

_The war._ Your eyes widened. That’s it, that’s what you wanted to ask him!

“About the war, what happened—”

“It’s hot in here, don’t you think?” Adrien interrupted you and took off his shirt.

You stared as he threw it away and leaned back on his elbows, showing off his toned stomach. He adjusted his hair, pulling on the bun, and you realized what he was trying to do.

You narrowed your eyes a fraction. “Are you trying to distract me, model boy?”

He gave you a sweet smile. “Is it working?”

He leaned in to kiss you, but you pushed his face back with your palm. “You can touch me after you answer _all_ my questions, Adrien.”
He pulled back and bit his bottom lip. “Oh,” he slapped a hand on his forehead. “I just remembered I need to check something with Leonard!” He got up and grabbed his shirt again.

You gave him a poker face. He was shamelessly running away.

“Adrien,” you warned. “If you leave, you’re going to regret it.”

He walked backward to the balcony, putting his shirt back on as he went. “I’ll… I’ll be back soon.”

The sound of his footsteps got fainter until they disappeared altogether. You groaned, flopping into the bed. *I can’t believe this.*

“Well, he ran away,” Plagg said, his voice muffled due to the cheese.

The tip of your pencil broke and you tsked, grabbing another one. You continued to make another sketch of Plagg as you waited for Adrien to return. He had been gone for a few minutes now and you had started to draw to lessen your frustration.

“Why is it so difficult for him to speak about the war?” You asked as you shaded a drawing with unnecessary force. “Can’t you tell me what happened, Plagg?”

The kwami shook his head. “I promised I wouldn’t talk.” He glanced at the smelly piece of cheese between his paws. Oh, so Adrien had bribed the kwami. *Clever.*

“Why don’t we talk about the dreams you had instead?” Plagg gave you a toothy grin. “The ones about the past Chat Noirs?”

You complied and told the kwami what you remembered. His expression got grimmer with each sentence you spoke.

“Do you miss them?” You asked in a quiet voice.

Plagg nodded. He seemed lost in his own thoughts.

You patted his head, hoping to give him some sort of comfort. “Do you have a favorite one?”

He scrunched up his little face. “That’s a mean question.”

You let out a laugh. “Yes, I suppose it is.”

You finished another drawing and put your pencil down, looking at the door that lead to the balcony. It was almost night-time already and no sign of Adrien. “Alright, that’s enough. I’m going after him.”

Plagg took another bite of his cheese. “Good luck.”

The hotel was empty except for a couple with two kids, who were playing in the heated pool. Adrien wasn’t kidding when he said that you’d go somewhere no one knew who you were. Leonard seemed to be the only exception, but he probably knew Adrien since he was little.

After a few minutes of walking around the place, you saw three people chatting at the reception desk. Adrien had his back turned to you, but you would recognize that model stance anywhere.
“Do you remember when you and Raphael fell into the pool?” Leonard’s laugh echoed through the large corridor.

“I don’t remember,” said a younger Leonard but with a darker skin tone. He was probably the son, Raphael.

“My father made a huge fuss, didn't he?” Adrien chuckled.

Leonard spotted you and his face brightened. “Oh, there she is!”

Adrien’s eyes widened when he saw you approaching. You sent a quick glare his way before smiling to Leonard, who introduced you to his son.

“He gives the best massages, if you’re interested.” He winked.

“I’ll keep that in mind.” You smiled at the way Adrien’s eyebrows furrowed. You put an arm around his shoulders and pulled him to you. “Are you done running away from me, dearest?” His whole body froze when you kissed his cheek.

“Why would you run away from your fiancée, Adrien?” Leonard asked.

Adrien let out an embarrassed laugh and took your arm off him. “Excuse us for a moment.” He pulled you a little to the side and whispered, “We can talk after dinner, chérie, I promise.”

“Dinner will be ready soon, lovebirds!” Leonard said as if he had heard Adrien’s words.

“After dinner, ok?” Adrien gave you a smile, but it didn't reach his eyes.

You let him pull you to your room, but your mind was elsewhere. He wasn’t going to escape this time, and you’d make sure of it.

Chapter End Notes

I might draw Adrien with a bun for this chapter, who knows. The next part will be posted while I'm traveling. So, if the chapter isn't posted for some reason, it's probably because something happened to me .-. not that it will happen, but you know /shrugs/

Also if any of you live in Mauritius, I'm sorry :c I tried to pick a far away place haha
As promised, here's the second part! I really liked writing this chapter (I love all of them tbh but anyway), finally some things are going to be revealed :D

enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The darkening sky and the strong waves could be seen from your table in the open dining hall. The family wasn’t there yet, so you and Adrien had the whole place for yourselves. You had put your best clothes for the occasion, and from the way Adrien was staring at you, you knew you had made the right choice.

You were making small talk with him, pretending everything was normal while you ate the delicious food on your plate. You knew you’d already miss the food when you went back to Paris. Maybe you could find a Mauritian restaurant there, but it probably wouldn’t be the same.

“You don’t like modeling then?” You swirled the drink inside your glass.

“Not really, sculpture is my true passion,” Adrien said, raising his fork. “I’m just a model because of my father.”

You hummed and raised your feet, touching his leg under the table. His hand stopped midair and he stared at you.

You smiled at him as you kept caressing his skin through the jeans. “What is your favorite subject in sculpture?”

Laughter filled the air and you saw the couple walking into the room, their kids running in front of them.

Adrien went back to his food. “Figure sculpting. The human body is fascinating.”

You let your feet go further up his leg until it reached his thigh. “Indeed.” His green eyes went wide and he glanced at the family, now seating a few tables away from you. “It’s interesting how the body reacts so quickly, don’t you think?”

“Don’t—” He began to say, but you pressed the tip of your feet against his crotch. He coughed so hard that the couple turned to look at him.

You shot him a sweet smile. “Are you okay, Adrien? Be careful.”

“Stop,” he said through gritted teeth.

“What?” You tilted your head as you applied more force.

He pressed his lips tightly together and pushed your feet back, but you just narrowed your eyes and put it back up again. His face was getting redder by the second, but you didn’t know if it was from
embarrassment or anger.

“You realize that if you tell me what I want to know, you can have me all for yourself, right?” You lifted your chin, exposing your neck to him. “Don’t you want to mark me, kitty? To show to everyone I’m yours?”

You saw his pupils dilate and he gripped the fork in his hand until his knuckles turned white.

“So? What do you say?” You caressed him again and a moan escaped his throat. A wicked grin stretched your lips as the blonde stared at you with mortified eyes, a hand over his mouth.

You cleaned your lips with a napkin and got up. Adrien watched you, lust clear in his gaze. Your job was done for now.

You put your hand on his shoulder and leaned down a bit. “I’ll be waiting in our room,” you whispered and began to walk away, letting your fingers linger on his shoulder.

You lay down on the bed with a book, the handcuffs you had brought strategically placed by your side.

“Things are going to get a little intense, Plagg.” You gave the kwami a meaningful look. “You might want to go to the lounge area.”

“Oh.” Plagg’s ears perked up. “Are you going to make him pay?”

You grinned and, apparently, that was all the kwami needed to know, because he soon vanished, a grin mimicking your own on his face.

A few minutes later, the door beeped and swung open. A flustered Adrien entered the room, hair in disarray. You could almost see the paths his fingers had made on his scalp.

You went back to staring at the book and pushed the handcuffs under a pillow with your free hand. “What took you so long, love?”

“I couldn’t get up with a boner in the middle of those people, could I?” Adrien’s voice was rough, filled with tension.

You smiled, glancing at his crotch. “I doubt they would mind.”

He narrowed his eyes. “That was dirty and you know it.”

You lifted one shoulder. “I warned you when you left earlier.” You put the book down and motioned for him to get closer. “Come here.”

He walked up to you as if you were a dangerous animal ready to attack and sat on the edge of the bed.

“Don’t you think you deserve to be punished for what you’ve done, Adrien?” You saw his throat move as he swallowed. “Don’t you?” You raised one eyebrow and after a moment he nodded, lips pressed tight. “I want to hear you say it.”

“Yes.” You barely heard the word leave his mouth.

You leaned in and whispered, “And will you let me do it?”
He nodded again and a small smile danced on your lips.

“Good. Then take off your clothes and lie down for me.” You put the book on the bedside table. “Oh, you can keep the boxers.” That way you wouldn’t get too distracted.

He opened and closed his hands but finally obeyed.

With him lying on the bed, you sat by his side and leaned down, letting your lips meet his in a slow kiss. His breath hitched in his throat and he closed his eyes.

“Put your arms above your head.” You whispered in his ear and were taken aback when he followed your command with no resistance. You had thought this would be more difficult.

He parted his lips slightly as if he was anticipating another kiss. However, you passed the handcuffs around one of the wooden pillars that decorated the bedframe and clicked them around his wrists.

Adrien’s eyes snapped open and you grinned. “Now you can’t run away anymore, model boy.”

“Wait—” He tried to move his hands, but the bedframe held him back. He looked up and then looked back at you. “You said you wouldn’t tie me up before. You said I’d like it.”

You gave him an amused look. “I said Chat would like it. You said you’re not into being dominated, right?”

He shook his head as if he couldn't believe what was happening. “This wasn’t what I imagined.”

“And what did you imagine I would do?” You put your legs on either side of his body and straddled him. “Spank you? Make you lick my feet?” Blood rushed to his face and you smiled down at him, feeling affection swell in your heart. “Are you sure you don’t like submitting to someone, Adrien?”

“No…” The blonde turned his face away and you took the opportunity to lay open-mouthed kisses on his neck.

“You’re so cute, kitty.” You muttered with your lips against his skin, and he arched his back under you, a groan rumbling in his throat. You chuckled, pulling back a little. “But this isn’t the punishment anyway. The real punishment is telling me what I want to know.”

You bopped his nose and Adrien scrunched up his face, just like he did as Chat. It was still cute. “Tell me what happened in the war. Why people don’t remember anything about it? Why Alya had her memory erased?”

He licked his lips. “Can’t you ask me something else? Anything else?”

“Why are you so reluctant to talk about it?” You began to leave small kisses along his jawline in order to distract him.

He closed his eyes tightly. “I… can’t.”

“Why?” You insisted, pulling on his hair and making a broken moan leave his mouth. If he at least gave you a good reason, you’d stop bothering him and try to find another way to discover the big mystery. But here he was, refusing to say anything.

“You won’t see me the same way again.” He breathed out as he gazed at you through half-lidded eyes.

“Adrien…” You said in a gentle tone, softening your hold on his blonde locks. “I love you for who
you are now, not for who you once were. Please understand that.”

His eyebrows furrowed and he refused to look at you.

You sighed and leaned down, letting your forehead touch his. “You need to trust me.”

You just wanted to understand, to finally be able to see past the veil that surrounded him and now you. However, the only sound in the room was of his breathing. His lips were closed, the truth held back behind them.

You began to let gentle kisses on his skin, going from his neck to his chest. “Answer me, Adrien. Say something.”

“I—” He squirmed under you and the handcuffs clinked. “Chérie, don’t do this to me. Just let me have you, please.”

“No.” When you sucked on his nipple, he bucked his hips up and you felt his arousal brush against your core. An electric feeling went through your veins and you stopped, lips hovering over his skin. Your own labored breathing mixed with Adrien’s filled the room. It was time for a break.

You got up from the bed and grabbed a neatly folded towel from the coffee table.

“I’m gonna leave you alone with your thoughts for a moment.”

“What? No!” Adrien pulled on the handcuffs. “You can’t leave me like this.”

“I can and I will.” You walked to the bathroom, feeling his gaze on you.

“Chérie, don’t you dare.” The handcuffs clinked again and you turned around.

“Ah, ah!” You pointed your index finger at him and he stopped moving. “Behave.”

His gaze darkened. “When this is over, it’ll be my turn.” His voice was subdued, yet it sent chills down your spine.

You smirked, ignoring the lewd images that popped into your mind. “I’m looking forward to it.”

The fabric of the robe caressed your skin as you sat by Adrien’s side. He was staring at your exposed neck, still humid from the shower. You had taken your time in the bathroom, taking care of your needs while also giving the model time to assess the situation. Hopefully, his frustration and yearning had grown even more.

“You’re evil, chérie,” he grumbled under his breath.

You touched his thigh and his muscles contracted. “Shall I remind you of when you tried to seduce me as yourself while I wanted to be faithful to Chat Noir?” His green eyes narrowed. “No?”

You left out a small chuckle at his lack of response. “Well,” you leaned in and put your fingers under his chin, tilting his face upwards. “Shall we continue then?” Because you would get those answers. He had promised you. He had promised.

A knock on the door made you freeze and turn around, almost growling. Who can it be? And at this hour?
“Just ignore it,” Adrien said when the person knocked again. You sighed and got up. So much for a peaceful night. The handcuffs clinked against the bed frame as Adrien tried to move. “Wait, chérie.”

“What?” You asked, but he remained silent. A smirk made way to your lips. “Are you embarrassed?” You had no idea why he would be since no one could see him from the front door.

“No.” His mouth said, but his red cheeks told another story. Adrien really had to work on being more honest with himself.

“Alright then.” You adjusted your robe and went to open the door. When you did it, a young woman with bright red hair was standing in front of you. “Yes?”

“Oh, hi…” Her raised eyebrows told you that you weren’t the one she was expecting to see. “Hmm, is Adrien Agreste here?”

Your forehead furrowed. “Who are you?”

She pushed her bangs out of her face. “I’m Alix, a friend of his.”

“Alix?” Adrien’s voice came from the bedroom.

The girl’s eyes lit up and the moment you blinked, she walked past you.

“Hey!” You exclaimed and chased after her as she crossed the lounge.

The girl froze as she entered the bedroom, eyes fixated on Adrien’s almost naked form.

“Oh,” was all that left her mouth.

Adrien’s face was even redder than before. The blush was creeping down his chest and shoulders. “I… can explain.”

You were almost trembling with fury as you walked and stopped in front of the girl, blocking her vision from Adrien. You crossed your arms and scowled at her. “Get out.”

Her blue eyes were wide as she stared at you. She opened and closed her mouth a few times. “I… I’m sorry. I didn’t know—”

“Get. Out.” You gave one step forward and she gave one back.

The handcuffs clinked behind you. “Chérie, wait. It must be important,” Adrien said, breathless.

“She can come back later,” you said through gritted teeth.

“I-it’s kinda urgent.” Alix put her hands up.

You tightened your jaw but didn’t move. How dare she appear out of nowhere and ruin your plan? After all that?

You heard Adrien say your name in a gentle voice. “Can you untie me so I can talk with her?”

You turned to look at him and blurted out, “No.”

He chewed on his bottom lip. He was pleading with his eyes for you not to do this, but he’d have to do better than that. All you wanted to do was to push the girl out of the room and be done with her.
“Please.” The word finally left his lips in a whisper. His voice was vulnerable, but his eyes were intense, his pupils wide. “Please, my love.”

Your shoulders sagged as you sighed. Goddammit. Why did he have to look at you like that?

The girl had her back turned to the bed and was looking with attention to an expressionist painting on the wall as you fiddled with the handcuffs. They clicked open and Adrien rubbed his wrists. “Merci.”

When he tried to get up, you put a hand on his bare chest and whispered, “This isn’t over yet, Agreste.”

You watched his Adam’s apple bob up and down, and let him go.

After he was fully clothed, you turned to Alix. “You can look now.”

She and Adrien hugged each other tightly and you averted your gaze, feeling discomfort in your chest. Stop it, you said to yourself.

“Sorry for interrupting your honeymoon,” Alix said as they both sat on armchairs near the wall.

You almost choked on air. Honeymoon? Did everyone think you were his fiancée now?

“Oh,” Adrien gave you a bashful look. “It’s… It’s nothing like that.”

He introduced you to her and said Alix was an old friend from high school.

You grabbed a book and sat on the bed, your body still calming down from what had happened. You were trying not to let annoyance take control over your mind, but it was hard.

“I didn’t know you were into that kind of thing, Adrien.” Alix laughed.

“Oh, shut up,” Adrien said, which only made her laugh harder.

“Does she… Does she know?” You heard Alix whisper. She wasn’t as subtle as she thought she was.

“Yes, she found out,” Adrien answered.

“Damn. Well, you can come out now, Kaa.”

“But—” Adrien began to say but the girl interrupted him.

“If you trust her, I trust her as well.”

You looked up from the book and saw a small snake creature fly from the girl’s backpack. You gaped as it stretched midair. Another kwami. That meant that Alix was the hero responsible for the Mauritius Islands! You wanted to ask what was her hero name, but you were still pissed at the red-haired girl.

“Ah, much better.” The snake flew around the room. Her scales were gorgeous, changing colors as light hit them. “Where’s Plagg?”

Adrien shrugged. “Probably sleeping somewhere.”

“I’m not sleeping,” Plagg’s drowsy voice came from under a pillow. He had been there the whole
“He hasn’t changed a thing.” Kaa shook her little head and Alix chuckled.

“How’s Ladybug?” The girl leaned back on the armchair, crossing her legs. “Being the miraculous guardian is probably tough, right?”

You glanced at the two and saw Adrien doing a ‘no’ gesture with his index finger. Alix’s eyes widened and she nodded. You went back to your book, feeling like smoke was about to leave your nostrils. More secrets, cool.

“She’s doing ok,” Adrien said. “But how did you find me?”

“I always keep an eye out for Paris’ news and there was an article about you coming to the Mauritius Islands,” Alix said. An article? Damn, those reporters were quick. “I could really use your help, so I decided to pay a visit. But I didn’t know you would be… busy.”

You resisted the urge to huff and tried to pay attention to the book again. Where was I? Oh, right. The heroine was about to release a demon from its cage.

“What’s wrong?” Adrien asked Alix.

The heroine resisted the temptation, but the demon called out to her friends.

“There have been cases of child trafficking on the island and they all link to one group. I plan to stop them, but it would be better if I had a helping hand.”

When she held one friend by the arm, the other opened the cage and the demon was set free.

“Tonight?”

You looked up from the book, your concentration gone.

Alix nodded. “Yeah.”

Adrien turned to you and the girl mimicked him. Even the snake kwami was staring at you with its yellow eyes.

“What?” You lowered the book. “Are you going to ask for my permission?” The blonde remained silent, and you sighed. “Child trafficking is more important than this, Adrien. Just go.”

The model got ready to leave as you tried to go back to your book. The girl was still about to release the demon. You had forgotten what had happened, your mind just couldn’t remember the words you had read moments ago.

Your hands were gripping the cover tightly when Adrien approached the bed.

“I’m sorry. I’ll come back soon.” He leaned down to kiss your cheek, but you turned your face, making his lips meet yours. You put a hand on the back of his neck, and he staggered forward as you pulled him to you and kissed him harder.

“I’ll… wait outside.” You heard Alix say.

You pulled back after a moment and looked into his wide pupils. “Be careful.”

He licked his lips, eyes not leaving yours. He kept staring at you for a moment before he shook his
head and turned around quickly. “Plagg, let’s go.” The kwami murmured from under the pillow. Adrien groaned. “Plagg.”

You heard a muffled tsk before the kwami appeared. He snuggled into your neck before flying away.

“À plus,” he said while yawning.

You smiled. “Bye Plagg, take care of him for me.”

He shot you a sleepy grin. “Will do.”

“Call me if anything happens,” Adrien said before closing the door.

The girl’s friend had released the demon and they had fled the cave, which crumbled to dust. You had managed to read until the end of the page, but that was it. You couldn’t do it anymore. The words were scattered by your tumbling thoughts and refused to stick to your mind for more than a few minutes.

You let your head hit the pillow behind you and looked around. There was no TV in the bedroom, so you couldn’t even watch the local news to see if Chat was ok. Maybe it was better this way. You had to trust him. He was going to come back.

You glanced at your phone before grabbing it. Marinette had just texted you, asking if you were okay and where were you. After you gave a vague answer and said you were traveling, she asked if you had seen Adrien anywhere. You had bitten your lip and said that no, you hadn’t seen the blonde. You didn’t want to lie to her, but she couldn’t know the truth.

You walked to the glass door and opened it. The sea breeze met your skin and pushed your hair back. You took a deep breath and walked on the grass-covered path until your feet touched the sand. Life with Adrien would always be like this. He’d go to places you’d never be able to follow, and you’d have to stay back, unable to help him. It was frustrating to not be a part of this magic world of his, but there was nothing you could do.

Your phone vibrated in your pocket and you almost let it fall down into the sand as you grabbed it. However, the name on the screen wasn’t the one you were expecting to see.

You took the call. “Allô?”

“Hey beautiful,” Julien drawled the words, his voice sounding strange. “Where are you? Do you want to go out?”

“I can’t,” you said, wondering if he’d be able to hear the crashing waves near you. Why was everyone suddenly asking you where you were? “I’m traveling right now.”

“Oh.” He went silent.

“Is something wrong?” You asked, pushing the sand with the tip of your feet.

“I… I saw a photo of Luan and me together.” His voice was barely audible. “I really miss him, so I just wanted to go out and forget.”

“Why don’t you call him or send him a—” The image of Julien with another guy by his side surfaced
in your mind. “Oh, but you are going out with Marius…”

“Marius… Nevermind, I’m sorry for bothering,” He hiccupped. “Your trip.” Oh, he was drunk. You could understand the weird tone in his voice now.

“Julien, you’re not bothering me. You can talk to me if you want.” You groaned a little as you sat down on the sand, careful not to get sand inside your pajamas. “I’m actually feeling really alone right now.”

“Are you traveling by yourself?”

You made little scribbles on the sand, remembering Adrien’s plan. “I’m with a friend, but they went out with someone else.”

“That’s rude as fuck.” Another hiccup.

You let out a small laugh, which was muffled by the crash of the waves. “Yes, it is.”

You talked on the phone for quite some time, not touching on the sensitive subject of love anymore. The conversation, along with the sound of the sea and the cool breeze touching your skin managed to calm you down. Julien’s voice got groggier with each passing moment and at one point, he stopped speaking altogether.

“Julien?”

You heard a snore. He had slept.

An affectionate smile curled your lips. “Good night, Jules,” you muttered and ended the call.

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The sound of something falling made you open your eyes with a start. You sat up on the bed and saw Plagg trying to lift a knife from the ground.

“Désolé.” He gave you a shy smile. “I was trying to cut the cheese and it fell down.”

You searched around the room, heart hammering against your chest, but no sign of your blonde muse.

“Where is Adrien?” Your voice cracked and you cleared your throat.

“Oh, he’s sleeping on the sofa on the lounge.” Plagg motioned to the side with his head.

You walked to the other part of the room, squinting at the harsh morning light coming from the open curtains, and there he was, sprawled on the sofa in the middle of a mess of pillows.

“Why is he sleeping here?” You whispered, tiptoeing to the curtains and closing them.

“You said he can’t mark you, so he decided to not sleep on the bed.” Plagg munched on a badly cut piece of cheese and the strong smell reached you.

You looked at Adrien, at his parted lips and the way his chest moved quietly, and felt an urge to touch him, to wrap your arms around him and be lulled back to sleep by his steady heartbeat. But you didn’t want to wake him up. He was probably exhausted.

You rubbed your eyes, walking back to the bedroom. “How did yesterday go?”
Plagg followed you. “Oh, Alix said to tell you hello.” You scowled and he snickered. “We actually arrived an hour ago or so. We were able to stop a boat that was leaving with twenty children. The police are taking care of the culprits now.”

“What will happen with the kids?” You put a hand over your mouth as you yawned. You were still tired, even if you had just woken up. The tiredness of the trip was finally catching up to you.

“Alix is taking care of that right now. She’ll try to find their homes, or find a new one for them.” Plagg sat on top of a box and you tilted your head. That box wasn't there yesterday.

“What’s is this?” You pointed in its direction with your chin.

“A gift for you.” Plagg grinned, and it dawned on you. He was probably waiting for you to ask what it was the whole time.

You opened the box and grabbed the dodo plush that was inside. You rubbed your face in it, the soft material making you sigh in happiness.

You lay down on the bed again, the dodo tucked into your arms. “Why does Adrien keep buying me stuff?”

Plagg sat by your side. The stuffed toy was 4 times bigger than him. “His father always did that. Instead of expressing his feelings, he bought him presents.” The kwami shrugged. “I guess the boy picked that from him.”

You brought the dodo close to your chest, feeling a lump in your throat. If all Gabriel did was buy him things, Adrien must have been really lonely. You’d have to talk to the blonde later and explain that this wasn't necessary. He didn’t need to buy you anything. All you wanted at the moment was his trust.

White gloves came back to your mind and you worried your bottom lip. Talking about trust… You hadn't told the Plagg about those dreams. Maybe he could help you understand them.

“Plagg, I’ve been having another dream.” You said and the kwami hummed. “It’s about a guy with white gloves that laughs like a maniac. Was it your doing?”

His mouth fell open, eye going round. “How did you…?” He covered his mouth with a paw.

“What is it?” Your heart began to beat faster. “Is it related to Chat?” It had to be, for Plagg to react like that.

The kwami just kept staring at you, not even blinking.

“It’s about the war, isn’t it?” You said. Plagg quickly looked away and his reaction was everything you needed. Your shoulders slumped. “You really can’t tell me?”

He shook his head and began to lick his paw. “I promised.”

You leaned back on the pillows as a sigh left your lips. God, this was frustrating. If only you could control the dreams you had… Your eyes widened and you sat upright. Maybe you couldn’t, but the reason for your dreams could.

You looked at Plagg, your heart now hammering against your chest. “Can you show me?” He lifted his face, his tongue stuck out of his mouth. You continued, “You said you can’t tell me, but maybe you can show me.”
His ears perked up and his eyes widened a fraction. He could.

The kwami looked down. “But I don’t remember what happened.”

“You too?” You passed a hand through your hair, cursing under your breath.

But then how were you able to have the dreams? The thought bubbled into your mind and your hand stilled. Maybe the memories were still there in Plagg’s mind.

“I want to try it.” You blurted out. The kwami just stared at you. “Please, Plagg.”

He glanced at the arch that lead to the lounge area and nodded, green eyes shining. Maybe he was as curious as you were.

His tail was swishing from one side to the other as you lay down on your side. You felt Plagg’s little paws on your neck as he moved to get comfortable.

You filled your lungs with air and let it out slowly. “Alright. Try to do the same thing you did when you showed me the secret room in Adrien’s studio.”

He hummed. “I can’t promise anything.”

You didn’t let his words dampen your mood. You closed your eyes, relaxed your body, and waited for sleep to come and whisk you away.

An endless black void surrounded you. You passed by many closed doors, but something compelled you to go forward. You heard laughter coming from one of the doors and your steps slowed. Waves of happiness and love, along with the smell of fresh rain, emanated from it. Something within you stirred, but you continued to walk. Somehow, you knew that wasn’t what you were looking for.

Your feet took you forward until something – someone? – told you to stop. You looked to the side and saw a door, barely visible against the black void. You reached out to it and a bright, gelid light enveloped you.

You let out a laugh when another building crumbled under your touch. People ran away like rats as the houses beside it began to collapse as well. A man tripped and fell, holding his left leg. Your slow steps made dust rise from the ground as you approached him. You smelled the terror in him. A grin pulled on your lips. He was going to feel what you did. The searing pain that threatened to crack your chest open. He’d feel it. He’d feel the agony.

You raised your hand to touch the man when a rope wrapped around you. But it wasn't any rope… It was a yo-yo cord.

“Ladybug,” you said as your lips curled into a half smile.

The cord sent a wave of electricity through your body and your knees slammed into the ground. You growled as you managed to grab the rope and rip it away from you.

You looked up and saw the almighty Ladybug jumping to the top of a building, the injured man in her arms. She was running away. Again. You smirked as you got up and dusted your white suit. She didn’t have the book. She knew she couldn’t defeat you.

You turned your head to the abandoned store to your right. The cracks on the windows distorted
your features. The white mask covering half of your face and your purple eyes, now free from that man’s control. All disfigured. The glass showed you what you really were: broken.

And you hated it.

You called your power and purple energy surrounded your hand. Ladybug could run away now, but she was going to have a surprise. Your palm made contact with the wall of the store, which began to disintegrate. A laugh left your lips as your distorted image turned to dust. Soon.

You gasped for air as you sat up on the bed. Plagg was flying above you, staring at you with a mix of awe and shock in his eyes. “You did it.”

You gripped your chest tightly as the images kept repeating in your mind in a loop. Chat. Chat had been the one that destroyed Paris, not Hawkmoth.

Chapter End Notes

Well, well well... another cliffhanger in The Muse. What a surprise. But of course I had to include one. It’s stronger than me guys lmfao but worry not, the next part is only six days away :^)

see you soon!
The sea waves crashed into the clear sand with force. Poseidon didn't seem to be happy today. You turned around on the framed bed, hugging a pillow. So the white-gloved man had been Chat all along. When Plagg said he didn't remember what happened, it was because Chat had been akumatized. But he didn't seem under Hawkmoth’s control in the dream. How was that possible?

“There you are.”

You looked over your shoulder and saw Adrien walking up to you.

“I’ve been looking for you everywhere.” He said. He had dark circles under his eyes, but he still managed to look gorgeous. You couldn’t understand his genetics.

You lay on your back, making room for him. “Now you know how it feels.”

The white mattress dipped when he sat by your side, but not too close. “You don’t look too good, chérie. Did you sleep well?”

“I was worried about you.” He opened his mouth to speak, but you put a hand up. “But that’s not it.” You took a deep breath. Here it goes. “Your akumatized self was the one who destroyed Paris, not Hawkmoth. Right?”

His mouth opened slightly and he paled. “How did you—?” His expression clouded. “Plagg.”

You shook your head. “He kept his promise and didn’t say anything. I saw it in a dream.” Adrien passed a hand over his face as he stared at the ground. “We have some sort of connection, and I can see things Chat and Plagg saw.” It was true that the kwami had helped you this time, but if Adrien knew that, Plagg would probably lose his cheese.

You sat up slowly. Adrien didn't move, eyes fixed on a spot between his feet.

“You were akumatized,” you said and he flinched as if the words burned him. Your stomach churned with worry at his reaction. You didn’t even know if he was breathing.

“Adrien.” You lightly touched his shoulder, leaning closer to him.
His head snapped up and your gazes met. His eyes were shining, filled with unshed tears.

“Oh, Adrien.” Your chest tightened. What had you done?

Children laughter reached you, carried by the wind. The family was walking on the beach; it was better to go to a more private place.

“C’mon, let’s go back in.” You pulled the blonde by the hand until you were back to your room.

Adrien sat cross-legged on the bed, motionless, his eyes unfocused. “I didn’t want you to find out.” His voice didn’t have any life in it.

Now it made sense why he didn't want to talk about the war. He probably felt horrible for destroying the city.

You took a deep breath. "I know." You gave him a glass of water and sat in front of him. "But you could have just explained to me how difficult this was for you. I would understand."

He slowly looked up at you. "And you wouldn't try to find another way to discover the truth?"

You pressed your lips together, knowing that he could see right through you. You probably wouldn’t rest until you found out what had happened in the war, and he knew that.

The blonde let out a small, humorless chuckle as he stared at the glass in his hands. "Always the curious one."

“We don’t have to talk about this if you don’t want to." You added quickly. "I shouldn't have pressured you to talk in the first place. I just... I just wanted to understand."

He chugged down the water before talking again. “It’s better this way. You deserve to know, even if I don’t want you to. I... I promised.” He took a deep breath. “I’ve done terrible things, chérie.”

You put the empty glass on the bedside table. “You were akumatized. It wasn't your fault.”

“I’ve been trying to tell him that for years,” Plagg said as Adrien stared down at his hands. The kwami was sitting between you two, near the blonde’s legs.

Adrien hummed, still not looking up. “Well, Ladybug and Rena told me what happened, but I had a feeling they didn’t tell me everything, so I saw the videos people took of Blanc before they were wiped out.” The broken tone of his voice was tearing you apart.

“Blanc?” You tilted your head.

“That’s how I liked to be called when I was…” He didn’t complete the phrase, but he didn’t need to.

You nodded and swallowed back the knot forming in your throat. “And why were the videos deleted?”

“They were erased along with people’s memories.” He searched your face for a moment before continuing. “It was Master Fu’s last wish. He was the miraculous guardian for years, and he wanted our identities to remain hidden.” He scratched his neck. “I kinda, hum, revealed everyone’s identities when I was akumatized. It was only me, Lady, Rena and Bee at the time, but still, after all the bad things I had done, the miraculous heroes image would be tarnished forever.” He let out a long sigh, like talking about this was sucking all his energy away. “I personally don’t think I deserved to have my mistakes forgotten, but it was his choice.”
You furrowed your eyebrows, wondering what ‘bad things’ was he talking about. “But you were akumatized—”

“I let myself be akumatized!” He interrupted you, and you were taken aback by the anguish and hostility in his voice. He clicked his tongue and looked down at his lap. “I’m sorry.”

Plagg gave you a worried look, and you moved to sit by Adrien’s side. You put a hand on his thigh, your palm facing upwards. “It’s okay.” He remained still for a moment before he put his palm in yours and intertwined your fingers. You gave his hand a gentle squeeze. “The first Hawkmoth was your father, right?”

Adrien and Plagg turned to look at you at the same time.

The blonde’s mouth parted slightly. “How do you keep doing this?”

“Another dream?” The kwami asked. You nodded sheepishly and his eyes seemed to shine brighter. “Fascinating.”

You scratched your neck, feeling shy with the sudden attention. “How… How did you get akumatized?”

Adrien’s hold on your hand got tighter for a moment before he relaxed. “Miraculous holders are stronger against Hawkmoth’s influence, but not immune. I was in a really dark place at the time.” He was staring forward, eyes focused on something you couldn’t see. “I wanted someone to love, but I couldn’t find love in anyone. My father was basically a stranger at our house, and at that moment, I didn’t realize why. Ladybug, who didn’t want anyone, found somebody to love, and I, the one who was looking so desperately for love, couldn’t find it.” A chuckle left his mouth, but there was no humor in it. Plagg rubbed his small head on his leg and the blonde sighed. “I got reckless in fights and one day, I almost got myself and Rena killed. That’s how Hawkmoth was able to get me while I was transformed. I have no memory of what happened after that.”

With each word he spoke, you felt the knot in your throat get tighter, almost suffocating you. Chat always seemed so cheerful and confident, you had no idea he had all this sadness huddled inside him. You had seen glimpses of it, but not everything. You wondered if all this time he had been suffering in silence, hoping that one day others would see the wounds that tore him apart from inside.

“Thank you for telling me.” You squeezed his hand, trying to send some sort of comfort to him, some positive energy, anything. You wanted to show him that you were by his side, that you were here with him now.

His thumb brushed against your skin and a small smile decorated his lips. “Don’t worry too much about me, chérie.” He said as if he could see the worry in your eyes. “It’s in the past now. I’m over it.”

You furrowed your brows. “But you still don’t use your power.” His eyes widened a fraction. “Is it because you destroyed the city with it?” He gave a curt nod. The last dream you had resurfaced in your mind. How that man seemed terrified of Blanc and wanted to run away. A bad feeling arose in your stomach. “Did…” You paused for a moment. “Did you use it on someone?”

His face contorted in pain and he closed his eyes, jaw clasped tight.

You put your free hand over your mouth. “You did.” Your voice was barely a whisper.

He must have seen a video of that. You didn’t want to even try to imagine how horrible that must have been. Knowing what you did, but having no memory of it whatsoever. No wonder he didn’t
want to talk about the war before, this was awful.

“Adrien—”

“I don’t deserve your comfort, love.” He tried to take his hand from yours, but you stopped him, holding his palm tighter.

“Don’t say that.” You said, turning your body to him fully.

His chin began to quiver and he turned his face away from you. Plagg was silently watching you both.


You waited and after a moment he finally turned around. His eyes were red and there was a wet trail of tears going down his cheek.

You took both of his hands in yours. “You help so many people. Every day, you’re out there risking your life to protect hundreds of strangers. Just yesterday you helped those children with Alix!” You brought his hands to your lips and kissed them. More tears rolled down his face and you let go of his palms to wipe his cheeks with your thumbs. “You’re a wonderful person, cat suit or not. Don’t let the past convince you that you don’t deserve a future.”

He hugged you, bringing you close to his chest and you hugged him back, putting your arms around his torso. You could feel his body shaking as he tried to muffle his sniffles and you caressed his back, trying to calm him down. Your heart seemed to break with each tremble of his body. You just wished you could make all his pain go away or, at least, cheer him up. So when the tremors lessened and his hold on you got more relaxed, you began to rub your face against his neck.

“What are you doing?” His hoarse voice vibrated in his throat.

“Marking you.” You rubbed your face against him once more to illustrate your point. “So Hawkmoth knows that I’m protecting you and I won’t let anything bad happen to you again.”

He pulled you back by the shoulders and stared at you with red-rimmed eyes. And then he smiled. Relief blossomed in your chest. Finally.

“That’s not how it works,” he sniffled.

You smiled. “Then show me.”

He wiped his eyes with the back of his hand. “Am I finally free from my punishment?”

You pretended to think for a moment and nodded. “You’ve been a really good boy, so I’ll allow it.”

“Oh, my princess, you’re so merciful.” He put a hand over his heart. “How I adore you, dearest one.”

You rolled your eyes but couldn’t help the chuckle that left your mouth. “You talked just like Chat now.”

He gave you a gentle squeeze. “You seem to forget we are the same person, love.”

“I miss seeing you in the suit,” you murmured, mostly to yourself, as you brushed his cheek with your thumb.
He arched one eyebrow. “Do you now? I could transform if you want.” You heard a small shuffle coming from the pillows somewhere behind you.

You hummed in approval, but then remembered that all the talk you had before was centered on him being akumatized as Chat. Maybe this wasn’t a good idea.

He began to move, but you stopped him. “Wait, are you sure?”

“I’m okay now, chérie.” He kissed your forehead. “I really need to mark you and I’ll feel happier to do it as Chat anyway, so...” He lifted one shoulder and turned to Plagg, who was lying down on top of a pillow. “Plagg? Would you mind?”

The kwami’s ears perked up and he took off, flying on top of your heads. “Finally remembered me, huh?”

Adrien poked his tummy with his index finger. “I know you want this as much as I do.”

Plagg tsked and swatted his hand away with his tail. “Do you want to transform or not?”

With one of the corners of his mouth curled in a smile, the blonde pulled away from you. “Transform me!”

You put a hand over your eyes as a bright green light filled the room. Being this close to the transformation made your whole body shiver, and you felt the hairs on your arms stand up.

You took your palm off your face and saw half-lidded green eyes gazing at you with a hint of mischief in them.

“Are you ready, princess?” Chat asked. “Because it’s my turn now.”

You smiled and exposed your neck to him. “Show me, kitty cat.”

“With pleasure.” He leaned forward, making you lie down on the bed. Soon he was hovering over you, blonde locks framing his face. “Like this.”

He dipped down and began to kiss your neck. You sucked a breath at the sensation. Chat was composed at first, but you realized it was all a façade. His touch started to get more intense and his kisses were verging on desperation. When you thought he’d lose himself completely, he paused for a brief moment and only then continued, his touch more tender.

“You don’t have to hold back,” you said. He pulled back to look down at you, his hooded eyes gazing into your own. You cupped his face. “Let go.”

He glanced at your parted lips. “Are you sure?”

You raised your head and captured his lips in a kiss. Yes, I’m completely sure. He let out a deep sigh, closing his eyes as he did, and kissed you back with force. It was like your words had set something free inside him.

“Je t’aime,” he whispered against your mouth. “Je t’aime tellement.”

Your eyes rolled inside of your head as you entered a state of pure elation. You could feel all his affection and love coming from him in waves. They washed over you and warmed and calmed your heart at the same time. If you could see your auras, you’d expect to see them intertwined, merging with each other.
You pulled back from him enough to whisper, “I love you too. All of you.”

A delicious purr vibrated in his chest. “I was so mad.” he bit your jaw, your neck, any expanse of skin his mouth could have access. “So frustrated to see that guy touching you and know that I could do nothing about it.”

It took you a moment to understand who he was referring to. “Julien?” You breathed out.

A low sound came from his throat. A warning. “I don’t want to hear you say another’s man name right now.”

You licked your lips and held his gaze. “Then stop me.”

You didn’t have to say it twice.

You lost track of time for a moment. Every time you tried to go back to the surface and clear your head, Chat pulled you under a sea of bliss again and you forgot everything but the feeling of his skin against yours.

“You can’t.” His hips met yours again and your eyes fluttered closed. The stimulation was too much. “I can’t do it again, Chat.”

“I know you can, my love.” Chat whispered in your ear as his hands gripped your waist. “Do it for me. Sing for me.”

His lips captured yours as he brought his hips upwards, filling you completely and making you tremble on his lap. You gripped his shoulders as you felt your toes curling. A loud cry left your lips when your climax finally hit you. It was getting stronger with each time. Chat held you close as your body slumped against his.

“See? You’re so good to me, princess.” He muttered as he left open-mouthed kisses along your shoulder. “So good.”

Your body relaxed, turning into mush as his hands took care of you once again.

“We should go eat something.” You rolled on your back, watching the sunset cast long shadows inside the dim lit room.

“I have a whole meal right here.” Adrien pulled you close to his body until his chest was pressed against your back, his bare skin warm against yours.

You turned back enough to throw him a leveled look, but your face was heating up at his words. “I’m serious.”

He kissed the base of your neck, which was probably dotted with hickeys. “I already called the kitchen and ordered some food. It should be arriving soon.”

“Good—” You let out a yawn and snuggled closer to him. Tiredness was about to take over your body. Maybe you wouldn’t even be able to wait for the food to arrive. What a pity.

“Oh, c’mon, love. You can’t be quitting now.” Adrien peppered your shoulder blades with kisses. “Not when we finally have all the time in the world. No ring to bother us.”

You chuckled lowly, feeling your eyes closing. “You’re insatiable, model boy.” You heard him sigh
loudly as your body relaxed against his. “Just a few minutes.”

You were almost sleeping when you heard a small, lethargic voice chime in.

“Go easy on her, tiger.”

“Plagg,” Adrien’s voice rumbled in his chest. “Go eat your goddamn cheese.”

Whispered words reached your ears. You turned to your other side and felt something was missing. Your eyes fluttered open as you searched the bed with your hand. It was still warm, but empty. *Adrien?*

A cold breeze entered the room, moving the curtains, and a shiver went down your arms. You sat up with difficulty, your body protesting. You might have overdone it with the fun yesterday. Not that you regretted it.

“I think I’ve found it.”

You froze when you heard the words.

“I think I can finally put all this behind me now.”

It was Adrien’s voice, no doubt. But… You glanced to the side and saw Plagg snoring softly, sprawled on your pillow. But who was he talking with?

You were about to get up from the bed when the blonde spoke again.

“I wish you could’ve met her, mom.”

You froze on the spot. *Mom?*

The wind blew again and moved the curtains, allowing you to get a glimpse of Adrien sitting on a stretched bed outside, looking at the night sky.

"You’d like her. She has the same light you had in you..." A pause, and then quiet words reach your ears again. “I hope you’re happy, wherever you are.”

You felt something inside your chest squeeze almost painfully. You just wanted to go there and hug him, but the moment seemed so intimate, a glimpse of a part of him you weren’t allowed to see yet. It felt wrong to interrupt.

“He always does that.”

You looked down and saw Plagg gazing at you, eyes barely open.

“Don’t worry too much,” the kwami murmured.

You slowly lay down and Plagg shuffled closer to you. You expected to hear Adrien’s voice again, but only the distant ocean waves disrupted the silence.

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You heard a click and groaned, putting your arm over your face. “Stop.”

You fought the smile that wanted to curl your lips. “I’ve lost count of how many photos you took of me already.”

The framed bed had a perfect view of the beach. It was your last day in Mauritius before you had to go back to Paris later in the afternoon, so you were enjoying the place while you still could.

“What can I do? You inspire me.” The blonde took your arm away from your face before giving you a chaste kiss on the lips.

You couldn’t help but smile now. “Does that mean I’m your muse?”

He kissed your forehead. “You always were, my love.”

“Ugh, I’m going to throw up.” Plagg groaned from the other side of the bed, where he was sunbathing. You thought the kwami was dozing off, but you had discovered he was a master of pretending he was asleep.

“You’re just jealous, Plagg,” Adrien said and kissed your nose this time. You scrunched up your face, a giggle escaping your lips.

The kwami huffed, rolling on his back.

Adrien lay down next to you and held his phone up, the frontal camera turned in your direction. “C’mon, just one more.”

You posed for the selfie with him, even though you knew he was lying when he said ‘just one more’. You didn’t mind it.

The blonde finally put the phone away, satisfied. He chuckled and buried his face in your neck, kissing the spot under your jaw as his arms circled around you. You passed a hand through his blonde locks, careful not to disrupt his messy bun, and let out a happy sigh. It was like you both were emitting an aura of pure contentment around you. You wished you could stay like this forever, with your muse on a faraway island, with no complications, no Hawkmoth. But you knew that wasn’t possible, at least for now.

“Was I too rough yesterday?” Adrien touched a sensitive spot on your neck.

The rest of your body was sore and there were hickeys dotting your skin, especially on your neck and inner thighs. You traced a red nail mark on his shoulder that continued down his back; he wasn’t looking much better.

You hummed. “I enjoyed it.”

He took a deep breath, and you felt the air hit your skin when he released it. “How can it be possible to love someone so much?”

You kissed the top of his head. “I’m still trying to figure that out myself.”

Plagg groaned again and you both laughed.

You pushed a loose lock of hair behind his ear. “But you need to stop buying me so many things.” He looked up at you with tentative eyes. “All I want is for you to trust me and be honest with me. I won’t run away,” you touched his chest in the spot his heart was. “From whatever you have here.”
“I’ll do my best.” He grabbed your hand and kissed your knuckles.

You smiled. “You don't have to be afraid to tell me anything. I love all of you, kitty.”

He groaned, burying his face into your neck again. “Don’t do this to me. We won’t be able to swim more if you keep this up.” He undulated his hips against yours and you gasped, trying to push him back by the shoulders.

“We’re out in the open.” You hissed.

“That didn’t stop you at the dinner two days ago,” he murmured against your skin, leaving kisses along your neck. “Or in the pool this morning. Or the—”

“Adrien.” You warned, but your voice sounded weak even to your ears. The desire in his voice was making your head spin. And if he insisted, just a bit more, you wouldn’t be able to resist him.

“Alright, fine.” He sighed and it turned into a yawn. You couldn’t help but mimic him as he brought you close to his chest. You had barely slept last night, as Adrien affirmed over and over again his love to you.

You stayed in each other’s arms, lulled by the constant sound of the ocean. You thanked the cool breeze that passed by, ruffling the white cloth that surrounded the framed bed. Without it, the heat that rose from the sand would make it impossible to be comfortable near another human being.

“There isn’t a single day that I don’t thank the universe for letting me meet you, love.” You heard Adrien’s sleepy voice rumbling in his chest.

“I wish we could’ve met sooner,” you muttered, thinking about how much he had suffered. Would you have been able to save him from that pain?

“Maybe now is the right time. Maybe we weren’t prepared back then.” He caressed your back.

“Meet me in the middle of your story when the soul is worn but wise.”

You glanced up at him. “Did you just come up that?”

“I wanted to say yes, but I read it somewhere,” he said, making you let out a quiet laugh.

A moment of silence passed before he spoke again. “Are you really going to leave in July?” His words were barely a whisper, almost being carried away by the wind.

“I…” The words got caught in your throat. The image of him looking at the night sky, talking to the stars, came back to you. You didn’t want to leave him. He was your muse, your home. But everywhere you looked, you couldn’t find an answer, a path that let you remain with him. You kissed his chest, pushing the creeping fear back into the depths of your mind. “We’ll find a way.”

Chapter End Notes

Woo, so this is the end of this big ass chapter. I already started working on the next one. What will happen next? Only time will tell :)

"Meet me in the middle of your story when the soul is worn but wise" is a quote by Angie Weiland-Crosby. I really hold it dear to my heart, so I had to include it in the
story.
Did you think this story would get abandoned? SIKE! It won't happen, my dear readers.

And alas, here we are again. This story is now 3 years old, my goodness. How is that even possible? Did time go by so fast? Yikes.

Anyway! I hope you guys still find my writing enjoyable! It's good to be back <3

“If you need a wedding venue, just tell me.” Leonard enveloped Adrien in a bear hug. When he let him go, the blonde groaned and took a deep breath. “Oh, I can already see it! It’s going to be breathtaking! It’s going to have dancers, white peacocks, coconut rice, and much more!” The man clasped his hands together. “Tell your father about it, and tell him to come back when he can.”

“Oh, I must take this. Goodbye, lovebirds. I wish you much happiness and light in your lives.” He gave you a cheek kiss and then kissed the top of your hand. “Have a good trip back! Au revoir!”

You watched as he passed under the entry arbor and disappeared inside the hotel. “He really thinks we’re getting married, huh.”

Adrien shrugged. “Maybe we do look like an engaged couple.”

You arched one eyebrow. “Really?”

“Leaving so soon?”

You almost jumped out of your skin when you heard the voice near you.

Alix’s red hair seemed to be on fire as she stood under the harsh sun, leaning on the hotel’s wall.

You looked around. When did she even get here? Was appearing out of nowhere a thing between miraculous heroes?

“It’s time to go,” Adrien said with a somber smile. It seemed that he also didn’t want to leave.

“What a pity.” Alix pursed her lips. The sound of wheels on the gravel filled the air as the first van arrived. “Take care.” She hugged Adrien, closing her eyes as she did so. “Tell the girls I miss them.”
You averted your eyes and bit the inside of your cheek. *I'm not jealous*, you told yourself. *Not jealous*.

“I will,” the blonde said. “Come visit us one day, we all miss you.”

She smiled. “I’ll think about it.”

Alix stood by your side as Adrien put his luggage in the van and then approached you.

“I’ll see you soon, chérie.” He put a hand on your cheek and kissed you.

You closed your eyes for a moment, telling yourself that you would be together again soon. It was just a few hours.

You smiled at him when he pulled back and gave him a peck on the lips. “Have a good trip.”

He waved at you both before getting in the car.

As soon as the van hit the road, Alix spoke. “I’m glad he has you now. The last years haven’t been easy for him.” You blinked at her, but she was still staring forward. You were not expecting those words to leave her mouth.

When the van couldn’t be seen anymore, she turned to you. “Please take good care of him, Adrien is too precious for this world.”

“I’ll… I’ll do my best.” You nodded, feeling a solemn sense of responsibility.

“I’m sure you will.” She raised her fist and after a moment of hesitation, you fist bumped her. “And if you need anything, send me a message or something.” She gave you a piece of paper with an email and a number on it.

“Thank you, Alix.” You put the paper inside your pocket. “You’re not so bad after all.”

The girl barked out a laugh. “Sorry for ruining your night that day.”

You shook your head as the embarrassing memories came back to you. “It’s fine. Everything worked out in the end.”

A black van pulled up in front of you and you grabbed your luggage as the driver opened the door for you.

“Friends?” Alix extended her hand. You looked at her palm for a moment before shaking it.

“Friends.”

As you got inside the van, you heard Alix cry out. “Don’t forget to invite me to the wedding!” You turned your head around to give her a look and she laughed.

You shook your head as you got comfortable inside. What was with these people and their obsession with marriage?

The nine-hour trip left you with aching muscles and a pounding head, and even if you had slept most of the time, your mind was still crying for sleep when you arrived at Adrien’s studio at 2 in the morning. You thanked the deserted street as you entered the building. If paparazzi saw you getting
inside Adrien’s place with luggage like this, you would be done for. They had lost interest in you for a while, and you wanted it to stay that way.

“You look tired,” Adrien said as he helped you carry your luggage inside the studio.

“Hello to you too, kitty.” You passed a hand through his hair, fixing some rebellious strands.

He leaned into your touch and gave you a sleepy smile before kissing you on the cheek.

The blonde slipped into the bed as you got ready to sleep. When you finally walked up the stairs, he stared at you with tired, half lidded eyes. He was probably making an enormous effort to wait for you. After turning the lights off, you got under the covers by his side, careful not to wake up Plagg, who was snoring softly on the pillow near Adrien’s head.

“How was the trip?” The model asked while yawning.

You couldn’t help but yawn in response as you lay on your back. “Exhausting. I think the ladies by my side talked during the whole trip. Every time I woke up, they were talking. I have no idea how they had so many things to talk about.”

Adrien snorted and shuffled closer to you, putting his arm around your waist and letting his bare torso lean against you. His warmth seeped into your clothes in an instant and you let out a happy sigh. It was still new to sleep with him like this, without having to worry about discovering his identity, and to be able to wake up by his side. You were still getting used to it and sometimes you would ask yourself if this was really happening.

“I missed you,” he murmured near your ear.

You chuckled, pushing his hair out of his face. “I doubt it.”

“I’m serious.” He kissed your neck and you hummed. “Didn’t you miss me?”

“Of course I did.” You bopped his nose and smiled as he just gazed at you with hooded eyes. He must be really tired.

You kissed his forehead and turned around. Different from Chat, Adrien liked to be the big spoon. You didn’t mind, so you let him hold you. It seemed to help him when he had nightmares. Those were less frequent than you had imagined, but they still took a toll on him. The weirdest part of it was that he couldn’t recall what happened in these dreams. ‘I just remember the sensations’, he had told you one night in Mauritius.

“Bonne nuit,” you said, closing your eyes. You felt little warm paws climb on your neck, and smiled as Plagg began to purr almost immediately.

“Bonne nuit,” Adrien murmured, his voice already laced with sleep.

Please,” the man said, the volume of his voice inconstant. You had lost count of how many times he had begged. “You’re stronger than this.”

You turned your head to him and your eyes locked with his dark ones. There was fear, but also strength in them. Your chuckle echoed in the empty room.

“Yes,” you said, pressing the claw of your thumb into the flesh of his neck. “I am stronger, and I’ll
become even more. It’s a pity you won’t live long enough to see it.”

As the door of the run down house busted open, you called your power. The man began to scream as purple light touched his skin.

His voice got mixed with a familiar one, desperate, coming from the entrance.

“Chérie.”

You let out a laugh as the weight in your hand vanished and a surge of power enveloped you.

“You’re too late, Ladybug.”

“She’s trembling. You need to wake her up.”

The images began to get blurry, moving in a mess of colors. Red and white seemed to clash against each other.

“Chérie, c’mon, wake up.”

You gasped for air as your eyes snapped open. You could still see the man in front of you, his features clear even in the darkness of the room. You passed a hand in front of your face and screwed your eyes shut as you heart hammered against your chest.

“Shh, it’s okay, love. I’m here.” Adrien pulled you to his chest and caressed your arm.

You opened your eyes again and saw Plagg flying in front of you. The man had vanished. You turned around and buried your face into Adrien’s chest. You breathed in and out, trying to follow the blonde’s breathing pattern. It was that same dream with Chat Blanc again, but this time there was no fog or distortion, everything was clear.

“It was just a nightmare,” Adrien said as he caressed your back.

Plagg lay on Adrien’s pillow and watched you intently. He only closed his eyes after a few moments, when your breathing normalized.

You weren’t able to sleep for a while and tried to stay still to not wake up Adrien and Plagg. The sensations of the dream were still coursing through you. It was all too much to grasp. You were afraid that if you slept again before thinking this through, you’d forget it.

The guy in the dream had to be Chat Blanc, but the guy he killed… You had no idea who he was. Maybe a hostage? You sighed, closing your eyes. Why were you able to finally see that fully now? Unless… You gasped as your eyes snapped open. Adrien shifted and you froze. When he didn’t move again, your body relaxed.

Before, when you had gone to sleep, Plagg was lying on your neck. That day in Mauritius when the kwami had helped you to see Chat’s memory, he had done the same thing. Could it be because of that? Maybe it made your connection with him stronger? Plagg wasn’t touching you now, so maybe he knew about that. You chewed on your lip as your eyes began to close again, like weights were pulling them down.

You wanted to talk to Adrien about it, but after his reaction when you talked about his akumization, you weren’t sure if it was the right time. Maybe you could mention it in a few days, but for now, you would just let him hold you in his arms.
“Chérie, c’mon.” Adrien sighed.

You grumbled, pulling him close to you again. “Five more minutes.”

He chuckled. “We need to leave for class in an hour, you know that.”

You let out a groan, refusing to even open your eyes. You were so comfortable and he was so, so warm. The feel of his skin against yours was delicious. “Let’s ditch it.”

He caressed your head. “I wish, but we need to give a report to Ms. Boucher about our project.”

You huffed. Stupid project. You hadn’t even done anything in the past few days, what were you going to say to the teacher?

“I’m afraid I have to agree with him this time.” You heard Plagg say. He probably just wanted Adrien to get him cheese.

“Fine.” You let go of your muse and turned to the other side, pulling the covers over your head.

The covers moved a little and you felt warm lips touch your forehead. “I’ll come wake you up after I finish showering.”

It didn’t take long for you to doze off again. You could feel your thoughts shifting into a dream when a noise came from the window. It took you a moment to reconnect with the real world. You cracked one eye open, but soon closed it, cursing the bright light. It was probably just the stray cats anyway.

But of course it wasn’t. Your soul almost jumped out of your body when a thud came from the front of the bed. Your eyes snapped open and you held your breath as the intruder stood upright, staring at the bottom floor. There was no mistaking to whom those clothes belonged to.

“Adrien, where the hell are you?” Ladybug barked out.

What was Ladybug doing in Adrien’s studio and at this hour? You opened your mouth to reveal yourself when bright light began to surround her. Your mouth hung open as your eyes widened.

Marinette stood in front of you. Your pulse seemed like drums beating in your ears. Marinette was Ladybug. She was Ladybug. The Ladybug!

For a moment you wondered if you were still dreaming, but the sensations coursing through you were similar to the ones when you found out about Chat. A part of your brain seemed to be waking up, bringing many memories about Marinette to the surface. This was real, very real. And Marinette, your friend, was Ladybug.

“He’s so irresponsible!” Mari crossed the room, going to the stairs. “He disappears for three whole days and doesn’t say anything! Anything! If at least he had picked up his goddamn phone, but no!”

“Calm down a little, Marinette. Maybe he had a reason.” A small red creature said, following the brunette.

The ladybug kwami! Your mind screamed at you. You tried to make it calm down, but it was no use.

“He better have a really good one!” Mari exclaimed, going down the first step.

The kwami’s eyes then fell on your form, hidden behind the covers, and they froze midair.

“Um, Marinette?” The kwami’s voice was filled with apprehension.
The girl stopped, turning around with a scowl. “What?”

The kwami pointed to you and Mari’s gaze met yours. All the anger melted from her face and transformed into an expression of pure dread.

“H-Hey Mari.” You pulled the covers closer to you.

The brunette stared at you for a long moment, her blue eyes not leaving yours.

You swallowed dry at the look on her face. “Um, nice to see you?”

“Tikki,” Mari said in a low voice, ignoring your words. “Erase her memory.”

Your mouth went dry. “What?”

The red kwami’s eyes widened. “But—”

“I’m not making the same mistake again.” Mari refused to look you in the eyes, keeping her blank gaze on the kwami. “Do it.”

Tikki sighed and began to fly over to you. With a shriek leaving your mouth, you scrambled out of the bed, dragging the covers with you as you tried to get away from the kwami. You walked backwards until your back hit a wall. You were trapped in a corner; you had nowhere to go.

“No!” You cried out, seeing Tikki approaching.

“Nobody is erasing my mind! Not again! ‘Adrien! Plagg! Help!’” You yelled as loud as you could.

“Plagg?” Tikki stopped and looked back at Marinette, who was staring at you wide eyed.

“What is it? What happened?” The sight of Plagg flying to your side almost made you cry in relief. The strong smell of cheese followed him.

“They want to erase my memory!” You pointed to the two visitors.

He then saw the other kwami and Mari, and dropped the cheese he was carrying on the ground. “Oh.”

“She already knows,” Marinette muttered, more to herself than anyone else.

“Back off, Tikki.” Plagg hissed and bared his teeth, staying between you and the other kwami.

“Whoa, calm down!” Tikki flew back a little.

“What’s going on?” Adrien’s voice came from the stairs. “Plagg, is she okay?” He arrived at the top of the stairs, a towel around his hips and his hair dripping water on the ground. “What in the—” His voice died in his throat.

His green eyes seemed like ping-pong balls, going from you and Plagg to Marinette and her kwami. It was like his brain was trying to process the scene in front of him, but was having trouble doing so.

Before he had time to have a proper reaction, Mari walked up to him and punched his arm.

“Ouch! What the hell!” Adrien rubbed the spot where she had hit him.

“Do you think it’s okay to disappear for three days, Agreste?” Marinette seemed to tower over him, even thought Adrien was quite taller than her. “I thought you had been kidnapped, or worse!”
She tried to hit his arm again, but he dodged. The towel around his hips began to slip.

“Stop punching me!” He gave a step back, holding the towel back up. “I’m sorry, ok?”

Mari crossed her arms over her chest. “Where were you?”

Adrien looked at you and the concern was evident in his eyes. He walked up to you as he said, “Traveling.”

Marinette huffed at his vague answer. “And you didn’t think about warning me or anyone else?”

The blonde gave her a shrug and then put a hand on your cheek. It was still humid, but you didn’t mind. “Are you okay?”

You leaned on his touch and put your hand over his, realizing you were trembling a little. “Yeah, they just surprised me.”

“We didn’t know you would be here,” Tikki said. Plagg was still watching her intently like she was a threat.

“So you’re not going to erase my memory?” You looked at the kwami and Marinette.

“Erase her memory?” Adrien slowly turned around to face Mari, a scowl beginning to contort his features.

The brunette scratched her neck. “Sorry about that. I… I panicked. Last time someone found out about my identity,” a shadow passed over her eyes for a brief moment. “It didn’t end happily for them. It became a reflex.”

Adrien’s eyes softened. “Mari…”

She shrugged. “But it doesn't matter now, since you already know Adrien’s identity. You're already too involved.”

You and Adrien shared a look. That was it? She wasn’t going to try and interfere anymore?

“So… are we cool now?” Tikki asked, looking around.

“No.” Plagg let out a huff and grabbed his cheese from the ground. “You made me drop my cheese.”

The red kwami rolled her eyes. “Just get another one. You have a fridge full of it.”

You noticed more water dripping from Adrien’s hair to his torso and put a hand on his arm, catching his attention. “You should dry yourself off and put on some clothes before you catch a cold.”

“What? You don’t like the view?” He looked down at his toned abdomen.

You brushed some of the water from his stomach and felt him shiver. “You know I like it very much,” you said in a low voice.

He grinned and leaned in to kiss you.

“So this is a thing now?” Marinette’s voice brought you both back to the present. Adrien turned around to face her. “You guys are officially together. I mean, you were already together when you were Chat, but, like,” she waved her hands around. “You’re completely together now.”
“Yes.” The blonde gave you a warm look. “She found out, and to make up for being an asshole I took her to Mauritius. I told her everything she wanted to know about me. I didn’t say anything about you, but,” he chuckled. “I guess it doesn’t make any difference now.” He turned his attention back to you. “I’ll be back soon.” He kissed your forehead and went inside his closet.

“So you found out by yourself?” Mari asked as you sat on the bed, finally letting go of the covers.

You contemplated telling her about the dreams and Plagg, but for now, you just nodded. It would take a long time to explain everything.

The brunette seemed impressed. “Well, you did notice my earrings before.

“The fake Ladybug’s ones?” Adrien’s voice came from the closet.

Mari hummed. “She was about to find out whether you liked it or not.”

“What are you talking about?” You looked at the earrings Mari was wearing at the moment, but they were black.

“The earrings I was using at the Valentine’s boat party. They’re not the miraculous ones, but since they look like Ladybug’s, we found out that the magic that helps us hide our identities works on them too and people don’t even notice them. I decided to use them as an inside joke since then.”

Mari touched the right ear. “But you noticed the earrings that day.”

“Oh, I had forgotten about that.” Adrien’s surprised voice reached you. Why was he taking so long? You wouldn’t be surprised if he was still deciding what to wear.

“Yes. I told you that day the miraculous magic wasn’t working on her so well anymore.” Mari smiled at you. “You were about to make the connection sooner or later. That’s why I kinda ran away that day.”

“I think…” Your brows furrowed as you tried to remember. “I think I found out the day after the party.” Plagg had sent you that dream, but you were beginning to mix Chat and Adrien too.

Her smile widened. “See? The only other person who noticed my earrings was my boyfriend. He found out about my identity just a little after too.”

“I’m sorry about what happened to him,” you said in a small voice.

Her eyes softened. “Merci.”

Adrien walked out of the closet. Spending so much time with him, especially these past days, you thought you couldn’t get more attracted to him. Well, it seemed you were wrong. Your eyes went up and down his frame as you admired his choice of clothing. The sleeveless shirt showed off his arms while the dark jeans hugged his thighs in a marvelous way. That’s why he was taking so long. Your eyes finally found his and you knew from his smile that he was enjoying the attention. How could someone be so perfect? If only he was just beautiful, but no, he was also kind and helped others and —

Mari cleared her throat. “Do you guys want me to leave?”

You blinked a few times and finally managed to tear your eyes from Adrien to look at her. “What?”

“Mon dieu, if I thought the tension was bad before, now it’s going to be unbearable.” She passed a hand through her short hair as she let out a laugh. “Oh, and Nino will have to give Alya 20 euros! I
just want to see his face.”

“We’re not going to tell anyone about it. If word gets out, it’ll become a huge scandal,” Adrien said, but then his eyebrows furrowed. “Wait, they have a bet going on?”

Mari hummed. “Yep. After Valentine’s Day, Alya said you would get together in less than a month. Nino said it would take longer for you to confess.”

“Well, Nino wasn’t exactly wrong,” you said. “If I hadn’t found out, Adrien wouldn’t have said anything.”

“I was going to do it!” Adrien protested.

“Sure thing, model boy.” You gave him a skeptical look as you got up and began to go down the stairs. Even if you still didn’t want to go to class, you had to get ready.

“Yeah… No. He wasn’t going to confess anytime soon.” You heard Plagg say.

“Hey!” Adrien cried out.

You heard Mari and Tikki laugh as you closed the bathroom door. You smiled. You could always count on Plagg to have your back.

When you finished getting ready and putting your materials for the class in your bag, you met the others at the kitchen counter, where they were eating breakfast together. You would have to eat fast, since you still had to get on the metro to the university.

There was a warm drink and a plate with food already waiting for you at the table.

“Thank you, kitty,” you whispered in Adrien’s ear as you squeezed his shoulders.

He kept staring at you with a smile as you sat down by his side.

“You guys are screwed,” Mari said and took a sip of her coffee. “Everyone is going to notice you’re together in an instant. How do you plan to hide it with you two looking at each other like that?”

Tikki nodded as she took a bite of her cookie. “Yeah, it’s pretty obvious.”

“Alright,” Mari put her cup down. “Here are some tips from someone who had a secret relationship before.” She raised her index finger. “One. Don’t look at each other like you were just doing. Two,” she raised another finger. “No PDA and stay at a safe distance from each other.” She added another finger. “And three. No photos together or of one another in your phone and no incriminating texts.”

You glanced at Adrien when you heard the last phrase. You had completely forgotten about the pictures in his phone of you two together. He’d have to store them somewhere else.

He smiled when he saw the concerned expression on your face. “No one looks at my phone, love, it’s okay.” Mari gave him a pointed look and he sighed. “Alright, fine, I’ll keep them somewhere else.”

“Thanks for the tips, Mari,” you said and took a big bite out of your croissant. You hoped you could keep this secret thing going, otherwise things would get crazy really quick.
“I’m glad you know the truth now.” Mari took another sip from her coffee. “I was almost telling you the secret myself. If he had fucked this up, I’d never forgive him.”

“I wouldn’t forgive myself either.” Adrien’s eyes went up and down your body and he sighed. “It’ll be so difficult to keep my hands to myself.” You nudged him with your elbow and he laughed.

A small clearing of the throat was heard. You turned and saw Tikki flying near you.

“I think we haven’t been properly introduced yet.” She smiled and extended her small paw to you. “I’m Tikki.”

You said your name to her as you held her red paw between your thumb and index finger and shook it. “It’s nice to meet you, Tikki. Especially now that I know you won’t erase my memory.”

Plagg got closer to you, eyeing Tikki with a serious gaze. “I’d never let her.”

Tikki rolled her eyes. “I see you’re still possessive as always.”

“I’m not.” He scowled.

You scratched Plagg’s chin and the scowl vanished from his face. “Thank you for saving me, Plagg. You’re the best.”

He tilted his head to give you better access and purred. “I was only doing my job.”

Tikki shook her little head with a smile.

“Even Plagg loves you already. This is serious,” Mari said.

Adrien blew inside his teacup. “He already loved her way before.” Plagg glared at the blonde and Adrien shot him a grin.

You smiled at their antics before turning to Marinette. “I can’t believe you were Ladybug all this time. The next thing I know, I’ll find out Alya is Rena Rouge.”

They all shared a look between each other.

“No…” You put your croissant down and gaped at them. “Are you serious?”

“Well, she isn’t Rena anymore, but she was in the past,” Adrien said. “The fox miraculous has been given to someone else.”

“Why? What happened?” You asked. This is crazy. Even Alya was a hero?

“She wanted to live a normal life with Nino after the Hawkmoth war,” Mari said. “She was afraid that what happened to my boyfriend could happen to him as well. We had to erase her memory.”

“But she didn’t end up like…” You glanced at Adrien.

“Like my father? No.” He looked down at his teacup. “My dad didn’t do the process properly and that’s why he ended up like that. We made sure that Alya was safe when we did it.” He drank the rest of his tea and got up. “C’mon, love, we should get going or we’re going to be late for class.”

You looked at the time in your phone. Oh crap, you had 15 minutes. You got up and stuffed the rest of the croissant in your mouth.
“If you want to know something about Ladybug, you can now ask Marinette,” Adrien said.

It took you a moment to swallow everything. “Really? Even about the war?”

Mari stopped drinking her coffee and glanced at Adrien. He was smiling at her sweetly, but his eyes were like Chat’s, full of mischief. It was like he was telling her your questions were her problem now.

“Huh, sure,” the brunet said. “But it’s better if we talk face to face. I don’t trust social media or texts.”

You couldn’t contain your smile. There were so many things that you wanted to know and maybe Marinette could have the answers you wanted. “Thank you, Mari!”

“No problem.” She smiled. She went to wash her cup and plate, but Adrien stopped her.

“Leave it, I’ll wash it later,” he said.

She shook her head. “I got it, relax. Now go before you’re late.”

For a moment it seemed that Adrien would protest, but he sighed. “You know where the spare key is, right? Just lock the place before you leave.” He opened his backpack and motioned to Plagg. “Plagg, c’mon.”

The kwami shoved a big piece of cheese inside his mouth and got inside. Tikki looked at him with a disgusted face.

“Bye Mari, bye Tikki. See you soon.” You waved at them as you grabbed your things.

“À plus, ladies. I’m gonna tell Marius you miss him.” Adrien grinned at Mari.

She sent him a death glare. “Don’t you dare, Agreste.”

Adrien just laughed as he closed the door behind you.

You walked down the stairs, hand in hand. Adrien stopped before the front door and let go of you. He took a deep breath.

“Allright. We can do this,” he said and went to open the door. “You can go first. I’ll be right behind you.”

“Wait.” You touched his arm.

He turned around, eyes wide. “What?”

You put a hand on the back of his neck and pulled him to you. He let out a small, surprised moan as you pressed him into the wall and deepened the kiss. You pulled back a moment later and licked your lips.

“Okay, we can go now.” You smiled.

Adrien shook his head a little as he adjusted his jeans. “You’re evil.”

Your smile widened as you opened the door.
You arrived at class with one minute to spare. Adrien had waited for a different metro at the station, so he should be arriving soon. It was just the first day of you pretending not to be together and your shoulders were already stiff as you walked inside. Having a secret was hard. You just wished that the miraculous magic would help you conceal your relationship, but you doubted it would.

You spotted Julien at his usual chair and sat by his side. “Hey, ça va?”

His whole face brightened when he saw you. “There you are, I was getting worried!” He pulled you into a hug. “How was the trip?”

You laughed at his enthusiasm. “It was great. Everything got better after that night. How about you? Are you feeling better?” After solving things with Adrien, you didn't have much time to check on Julien, which you regretted. But at least on the outside, he seemed to be doing fine.

“Oh, I’m great! Just great.” He smiled. “I went out with Louise that day, she has been helping me out. Oh, did I tell you she’s going to therapy?”

“Really? I hope it helps her.” You said, impressed. You hoped it made her realize that taking her anger out on other people wasn’t a good coping mechanism.

Mrs. Boucher and Marius arrived at the class and Adrien got in right after them, without the teacher noticing. You smiled at him. That was close.

His eyes met yours and he smiled back before going to his seat.

“Are you and Adrien cool now?” Julien asked, and all of a sudden it dawned on you what you had done.

It was just a smile, it wasn’t affectionate or anything, right? You stopped talking to yourself when you noticed Julien was still waiting for an answer.

“O-oh, yeah, we’re okay now.” You gave him a smile and hoped it didn’t look strained. “We’re friends. Good friends.”

He pursed his lips, and you could feel your palms getting sweaty. He then sighed. “What a pity. I wanted to tease him more.”

You let out a laugh and hoped he couldn’t hear the relief in it.

“This is less than ideal,” Adrien said as he put his metal easel next to yours.

Mrs. Boucher wanted the students to work in pairs again, and, of course, she had chosen to put you and Adrien together. ‘You two make a great team’, she had told you.

“Relax, can’t you control yourself?” You said, almost whispering.

He glared at you. “That’s not it. What if I get distracted and do something?”

“Then don’t get distracted.” You sent him a small smile before focusing on your drawing.

The satin cloth under Marius’ body had many details, making it tiring to draw. You almost praised the heavens when you finished it and got to work on Marius. When you finished the lines, you waited for Adrien to finish his and exchanged your drawing with him. A smile pulled at your lips when you put the paper in front of you. You were always impressed by his style. It was linear and
symmetric, but the thickness of the lines in certain points gave it a beautiful movement.

“I wish I could draw you naked right now,” you whispered to Adrien as you began to shade the drawing.

He whispered back, “Well, I can offer to be the next model.”

You quickly looked around to see if anyone was paying attention to you, but everyone was focused on their own papers. “And let these people see the astonishing sight that is your body? Never. They already eat you up with their eyes as it is.”

Adrien grinned. “Oh, so you want me all to yourself? It would only be for the sake of art.”

“Art can find someone else. I don’t like sharing.” You kept glancing at Marius as you tried to figure out the shadows on his body. “Didn’t you tell me something like that once?”

A small chuckle left Adrien’s lips. “I suppose I did.”

You glanced at Marius again, and your heart skipped a beat when you noticed him staring at you. He kept looking and you arched one eyebrow. His lips twitched into a smile for a brief moment before he looked into another direction.

You narrowed your eyes a fraction. Weird…

“Hey, check this out,” Adrien whispered.

He showed you his drawing and you saw that Marius’ nipples were now smiling faces. You put a hand over your mouth to try to stop the snort that wanted to come out, but the blonde began to laugh quietly and you couldn’t help but laugh as well.

Some students began to glance at you, and you hit Adrien’s arm.

“Stop it,” you said under your breath. He pressed his lips tightly, but he was still smiling.

You wanted to run from the classroom when the class ended. You rushed to gather your materials before you and Adrien ended up ruining everything.

“Don’t forget to bring the silhouette drawings next week,” Ms. Boucher said as the other students began to leave.

Your shoulders sagged at her words. That meant you’d have to come to the university and do your homework, since you didn’t have the metal easel. Well, there was nothing you could do about it. You should be thankful that the teacher didn’t force you to buy one.

You and Adrien took your finished drawings to the teacher, who looked at them with fondness in her eyes before putting them with the others. Apparently, she was going to make an exposition with the drawings later on.

“You two always make such a great duo. I can’t wait to see your final project. How is it going?” She asked.

“About that,” you gave Adrien a look, and he nodded, encouraging you. “We’re working on it, but we didn’t get much done this past week.”

“Don’t worry about it, you can show me a photo or something next time.” Mrs. Boucher said and you were left speechless. You weren’t expecting it to be so easy.
“I think I have some photos here,” Adrien said, taking out his phone.

You leaned on the wall outside the classroom as you waited for Adrien to finish talking with the teacher. Julien and Marius were nowhere to be seen, and you wondered if your blonde friend was really okay. You would have to ask Marinette if she knew about something.

You felt a presence by your side.

“Hey, sweetheart.” Marius leaned on the wall next to you, a grin on his lips. “So, did you find the secret?”

You narrowed your eyes at him. What was up with him and these damn secrets? “Which secret?”

His grin got larger. “The cat’s secret obviously.”

You stomach lurched. This was the same thing he had told you some time ago. He was probably talking about Chat, but which secret was he referring to? Marius gave a step forward, but you refused to give one back and just stared at him.

He tilted his head. “Hmm, maybe not?”

You heard Adrien calling your name and a moment later he arrived by your side.

Marius gave a step back to look at him. “Ah, Agreste, good to see you.” The kind words and the smile on his lips didn’t match the acid tone of his voice.

“Same here,” Adrien said in that same tone and then turned to you. “You okay?”

“Yeah.” You nodded, keeping your eyes on Marius.

Marius’ caramel eyes went from the blonde to you and his expression shifted slightly. It was almost imperceptible, but you saw the way his eyes widened. Something clicked in your brain. The secret…

He gave you a tight-lipped smile. “Well, this was lovely, but I need to go. À plus, doll.”

Adrien’s eyebrows were furrowed as he watched the brunette leave. “What did he want?”

“He knows,” you muttered. You could feel your legs shaking. It was obvious which secret Marius was talking about now. All that talk about doors, secrets, and black cats, he already knew then.

“What?” Adrien asked. “He knows what?”

“About you.” You looked at him with wide eyes. How did Marius know about Chat’s identity? And why did he want you to find it out?

“Chérie, calm down.” Adrien went to touch your face, but he stopped himself and looked around at the corridor full of students. “Come with me.”

You followed him from a safe distance, Marius’s smile still imprinted on your mind. Adrien took you to the last floor of the building, pulled you into an empty classroom and closed the door behind him. You were hyperventilating at this point.

“Hey, love, look at me.” The blonde grabbed your arms. “Breathe. In,” he took a deep breath and you did the same. “Out.” You pushed the air out of your lungs.

You did that a few times until your heartbeat went back to normal.
“Tell me what happened.” Adrien sat down on a chair and you did the same. The only light came from an open window on the back and shadows covered most of the place.

You told him about Marius’ questions and how he had reacted earlier.

“There’s no way he knows I’m Chat.” Adrien said, a slight crease between his eyebrows showing his doubt. “If he did, I’m sure he’d have sold that secret to a lot of people by now.”

You tapped your fingers on the table. What if he had a reason to keep it a secret? “What if… What if he’s the new Hawkmoth?” You asked.

“Marius?” Adrien said the name as if it was a word from a different language. He went pensive for a moment before saying, “I’ve seen him during akuma attacks, it can’t be him. Hawkmoth needs to be transformed to be able to akumatize someone.”

Oh. Your shoulders sagged. Adrien was right. You had seen Marius at college when Claude Genova, that gang boss, had been akumatized.

“His talk about secrets isn’t anything new, since he basically collects secrets at this point.” Adrien said. “I wouldn’t worry too much about it.”

You opened your mouth to tell him that Marius was still suspicious when he put a hand up.

“But I can talk with Marinette and we can investigate.” He grabbed your hand and kissed the top of it. “Don’t worry about him, alright? Next time he bothers you, tell him to fuck off. And Chat Noir can always, you know,” he cracked his knuckles.

You let out a chuckle. “Alright, thank you, my hero.”

“Just say the word and it’s done.” He winked and then extended his hand. “C’mon, let’s go home.”

“---

“How many muses do we still need to make?” You were doodling on your sketchbook while sitting between Adrien’s legs on the soft rug.

You had finished lunch some time ago. After that, he had helped you take your luggage back to your place and you came back to his studio with him. He’d be leaving to patrol the city with Ladybug soon and, later on, he’d have more errands to do, so you were enjoying your time together while also discussing the Nine Muses project. Plagg had just finished his meal and was snoring on the couch.

“I finished Melpomene a few days ago, so five muses.” Adrien propped his chin on your shoulder.

You sighed, leaning more against him. You had just started and you were already tired. “That’s a lot.”

Adrien laughed and your body shook along with his. “I still haven’t taught you how to sculpt properly.” He kissed a spot on your neck that made a strong shiver run through your body. You could feel his lips curling into a smile. “And you haven’t taught me how to draw like you.”

You huffed. You wanted to tell him he didn’t need it, but you knew he would just disagree with you.

“Now that we don’t have all that tension going on anymore, we can focus on learning,” he said.

You stopped drawing. “You mean, now that you aren’t trying to seduce me anymore.”
He chuckled. “Oh, but I’m trying.”

You turned your head back a little to look at him. “Are you?”

He let out a dramatic sigh. “I can’t believe all my efforts were in vain.”

“You need to try harder.” You shrugged.

His arms tightened around you and he said in a quiet voice in your ear, “Is that so?” You resisted the urge to shiver as he began to leave open-mouthed kisses along your neck. He sucked on the same spot he had kissed before and you let out a small moan. “And what do you want me to do?”

“I—” The intercom rang, making you jolt in his arms. “Holy shit.” You put a hand over your heart and looked backwards, to the source of the noise. Adrien was staring at the intercom with furrowed brows.

“Aren’t you going to see who it is?” You asked, glancing at him.

“Oh,” he smiled. “It’s fine. It’s probably just someone selling something or a new fan who found my address.”

He went back to kissing your neck and your eyes almost fluttered closed.

The intercom rang again and your gaze went to the device near the door. You put your sketchbook down and began to get up to take a look at the intercom camera when his arms tightened around your waist.

“Where are you going?” He arched one eyebrow.

“I’m going to see who it is.” You tried to move again, but he didn’t let go of you. You groaned. “Adrien, c’mon.”

“If it was someone important, they would’ve called me already.” He said, still keeping you in his arms. “If you insist, I’ll have to use extreme seductive methods.”

You laughed. “What in the world is that?”

Plagg shifted in his sleep, turning to the other side, as the intercom rang once more. Who is it? You began to pry Adrien’s arms away from you and he let go with a sigh.

“I warned you,” he said. “Plagg, transform me!”

As soon as the kwami’s eyes fluttered open, he was pulled inside the ring, a shocked expression on his face. Before you could feel bad for Plagg, you were pushed backwards, and a second later, you were lying on the rug and Chat was straddling you.

You eyed him coldly. “Oh, so you’re the extreme seductive method.”

He passed a hand through his hair. “I know you can’t resist this, princess. Especially these cat ears. I know how much you love them.” He winked.

You fought the urge to laugh and tried to maintain a neutral face. “You embarrass me.” You bucked your hips up, expecting to throw him off you, but he barely moved.

“I can do that too.” He ground his hips down, and you bit your lip, fighting back a moan.
“I just want to see who it is, you ass,” you said, a bit breathless.

He pouted. “But I’m gonna leave soon and we won’t see each other until tomorrow.”

“It will be just a second!” You exclaimed.

He batted his eyelashes at you. “A second is too much to be away from you, my love.”

You let out a sigh and relaxed under him. “Fine.”

He grinned and got off of you.

When you were free, you got up swiftly and ran to the intercom. Your feet stopped touching the ground and a string of curses left your mouth as Chat lifted you up and threw you over his shoulder.

“No!” You cried out. Why did he have to be so strong?

“I knew you would do that.” The blonde laughed.

Before you could yell at him to let you go, he put you down on the sofa. At this point the person ringing the intercom would be already gone. Your curiosity was screaming at you.

“Asshole.” You grumbled as Chat leaned over you, putting one arm on each side of your head.

He licked his lips. “So? Are you going to punish me because of it?”

You looked up at him with a poker face. “You’re so kinky.”

“I know you love it.” He leaned down and licked your nose.

“Aw, c’mon!” You groaned and wiped your nose with your hand as he laughed. You wiped it on his chest and he glared at you, making you laugh.

“You should handcuff me again, chérie.” He looked down at you with hooded eyes. “We were so rudely interrupted last time.”

“I wish I hadn't heard that.” Lady’s voice came from the window, making you and Chat look up. “Now the image is going to be in my head forever.”

“You should ask Alix about it,” Chat said as he got up. “She knows exactly how great I look thanks to my dearest one here.” Chat smiled sweetly at you.

Ladybug shot an incredulous look your way.

You let out a long sigh as you sat up on the sofa. “Don’t look at me like that.”

You grabbed your things that were scattered around the place and got ready to leave. Now that Lady had appeared, the two would go patrol the city. There hadn’t been any akumas in the past days, so Lady was getting worried that something big might be going on.


The cat boy nodded. “Yeah, it was crazy. I’ll tell you during patrol.”

“Talking about patrol. Are you sure you have enough time for it?” She motioned with her chin to his ring.
“I just transformed, don’t worry. I still have plenty of time,” he said.

“Alright, let’s go then.” Lady turned to you. “I just checked the street and it’s safe. There’s barely anyone outside, but be careful anyway.”

“You too,” you said and then looked at Chat. “Both of you.”

Chat kissed you on the cheek and then leaned in, making your noses brush. “See you tomorrow, my love.”

You began to close your eyes and shorten the gap between you when he pulled back. You stared, mouth slightly open, as he grinned from ear to ear. You narrowed your eyes as you leaned back slowly. Oh, so that’s how it was going to be. So he really wanted you to handcuff him.


“Marius?” Ladybug asked.

“We have a lot to talk about.” Chat’s voice was cut off as you closed the door behind you.

You looked around the street when you arrived at the gate, trying in foolish hope to see if the person that buzzed the intercom was still around, but it was as Ladybug said, there was no one around. You let out a frustrated breath as you began your walk home. You would have to live with the curiosity.

As you passed by busy cafés that filled the Parisian streets with a delicious smell of coffee and pastries, you grabbed your phone and called Alya.

You hoped Chat would talk about Marius with Ladybug. You didn't know if they’d investigate him or not, but you wanted to help, and you knew you couldn’t do that alone. Even if Marius wasn’t Hawkmoth, there was something about what he said that kept bothering you. The miraculous heroes had their mission, and now, you had yours.

“Allô?” Alya’s voice came from the other side of the line.

“Alya, ça va? It’s me,” you said.

“Hey, ça va! I haven’t seen you in a while.” You heard Leon faint barking before it vanished. Alya must have walked to another room.

“Yeah, I was kinda busy.” You went down the stairs to the metro station. “You said you have been trying to find the new Hawkmoth, right?”

“Yeah, why?” Alya asked.

You adjusted the phone over your ear as you used your metro pass and went through the ticket gate. “Do you want help?”

“Oh, ho, ho.” She laughed and you could almost see her eyes shining on the other side of the line. “I like where this is going. Do you have a lead?”

“Maybe.” You walked down another set of stairs. “Have you looked into Marius Boucher yet?”

The line was silent for a moment. “Hmm, I don’t think so…”
As you stopped to wait for a metro car, you thought back to Adrien. He was always risking his life to save Paris and protect you. The last you could do was to try and help him as you could.

“I think Marius might know something,” you said. You would have to talk to Alya about your suspicions and see if you weren’t just paranoid, but there was that whole secret thing, and also the fact that Marius didn’t like Adrien, which was suspicious in itself. Who in their right mind wouldn’t like Adrien?

Alya hummed. “Well, do you want to be the Watson to my Sherlock Holmes?”

The metro car arrived, ruffling your clothes. You smiled, even though Alya couldn’t see it. “It’ll be an honor.”

Chapter End Notes

I won't say the story is ending soon, but we ARE in the path for the final arc...

As I mentioned on tumblr, I have 2 more chapters ready. I'll be posting one each week like I did in the past. Here's the posting schedule:
14/08 Chapter 41
20/08 Chapter 42

Thank you all for the overwhelming support, as always! It still astounds me how people can like this story so much. I recently reread everything and there are so many things I want to change hahahah Thank you, from the bottom of my heart. I'm sorry I couldn't answer every one, but know that I appreciate each word and kudos. Love you!
Wanderer above the Mist

Chapter Summary


Chapter Notes

Thank you all for the warm welcome back! (•﹏•*)

A dear reader of this story asked me if I could post this chapter on their birthday, so here it is! I hope I'm not too late!

Enjoy, everyone!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Silence filled the classroom, with only a few voices bouncing off the walls once in a while. Your mind, on the other hand, was a cacophony of thoughts. You had talked to Alya yesterday and she gave you a task: to keep an eye on Marius Boucher. You were still trying to figure out how you would do that without giving yourself away, but the best way to bump into him was at the university, and since you had to do your Figure Drawing homework, it worked perfectly.

“When is your flight?” One of the students in the classroom asked her friend.

“May 4th,” the girl answered.

You swallowed dry, trying to focus on your homework again as their conversation went on. That was another reason why your thoughts were in such a state. Many international students were already preparing to leave, and some, like Luan, had already gone back home. Your time to say goodbye to Paris was right around the corner and you had to do something about it. You couldn’t leave Adrien, and due to the new French laws, the only way to stay in Paris was to find a job that would give you a work permit. You had to prepare an up to date portfolio and send it to any companies you could find. God, you had to do so many things…

You put your pen down. You were able to get a lot done, thanks to the inspiration coursing through your veins. Being with Adrien these past days had done wonders for your art. But that was enough for today. You still had to find Marius and it was getting late. When you turned around, your eyes met Mrs. Boucher’s light brown ones.

“Have you ever thought about participating in the Paris Art Contest?” She asked.

You blinked a few times. “I’m sorry?”

“Oh, I apologize if this is too sudden.” She glanced at your easel. “I’ve been paying attention to your art style and I think you have a great chance to win.”

The Paris Art Contest. It was a big thing in France for artists. The winner got a large amount of
money as a prize and… Your eyes widened. They were usually hired to work as an illustrator for magazines.

“The applications are open?” You asked, trying not to sound too eager.

“Yes, until next week.” She smiled.

You could feel your heart begin to speed up. This was your chance.

“I have another class with a live model in the afternoon,” Mrs. Boucher continued. “If you want to practice for the contest, just appear there. Room 201, at 15pm.”

“I will.” You grinned. “Thank you, professor.” You wanted to give her a big hug. This was something. A flickering light in the dark.

Someone walked by the door, going down the corridor. You were able to recognize the short black hair and the elegant posture. Marius.

“Sorry, professor, I need to go,” you said as you gathered your things. You had to be quick before you lost him. “I’ll see you soon!”

When you got to the corridor, you looked around. No sign of Marius. You cursed under your breath. Where did he go? You continued down the hallway, checking inside open classrooms for a few minutes. Nothing. He had vanished. When you were about to head back, the ground shook and you leaned on the wall for support. You had been living in Paris for more than a year now, so you knew this wasn’t a simple earthquake. And when the screams of ‘akuma’ reached your ears, you weren’t surprised.

You tried to find Marius in the middle of the crowd that was forming, but there was no sign of him. You would have to tell Alya that piece of information later, because at the moment, leaving the building was a priority. The last time there was an akuma attack, the villain had used you to hurt Chat. You wouldn’t commit the same mistake this time.

Holding your pager tightly in your hand in case something happened to you, you found a café near the university and hid there along with some other students.

As you sat on the ground with the others, you received a message.

Cute model boy: where are you? Are you safe?

You: I’m at the Le Petit Café, I’m safe

Cute model boy: good, stay there. We’ll take care of this and I’ll meet you soon

There was another tremor and people screamed. You held your phone close to you before starting to type again.

You: be careful

You wanted to add an ‘I love you’ to the message, but as Mari had said, it was better not to send incriminating texts. What if you forgot to delete the conversation and someone got Adrien’s phone or yours?

Cute model boy: you too

Someone by your side was watching the news on their phone. You leaned a bit closer and saw Chat
and Ladybug fighting a mole-like villain. She was destroying the metro tunnels, creating a trail of debris behind her. An image of Chat being crushed under the tunnels flashed before your eyes and you turned your head away from the screen.

_He’s going to be okay. He’s Chat Noir after all_, you told yourself, in hopes to calm down your rapidly beating heart.

Your phone vibrated and you quickly looked at your messages. But it wasn’t Adrien this time. You almost hit your head. Of course it wasn’t him, how could he text you while fighting?

Alya: have you seen Marius anywhere?

You: he was at the university, but he vanished before the akuma appeared

Alya: I’m gonna see what I can find

You: where are you going?

You waited for her response, but it didn’t come. Bottles fell to the ground when another tremor struck the café and people screamed again. You closed your eyes tightly, wishing that all this would stop. You just wanted to be back in Mauritius, with Adrien and Plagg sunbathing by your side.

----

“You don’t have to worry so much, chérie,” Adrien said as you ran your thumb over a dark bruise on his cheek. You knew that it would be gone soon, just like the small cut on his bottom lip, but it didn’t make you feel much better. “I’m okay.” He looked up at you from your lap and smiled.

You resisted the urge to sigh and looked out of the window of your bedroom, where the orange sunset was casting long shadows on the buildings. It hadn’t been long since Adrien had arrived. The mole villain had been more persistent than expected. Your apartment was silent, except for the faint noise of cutlery coming from the kitchen, where Plagg was gulping down the Camembert you had bought for him.

“As long as you’re out there risking your life,” you ran your fingers through Adrien’s blonde hair. “I’m going to worry.”

He pushed half of his body up and leaned on his elbows. “Will it make it better if I kiss you?”

Your lips twitched as you fought back a smile. “Do you think you deserve it after yesterday?”

He almost pouted. “Please?”

You looked to the side, pretending to think. “Hmm, that’s not enough.”

“Pretty please?”

You shook your head. “Nope.”

He pressed his lips together for a moment before a sly smile graced his face. “Please, my mistress?”

You spluttered, staring at him wide-eyed. “Mistress?”

“I knew you’d like it.” He grinned.

You couldn’t stop the smile this time. “Your Chat is showing.”
“He always is when I’m near you,” he whispered as he leaned in, almost brushing his lips against yours.

You remained still, and he did the same, waiting for you. After a few seconds, you closed the gap and lightly captured his upper lip with your mouth. He let out a small sigh before kissing you harder. When the tip of your tongue traced his bottom lip, his phone went off. You pulled back when he didn’t make any moves to take the call.

“Aren’t you going to take it?” You asked, glancing at the device on the bedside table.

Adrien followed your gaze. A sigh left his lips and he sat up to take the call.

“Allô?” His voice was monotonous, clearly showing that he didn’t want to be talking on the phone at the moment. “The news? No, I didn’t see it.” His eyebrows began to furrow. “Another one? Where?” He glanced at you.

You mouthed a ‘what?’ at him, but he just shook his head.

“Ohay, I’m going. See you in a bit.” He ended the call and got up from the bed.

“What is it?” You followed him as he left the room and walked down the corridor.

“There’s another akuma.” He pushed his hair back. “Two in a day. That hasn’t happened in a long time.”

Plagg’s ears perked up when you arrived at the living room. “Another akuma?” He put another piece of cheese into his mouth. He had eaten almost everything you had bought.

“Yeah, we need to go. Lady is waiting for us.” Adrien turned to you and cupped your cheeks. “I need to leave. I’m sorry, chérie.”

You put your hands on top of his. “You don’t have to apologize for having to go save the city, model boy. You’re a hero.”

He brushed your cheek with his thumb, a melancholic look in his gaze. “A hero that will let the love of his life sleep alone for another night.”

“You can make up for it later.” You wiggled your eyebrows and smiled, hoping that it’d lighten up his mood.

He chuckled. “And I will.” He pulled you to him by your waist and kissed you.

You closed your eyes and wrapped your arms around his neck. You didn’t want him to go, you didn’t want him risking his life again. You deepened the kiss and he began to purr. You were about to tease him about that when blaring sirens broke the silence of the night as they zoomed past in the quiet streets.

“Adrien, we need to go,” Plagg said while he chewed.

The blonde pulled back from you and licked his lips. “I know, I know.”

You looked away from the bright light when he transformed, already feeling your heart heavy with worry. With a farewell kiss on your forehead, Chat was gone, his black suit blending with the darkening shadows of the dusk.

----
Since you had arrived in Paris, almost one year ago, akumas appeared once every two weeks or so. Chat and Ladybug spent most of their time dealing with crime around the city. But ever since that double akuma accident, things began to change. Villains began to appear more often. The miraculous heroes still had to do their daily patrolling, which culminated in you not seeing Adrien for a few days while they adjusted their schedule.

The blonde would stop by your place to say hello, but he couldn’t stay long. You were getting more worried with each passing day. When Chat was away, you kept watching the news and live streams you found on the internet. You hadn’t known there were people out there who risked their lives to go and record the fights between akumatized villains and miraculous heroes. You didn’t want to reinforce their behavior, but sometimes, the news didn’t give any relevant information and worry took control of your brain.

You watched the streams and the news for the fourth or fifth fight, but after that, you couldn't watch it anymore. It was making your anxiety levels hit the roof, and not even drawing was helping anymore. It was better to do something more productive and focus on sending your portfolio to some companies. You had to trust Chat. He would be back safe and sound, you knew it.

“Have you found anything about Marius?” You asked Alya one day as you sat in front of her at the resto U.

She shook her head. “Nothing incriminating.”

Nino was studying for some upcoming tests, so it was just you two at your usual table. You hadn’t been able to have lunch with everyone together since you came back from Mauritius, and now with Marinette and Adrien so busy, you didn’t know when that would happen. Alya thought the two were absent because of college, but you knew they were patrolling the city in their hero suits.

You let out a sigh and dropped your head on the table. With the two occupied with the akumas, they hadn’t been able to look into Marius and his suspicious behavior. How convenient.

“From what we were able to gather, he has been disappearing when there’s an akuma attack, so it’s something. But we need more evidence,” Alya said.

You pursed your lips as you thought. You couldn’t go around asking people about him, that’d be too suspicious. And if Marius found out you were investigating him, it would make things much more difficult for you and Alya.

“Is there someone who doesn't like him?” You asked. “Maybe we can ask if they have any info on him.” Alya opened her mouth to answer, but you beat her to it. “Besides Marinette.”

She closed her mouth and frowned. “Hmm, I know Marius doesn’t like Adrien, but I don’t know how Adrien feels about him.”

Oh, right. The model had told you once that Marius didn’t like him because of ‘family stuff’.

“Do you know why?” You leaned over the table.

Alya scratched her cheek. “Well, I’m not really sure, but Adrien’s dad dated Marius’ mom a few years ago.”

“What?” You gaped at her. Gabriel had dated Mrs. Boucher?
“Yep.” Alya nodded as she typed on her phone. She turned the screen to you and there was a photo of Gabriel and Mrs. Boucher together in a fashion show. Adrien’s father looked so different, so… alive. “They were a great couple, always in the tabloids and stuff, but they broke up after the war. I guess that’s when the beef between Marius and Adrien started.”

You put a hand over your mouth. This was important. It meant that Marius had been related to Gabriel, the past Hawkmoth, and he didn’t like Adrien, aka Chat Noir. It corroborated the theory that he was involved with the new Hawkmoth, but it was still vague. You had to find out more about it. And for that, you would have to ask Adrien.

“Why are you making that face?” Alya tilted her head. “Do you think this is important?”

You opened your mouth but soon closed it. You couldn’t tell her your line of thought without making a connection between Adrien and Chat Noir.

So you settled for, “Oh, I was just surprised. But maybe Adrien might be able to help? He and Marius were kinda half brothers for a while.”

She gave you a funny look when you mentioned Adrien’s name. “It doesn’t hurt to try.”

----

It had taken a few minutes of waiting and pretending to look at nearby stores, but you managed to sneak into Adrien’s studio without anyone noticing. After postponing it for a week due to the akumas, you would finally be able to meet him and continue the Nine Muses project. The class was the next day, so you had to do something to show Mrs. Boucher. And you also had to talk to him about Marius, since your investigation depended on that.

You shifted from one foot to the other as Adrien unlocked the door. It had just been a week, but you missed him. It had been terrible sleeping in your bed alone. It was too big, too cold. So when the door opened and your eyes finally met his, you grinned.

“Welcome back—” His words were cut short when you hugged him tightly against you. He laughed, and the sound boomed in your ears. “Did you miss me that much?”

You pulled back a little to look at him properly. “What do you think?”

It was his turn to grin. “I missed you too.”

His lips met yours, but before you could close your eyes, the kiss was over.

“Aw, c’mon.” You leaned in again, but Adrien pulled away from you.

Before you could complain once more, he eyed you with a serious look. “I need to focus, otherwise we won’t finish the Muses today.”

You swallowed dry and gave a little nod. “Okay.”

Stunned into silence, you followed him to the sculpting area, trying really hard not to think of what would have happened if that kiss had continued. You could hear Plagg’s soft snoring coming from the second floor as you passed by the stairs. The poor thing was probably exhausted from having to work day and night these past days. Adrien still looked ready for a photo shoot as always, but there were faint dark circles appearing under his eyes. Your steps slowed to a stop when you walked by the grey wall with the Bastet statue in front of it. You still had to go back in that secret room. There were so many things you wanted to explore, so many questions to be asked.
"Chérie?" Adrien’s voice came from the other side of the studio.

You blinked, realizing you had spaced out. “Sorry, I’m going.” You noticed he was watching you with a funny face as you approached. “What is it?”

“Nothing.” He lightly shook his head with a smile as he went to the cabinet and got a package of fresh clay. “I just asked if you have found a job yet, but I think you didn’t hear it.”

“I sent my portfolio to a few places.” You followed him and grabbed a package as well. “And I’m training for the Paris Art Contest. If I win, I can land a job in no time.”

“Do you think you can win?” Adrien asked.

Your eyebrows furrowed a little, but you knew he wasn’t doubting your ability to win. He was probably genuinely concerned that you wouldn’t be able to get a work visa. You couldn’t blame him; you were worried yourself. The possibility of losing was very real.

“Mrs. Boucher thinks I can do it.” You said as you put the clay on top of the sculpting table. And talking about Mrs. Boucher… You took a deep breath before turning around to face him. “Oh. Alya told me that your dad dated Mrs. Boucher. Is that right?”

His eyebrows shot up. “Hum, yes, they were together for three years or so.”

You opened and closed your hand as you hummed. Here it goes. “Is that why Marius doesn’t like you?”

Adrien scratched his neck as he looked to the side. “Er… I guess. After my father erased his memory, he didn’t remember anyone besides me and my mother. And even that was messed up. He was sure I was still fifteen for quite some time.”

Your eyes widened. “That means…”

“He didn’t remember who Mrs. Boucher was.” Adrien eyed you intently, as if he was trying to figure you out. “She was devastated when she found out, but she accepted it. Marius, on the other hand, was livid. He blamed my father and I for his mother’s suffering. He still does.”

This seemed like a villain backstory from a movie. Your fingers were itching to text Alya. “But why you?” You asked. “Your father I can understand, but you?”

He shrugged. “I never understood it myself.”

“You still think Marius can’t be related to Hawkmoth?” You asked, trying to keep your eagerness at bay.

“Oh, that’s what this is about.” Adrien chuckled as he opened the clay package. A lock of hair fell on his face and he shook his head, trying to remove it. “Why are you so obsessed with this, love?”

“I want to help you.” You leaned closer and pushed the lock of hair behind his ear.

He grabbed your hand before you could retract it. “You already help me by being by my side.”

You shook your head. “It’s not enough.”

He kissed the inside of your wrist. “It is.”

You wanted to tell him to please investigate Marius, but with him so busy with the akumas, you
couldn’t bring yourself to do it. You and Alya would have to do this yourselves.

You gently pulled your hand away from his. “Anyway, what are the Muses we need to create today?”

He looked to the side as he thought about it. “The goal is to finish three Muses. Polyhymnia, Calliope, and Clio.” He put an apron over his clothes and passed you another one.

“Alright. We should start before another akuma appears.” You said in a joking tone, but Adrien nodded, a serious expression on his face. You swallowed dry and put your apron on as well.

While he prepared the clay, you took a look at his designs, pointing out some details that could be improved. He didn’t argue with you and just kept staring at your face with a tender look in his eyes while you talked. It shouldn’t affect you, it really shouldn’t. But after being away from him for almost a week, your nerves were on fire with that simple gesture.

“Stop it,” you said when you couldn’t take it anymore. You could feel your cheeks burning already.

“Stop what?” He chuckled.

“Stop looking at me like that.” You put a hand over his eyes and he laughed.

“Why? I wasn’t doing anything.” He leaned away from you until you couldn’t reach his face anymore. “It just baffles me sometimes how much I love you.”

You groaned, feeling the warmth spread to your whole face. “You can’t say these things out of nowhere, I already told you that.”

He smiled. “But your reaction is so adorable.”

You gave him a poker face. “Didn’t you say that you had to focus? Well, I can’t focus like this.”

He put his dirty hands up. “Alright, alright.” You went back to making changes in the drawings, and he started to talk again. “You know, love. I was going to confess to you using this project.”

“Seriously?” You glanced up from the sketchbook.

He nodded as he pressed down on the clay. “I had this super cool plan in my head that I’d confess to you when we finished the project, and I’d say how each of the muses reminded me of you and how much you inspire me.”

The warmth from before went down to your chest and you beamed at him. “That is pretty cool.”

“Yeah,” he said with a somber expression. “But then after my father’s fashion show I realized you might like me as Adrien just as much as Chat Noir and everything went downhill from there.”

“Oh,” you said, remembering what had happened. “You mean when you began to flirt with me?” His face flushed and he nodded. You shrugged with one shoulder. “Well, you can tell me now.”

The blonde shook his head with a small smile. “Sorry, love, I’m only telling you after we finish the project.”

You gave him the most pleading expression you could come up with, but he was unfazed. You sighed. “Fine, I guess I can wait.” You went back to the sketchbook. “I know it’s going to be great anyway. You always amaze me with your words, cat boy.”
“Merci,” he said in a small voice. You glanced at him and saw his cheeks were a deep red now.

You grinned. “You like it when I praise you, don’t you?”

He shrugged with one shoulder. “It’s nice.”

“I’ll do it more often then,” you said.

He looked at you for a long moment and then smiled. “I have an idea. Come here.” He got up from his stool, and you arched one eyebrow at him. He patted the stool. “C’mon.”

You had no idea what he had in mind, and it was nerve-wracking and exciting at the same time.

When you sat on the stool, he stood behind you and put his hands on your shoulders. “You said that you aren’t good at sculpting, right?”

You looked at the clay on top of the table and nodded. “I’m terrible, actually.”

“No, you aren’t.” He squeezed your shoulders. You resisted the urge to roll your eyes. “But you can improve. So I thought, what if I help you?”

You turned your head back to shoot him a suspicious look. “Okay…” This reminded you of when you met Chat. You were sure Adrien was going to say something about inspiring you. “And what do you have in mind, my muse?”

He put his arms around you and grabbed your hands, putting them on the clay. “I can guide you.”

You blinked a few times. “Oh.” That wasn’t what you had in mind.

You heard him chuckle. “You seem disappointed. Would you prefer something else?”

“No.” You shook your head, reminding yourself why you had come to his studio in the first place. There was no saying what would happen if he decided to inspire you. You might not even finish the Muses. “No, it’s fine.”

“Even I can see you’re lying.” Plagg snickered.

You snapped your head to the kwami. Wasn’t he sleeping? He landed on top of the table and rubbed his eyes.

“Plagg,” you whined. “You’re supposed to be on my side.”

He shot you a sleepy grin. “But I am.”

You huffed. Yeah, right.

“We might need to leave again today, so why don’t you try to sleep a little more? You still look tired,” Adrien said.

The kwami yawned. “I can’t, you guys are being too loud.”

“You can just admit you missed her, Plagg. It won’t hurt.” You could hear the smirk in Adrien’s voice. Plagg narrowed his eyes.

“Did you, Plagg? I’d love to hear if you missed me.” You told the kwami with a smile.
He looked away. “I did… miss you, I mean,” he grumbled.

“I missed you too.” You scratched his ear. The kwami closed his eyes and purred.

“Love, c’mom, focus.” Adrien squeezed your shoulders.

“Alright, alright,” you said.

Plagg sent Adrien a dirty look before turning around in circles a few times and lying down on the table.

You sucked in a breath when Adrien arms enveloped you and he put his head on your shoulder. His torso was pressed fully against your back.

“So, first we need to make the base,” he said, grabbing a great amount of clay.

You did your best to concentrate on what he was saying. Why did he have to be so close? You imagined if he had done this to you when you didn’t know he was Chat. You would’ve killed him.

You began to model the clay into a humanoid shape. The clay was cold, but Adrien’s body was warm against yours. It was difficult to choose what to focus on. When you finished the base of the sculpture, the blonde handed you the sculpting tools.

“Use this one to smooth the clay, like this.” He grabbed your hand and showed you the right movement. “Now you do it.”

You glanced at Plagg and saw he was watching with attention while licking his paw. It’s just Plagg, you told yourself. He won’t judge me if I fail horribly… right?

You gasped when Adrien nipped your neck.

“Focus,” he whispered in your ear.

You furrowed your brows and mimicked his movement from before.

“There you go, you’re doing great,” he whispered again.

You closed your eyes for a moment and crossed your legs tightly over one another. Concentrate.

“Now add a little more clay to the body so that you have more material to work with,” Adrien said and you followed his instructions. “That should be enough.”

Even with Adrien’s proximity distracting you, his teaching was still enlightening. You worked on Calliope’s face with care. You couldn’t believe you were sculpting and the figurine wasn’t looking so terrible. For the first time, you thought that you could actually learn how to do this properly.

You felt warm lips on your neck. Your shoulders shot up as a strong shiver went down your spine.

“Adrien.” You warned. “I’m trying to focus here.”

“You looked so serious.” He chuckled. “You need to relax, love.” He nibbled on your skin and then sucked on it. Your eyes threatened to roll back into your head. “See? Your muscles are all tense.”

“Adrien…” You breathed out, feeling dazed. Your body was getting too hot. “I can’t sculpt like this.”
He let out a small laugh. “Désolé. I’ll stop.”

He began to get away, but you grabbed his arm, dirtying it with clay. “That doesn’t mean you can leave.”

He smiled, positioning himself behind you again. “Yes, mistress.”

You glanced back and narrowed your eyes at him. You couldn’t figure out if he was mocking you or not.

“Don’t you guys have to show these to the teacher by tomorrow?” Plagg asked. “You need to stop disturbing her Adrien.”

The blonde snapped his head to the kwami. “I’m teaching her.”

Plagg scoffed. “That last bit didn’t look like teaching to me.”

“If you know about teaching sculpture so much, why don’t you teach her?” Adrien’s smile was cold as ice.

The kwami shrugged. “I’ve watched you sculpt for years. I’m sure I could do a great job.”

“Oh, yeah? You think watching and actually sculpting are the same thing?” Adrien asked, amused. “Fine. Teach her then.”

Plagg lifted his chin up. “I will.” The kwami sat on your other shoulder and cleared his throat. “Now, you need to put more clay on her neck or it’s going to break.”

“Yes, teacher Plagg.” You nodded and did as he said.

Adrien’s arms tightened around you. “Why didn't you call me teacher?” You shrugged. He grumbled something under his breath.

Plagg patted you lightly on the cheek with his small paw to get your attention. “Add some water drops to her head, it’s starting to get dry.”

“Like this?” You asked as you stroked the clay.

He nodded. “Yes, perfect.”

Warm lips touched the already sensitive skin of your neck and a small noise escaped your mouth.

“What is it?” Plagg asked from your shoulder, looking down at the clay.

“Nothing.” You tried to nudge Adrien with your elbow, but he caught it with his hand and began to leave open-mouthed kisses along your neck and shoulder.

You contemplated shaking him off, but after a particular bite between your neck and your shoulder, you opted for just letting out a resigned breath. You had to give Adrien some credit. He did know how to win you over.

Plagg continued to give you small instructions, but your heart was only half into the task. The other part was more interested in the feeling of Adrien’s hands under your shirt, touching your stomach.

“I think you can use that spatula to make the details,” Plagg said.
You hummed and squirmed on your seat as Adrien’s hands went down your stomach and stopped at the edge of your pants. You closed your legs tighter against each other when he tried to go lower. He nipped your neck in retaliation, and you sucked in a breath. The blonde didn’t have fangs like Chat did, but it still hurt.

Plagg called your name. “Are you listening?” He flew in front of you, then his eyes fell on Adrien, who still had his lips on your neck. “Oh, of course it’s your fault. Stop it.” Plagg hit Adrien’s head with his paw. When the blonde didn’t move, the kwami let out a small growl. “You’re distracting her!”

You couldn’t help but laugh at Plagg’s annoyed face. The kwami sent you a glare and you clamped your mouth shut.

Adrien pulled away and spun you around. He crashed his lips against yours and you wanted to laugh again, this time due to slight desperation. You would never finish the three Muses at this rate.

Adrien pulled back and licked his lips. “We’re taking a break, right, love?”

You gave him a quick nod upon seeing his heated gaze. Well, you could finish the Muses later, you still had time.

“This is ridiculous.” Plagg shook his head. “You’ve barely started!”

Adrien ignored the kwami and picked you up from the stool. You gave Plagg an apologetic smile, and he let out a long sigh.

You held your dirty hands close to yourself as Adrien put you down on the couch in the living room.

You glanced at your hands and then at the light-colored couch. “It’s going to ruin your sofa.”

He pinned your hands above your head. “I don’t care.” He dipped down and began to leave kisses along your neck.

“And your clothes, if I touch them.” You shuddered as his hands gripped your wrists tighter. “And my clothes.”

He finally stopped and looked down at you. You bit your lip at the lust in his eyes.

“I don’t care.” The low tone of voice almost made you let out an embarrassing sound. “Do you?”

You swallowed dry. “No.”

“Good.” Adrien raised his head a little and looked to the side. “Plagg, are you going to watch?”

The kwami’s eyes widened. “Oh.” He looked away as his ears flopped down. “I’m… going to get some cheese.”

“I don’t mind, Plagg. You can stay!” You called out to him, but he flew faster to the kitchen. You snickered at his sudden coyness.

“Wasn’t it teacher Plagg?” Adrien asked.

You smirked. “Are you jealous of a kwami?”

“As if.” He leaned down to kiss you.
“Wait,” you tried to free your hands, but his grip on your wrists was strong. “Let me go for a moment.”

As soon as he released you, you made a stripe of clay on his nose with your index finger. He stared down at you with a blank look, and you barked out a laugh. It soon transformed into a moan when he cupped you through your jeans.

Your hands full of clay were all but forgotten after that. In the middle of the lustful haze involving you, you noticed that Adrien’s body, some cushions, and even the rug were decorated with clay marks, some in the shape of your hands. You didn’t even want to think about the sofa.

Adrien held you close as he came down from his second climax. His eyes were screwed shut and his harsh breathing made your body move up and down on top of his. You squeezed a little around him and a beautiful broken moan left his lips.

“Ah, chérie, don’t do that,” he pleaded, his voice a little hoarse.

You chuckled as he pulled out of you with a groan. When his arms around you relaxed, you propped yourself up and began to slowly pepper his face with kisses.

“Next time you should moan louder Adrien, I think the neighbors on the other side of the street haven’t heard you yet.” Plagg’s voice came from the kitchen. It was obvious from his spiteful tone that he was still vexed that Adrien had interrupted his teaching lesson earlier.

Adrien grabbed a cushion to throw at the kwami, but you dipped down and captured his lips with yours. He relaxed under you and let go of the cushion.

You pulled back enough to whisper. “I love your moans, kitty.”

His face got instantly red, and you felt his length twitch under you. Smiling, you slowly sat up on top of him and looked down at your body, seeing that even you hadn’t escaped the clay. Adrien brushed his thumb over a dry clay mark on your hips. What a mess.

“I need a shower,” you said.

The blonde let out a hum and slid his fingers between your legs, reminding you of yet another mess. “Agreed. Although I love seeing you like this.”

You slapped his hand away, and he laughed. “This is all your fault, Agreste.”

He put his hands up in mock surrender, but didn’t try to deny it. "Well, I was going to offer to clean you up, but I guess you don't want it.”

You narrowed your eyes at him, refusing to imagine his mouth against your core again, licking you — You got up and headed to the bathroom before you could change your mind. You still had to finish the Muses.

Adrien followed close behind. “So you didn't like our little break?” He asked as you opened the shower curtain.

You glanced behind you and threw him a half-smile. “I didn’t say that.”

A sly grin made way to his lips as he closed the door behind him.
Whispers found their way into your ears and your eyes fluttered open. The bed was too cold. You leaned on your elbows and looked around in the dark. Plagg was purring near your pillow and you recognized Adrien’s frame in front of the window. The open curtain let a stripe of light in and it illuminated part of his body while he looked down at his phone. Police cars raced past in the street below, the sound of their blaring sirens getting distorted as they got further away.

“Another akuma?” Your voice was raspy with sleep.

Adrien let out a long, tired sigh. “Yes.”

You knew what that meant: he had to go. His shoulders were sagged, and even under the dim light that his phone emitted you could pinpoint the dark circles under his eyes. He looked so tired. You regretted staying up so late finishing the three Muses with him.

You got up from the bed and hugged him from behind. His skin was still warm from being under the covers.

“You’re a wonderful person.” You left a kiss on his shoulder blade. “I love you.”

He tilted his head back, leaning into you, and put his arms over yours. “I love you too. You give me the strength to keep going.”

You got off from Chat’s back and landed on your balcony. A strong gust of wind made your clothes ruffle and goosebumps arise on your arms. You had told him you could go back to your place by yourself, but arguing with him had been futile. He kissed your forehead and jumped on the parapet.

“Be careful,” you said, hugging yourself.

He turned around and opened his arms with a grin. “Did you forget who I am, princess? I’m Chat Noir. Careful is my middle name.” Even with all the theatrics, his voice still held that tiredness from before.

Chat let himself fall from the parapet. You ran to the border and looked down. Your eyes could barely make out his form in the dark. A lone shadow that seemed to be a part of night itself. You watched as he jumped from one roof to the other, getting further and further away from you.

Chapter End Notes

I have an important announcement! I got more than 70 coffees in ko-fi! Wooo! ( lộ trợ ):* That means I’ll write Chat’s POV for Ch. 19 and that a new survey to decide the next POV chapters will be made soon!

See you next week!
You glared at the back of the girl who would be posing for the Figure Drawing II class. It wasn’t her fault that Marius wouldn’t come, but you had to direct your anger somewhere else. You had planned to ask Marius some questions, and now your plan had simply gone down the drain. Julien was busy chatting with his partner for the class, so you couldn’t ask him where the brunette was.

You passed a hand over your face. You were so tired. You had barely slept yesterday, since every little noise made you jump and clutch the pager in your hand, wondering if an akumatized villain would come and get you. And when you did sleep, your dreams were filled with images of Chat getting hurt.

You looked at the empty metal easel by your side. Adrien hadn’t arrived yet. You didn’t know if he was even going to come. He had sent you a message when he had arrived at his place after defeating the akuma, and that had been at 6 am. He was probably sleeping at the moment. You wished you could be doing the same, preferably by his side.

“Today we will be working with charcoal.” Mrs. Boucher put her hands behind her back as she walked around the classroom. “Don’t forget to exchange drawings with your partners. If you forget, your drawings won’t be part of the exhibition at the end of the semester.”

The classroom door opened and everyone turned to look at it. A heavy breathing Adrien walked in, his pale cheeks colored a faint red.

“I’m sorry for being late, professor,” he said, a little breathless.

“I hope it doesn't repeat itself, Mr. Agreste.” Mrs. Boucher’s voice was firm, but it also held a softness to it. Now that you knew she had been Adrien’s stepmom for a while, it made sense, but you wondered why the blonde was always so formal around her.

“It won’t, professor.” Adrien bowed his head a little and began to walk in your direction.

The dark circles under his eyes were more prominent and there was a colorful bruise around his left eye. If it was still visible now, it was either really recent or Adrien had been hit quite hard. It hurt just looking at it.

You moved your metal easel a little to the left, so that he could take the place by your side, but Mrs. Boucher held up her hand.

“Wait. You two won’t be partnering up today,” she said. You and Adrien exchanged a confused look. What happened to you two making a great pair? Mrs. Boucher motioned for a boy to move to your side. “Jean, exchange places with Adrien.”
A scrawny guy with dirty blonde hair nodded and gathered his things. Adrien gave you a sad look as he walked away. You resisted the urge to run and hug him close to you.

“Hey, I’m Jean Durand. You’re the Chat Noir girl, right?” Jean smiled as he put his paper on the metal easel by your side.

You pinched the bridge of your nose. “Please don’t call me that.”

“Oh, désolé.” He pressed his lips together.

Thankfully, Jean seemed much more interested in paying attention to the girl posing than making small talk with you, and you were glad for that. Your brain was already having a rough time keeping you awake.

During the class, you kept glancing at Adrien to make sure he was doing ok. He seemed focused on his drawing, but sometimes he would crack his neck and roll his shoulders. *He must be sore from the fight*, you said to yourself. You wondered if he had any more bruises you couldn't see.

You felt someone’s eyes on you and turned to look. Julien was staring at you. He seemed taken aback when your gazes met, but he soon smiled and waved at you before going back to his drawing. He reminded you of Marius. Maybe your blonde friend was spending too much time with him.

Black tinted the sink under your hands. No matter how much you washed them, the charcoal refused to leave your skin and nails. You hoped this was the last time you would have to use charcoal in this class. At least the classroom already had a few sinks in it for moments like these.

Adrien walked up to you, his hands already clean. “I’ll show the photos of the Muses we finished to the teacher and I’ll meet you at the resto U.”

“Allright.” Your eyes went to the bruise around his eye. Your fingers itched to caress his skin. “Does it hurt?”

“Not really.” He touched the bruise and grimaced a little. “It’ll go away soon. Don’t worry about it.” He shot you a smile before going to talk with Mrs. Boucher.

You pressed your lips tightly against each other, focusing back on your hands. You hated when he told you ‘not to worry about it’, as if that would magically make you care less.

Adrien was still talking with Mrs. Boucher as you walked out of the classroom. You began to make your way to the resto U when a strong perfume surrounded you, making your nose start to itch.

“*Bonjour*!” Julien beamed at you. The smell got stronger when he gave you two cheek kisses. He was wearing much more cologne than usual. “How are you today?”

You couldn't help but smile at his cheeriness. The last time you had seen him this happy was when Luan was around. “I’m good, but how about you? You seem happier today. Did something happen?”

His smile broadened. “It’s not certain yet, but,” he clasped his hands together. “I might be able to go see Luan.”

Oh, so it had something to do with the Brazilian boy!
“Really?” You asked. This was a huge change. Last time you had talked about this with him, he had completely given up in being with Luan.

“Yes.” He let out a laugh. “Someone is going to help me.” The blonde began to walk down the corridor and you hurried after him.

“What? How?”

He made a gesture of zipping his lips. “Secret.”

You arched one eyebrow at him, but it didn’t seem that he was going to elaborate. He really was serious about the ‘secret’ thing. Alright then… “But what about Marius?”

“Oh,” he scratched his neck as he looked away. “We… We aren’t really together.”

You bit your bottom lip. Did that mean you could ask him weird questions about Marius? Would Julien tell the brunette about it? There was only one way to find out.

“Does he disappear out of nowhere when you’re with him?” You blurted out in a nonchalant tone as you approached the resto U doors.

Julien’s eyebrows shot up. Your stomach seemed to do flips as you waited for his answer.

“Sometimes, yes,” he said. There was something different in his tone, but you couldn't pinpoint if it was suspicion. “Why?”

You shrugged with one shoulder. “I saw him do that more than once, and I was wondering if anyone else noticed it.”

“Marinette and Adrien do the same thing, right?” He tilted his head to the side. “Disappear out of nowhere?”

You felt the blood leave your face. “Oh, they do?”

He nodded. You heard a whistle and looked up. Marius was leaning on a glass door that lead to the garden. He motioned with his head to the door before walking outside. You furrowed your eyebrows. What?

“I-I need to go.” Julien gave you a weak smile.

Before you could say anything, he hugged you tightly. The smell of his perfume filled your nostrils, making your nose itch again. He pulled back and then gave you cheek kisses. A few of them this time.

“À plus!” He waved as he went after Marius.

You narrowed your eyes. Could the brunette be the one helping him? Could it be— You sneezed so hard that you almost lost your balance. Ugh. You rubbed your nose. Great. Now you would have his perfume on you all day.

You gave one last look to the glass door. Even if they weren’t together, Julien still seemed to be involved with Marius. You were glad you hadn’t asked anything too weird.

Everyone around the table went silent when you put your tray down and sat by Marinette’s side.
When you were about to ask what was wrong, Alya raised her plastic cup.

“At last, we’re all having lunch together!” She grinned.

Mari raised her cup as well and touched it with Alya’s. “I’ll drink to that.”

She also had dark circles under her eyes like Adrien, but hers were subtler, probably thanks to a concealer. There were no apparent bruises on her body, so you couldn’t tell if she had been hurt during the fight.

Nino let out a happy sigh, raising his cup too. “I passed my midterms, so now I can relax a little.”

“Congrats, Nino!” You smiled at him and touched your own cup with the others.

You looked around and saw Adrien’s drawing tube on the table, but no sign of the model. “Where’s Adrien?”

“Here.” The blonde said as he walked behind you. He put his tray on the table and sat down in front of you.

“Did the teacher like the sculptures?” You asked as you picked up your fork and knife and began to eat.

Adrien nodded. “Yeah, she said we’re doing well.”

“That’s good. We worked too hard on them.” You put a forkful of food into your mouth.

“Yeah, we did.” Adrien chuckled. “Really hard.”

You glanced to the side and saw Alya’s gaze going from you to Adrien. She narrowed her eyes and then smiled.

“Pay up.” She extended her hand palms up to Nino.

“What?” Nino looked around, outraged.

Your mouth went dry and you shared a quick look with Adrien. His eyes were open wide. This had to be the bet about you and him the two had going on. But how did Alya know? You just had a friendly conversation with Adrien! You glanced at Marinette and saw she was shaking her head with a smile on her lips.

“A bet is a bet, mon amour.” Alya put her hand closer to Nino.

Nino looked from Adrien to you for a moment. He sighed and put 20 euros on Alya’s outstretched hand. She gave him a kiss on the cheek and laughed when he huffed.

“What are you guys talking about?” Adrien asked, feigning innocence.

“Don’t worry about it.” Alya winked at him.

Marinette cleared her throat in a subtle way. “Have you guys seen the new indie game about the Hawkmoth war?”

Alya gasped.

Nino heaved a sigh. “Don't start, Marinette, you know how she gets.”
You let them talking and focused on Adrien. He was gazing at you with a troubled expression. You shrugged and resumed eating your lunch. There was nothing you could do; your friends had already figured it out. But at least they seemed to understand you weren't ready to make your relationship public yet.

Adrien took a deep breath and then froze. He stared at you, unmoving.

“What?” You asked as you chewed, but then it came back to your mind.

Julien’s perfume.

You stared back at Adrien and slowly moved your head from one side to the other. Don’t even think about marking me now, Adrien. Don’t even think about it. His eyes narrowed and your heart sped up. How much of a cat was he when he wasn't transformed? Was he going to pounce on you? His hands were opening and closing on the table but he seemed to be able to control himself. You imagined he just had to remain calm until the urge to mark you went away.

“Salut a tous!” Julien materialized near the table, holding a tray.

Your heart dropped to your stomach. Adrien slowly turned to look at Julien, a dangerous look in his green eyes.

“Jules! I haven’t seen you in ages!” Mari patted the free seat by her other side. “Come sit with us!” Julien sat by her side and they began to talk about their internship at Gabriel’s company, oblivious to Adrien’s stiff posture.

The model inhaled deeply again and looked from you to Julien with a scowl. You kicked his foot under the table and gave him a pointed look.

He doesn’t like me.

He rolled his eyes as if saying ‘it doesn’t matter’.

“Can you guys communicate telepathically now?” Nino whispered to Adrien.

“What? No!” Adrien leaned away from him. “It’s just…” He glanced at you. “We, hum—”

A murmur filled the resto U and a moment later a familiar high-pitched voice rang from a few meters away. “Hello everyone! Look who’s here!”

“Oh mon dieu.” Marinette sighed, putting a hand over her face.

“I heard that, Marinette!” Chloé marched to your table after taking a selfie with a student. Everyone at the resto U was looking in your direction. You wanted to slide down the table and hide.

“Chloé?” Nino’s face contorted, confusion evident in his one raised eyebrow. “She doesn’t even study here.”

“So what, Lahiffe?” Chloé dropped on the seat by Adrien’s side and put an arm over his shoulders. “Can’t I visit my friends?”

“And how did you know where we were?” Nino asked.

She grinned. “I have my ways.”

“Did you come to have lunch?” Adrien asked. “Most of it should be over by now.”

Chloé huffed. “Oh please, Adrien. Do you think I’d eat cafeteria food?”
“She hasn’t changed at all,” Alya muttered.

Chloé sent a pointed glare to the brunette but decided to ignore her. “I heard things were getting chaotic here in Paris so I came to help.” She leaned over the table, put a hand over her mouth and whispered to you. “Adrien has a lot of dark circles and I can’t let that happen to that pretty face of his.” She straightened her back and pinched Adrien’s cheek with a smile. “And I’m not even going to mention this awful bruise.”

“Hey!” Adrien protested, leaning away from her. “It was an accident!”

“How did you hurt yourself that bad, dude?” Nino asked.

Your cellphone’s alarm went off. Mrs. Boucher’s afternoon class would begin in a few minutes. You wolfed down the rest of your food and gathered your things.

“Sorry guys, I need to go. I have another class right now.” You had to focus if you wanted to win the contest.

“Aw, but I just arrived.” Chloé pouted.

You gave her an apologetic smile. “Sorry, I really need to go.” You grabbed your tray with one hand and waved at the others. “Bye everyone.”

Adrien shot up from his seat. “I’ll go with you.”

You looked at his plate. He hadn’t even finished eating yet. “No, it’s okay.”

He gave you a pointed look as he slung his drawing tube over his shoulder. “I insist.”

You clenched your jaw and stared at him. What are you doing?

He maintained your gaze before grabbing his tray and taking yours from your hand. “C’mon, let’s go.”

The others shared a look when he began to walk away. When you tried to hurry after him, Chloé grabbed your arm and pulled you down a little.

“We’re going to have a miraculous girls night today at Marinette’s place,” she whispered. “You’re invited.”

You glanced at Mari, who was watching the interaction with amusement. She probably had no idea what the blonde was talking about. You also had no clue how Chloé had found out that you knew Mari was Ladybug.

“Does she know about that?” You asked.

Chloé laughed, releasing you. “She will soon.”

You chuckled to yourself as you went after Adrien, who was already waiting at the entrance with an impatient look on his face. You scowled at him when you approached.

“I could’ve walked to the class by myself,” you whispered, not trying to hide the annoyance in your voice. “You’re going to ruin everything.”

“You’re my friend. Can’t I walk by your side?” He whispered back.
You seethed as you walked out of the cafeteria. “I know you can feel Julien’s perfume on me, but you have to relax. It’s just Julien. You know he’s not a threat.”

“Do you think my body cares about that?” Adrien said in a low voice as you passed by a group of students. “All my mind is telling me is that you’re smelling weird and that I need to fix that.”

“Then don’t listen to your mind.” You turned to an emptier corridor.

You were glad that the ring only made Adrien acquire some feline characteristics. You didn’t want to imagine if he wanted to mark things by spraying like cats did.

You walked as fast as your legs could go without running. You wouldn't risk staying too close to Adrien when he was altered like that. When you spotted the classroom door, your shoulders sagged with relief. You opened your mouth to say goodbye to Adrien when you spotted a familiar mop of black hair inside the room.

Marius was inside, wearing a robe. Your eyes widened. Yes. Finally! And he was going to pose for the class? That was even better. You could keep an eye on him if anything happened.

“What are you smiling for?” Adrien peeked inside the classroom. You knew the moment he spotted Marius, because his expression clouded. “Oh.” He looked at you with clear disapproval.

You rolled your eyes. This wasn’t the time to get jealous. “I just want to talk to him. That’s all.”

Adrien took a deep breath and his eyes widened. He sniffed the air closer to the doorway, his forehead creasing as he did so. “He has the same smell as you.”

You tried to sniff the air, but felt nothing different. “It must be Julien’s perfume on him.”

Adrien glared at Marius for a moment before speaking. “Let’s go home.”

You shook your head. “I can’t. I need to practice for the contest.”

He passed a hand through his hair and bit his lip. You could see he was struggling inside. He really didn't want to leave you. “At least give me a hug then.”

You looked around the marble corridor. It was fairly empty, but still, it was too risky and you doubted Adrien would be able to stop at just one innocent hug. “Are you serious?”

“I can’t let you go in there like this.” He had a pained expression, like just the thought of doing that hurt him.

You cursed under your breath. Goddammit Julien, what have you done? You turned on your heels and began to walk to the stairs. After a moment, you heard Adrien’s hurried steps behind you. You walked up the stairs until you were on the third floor. It was always the emptier one, since the classrooms there were usually used for presentations and exhibitions. You made your way to the women’s bathroom and got in. After checking every stall to see if there was anyone there, you met Adrien outside.

You held the door open for him. “Get in.”

He looked around the empty corridor before obeying. You closed the door, wishing it had a lock.

You pulled Adrien inside a stall and closed it behind you. It was cramped, but at least the door covered your whole frame, so if anyone got in, they wouldn’t see your feet.
Plagg flew from inside Adrien’s jacket. “What are you two doing?” He stopped and sniffed the air. His green eyes narrowed as he looked at you. “Oh. You smell weird.”

“That’s what I told her,” Adrien whispered.

You let out an exasperated breath and raised your head, making your neck more visible to Adrien. He swallowed, his eyes fixed on yours.

“You have 5 minutes. No biting, no sucking,” you said.

“Can I do it too?” Plagg asked. Adrien shot him a warning look and the kwami snickered.

Adrien didn’t waste time in pulling you to him and rubbing his face against your skin. You shook your head lightly. What had you gotten yourself into? But all your worries began to leave your mind when the blonde began to leave kisses on your skin. He was really good at making you relax.

You gasped when you felt him bite your neck. You cursed and pulled on his hair. “I said no biting, Adrien!”

He pulled away from you a little and captured your lips with his. You tried to protest, but it melted into a groan. You should have said no kissing as well. Shit. Now your lips would be red and swollen when you got out.

You and Adrien froze when the bathroom door made a noise. Plagg’s eyes widened and he hid inside Adrien’s jacket again. Steps echoed on the tiles as the person got closer. Your heart was thumping against your ribcage as you waited for some stall door to make a locking sound. When you heard it, you opened your stall and pulled Adrien along with you as you dashed to the door as quietly as you could.

You let out a pent up breath when you were out. Thank goodness, it had worked.

“That was fun.” Adrien chuckled, the sound too loud in the corridor.

You turned to scold him and your eyes locked with blue ones. A red haired girl was staring at you both with her mouth agape from the other side of the corridor. You let go of Adrien’s hand and did your best to keep your head high as you walked past her. When you walked around the corner and were finally hidden from her gaze, you leaned heavily on the wall and breathed in and out.

You put your hands over your burning face. “We’re doomed.”

“I doubt it, chérie. Don’t worry.” Adrien's voice sounded way too cheerful for the seriousness of the situation. Someone had just seen you two walking out of the women’s bathroom together, and with ruffled clothes and red lips, no less.

You scowled at him as you pushed yourself off the wall. “I’m leaving. Don’t follow me.”

“Yes, ma’am,” he whispered as you walked away.

You tried to control your nerves as you made the walk of shame back to the classroom. The shocked look in the girl’s eyes was imprinted into your mind. She was going to tell somebody, you were sure of that, but was it going to be enough to start a rumor?

You peeked inside the classroom and saw Marius was already posing in the middle of the room, with students circling him. With an apologetically nod to Mrs. Boucher, you put a hand on your neck where Adrien had bitten you and walked to an empty chair near the wall. As you were getting your
sketchbook out of your backpack, the red haired girl walked in, holding a small container with water. You slid further into your chair and put a hand over your face as she walked past you. *This day can’t get any better.*

You couldn’t decide if you were paranoid or not. Whispers seemed to surround you, and you caught the girl looking your way more than once. She could be just staring at Marius, since you were directly behind him in the circle, but still, you felt watched. She had probably told her friends already and they were all talking about you. Soon everyone would know.

*Snap out of it!*, you chided yourself, but it wasn’t enough to make you focus. Your hands were trembling. You didn’t want to deal with paparazzi again. What if you were kicked out of your flat like before?

When Mrs. Boucher announced a 15 minute recess, you got up. You had to get out of there. You slung your backpack over your shoulder and were about to walk out of the classroom when you spotted Marius near the door. He was alone, looking at his phone. It was your chance, you had to talk to him.

He looked up when you approached, an easy smile curling his lips. “Oh, it’s you sweetheart. *Ça va? You looked gorgeous drawing today.*”

You forced yourself to smile back. “Thank you, you looked great while posing too.”

That seemed to spike his interest. “Oh? But you aren’t here to compliment me, are you?” He looked you up and down. “Did you get tired of Agreste already?”

You clenched your jaw, but forced your voice to remain calm. “I wanted to ask you about that secret you mentioned before.”

He arched one eyebrow, amused. “A secret?”

“Yes. You said something about the black cat’s secret before.” You searched his face for any changes, but he was still smiling. “I was wondering if you had more information for me.”

“I’d love to help you, but I don’t know what you’re talking about, sweetheart.” He shrugged.

You blinked a few times. “What?”

“Are you feeling okay? You seem a little dazed.” His eyes fell to your neck, and you instinctively covered Adrien’s bite with your hand.

“I’m fine.” You glared at him. So now he was going to deny everything. He probably knew you were onto him. What were you going to do now?

“Aren’t you going to stay for the second part?” Mrs. Boucher’s voice shook you out of your thoughts.

“I have an appointment, professor. I’m sorry.” The lie slipped easily from your lips as you smiled at her.

She nodded as she stood by her son’s side. “Don’t forget to practice at home. The day of the contest is almost arriving.”

“I won’t,” you said and bowed your head a little. “Excuse me.”
You glanced at Marius and saw he was smiling from ear to ear. You sent him a glare and went on your way home.

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Marinette wasn’t so happy to discover about the sleepover Chloé had set up at her own house. But Chloé insisted, saying that you had a lot of catching up to do. Apparently, Adrien had been the one that told her that you found out his and Marinette’s identities.

“I can’t believe you had dreams about it, that’s insane!” Chloé grabbed some ingredients from the refrigerator.

Mari had agreed to the sleepover with one condition: that the blonde helped with the cooking and baking. To her and your surprise, Chloé had agreed to it, even if a little begrudgingly, and now you were making apple cupcakes.

“I think me and Plagg have some sort of connection.” You shrugged as you put diced apple in a bowl.

“He does like you quite a lot,” Tikki said.

Mari took a piece of the apple and threw it at the kwami, who caught it in the air. “I’m just glad we have less things to worry about. Adrien was a mess before she found out. If this was still going on now with all the akuma attacks,” she shook her head, as if to get rid of that thought. “I don’t even want to imagine the chaos.”

“Why didn’t you call me?” Chloé asked. “I could’ve come earlier.”

“You already have your own responsibilities in the north and in Spain.” Mari beat the egg whites and sugar together in a bowl. “And we’re taking care of it.”

Chloé huffed. “Yeah, right. Have you seen your face? I can see your dry skin from meters away, and I know you’d never let that happen if you were doing okay.” When Mari rolled her eyes, the blonde continued. “Still no clue about Hawkmoth? Why he started to act now of all times…” She trailed off, looking around for something.

Pollen, Chloé’s kwami, phased through a cabinet. “The chocolate is inside here, my queen.”

Chloé smiled, opening the cabinet. “Thank you, Pollen.”

You put the cupcake molds on the counter. “I think Marius Boucher might know something.”

Chloé eyebrows shot up. “Marius Boucher? That cutie from Gabriel’s company?”

You nodded.

Mari put flour and baking powder in the mixture. “Adrien told me you’re worried,” she said to you. “But he and I observed Marius for some time and we didn’t find anything. No secret lairs, no involvement with criminals.” She gave you an apologetic look. “He’s a pain in the ass, but he’s clean.”

You didn’t say anything as you grabbed a pan to sauté the apples. You knew Marius was hiding something. He had to be. Otherwise, why would he deny he had that talk with you? You just had to find out what he was hiding. You wished Alya were there to back you up; she was the only one who understood your suspicions.
You sat around the living room as the cupcakes baked in the oven. You could talk freely about the miraculous since Marinette’s parents had gone on a date at her request. They were pretty laid back, so you imagined they didn't mind.

“I bumped into Juleka the other day.” Chloé took a sip from her wine. A soft French ballad was playing in the background. “She and Rose are getting married soon. She told me she’d send us the invitations.”

“That’s wonderful!” Marinette grinned. You had no idea who they were talking about, so you just enjoyed eating the leftover melted chocolate from the cupcakes.

“Can I ask you something about the war?” You asked after their conversation about weddings died down.

Chloé groaned. “Why do we have to talk about it?” She shivered dramatically. “Just remembering those days in the catacombs makes me want to puke.”

“I agree.” Pollen leaned on the blonde’s arm. “It was a terrible time for us all.”

“Sorry…” Your hand then froze inside the chocolate bowl. “Wait. Catacombs?”

Mari twirled the wine inside her glass. “We had to hide in the catacombs along with the residents that couldn’t leave the city before Blanc destroyed the train tracks.” She took a sip before continuing. “They’re like a labyrinth under Paris that extends miles under the city. It was the only place where he couldn’t get us.”

“I’m going to get more wine.” Chloe shot up from her armchair and Pollen flew around her. “When I come back, I expect you two to have stopped talking about this sad shit.”

The door closed and music was the only sound heard for a moment. You felt a pang of guilt for mentioning the war. You didn’t know Chloé hated talking about it so much, and you couldn’t blame her, since everything about it seemed horrible. You just wanted to know more so that you could understand what had happened.

Mari gave you a kind smile. “You can ask me anything before she comes back.”

You bit your lip, wondering if you really should, but this was an opportunity you couldn’t pass up. Marinette was the only one that didn’t seem too reluctant to talk about the war. “Alright,” you put the chocolate bowl down on the coffee table. “How did Blanc get free from Hawkmoth?”

“Oh,” she let out a humorless chuckle. “It’s kinda complicated.”

You leaned forward a little on the sofa. “Try me.”

Mari and Tikki exchanged a look. The brunette then took a deep breath, as if to prepare herself. “When Chat was akumatized, Hawkmoth put the akuma in his bell. He didn’t put it in his miraculous ring, otherwise he’d lose Plagg if I destroyed it.” She waved her hand. “Oh, Plagg is linked to the ring, in case you didn’t know. If the ring is destroyed, he becomes energy, and we can't interact with him.”

“We’re only visible to humans because of the miraculous objects.” Tikki added. “They tie us to this world.”
You nodded to show them you were following.

Mari linked her hands together. “So, Blanc pretended to be down and let me destroy his bell, but before I could purify the akuma, he absorbed its power with Cataclysm. So he was set free from Hawkmoth, but still had the powers.”

“Wait,” you put a hand up. It was too much information at one time. “So Chat can absorb powers with Cataclysm?”

She shook her head. “No, only Blanc could do it. It was one of the enhancements from the akuma.”

“I’m back! No more sad talks!” The door opened and Chloé pushed it with her feet. There was a bottle of wine in each of her hands. She sat on the sofa by Mari’s side. “No more sad faces too.” She poked Mari’s cheek and the brunette slapped her hand away playfully. Chloé raised the bottles. “C’mon, girls, is this a sleepover or a funeral?”

As it often happens when people drink, they start to reminisce about the past. ‘But only happy memories’, Chloé had demanded. Photo albums were sprawled on the floor and you smiled as Mari and Chloé laughed about their adventures. Mari seemed okay, but Chloé had already lost it. You decided to remain sober since you wanted to remember any information you could learn. Maybe something could help with your and Alya’s investigation.

“You could’ve stopped that stupid bull, Marinette!” Chloe’s eyes were only half open as she leaned on the arm of the sofa.

Mari munched on a cupcake. “But where’s the fun in that?”

“The fun?” Chloe slurred the words. “The fun is helping a friend out. That’s what friends are for! Because if we don’t have friends, we don’t have anything.” She turned to you. “Am I right?”

You nodded. “Totally.” You searched the bookshelf for another photo album. When you found an interesting one, you pulled it out.


Marinette rolled her eyes with a smile and went to the kitchen. “I’ll bring more snacks. Try not to throw up before I come back.”

You chuckled and looked back to the photo album in your hands. This one was filled with photographs from their teenage years. You ran your finger softly over a picture of Adrien. His hair was short back then. Damn, you already missed him. With a smile on your lips, you flipped another page.

A gasp left your mouth. The man from your dreams with Blanc was staring right back at you, his expression frozen into a smile, so different from the pained and bloodied one from your vision.

“Who…” You struggled to form words. “Who is this?”

“Hmm?” Chloé got up and looked over your shoulder. She leaned on you a little to keep her balance. “Oh, that’s JiYong, Mari’s boyfriend. He was stunning, wasn’t he? Such a shame.”

The album made a loud thud when it fell to the ground. You didn’t know how many steps backwards you gave, but when you realized, your back was pressed against a wall.

“Whoa, whoa, whoa! What happened?” Chloé wobbled as she walked up to you.
It was Hawkmoth’s fault. That was what Mari had told you.

“Marinette!” Chloé cried out behind her. “I think we have a problem!”

“What?” Mari appeared in the doorway.

You tried to take deep breaths, but it seemed that your lungs couldn’t keep the air inside them.

Chloé struggled to point her finger at you as her hand kept moving around. “She’s freaking out.”

You kept staring at Mari with wide eyes as she approached. She had said it was Hawkmoth’s fault. She had lied to you.

“What happened? Are you hurt?” She looked all over your body, searching. Her fingertips touched your cheeks. “Your face is cold.”

You stepped to the side, away from her, and began to pace around the room. This is bad. This is really bad.

“What happened?” Mari whispered to Chloé.

The blonde shrugged. “She was seeing that photo album and puff! She began to freak out.” Mari picked the album from the ground. Chloé continued. “Oh, she asked who JiYong was. I guess she had never seen a picture of him?”

Mari’s eyes widened. “Adrien told me you had dreams about the war.” She said in a cautious tone as she put the album down on the sofa. “Was my boyfriend in one of them?”

That made you stop in your tracks. “You said Hawkmoth was the one that killed your boyfriend. In the dream—”

“It was Hawkmoth,” she said, slowly approaching you. You huffed and began to walk again. “Listen.” Mari stopped in front of you and grabbed your arms. “If Gabriel hadn’t akumatized Chat, none of this would have happened.”

You tightened your jaw. “Does Adrien know?” Mari pressed her lips together and averted her eyes. “Does he know, Marinette?” You asked again, with more force in your voice.

She let go of you. “You can’t tell him.”

You put a hand over your face. “Oh my god.”

“It will break him,” Chloé said, sounding more sober. “He already blames himself for what happened. If he knew that he killed Mari’s—”

“Chloé,” Mari warned and the blonde began to sip on a glass of water. The brunette turned to you. “He can’t know about it. You have to promise me you won’t tell him.”

You shook your head. You couldn’t keep that from him, it wasn’t right.

Mari grabbed your arm. You could see the desperation in her gaze. “This is in the past. There’s no need to bring it back to haunt us.” She squeezed your arm and looked into your eyes. “Promise me.”

“I…” You swallowed the sudden lump that formed in your throat.

Adrien’s broken expression from when you forced him to talk about the war came back to you. What
would happen if he knew about this? It’d probably break him, just like Chloé had said. You doubted he’d be able to focus on the fights like that.

“Please,” Mari said in a small voice.

Your words were barely a whisper when you said, “I promise.”

“Merci beaucoup.” Mari pulled you to her and hugged you. She was trembling, or maybe you were. You weren’t sure. “It’s for his own good.”

You wrapped one arm around her and looked to the album lying forgotten on the sofa. There was an emptiness in your chest, threatening to consume you. How would you be able to keep this from Adrien?

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“Why are you looking at me like that?” Adrien looked over his shoulder with an amused smile.

You blinked, sitting upright on your stool by the kitchen counter. You hadn’t realized you were staring. He chuckled and put a plate in front of you before turning around again and focusing on the electric kettle.

You passed a hand over your face, trying not to space out again. You hadn’t slept at all at Mari’s place yesterday and you were having difficulties to focus on anything that wasn’t the secret that you now had to keep from the most important person in your life.

“You’re too gorgeous for your own good, model boy,” you said as you spread butter on the pain grillé he had made for you. “I’d have you right now if I could.”

He almost let the electric kettle fall. You smirked, taking a bite from your pain grillé, as he cursed under his breath and grabbed two mugs from the cabinet. It was so easy to fluster him.

Adrien had come to your place to have breakfast together before you had to part ways. He would leave for a modeling job in an hour and you had class at the university, so you didn’t have much time to spend with the blonde. And part of you was glad for that. You needed some time to organize your thoughts. Seeing him after the talk with Marinette and Chloé had made conflicting emotions clash in your chest, guilt being the strongest one. You wished you hadn’t found out what had happened with JiYong; at least you wouldn’t have to hide anything from Adrien.

It’s for his own good, Mari’s words kept repeating in your mind. It’s for his own good. What if you messed up and he found out?

Adrien left a lingering kiss on your cheek, making you come back to reality. “Careful for what you wish for.”

He put a mug in front of you and sat down by your side. You turned to look at him as he prepared his own food. The bruise around his eye was gone, but you knew it was only a matter of time before he got hurt again.

You grabbed the warm mug and blew inside it. “Don’t provoke me, kitty.”

He leaned closer to you, a mischievous smile on his lips. “And what if I do?”

“Mon dieu, I can’t leave you two alone for five seconds,” Plagg said as he flew inside the room.
The blonde shrugged with one shoulder, going back to his food. “It’s her fault for looking at me like that.” You rolled your eyes playfully, taking a sip from your tea.

“Oh, so you’re the victim now?” Plagg asked, and Adrien let out a laugh.

“Of course!”

You smiled at the joy in his voice. Even with all the akuma fights, he was happy. Maybe it was for the best if he didn’t know about what Blanc did.

You sat at your usual place at the lecture hall for Art History III as the other students arrived. You were used to being stared at, but people seemed to be staring more than usual. If you weren’t so tired, you might have glared at them until they stopped. Maybe a paparazzi had taken a photo of you and posted it somewhere. You didn’t know why they’d bother to do that, since you weren’t seen with Chat in public for a while.

Someone plopped down by your side. You turned to look and saw Jean, from the Figure Drawing II class.

“Bonjour Chat Noir girl!” He exclaimed. You gave him an icy look. His eyes widened and he continued in a quieter voice. “Oh sorry, I forgot. He even said in an interview that you weren’t together, right?”

“Right,” you said through clenched teeth and tried to shoot him a smile. It was probably one of the most forced smiles you had ever given someone.

You opened your sketchbook and began to draw, hoping Jean would get the message that you didn’t want to talk. Why can’t the teacher arrive already? The guy seemed to understand that you wanted peace, because he went quiet. You worked in silence until Jean opened his mouth again.

“Say,” he began, and you sighed. “Are you and Agreste together?”

You gripped your pencil and snapped your head to look at him. “What?”

He put his hands up, a startled look on his face. “I was just asking. People are talking about it.”

“Who?” You quickly surveyed the place, seeing that a few students were looking your way.

“Hum, everyone? It’s even on the internet now.” Jean leaned away from you. He almost seemed scared. “They say you were seen getting out of a bathroom together here in the university.”

Your stomach churned. The stares. It all made sense now. You had told Adrien you were doomed that day, and you were right.

You swallowed down the panic that wanted to make itself known as tears, and forced a laugh out of your lips. “People come up with the craziest stories. We’re just friends.”

“I know, right?” Jean let out a relieved laugh. “But you two do look great together.”

“You think so?” You asked, maybe with too much cheeriness in your voice, because he arched one eyebrow at you. “I mean,” you leaned closer to him. “I think he likes someone else.”

“Oh, really?” Jean whispered.
“You nodded. “I think it’s a guy.” Jean’s mouth hung open. “Don’t tell anyone, ok?”

“You told him I’m gay?” Adrien asked.

You paced around your living room. “I told him you might be.”

“That won’t work. It’s an old rumor already.” He got up from the sofa. “People have been wondering if I’m gay since I began modeling.”

“This is bad, Adrien.” You stopped in front of the glass door to look at the Eiffel Tower, but not even the sight of it against the night sky made you feel better. You began to pace again. “No. This is downright awful!”

“Chérie, it’s just a rumor.” Adrien grabbed your arms and gave them a reassuring squeeze. “I looked into it. It’s just some rumors on Twitter. They don’t have proof.”

“But that girl saw us,” you said.

“It’s her word against yours,” Plagg said from the coffee table. “But I do think it was mainly Adrien’s fault. You could have controlled yourself, boy.”

“Plagg you’re not helping.” The blonde sent him a glare before looking back at you. “We’ll just have to be more careful. I’ll come to your place as Chat until this dies down.” He caressed your arms. “Relax, love, everything will work out.” He let go of your arms and grabbed your hand instead. “C’mon, I’ll make you something warm to drink.”

You took a deep breath as you let him take you to the kitchen. Somehow, Adrien’s gentle words weren’t enough to placate the heavy feeling in your chest. He could tell you many times that everything would work out, but still… You had a bad feeling about all this.

Chapter End Notes

Dun dun duuun! What will happen next, I wonder? :3c

Well, that will have to wait because the next chapter will be Chat’s POV of Ch. 19, and then the main plot will continue! I’ll make sure to add what happened after the midnight kiss with Chat :^)

Also, I created a new survey for the POV chapters. You can vote until September 10th! And the results will be out the next day. I know the past surveys caused some misunderstandings, but this one will have a lot of new chapters, so it’ll override the results of the past surveys. The last ones were in 2017, holy hell.

Anyway, here’s the survey link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7BSSJMG

p.s.: if you’re new here, the POV chapters can be unlocked by buying me coffees from ko-fi! I’ll explain more when the results are out
Chat balanced himself on the parapet of his artist’s window. He knew she was struggling with a project and he, as her wonderful muse, was going to help her. He couldn’t wait to see her again.

Her laugh reached his ears, making him lean closer to the window. He tried to peek inside, but the curtains were closed. Odd. She never closed the curtains, did she? He opened the lock of the window with ease and stepped inside, pushing the curtains out of the way.

A grin curled his lips when saw his dear one sitting in front of a canvas, but his expression soon clouded as his eyes fell on the half-naked man standing in the middle of the room.

The two of them turned to look at him.

“Oh, hey Chat,” the artist said, putting her brush down.

“Am I interrupting something?” He glanced at the man. It was the same guy from Christmas night, the one he had made run away in fear.

“Kostas agreed to help me with my new project.” She motioned with her hand to the man, who waved at Chat with a smug grin on his face. The blonde narrowed his eyes. “He has been a great help so far.”

The two of them shared a warm look that made Chat feel nauseated. The room seemed to get darker, like a light had just burned out, but maybe it was just his imagination.

The blonde focused on his artist, determined to ignore the guy. “I could’ve helped you.”

“My dear one sighed and got up from her chair. Chat’s hands balled into fists as she stopped by Kostas’ side and put a hand on his arm. What is she doing? ‘I don’t need your help anymore.’”

Her voice cut through him like a sharp blade. “What?” He waited for an explanation, but she was silent, her gaze void of emotion. “I thought I was your muse.”

She arched one eyebrow at him. “You were.”

Chat’s shoulders slumped. The corners of the room got even darker, and this time he knew it wasn’t his imagination. It was like the darkness of the room was slowly trying to reach him, to consume
“But you promised,” he said in a small voice. She had promised he was going to be her only muse. Didn’t that mean anything to her? “I thought… I thought you liked my help. I thought you liked me.”

“Oh Chat,” the artist let go of Kostas and walked up to him. “Did you really believe that? Did you think I’d even love you one day?” Her limbs began to stretch with each step she gave in his direction. Soon she was towering over him, looking down with eyes filled with pity. “You’re full of secrets, always away fighting crime and what not. How could I love someone like that?”

Chat could feel his tear ducts burning, tears begging to be let free. “Chérie, please. Let’s talk about it, ok?” He heard Kostas chuckle, as if mocking him. He really wanted to hit the guy.

The artist grew even taller, destroying the ceiling as she went past it. The room dissolved in darkness until it was only Chat and his dear one in front of him.

“I’m happy now, Chat Noir,” she continued, her booming voice making his body vibrate. “I’m _happier_ without you.” She looked down at him, her eyes shining in the darkness, and raised her feet. “I don’t need you anymore.” Her feet came down on top of him, and Chat closed his eyes, waiting for the impact.

His whole body jolted when he felt something touch his head.

“Whoa there, sleepyhead.”

Chat’s eyes snapped open at the voice. He looked up and saw the face of his dearest one smiling down at him. A blue sky surrounded her, so different from the darkness from before.

She touched his hair as if he was still sleeping, her touch light as if he was one of her mother’s expensive porcelain dolls. “Did you have a nightmare?”

Yes, that was what it was. A nightmare. The details were already getting lost in his dizzy mind. He couldn't even remember what he had dreamed about anymore.

“I think so.” He moved his head on her lap and looked around. The familiar hills extended far and wide, wild flowers like colorful flecks of paint on the green grass. They were in her favorite part of the village.

Chat knew he shouldn’t be here, since it was too close to her family’s manor, but he did it for her, for the joyful face she made when she looked at the hills. Chat thought they were stunning, but, for him, she made everything around her pale in comparison. Maybe he was a lovestruck fool, like Ladybug had said before she went away to serve the king. Maybe he was, especially for staying so long in this small village when he was wanted dead or alive across the whole kingdom. However, it was where his dearest one lived, and that’s where his heart wanted to be, despite all the risks.

“Do you want a kiss to make it better?” She traced his bottom lip with her thumb bringing his attention back to her.

Chat let out a chuckle. “You pamper me too much, my dear.”

She smiled, and Chat sighed in contentment. He felt so happy to just be able to be with her like this. Ladybug was right, he really was a lovestruck fool.

“Anything for my masked hero,” she whispered and leaned down, bringing their lips together.
He kissed her back, doing his best to keep his hands to himself. When she began to deepen the kiss, he pulled away. He couldn’t get too worked up.

She gave him an understanding look and went back to touching his hair. She knew they would get there in time, but it’d only be after God had blessed their eternal vows. Chat hadn’t done many things the right way in his life, but he would make an exception this time. Just for her, his guardian angel.

The ring on her finger glinted as it caught the sun’s light. Chat still couldn’t believe she had accepted his proposal, going against her family’s will. He was an outlaw, after all. He wasn’t like Ladybug, so respected across the kingdom that the king himself had requested her services. No, not Chat Noir. The villagers even went as far as calling him a witch and saying that his sword was forged from the blood of the Devil. But it didn’t matter. His dearest one loved him for who he was, and that’s all that mattered to him. He just had to wait until he gathered a bit more money before they could elope and live in a far away place. His bandit days would be finally over then.

Chat’s cat ears twitched as a sound came from the woods behind them. He sat up on the grass and narrowed his eyes.

“What is it?” His fiancée asked, eyes wide as she searched the forest as well.

He put a hand up and waited until his eyes adjusted to the light. Between the trees, hidden in their shadow, Chat saw the familiar glint of a sword.

“Run to the house and hide,” Chat whispered, eyes still locked in the woods. Four armed men stepped into the light. He got up, pulling his love along with him. He stood in front of her as two more men appeared from the sides, trying to circle them. “Go!”

As he heard her hurried steps getting fainter, he pulled out his sword from the scabbard. It glowed in a menacing green light and the men slowed their pace, eyes fixed on the weapon. The demon sword that, according to the rumors, was able to destroy entire armies. Chat knew this was why they were here. They thought they could kill him and get the sword as a bonus. So foolish.

The men charged at him all at the same time, but Chat didn’t feel anything besides the rush of adrenaline in his veins. He had done this many times and he wasn’t going to lose this fight.

His blade had just met the neck of another guy when he heard her scream. His eyes widened and he counted the bodies on the ground. One, two, three, four… five. There were six men before.

He sheathed his dirty sword and ran to the manor, almost tripping on the gravel in his haste. He saw the smoke before he felt the heat of the fire. No. The flames licked the stone walls as he tried to find a way to get in. No, no, no.

“Cat demon!” The last man exclaimed. Chat turned to him and his chest tightened in a mix of relief and worry. He had an arm around his fiancée's neck, a knife pointed to her throat. “Drop the sword!”

His dear one stared at him with wide eyes, her face and clothes dirty with soot. Chat unsheathed the sword and put it on the ground.

“Now kick it away!” The man demanded. Chat did as he said, his green eyes trained on the bastard. He didn't need a sword to kill him.

“Let her go,” the blonde said in a leveled voice.

The man pushed his love forward and rushed to get the sword. Chat caught his fiancée before she
fell to the ground.

She coughed into her fist, and Chat touched her face. “Are you okay?”

“The sword…” She began to say, but then started to cough again.

“Don't worry about it.” Chat reassured her.

Her eyes widened as she looked to the side. “Chat, look out!”

He turned in time to see the man running at them, his sword raised in the air. The sword wasn’t glowing green, since only Chat could use its power, but it was still deadly sharp. Chat dodged the attacks easily, until a wrong step made him fall to the ground.

“Chat!” His fiancée screamed as the man raised the sword. She pushed the man away, but the guy turned fast and hit her with the blade.

“No!” Chat got up as she fell to the ground with a thud.

The man followed not long after, his throat oozing blood where Chat’s claws had cut him.

After putting away the cursed sword, the blonde ran to his fiancée and cradled her body in his arms. He glanced at the blood dampening her clothes.

“Please, my love. Please don’t leave me,” he whispered.

She blinked slowly, her breathing shallow. “I’m… sorry.”

“No…Please.” He felt tears running down his face.

A sob left his lips when her eyes lost their light. This couldn’t be happening. They were to get married; they were going to be happy together!

“You!” Chat heard her father’s enraged voice. “What did you do to my daughter? What did you do to my house?”

The blonde looked up and saw the man running towards him. The whole village seemed to be following him, probably alerted by the fire that still raged behind Chat.

“I-It wasn’t me!” But it was you, a voice in his head whispered. It's your fault that the men came.

Her father took out his sword. Chat left his fiancée’s body on the ground carefully and got up.

“You monster!” The man bared his teeth at him.

Chat stepped backwards, putting his hands up. “It wasn't my fault! I swear!” But his palms were coated with blood, which didn’t help to convince her father or the villagers that approached.

They were circling him, getting closer. He could see that many people had already unsheathed their swords.

“Demon!” Their screams began to merge into a cacophony of sounds.

“Witch!”

“Murderer!”
Chat looked at his fiancée one last time before he began to run. He ran until the shouts became distant and darkness began to surround him. It consumed everything. He could only see part of the trees and the path in front of him. She was gone. The love of his life, gone. And all because of him.

He got inside his cabin in the woods and slammed the door closed behind him, but the darkness didn’t stop. He couldn’t breathe. She had given her life to save him. Her scream repeated into his head. Cursing, he put his hands over his ears and closed his eyes.

When he opened them again, a wave of sound and light bombarded his senses. Irate shouts came from all around him.

“Murderer!”

He was in the village’s main square, surrounded by an angry mob. He tried to move his arms, but realized he couldn’t. He was tied to a pole, with logs all around him.

“Burn the witch!” Someone screamed.

Chat hung his head down when he realized what would be his fate. He’d finally be sentenced for his crimes. People threw rotten food and stones at him, continuing to scream as they did so. He felt the sting when a pebble cut his cheek, but he still didn’t look up. He still couldn’t believe the light of his life was gone, and all because of him. Maybe he deserved this.

“Let’s kill the beast once and for all!” Chat recognized the voice. His fiancée’s father. He was finally going to get the revenge he desired.

Chat heard a commotion in the square. People began to scream and there was a sound of water splashing close to him, but he didn’t bother looking up. He just wanted to stay still until it all ended and he could join his love wherever she was.

The square got too silent and Chat’s ears perked up. That was odd. The wooden platform creaked and the blonde finally looked up, just enough to see who it was. His eyes widened.

“Chérie?” It was her, his love. How was she here? He had seen her die, had held her lifeless body in his arms. How was this possible?

She nodded and wiped his cheek with her thumb. “I’m going to get you out of here,” she said and disappeared behind him.

Chat heard screams from afar. The villagers seemed to be coming back from wherever they had gone to. When he was about to ask his dear one what she was doing, he felt the ropes tying him move and then he was falling. He groaned when his body hit the wooden platform, all his wounds making themselves known in a burst of pain.

His fiancée helped him get up, and he noticed she had his sword in her hand. Where did she get that? Chat finally took a good look at her, feeling his chest tighten. She was wearing different clothes. He had never seen those before.

He knew his hand was trembling when he touched her face. She was warm, alive. “How? I saw you—”

She gave him a small smile. “You’ll understand soon. We need to find the exit. Quick.”

Chat couldn’t comprehend what was happening. Maybe he had already died and this was his personal purgatory or maybe he was just dreaming. Either way, he didn’t want it to end.
He let his love lead the way and take him through the village. His head was light and it felt like his legs would give in under his weight any minute now, but her arm around his waist made him feel safer. She gasped when she saw a door with light coming from under it. Maybe she wanted to hide until nighttime?

Four creatures that seemed made of smoke blocked the way, hissing at them. Chat knew he couldn’t run, much less fight. He’d only get his dearest one killed again.

“Leave me. Save yourself, princess. We’re not gonna make it like this.” He looked behind him, watching as at the angry mob of villagers appeared around the corner. He still had some strength in him, he could buy his loved one sometime until she was able to escape.

“You trust me, right?” She asked, her voice firm but gentle.

The words made a twinge of familiarity spark in his mind. He had heard those words before. His memory was hazy, but it didn’t really matter, because he knew the answer. He knew she was going to save him once again.

She smiled and pulled him along before he could say anything. “Let’s go.”

He struggled to keep up with her pace. He saw her brandish the sword, his sword, with confidence and it was like he was falling in love all over again. If he hadn’t already asked her to marry him, he’d do it once more.

After she attacked two monsters and dissolved them into nothing, the other two got distracted. They managed to get past them and Chat kicked the strange door open.

Bright light blinded him. It felt like it was pulling him from somewhere deep inside his mind, and then it threw him onto a patch of grass.

The blonde stared at the night sky, feeling the world spinning around him.

“I knew you could do it!” He heard Ladybug exclaim as she passed by. Lady?

The loud sound of a helicopter made his mind focus on the present moment. His vision began to clear, and he felt the bite of the cold wind on his face.

Chat sat up and groaned, looking around frantically. He was in the Champs de Mars, and everything was chaos around him. People were screaming and running away from smoke. “What the—”

“You were inside one of those bubbles.” The artist got up by his side, wincing as she did.

Bubbles? Chat’s eyes widened as his memory came back to him. Oh, of course. He was hit by one of those awful things. His artist must have gone inside the nightmare bubble and got him out. She had saved him.

His chérie extended her hand to him and he grabbed it, allowing her to help him stand. What had happened in that last nightmare? That was a past Chat life, wasn’t it? He felt a sharp pain in his temples and shook his head lightly. Shit.

“You don't have much time.” The artist pointed to the huge clock on the Eiffel Tower. The display showed 5 minutes until midnight.

“Merde,” he muttered. How long had he stayed in that damn bubble? It felt like an eternity.
Chat knew he had to act. Fast. When he was about to leave, his artist gave him his baton.

“Here. Stop that lunatic,” she said.

“I’ll be back for you, chérie.” He touched her face briefly, smiling. He’d make sure to end this and teach that villain and Hawkmoth a lesson. “Meet me at the Amélie bookstore’s rooftop.”

Chat ran to where Ladybug was. She had just popped some nightmare bubbles that tried to get in her way.

“You almost missed the fun, chaton!” Lady grinned and gave him a pat on the back when he approached. “It’s good to have you back.”

Chat smirked. “Let’s get this over with, my lady.”

They made their way to the Eiffel Tower with ease. Years of fighting alongside Ladybug meant that Chat knew her movements, as well as her strengths and weaknesses, and she knew his as well. He didn’t need to tell Ladybug what he was going to do; she already knew and acted accordingly. Maybe their fighting style was too predictable, but it had worked perfectly all these years.

They hid near one of the legs of the Eiffel Tower. Lady made a few hand signs to him, and Chat understood the plan. He had to distract the teacher while Lady used her power and figured out what to do. Easy.

Chat used his baton to land on the first floor of the tower, where the teacher was. The man’s face was impassive, but his stiff stance gave away his fear.

“Did you enjoy the nightmares, kitty?” The man smirked. Chat really wanted to punch him for all he had done, but he refrained himself.

“There’s only one person who can call me that, and that’s not you.” He dodged a few smoke words and winked. “You have to buy me dinner first to get that privilege.”

The teacher threw some nightmare bubbles at him. Chat hit them with his baton, wincing when one almost touched his arm. *C’mon Lady, hurry up.*

“These smoke words and nightmare bubbles are so lame.” Chat faked a yawn as he dodged another bubble. “Hawkmoth has no standards these days.” The man’s face contorted with anger. Chat noticed Lady was in position and smirked. “You know the grade I give your powers? Zero.”

The teacher screamed and threw a bunch of smoke words at him at once. Chat jumped out of the way and Lady landed on his place, a huge red fan on her hands. She blew the smoke words back. The man screamed in pain and became paralyzed when they hit him.

“Thank goodness.” Chat breathed deeply, passing a hand through his hair.

“Good job, chaton,” Lady said as they fist bumped.

He leaned on a metal pillar of the tower as Lady used her power to fix everything. Chat felt a sting on his cheek and arms, where the magic was healing his wounds.

“Should we say something?” Lady asked, eyeing the microphone that the villain had been using. “There’s two minutes before midnight.”

Chat glanced at the passed out teacher, lying down a few meters away from them. “We can’t let
Hawkmoth think that he’s going to get away with this.”

Lady grabbed the microphone and passed it to him. “Alright. Remember to refer to him as only one person.”

“I know, I know,” Chat muttered as he turned the microphone on.

He looked at the expanse of green in front of him and at the illuminated city that extended behind it. People were scattered around the grass, some getting up from the ground, some getting out of their hiding spots. There was a drone a few meters ahead, filming what was happening, and a helicopter circled the fields.

Hawkmoth was probably watching. Even after five years of fighting this mysterious man, Chat didn’t know what he wanted out of this. He didn’t know why or how the guy got Nooroo, but for years, it seemed that he just used his powers to steal money. It was just recently that things had changed. He didn’t try to steal as much, but he also didn’t always try to get Chat’s and Lady’s miraculous, like Gabriel Agreste had done.

Chat really couldn’t understand the new Hawkmoth’s motives, but if this man thought he could just kidnap and hurt his artist, he was wrong. And he’d make sure to tell him that.

“I know you can hear me, Hawkmoth, so here’s a warning.” Chat’s voice reverberated in the field. “And make it a warning to every other villain out there. I’m sure you all remember the pact me and Lady did in the last—” His voice faltered when images of his hands dripping with blood and the sound of a maniac laugh flashed in his mind. He pushed those thoughts back and recomposed himself. “The last fight with the first Hawkmoth.”

Chat moved the microphone to Lady so that he could calm down a little.

She crossed her arms. “We promised we wouldn’t spill any blood like he did,” she said with determination.

At her words, memories of Marinette crying in JiYong’s funeral came back to Chat. He gripped the microphone tighter. That wasn’t going to happen, not again.

“That’s right.” Chat put a hand on Lady’s shoulder and nodded. “But you try to hurt the ones important to us again,” he narrowed his eyes, trying to put all the hatred he felt in his gaze. “And I won’t hesitate to hunt you down and break that deal.”

The past Chat’s fiancée might have sacrificed herself for him, but he wouldn’t let that happen to his artist. Even if he had to kill this new Hawkmoth to save her, he’d do it.

“Make it two.” Ladybug nodded, and Chat relaxed a little, knowing she supported his decision.

“You’ve been warned,” he said in the microphone before passing it to Ladybug.

The Champs de Mars were filled with applause. It seemed that the people also approved their words. Chat wished he and Lady could finally bring peace to the city. Well, as peaceful as Paris could be. Nevertheless, he knew one day this Hawkmoth would slip up, and then we’d be done for.

“But now it’s time to celebrate, Paris!” Ladybug smiled, and Chat almost snorted. She was probably exhausted from the fight, but she still did her best for the sake of others. It was one of the many things he admired her for. “The New Year is almost here!”

At her words, the blonde realized that the countdown was about to begin. He looked at Lady, but she
was already smiling at him with a knowing look as she turned the microphone off.

“Go find her, Romeo.” She wrapped her arms around him and gave him a tight hug. “Happy New Year.”

He hugged her back. “Happy New Year, Lady. I’ll be back soon to help you out with this guy.” He motioned to the teacher with his thumb.

The brunette laughed as she pulled back. “Yeah, right. Just go, chaton. I’ll take him to the clinic.”

“Ten!”

Chat turned around to the field as he heard people scream in unison. The countdown had begun.

He grabbed his baton and ran to the edge. “I’ll come back! I’m serious!”

He couldn't see Lady’s face as he jumped, but he knew she was probably rolling her eyes. She knew he could get a little carried away when his artist was involved.

“Nine!”

Thousands of people were gathering at the Champs de Mars to watch the fireworks. Chat used his baton to jump over roofs to get to the Amélie bookshop. He passed by some groups of people sitting on the rooftops, trying not to step on their wine bottles. They cheered and called his name as he ran past.

“Eight!”

“Chat Noir, I love you!” A girl screamed as he passed running by her.

He winked and finger-gunned at her. She screamed louder, and he couldn’t help but laugh. He had probably made her entire night with that simple gesture. He couldn’t wait to make another girl’s night, but with this one, a wink and a finger-gunning gesture wouldn’t be enough.

“Seven!”

He landed on the bookstore’s rooftop, glad that it was empty, except for one person. The artist gave him a bright smile when she saw him. She seemed tired, but she was safe.

When Chat realized, he was already smiling back. “I said I would come back to you, didn’t I?”

“Six!”

He noticed her nice clothes, the ones she chose to wear for their failed date as he approached her. He felt so bad involving her in his mess.

“I never doubted it.” She grinned when he wrapped his arms around her waist in a loose embrace. The way the string lights made her eyes shine was doing weird things to his chest.

“Five!”

She touched his face. And if her touch wasn’t enough to drive him mad, her next words surely did.

“You becoming my muse was the best thing that happened to me this year.”

“Four!”
Oh man, he really wanted to kiss her.

“The same for me, ma belle.” Chat smiled and gave her forehead a light peck.

It wasn't enough. He wanted… more. But he was still only her muse, he couldn't kiss her just because he wanted to, right? They hadn’t talked about that yet. What if she rejected him?

“Three!”

The safest way was to make the kiss related to the reason why he became her muse in the first place. Inspiration.

He cupped her face, his thumbs stroking her skin. “Chérie, you know how they say that New Year’s kisses bring luck and good things, right?”

“Two!”

Her lips twitched before curling into a small smile, as if she already knew what he was going to say. “Is that so?”

“That’s what they say.” Chat smirked when he saw the amusement in her eyes. Alright, this might work. “Want to find out if it works with inspiration as well?”

“One!”

For a terrifying second, he thought she was going to laugh or maybe arch one skeptical eyebrow at him, but thankfully the Nine Muses were blessing him tonight, and the artist gave him a grin.

“Sure.”

With his heart beating rapidly in his chest, he didn’t waste time in leaning in and capturing her lips with his.

“Happy New Year!” The cheers and fireworks around them were all forgotten when he closed his eyes and lost himself in her.

He tried to stop smiling in the kiss, but he couldn’t help it. Even with the fight and the memories it brought back, this was one of the best New Year’s Eve he had in a long time. He wouldn’t trade this moment for anything else.

His chérie put her arms around his neck and deepened the kiss. Chat almost melted. Well, maybe he’d trade this moment for her completely ravishing him in any way she wanted. But that time would come, he was sure of it. He’d make sure that soon she’d kiss him just because she wanted too. No excuses.

He pulled away from her mouth to kiss her neck and mark her when he saw something small flying in his peripheral vision. He looked to the side, searching for whatever he had seen, but it was gone.

“What is it?” The artist asked, her arms still wrapped around his neck.

“We should go.” Chat didn’t know what that thing was, but it made him aware that even if they were on a secluded rooftop, they were still in public.

His dear one seemed disappointed for a moment, but she nodded. “Alright.”

The way her expression fell for a moment made his stomach flutter. “We can continue our…
celebration in your flat, if you want.”

“Hmm.” She tapped a finger to her lips, seeming pensive. Chat couldn't help but follow her movement. “Do you think it’ll still work? The New Year’s Eve will be over by then.”

Chat smirked. “There’s only one way to find out.”

His back hit the wall when the artist pushed him backwards, her lips not leaving his. Chat felt a purr coming from his chest. He had to go back and help Ladybug with the teacher, but the artist was making it difficult for him. He didn’t know what had gotten into her to make her kiss him like this, but he didn’t want her to stop.

His baton vibrated and made a sound on his belt.

The artist pulled back, her eyebrows high upon her forehead. “What was that?”

Chat sighed, grabbing his baton. “Ladybug is calling me.” He smiled at her. “Just a moment, princess.” He pressed the paw print button and put the small baton near his ear. “Yes, my lady? Are you at the rehab clinic already?”

“Yes,” Lady said. “The questioning is about to start, but I don’t think I can stay transformed for long. Can you come?”

“Of course, I got… sidetracked for a moment. Désolé.” He glanced at the artist, who shrugged with a coy smile.

He heard Lady’s chuckle coming from the other end. “I can imagine. À plus.”

When she hung up, Chat put his baton back on his belt and turned to the artist with a sad smile.

“So you have to leave?” She asked.

“I’m afraid so.” He scratched his neck. “But I’ll see you soon.”

She arched one eyebrow. “Even if I’m on winter break?”

Chat felt his lips curl into an easy smile. “Can’t an artist be inspired by their muse even on breaks?”

She smiled as if she could see right through him and his hidden motives. “I guess they can.”

“Great. So I’ll see you soon.” He grabbed her hand and kissed the top of it. “I’m sorry for involving you in this mess.”

“It’s okay, I’m alright.” She shrugged with one shoulder.

Chat squeezed her hand a little. He knew she was still hurt from the fight and being kidnapped must have been terrifying, but here she was, saying she was fine. She was stronger than he thought.

“I’ll see you soon,” he repeated as he walked up to the window and opened it. The icy wind from outside got in, ruffling the artist’s clothes. “Have a good night and dream about me, ma belle.”

“I'll do my best,” she said with a side smile.

Chat shot her a grin and jumped on the parapet before going to the roof of the building. He shivered
a little as the cold air made contact with his skin and the wind pushed his hair back. He wasn’t too
eager to get to his destination; the rehab clinic was probably even more nightmare inducing in the
middle of the night than it was normally.

The colorful paintings on the white corridor walls did nothing to help make the clinic seem less
haunted. Chat wished the staff woman that was accompanying him walked faster so that he could
just do what he had to and leave this awful place. It was way past midnight, and it made the
creepiness of this place increase tenfold, just like he had imagined.

The rehab clinic for former akumatized people was a sad remembrance of all the times the
miraculous heroes had failed. Some people stayed there for years, unable to continue with their
normal lives after the akumization. Chat didn’t know what made some akumatized victims react
worse than others, so he couldn’t even help them properly.

They passed many closed doors, and the blonde refrained to look at them, trying not to get too lost in
his memories. His father had stayed in one of these rooms after he erased his own memory. After
some time, the doctors realized the ambient of the clinic was worsening Gabriel’s condition and
allowed him to stay at home.

The clicks of the staff woman’s high heels stopped as she faced a closed door. After thanking her,
Chat got inside.

The questioning had already started. The teacher was lying on a hospital bed, with two police
officers surrounding him and asking questions. The man looked up when he entered the room, but
then turned his face away.

“Your lips are red,” Ladybug whispered as she quietly approached Chat.

He shrugged. “It’s the cold, my lady. You know how it is.”

Lady raised an amused brow at him. “Ah, yes, the cold, of course.” She obviously knew what he
had been doing, but he wasn’t going to admit that he was late because his dear one was kissing him.

“Do you have to go?” He asked her.

“Yeah, Valentin is cooperating, so it shouldn’t take too long.” Lady glanced at the teacher and then
patted Chat on the shoulder. “I should be going. Goodnight.”

“Goodnight, Lady, rest up.” Chat smiled at her.

“Goodbye officers! Chat Noir will assist you now,” Lady said before leaving the room.

Lady was right, Valentin was cooperating, just not in a very helpful way. After asking their
questions, the police officers let Chat do his own interrogation of sorts. It was better if he acted fast,
while the akumization was still fresh.

“I already told you I was going to London and then, puf!” The man made a gesture with his hands.
“I don’t remember anything else.”

“So you were trying to leave the country after being accused of receiving bribes and trying to hurt a
student.” Chat crossed his arms, scowling at Valentin. The guy definitely wasn't going to stay in the
clinic for long, not with these serious charges against him. He was probably going to court soon.

“I was stressed! And it wasn’t just me!” Valentin moved his hands around frantically, making Chat roll his eyes. This guy was a joke. “I accepted the money, but Solène did as well!”

He had said that a couple of times already. Apparently Solène worked in the Administration Office of the Arts and Design University.

“Who gave you the money?” Chat asked, trying to maintain his voice calm. “What did they say to you?”

“It was at the university, I…” The man’s face became blank. “I told you about the money already, didn’t I? Solène got it too.”

Chat sighed, passing a hand over his face. It’s no use. “His memory was erased.” He turned to the police officers. “We need to find Solène, fast.”

The cat hero knew it was probably too late, but they had to try.

The clock on his studio marked 3 am as Adrien transformed back. He hissed as he rolled his shoulders. What a rough night.

He heard Plagg yawning and turned to the kwami. His ears were down and he had a somber expression on his face.

“Do you want me to get you a piece of Camembert?” Adrien asked.

“I’m okay, thank you.” Plagg flew to the secret room and disappeared inside.

He liked to sleep there sometimes, for whatever reason, so that wasn’t too weird, but the fact that the kwami declined a piece of Camembert was worrying.

Adrien let out a long sigh as he checked his phone. There was a message from Aimée, from his father’s company. He opened it and saw a photo of his father around more people from work. They seemed to be at a New Year’s Eve party. His father looked a bit lost, but Adrien hoped he was enjoying his time in Switzerland. Aimée was probably taking good care of him.

The blonde felt a pang of guilt for not going and spending the New Year’s Eve with Gabriel, but he didn’t want to leave Paris unless with was really necessary, like a photo-shoot or a catwalk job for the company.

After taking a quick shower to get rid of the dirt from the fight, Adrien walked to the large windows and put food for the stray cats. It didn’t take too long for two of them to appear.

Adrien smiled as he stroked the small white one. “I hope the fireworks didn’t scare you too much.”

The cat meowed, rubbing her face on his hand. The other cat, a grey tabby, didn’t even spare him a glance as he went to the food bowls. It still didn’t trust him too much, but Adrien knew it wouldn’t take long for the tabby to be comfortable around him. It seemed cliché, but he and cats got along well. Maybe it was just a coincidence, or maybe being Chat Noir made the cats see him differently somehow. He didn’t know.

Adrien stroke the white cat one last time before sitting down on the windowsill.
Looking up at the night sky, he smiled. “Happy New Year, mom. We’re doing okay here, but… We still miss you.” He fiddled with his thumbs for a moment and tried to calm down the turmoil in his heart. “Today… Today was a crazy day, you know?”

He told the sky about the fight, trying to imagine that his mom was listening to his quiet words. If he imagined hard enough, it felt like she did.

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“What do you mean you can’t transform?”

Adrien watched as Plagg sighed and lied down on his cat bed on the Egyptian pedestal. The kwami had spent the whole night in the secret room, and now that Adrien had to leave and help Ladybug question Solène, Plagg blurted out that he couldn’t transform.

“I can’t get back in there.” The kwami eyed the ring on Adrien’s finger. “It brings back too many memories.”

Adrien looked at the ring as well. “Are you talking about that nightmare? When I was almost burned alive?”

The kwami flinched, making Adrien feel instantly bad. They hadn’t talked about it, but Adrien knew that nightmare had been affected by Plagg’s memories, not his. So that meant a past Chat had lost his fiancée and then was burned alive, accused of killing her. That was fucked up.

“Yes…” Plagg began to say. He seemed completely crestfallen. Adrien hadn’t seen the kwami like that in a long time. “I’m unstable and I could harm you. I… need some time alone.”

Adrien could just say ‘transform me!’ and make Plagg get in the ring, but he would never do that. He respected Plagg. If the kwami said he needed time, he’d let him be. He just had to tell Ladybug that he couldn’t go.


Plagg nodded and flew out of the open window. Adrien let out a pent up breath, passing a hand through his locks. He wished he could help the kwami, but giving him space was the best he could do at the moment. He just hoped Plagg got better soon.

A few hours later, Ladybug appeared at his flat, a grim expression on her face. Plagg still hadn’t come back from wherever he had gone.

Adrien got up from his stool near the sculpting table. “How did it go?”

Lady slumped on the sofa and a bright light surrounded her as she transformed back. “She doesn’t remember anything. Hawkmoth erased her memory as well,” Mari said. Tikki waved at Adrien before getting inside Marinette’s purse. “But she mentioned something about our college. It could have been someone from there.”

Adrien hummed as he washed his hands in the sink. “You think Hawkmoth can be someone from the university?”

“It’s worth taking a look.” Mari lied down on the sofa and began fiddling with her phone. Tikki reappeared from the girls’ purse, holding a cookie with her small paws.
Adrien walked up to an armchair near the sofa and sat down. He wished they could bring Valentin’s and Solène’s memories back, but doing so would damage their minds and potentially even kill them. It was too risky.

“Oh *mon dieu.*” Mari put a hand over her mouth as she stared at her phone.

“What?” Adrien asked, sitting upright on the armchair.

She didn’t answer, eyes glued to the screen.

“What is it, Marinette?” The blonde couldn’t help the exasperation in his voice.

Mari turned her phone to him. A photo of him and his artist kissing at the New Year’s Eve was on the screen. The headline on the news page read ‘*Chat Noir and Mysterious Girl Share Passionate Kiss on New Year’s Eve*’.

Adrien felt his mouth go dry. That thing he had seen in his peripheral vision had probably been a drone or something.

He quickly went over their alternatives. He couldn’t transform and Marinette had just transformed back. The fastest way to get to the artist was by car. If she was even in her flat.

“Try calling her phone while I get the car,” Adrien said as he grabbed his jacket. He knew from experience how awful reporters and paparazzi could be. They had to be quick. “We need to find her. Now.”

Marinette nodded and rushed to the door along him. “Tikki, c’mon.” She beckoned the kwami, who grabbed her cookie and hid inside Mari’s purse.

Adrien got his car keys from the shelf near the entrance and opened the door.

“Alright, let’s go.” Mari rushed outside and began to go down the stairs, cellphone in hand.

Adrien locked the door and followed after her. Of course everything had to go wrong when he couldn’t transform. He just hoped that they would be able to find the artist before those vultures.

Chapter End Notes

A huge thank you to everyone who donated coffees and made this chapter happen! The new survey results are available on [tumblr](http://tumblr), make sure to check them out if you’re interested! [And here's my ko-fi account!](http://ko-fi.com)

In the next chapter we'll continue where the story left off. See you soon! <3
Rain came back to Paris with full force and brought the merciless cold along with it, as if to accentuate your dull mood. Even if you were inside a classroom, a shiver went down your spine, making you adjust your scarf around your neck to keep any cold air from getting in.

A loud crack of thunder made you look to the large windows of the cinema classroom. In your previous class, you had heard other students, mostly foreign ones, complaining about the weather, which was supposed to stay like this for the whole week. However, you didn't mind the rain. The thunders and constant noise were great to drown out the whispers that seemed to follow you around the university.

You should be used to the gossip by now, since it had been happening to you since the incident with the akumatized teacher and the scandal with Chat, but the whispered words and judging stares still made your skin crawl with annoyance. Sometimes you just wanted to yell at people to mind their own business, but it would only make things worse.

You had been reluctant to come to college thanks to all that, but you were glad that you had come. To a certain degree, at least. The cinema teacher had talked about the midterm exam and the last one, which would be in May. After that, the classes would be over, and you would have two more months before you had to fly back ‘home’. You tried not to think too much about your departure, since it only seemed to worsen your anxiety.

The rest of the morning dragged on. It would have been great if you could’ve used the classes to take your mind off the issue with the rumors, but you didn’t have that luck. Your classmates kept talking between themselves, and the quiet but still audible tone of their voices made you believe that they wanted the words to reach your ears.

“First Chat Noir and now Adrien? I’m actually jealous.”

“She just wants their fame.”

“What a bitch.”

If the whispering students around you weren’t enough, even the teacher seemed to be giving you weird looks now and then. You pretended to be focused on taking notes, but your notebook was filled with messy scribbles.

When the class finally ended, some students were bold enough to approach your desk before you
could bolt out of the classroom.

“Are you really dating Adrien Agreste?” A girl with box braids asked.

“We’re just friends.” You slung your backpack over your shoulder and put your earphones in. If the girl or one of the other students asked something else as you dashed out of the room, the blaring music stopped you from hearing it.

You lightly moved your head to the beat of a song as you waited in line at the resto U. You stared forward, eyes unfocused and fixed on the back of the head of the guy in front of you. If you didn’t look around, you wouldn’t see the stares. You could pretend for a moment that everything was normal.

With your tray in your hands, you gather up your courage and looked around, looking for the usual table you sat on. You froze when you saw Adrien already there with your friends. Maybe it was better if you didn’t sit together anymore. You turned around and began to head to a different table when someone put a hand on your shoulder.

Marinette smiled as she held her own tray with one hand. “Where are you going? C’mon, come sit with us.”

You glanced at her hand on your shoulder. Did she know about the rumors? You weren’t sure if Adrien had told her or if she had heard about them.

You stole glances around you and lowered your voice. “I don’t think it’s a good idea. There are rumors—”

“I know.” Her eyes softened. “But it’s better not to isolate yourself in times like this. You become an easier prey. Trust me, I know.” She began to walk towards the table. “You can sit by my side. C’mon.”

You quietly followed after her. It was the first time you were seeing Mari after discovering about what happened to her boyfriend. It felt like you were bound together by the secret, which was like a curse that now ran through your veins, slowly draining your life force.

You put your tray down on the table and forced yourself to smile despite your anxiety. “Salut.”

Alya, Nino, and Adrien said it back in unison. The blonde furrowed his brows a little when you sat by Marinette’s side and not his. The dark circles under his eyes were accentuated, and you knew it wasn’t due to an akuma attack this time. Yesterday, you had almost made a hole in your sketchbook in your attempt to get rid of your distress by drawing. At some point, Adrien had dragged you to your bed and made you lie down by his side. Even if he was exhausted, he kept humming to you and caressing your skin until you fell asleep, cradled in his chest.

“You okay?” Alya asked, making you tear your eyes away from Adrien.

You lowered your head and picked up your fork. “Yes, I’m fine.”

You were painfully aware of the silence that hung over the table as you ate your lunch. It stretched like a rubber band, and you ate as quickly as you could before it snapped on your hand.

You weren’t quick enough, because Alya blurted out, “I already reported the account that started the rumors.” You looked up, swallowing a mouthful of food, and she continued. “I’m also flooding
Adrien’s hashtag on Twitter with sexy photos of him to distract people.”

“So it’s you!” Adrien gave her an exasperated look. “Are all those accounts yours?”

“No.” Alya grinned. “Nino has a few too.”

Nino mirrored her expression and pushed his glasses up his nose. “The username ‘Agreste hot abs’ was already taken, so I had to add a ‘69’ to the end for it to work.”

Marinette barked out a laugh, and even you chuckled. You hadn’t checked any social media since you found out about the rumors, but now you were tempted to.

Alya nudged Adrien on the side. “It would be great if you posted some photos too. But I already have a ton of material from that one sinful magazine.”

“Don’t remind me of that.” Adrien put a hand over his face. “It’s embarrassing.”

“You should be grateful for those photos. I’m inclined to believe they were what started this.” She made a discreet hand gesture from you to Adrien.

“Oh,” the blonde gave you a coy look.

You hunched over a little. You hoped the loud noises at the resto U made it difficult for other people to hear the conversation. But Alya was right in her statement. It had been thanks to that magazine that you began to see Adrien in a new light.

“He’s aware,” Marinette said with a pointed look at the model. “He didn’t do those poses for nothing.”

You arched one eyebrow at Adrien, but he was busy staring at his plate. Well, that was an interesting new piece of information.

Alya smirked and raised her cup. “That explains a lot.”

Before you could ask more about the magazine, a person approached the table.

“Bonjour!”

Dread filled your stomach when your heard Julien’s voice. It only intensified when he sat by your side and his perfume surrounded you. Your mouth went dry as you glanced at Adrien and saw the blonde narrow his eyes slightly. You knew what would happen if Julien’s perfume touched your skin. You didn’t want to go through that again, not with those rumors going around. All everyone needed for the situation to get out of control was some sort of proof. If someone snapped a photo of you and Adrien in a compromising position, it was over.

“Ça va?” Julien leaned in to give you a cheek kiss, but you leaned backwards until you bumped into Marinette. His eyes widened as everyone on the table stopped to stare at you two.

“I’m sorry,” you rushed to say. “I think I’m catching a cold. I don’t want to get you sick too.”

“Oh, it’s… It’s okay.” He let out an embarrassed chuckle as he leaned back.

You apologized to Mari for the bump before resuming to eat. Your attention, however, wasn’t on the food.

You only waited a few moments to let your heart calm down, before asking Julien in what you
hoped was a convincing nonchalant tone, “How’s Marius?” Since Marius was feigning innocence and refusing to cooperate, you’d have to find different ways to know more about him. Julien was your best bet at the moment.

“He’s ok.” Julien shrugged. “Tired.”

“Oh, really?” You shared a look with Alya across the table. Could it be because of the constant akumas? Hawkmoth would probably be tired, and his minions as well, right?

Julien shifted in his seat. “I mean, he has been working a lot in Gabriel’s company.” He leaned a little on the table to look at Marinette. “We all are, right, Mari? After Gabriel retired, things are crazy there.”

“Does Marius work somewhere else?” Alya leaned forward on the table. She didn’t seem to care about being subtle with her questions. “He used to be a model for Gabriel’s company, right?”

You snapped your head to her, eyebrows high on your forehead. You remembered thinking Marius was a model when you first met him, but you didn’t know it was true. “He’s not a model anymore?”

Julien let out a dry laugh as he looked at the others. “What’s this? An interrogation? I’m not his boyfriend or anything.”

“Thank goodness, otherwise I’d have to put some sense into you.” Mari huffed. “Why don’t we talk about something more interesting and less irritating?” You and Alya shared another look, silently agreeing to retreat for now. Marinette continued, “What about the next party at the Agreste manor?”

“What?” Adrien shot her a confused look.

“We should have a sleepover during the Easter holiday!” Nino grinned.

“Ooo, I like the idea!” Alya high-fived Nino across the table.

“Don’t I have a say in this?” Adrien rolled his eyes, but the small smile on his lips showed the annoyance on his face was nothing more than a façade.

As your friends began to discuss details about the party, Julien let out a relieved sigh, which didn’t go unnoticed by you. You pretended to be interested in the conversation for a moment before turning to the blonde.

“What about Luan?” You asked in a quiet voice, hoping the others wouldn’t hear you. “Have you talked with him yet?”

“Ah, yes.” Julien looked down at the table with a coy smile. “He said he’s waiting for me.”

Your eyes softened. After your last encounter with Julien, you had a suspicion that Marius was the one helping him go to Brazil. You doubted Marius would do that of the goodness of his heart, and if he was involved with Hawkmoth, Julien could be dragged into this mess as well. You didn’t want that for him, but it was his choice to make.

You put a hand on his shoulder, ignoring the feeling of Adrien’s eyes on you. “If you need anyone to talk to, I’m here for you, ok?”

His green eyes widened. “Oh… Okay.”

You smiled as you gave his shoulder a gentle squeeze and got up from the table.
After saying a quick goodbye to everyone, and trying not to stare too much at Adrien, you began to make your way to Mrs. Boucher’s class, earphones in place. Time for another round of gossip.

You tried to pay attention to the guy modeling in front of you and ignore the heavy feeling in your chest. You would just make a few drawings before going home. Marius wasn’t there anyway, so you didn’t have any other reason to stay and be stared at by the red-haired girl and her friends.

The rain seemed to take pity on you, because it intensified, with thunders grumbling every now and then while the storm raged outside. The students were using easels, so you just sat on the ground on the far side of the room, earphones in your ears and sketchbook on your lap. It didn’t matter if your head began to hurt because of the constant music, it was better than the whispered words that you were sure were surrounding you.

Mrs. Boucher had been really helpful by letting you just sit there instead of working on an easel like the others. She didn’t seem to mind that you were just there, existing, and had just reminded you of the contest, saying that the organizers would reveal the theme of this year in two days. You wished your other teachers were as nice as her.

The light of the street lamps already illuminated the streets when you decided to leave. The clock on your phone said afternoon, but the dark sky suggested nighttime.

Holding your umbrella firmly with one hand, you took a deep breath, filling your lungs with the smell of the rain. The streets seemed busier than normal as you made your way to a small grocery shop near your flat. Even if people bumped their umbrellas against yours in their hurry, you didn’t mind. You were happy to be out of the university. Your ears could finally get a break, both from the music and gossip, and you let them take in all the sounds around you.

The street of the grocery shop was filled with other small stores, which were full of people hiding from the rain. Before you walked inside, you saw a beautiful black butterfly land on the door. When you got closer to take a look, it flew away. You tried to watch as it went, but it soon disappeared. You just hoped that the rain wouldn’t kill it.

Your basket made a clinking noise when you put a package in it. Adrien would probably sleep at your place tonight, so you had to buy more food for dinner. As you passed a shelf full of cheese, you smiled and grabbed a piece of Camembert for Plagg.

“Where is she?” You heard a girl scream in the store.

A few gasps and the sound of hurried steps followed. You stopped where you were and listened. An eerie silence fell in the store. You began to walk to the end of the corridor with quiet steps. What is happening?

Someone stopped at the end of the isle, blocking your path. It was obvious that the angry voice you heard belonged to the young woman in front of you.

She looked enraged in her red raincoat and boots. Her hands were balled into fists by her sides, and to finish the look, she was wearing a t-shirt with Adrien’s face on it.

“How dare you!” She screamed. A strong sound wave hit you, making you take a step back. “Adrien is mine!”
Your pulse began to drum in your ears. Of course a fan of Adrien would get akumatized and go after you, it was just your luck. You had to get your pager and call Chat and Ladybug fast. The device was in your coat’s pocket, but you were holding the cheese with one hand and the basket with the other, which meant that there was no way to alert the heroes without attracting the villain’s attention.

“I don’t like Adrien. You can have him.” You shrugged with one shoulder as you gave a step back.

She glanced at your feet and narrowed her eyes. “Liar!” Her hands began to glow yellow. She opened her coat and grabbed a magazine from inside. “You can have these instead!”

You didn’t wait to see what would happen. You dropped everything you were carrying and ran to the entrance.

“Move!” You cried out as you dodged people in the store.

“Get her!” The girl screamed. You could hear many footsteps behind you, but you didn’t dare look back.

When you got outside, you slipped and almost fell as you ran on the slick cobblestone street. With a string of curses leaving your lips, you resumed your running and tried to ignore the way your clothes and backpack were getting soaked under the pouring rain.

“No!” You heard the girl scream along with the sound of something dissolving.

You put a hand in your coat’s pocket and pressed both buttons on the pager. You glanced behind you, trying to see through the heavy rain, but no one seemed to be following you. Your eyes locked on the entrance of a covered passage – some sort of shopping gallery – which was brimming with people. You could lose the villain there.

You made your way inside, pushing past people and saying a bunch of ‘sorrys’ as you ran and tried not to trip on the slippery floor. Your clothes seemed to weigh more, making the effort of running more strenuous. You just hoped your belongings were intact inside your backpack.

It was only when you had walked further into the narrow corridor of the passage and couldn't see the entrance anymore that you allowed yourself to slow down. You looked around, seeing you were in a large room, filled with cafés and a newspaper stand. With your chest heaving from the effort, you passed a hand over your face to get rid of the raindrops.

A hand grabbed your arm.

You screamed, turning around to hit the person. Your wide eyes met with Adrien’s green ones.

“Adrien!” You exclaimed, instantly relaxing.

He smiled. His hair was curiously perfect with all this rain, along with his clothes. It seemed that he had just gotten out of a photo-shoot.

You tried to pull your arm back lightly, but he didn’t bulge. And why wasn't he transformed? Didn’t he see his pager? “Uh, we need to get out of here, there’s an akumatized—”

Your voice died in your throat when you saw another Adrien approaching from the corridor from the right, wearing a tuxedo. Your eyes darted left and you saw another Adrien coming your way, shirtless. You tried to pull your arm back – with force this time – but the Adrien in front of you, dressed in a black leather jacket, tightened his hold and snaked an arm around your waist, pulling you to his chest.
“Let me go!” You tried to push him back, with no results.

A wicked laugh came from one of the corridors. People screamed and began to run away when the sound waves hit them. You looked around, seeing some teenagers filming what was happening, before your eyes stopped on the akumatized girl at the end of a corridor.

“What’s the problem, you filthy slut? Didn’t you want Adrien?” Her hand glowed yellow and the magazines inside her coat shined in the same color. Five more Adriens materialized by her side. “Do whatever you want with her, but make it lewd and public,” she told them.

You felt a chill go down your spine. Had she said that to the other ones as well?

“Have fun! I’m going to find my husband now!” She yelled and turned around, waving a hand in the air. “Bye!”

The new Adriens marched your way, pushing past people as they went. The covered passage erupted in chaos, with people running away and screaming. A man bumped into the Adrien holding you, and he got distracted. You kicked between his legs with force. His face contorted in a silent scream and he released you.

You turned around and ran… Straight into the tuxedo Adrien’s arms.

“Let me go!” The shirtless one caged you from the back. You tried to head-butt him, but he dodged and bit your neck. “Stop!” You cried out in pain, thrashing against their hold. The tuxedo Adrien began to kiss the spot where he had bit you while touching your stomach. “Someone help!”

Some people tried to approach, but the Adriens pushed them back. Others were just staring, some of them with their phones up. Dread went down your throat like acid. No one would help you. Where’s Chat? Ladybug?

“Let her go, you freaks!”

A group of girls threw things at the Adriens holding you. Some of the objects hit the tuxedo one on the back, making him hiss. You gasped in horror as he became a puddle of wet paper on the ground. By his side were various spilled coffee cups.

Without missing a beat, you elbowed the shirtless Adrien on the stomach and began to run. You had to go back outside, to the rain; the fake Adriens wouldn’t be able to follow you there. If what happened to the tuxedo Adrien was any indication, they were made of paper and water was their weakness. However, you were wet at the moment and it did nothing to them. Maybe a lot of water was necessary to make them dissolve.

Before you could get to the corridor, the other Adriens blocked your path. You tried to dodge them, but ended up bumping into a metal stand, making newspapers and magazines fall to the ground. The fake models soon surrounded you, and this time there would be no group of girls to help; the Adriens had kicked everyone out from the covered passage.

One of the Adriens stepped forward, his foot landing on top of a magazine, and he got sucked inside of it. The others stopped, staring at the papers on the ground with wide eyes.

You grabbed a fashion magazine that was near your feet. “You don’t like this?” You showed it to them. The Adriens gave a step back, fear clear in their eyes. Water didn’t seem to frighten them, but the magazines did.

You grabbed a few more magazines with your cold hands. You had to pass by the fake models
without letting them touch or grab you.

“Stay back!” You screamed at them.

The Adriens stared at you, shifting from one foot to the other. One of them glanced at the others and began to walk forward.

“I said, stay back!” You threw one magazine at him and he disappeared. The others took a step back, eyes wide.

Fighting each one of them would take too long. You had to run before the villain came back to check on you.

An idea popped into your mind.

“Kneel,” you said in your most demanding voice. You hoped they hadn’t heard the underlying fear in it. The Adriens just stared at you. You showed them one magazine and they visibly flinched. “I said kneel.” They obeyed. You swallowed dry, not believing this was working. They were really terrified of going back to the magazine.

You began to slowly walk to the side, being careful not to get too close to them. You just had to get away from the circle they had formed around you and then you could run to the rain.

Before you could give another step, you heard footsteps running in your direction.

Chat and Queen Bee appeared from one of the corridors, panting and wet from the rain.

“What on earth…” Bee said as she stared at the kneeling Adriens.

You expected Chat to crack a joke or something, but he only stared at the scene in front of him with wide eyes. You saw blood on his lower lip. He must have fought the villain or her minions to get to you.

The Adriens turned to look at them and began to get up.

“Stay.” You commanded and they bowed their heads. “Don’t get up unless I say so.”

Chat let out a shaky breath, still frozen on the spot. If he weren’t wet from the rain, you would wonder if he was even the real Chat.

Queen Bee glanced at him and rolled her eyes. “Oh for fucks’ sake.” She flew over the Adriens and picked you up. “Are you okay?”

You held onto the magazines as she took you to where Chat was. “Yeah, they’re really afraid of magazines.”

The fake models watched as she landed by Chat’s side and put you down on the ground. They hinted at getting up, but you showed them the magazines again and they bowed their heads.

“See?”

“Afraid of magazines, huh? Sounds like someone I know,” Bee said and then hit Chat on the back of the head.

“Hey!” Chat massaged his head and glared at her. He seemed to finally be free from his weird stupor.
“What are you waiting for? Take her out of here before that crazy girl comes back!” Queen Bee scowled at him. “If you don’t do it, I’ll do it myself.”

“Alright! Calm down!” Chat sent her a nasty look before pushing his wet hair away from his face and walking up to you. Even with the mask covering part of his cheeks, you could see a faint red flush on them as he looked at you. “I’m sorry for taking so long, princess. The villain girl ambushed us.”

“It’s alright, I’m glad you’re okay.” You smiled and then turned to Queen Bee. “Here, take the magazines.”

“What are you fools doing?” The villain’s yells echoed in the gallery. She marched down one corridor, creating more Adriens behind her. Her face had some scratches and her wet coat was torn in some parts. “I can’t find Adrien anywhere and it’s all this bitch’s fault! Get her!”

The other fake models got up and began to run in your direction.

Chat growled before picking you up in his arms. “Hold tight, princess.” You put your arms around his neck as he began to run. He jumped over the fake Adriens and began to head down the other corridor, going to the exit.

“No!” The fangirl screamed, making a sound wave hit everyone near her. The Adriens fell to the ground and even Bee swayed. You looked over Chat’s shoulder and saw as the villain tried to follow after you.

Queen Bee blocked the way, standing in the middle of the corridor in a fight stance. “You’ll have to go through me first, sweetie.”

The girl bared her teeth at her and prepared to scream. A red blur hit her on the back of her legs, making her fall to the ground.

Ladybug’s yoyo went back to her hand and she looked down at the girl. “I’d stay down if I were you.”

Before you could see what would happen, rain hit your cheeks and Chat jumped onto the roof of a building, taking you away from the covered passage.

The sounds of the fight got weaker as the cat hero carried you through the city. You had no idea how he could see where he was going with the storm raging as it was. Cold drops hit your body with force and the icy wind made sure to make them even more freezing. You shivered and tried to hide your face in the crook of Chat’s neck.

The blonde held you closer to his chest. “Don’t worry, chérie, we’re almost there.”

Chat put you down at the entrance of your flat’s building. Your hands were shaking as you opened the metal door and got inside. Chat stood there under the rain, a weird expression on his face.

“Thank—” You put a hand over your mouth and nose as you sneezed hard. A grimace contorted your features when a burning inside your nose followed quickly after.

The blonde’s gaze became worried. “You should take a hot bath and drink something warm.”

You sniffled and looked down, seeing your clothes were dripping water in the expensive entrance
hallway. “Yeah, I need to take off these soaked clothes. Thank you for the help once again, kitty.”

“Don’t worry about it.” He looked away for a moment and his tail switched from side to side. “I, uh, I’ll come back soon.” He then gave you a timid smile and began to run down the street, back to the fight. He almost slipped on the cobblestone-covered ground, much like you had done earlier, and turned around to shoot you an embarrassed grin.

“Be careful!” You exclaimed as he resumed his running, but you weren’t sure if he had heard you with all the noise the storm was making.

Your head pounded as you lay down on your bed in your coziest pajamas. You had followed Chat’s suggestions, and while they had helped, it seemed that the time you spent with your soaked clothes on had taken a toll on your body. You hoped you hadn’t caught a cold.

Thankfully, the things inside your backpack had survived the rain, so you fiddled with your phone in the dark, waiting for Chat to arrive so you could eat dinner together. Thanks to the villain, you hadn’t been able to buy the groceries you needed and would have to order something for you two. However, the cat hero still hadn’t come back even though the news site you were browsing had announced the fight was over.

Your finger froze on your phone’s screen when you saw a photo of you and the leather jacket Adrien on the website. It was from that moment when he had pulled you to his chest. They had cut the other Adriens from the photo, making it seem that the fake Adrien was real, and were using the picture to talk about the rumors about you and the model. You weren’t even surprised. Of course the press would use that to their advantage.

You sniffled, hating how your nose was getting stuffy, and put your phone on the nightstand before pulling the covers over your head, leaving only your face out of your warmth bubble. Alya will have a field day spamming Adrien’s hashtag now. Part of your mind was telling you to create a fake account and help her, but the majority of it just kept repeating over and over how tired you were, so you gave in and closed your eyes. You would rest just for a few minutes.

The bed dipped behind you, dragging you from a weird dream to reality. You gasped and turned around as memories of the fight with the fangirl pushed away the feeble remnants of the dream. Had the villain come to get you again?

Your wide eyes met Adrien’s green ones. His frozen form was barely distinguishable in the dark room, which was illuminated only by the light coming from the corridor.

“It’s me, love,” Adrien rushed to say, his expression turning apologetic. “I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to startle you.”

You just kept staring at him as your heart hammered against your chest. Your mind was still processing what was happening and looking for clues that this Adrien was your Adrien.

“He’s the real one.” Plagg appeared behind the blonde and sat on his shoulder. “Don’t worry.”

At the sight of Plagg, you let a breath through your mouth and lay back down on the bed.

“I’m sorry,” Adrien said in a small voice as he sat down by your side, leaning his back on the wall.
You sniffled and rubbed your nose. “It’s okay, I’m just jumpy after what happened.” Your voice was already beginning to sound nasal. *This is ridiculous.*

Adrien’s face scrunched up in worry. “Are you alright?”

“I’m fine.” You sniffled again as you sat up. You shuffled closer to Adrien and put your head on his shoulder. He leaned his head against yours. “How was the fight?”

Plagg gave Adrien a funny look, which made you even more curious.

“Annoying.” The blonde grabbed your hand and intertwined your fingers with his. “I had never imagined I would have to fight a shirtless me one day.”

“It was pretty weird.” You almost shivered when the memory of the fake Adrians’ touch on your skin came back to you.

“That girl needs serious psychological help.” Plagg flew over to you and sat on your lap. You caressed his head with your free hand. “I think she will stay at the rehab clinic for quite some time.”

You hummed, feeling your eyelids grow heavier. “The rumors are getting worse.” You couldn’t help a yawn from leaving your lips. “They’re sharing a photo of me and one of the fake Adrians together and using it to talk about the rumors.”

Adrien let out a sigh. “I was afraid they would do that. I’ll see what I can do.”

“Would it get much worse if we were open about our relationship?” You caressed Plagg’s head absentmindedly. The kwami yawned and lay down on your lap.

When you had found out Adrien’s identity, you both had agreed to keep the relationship a secret as it would make your lives hell, but what was happening at the moment wasn’t much better.

“I’m afraid so.” Adrien squeezed your hand a little. “I’ve never… dated anyone, so the press wouldn’t leave us alone to try and find out who’s the mysterious girl that finally snatched my heart.” You let out a small chuckle; you could already see the headlines. Adrien continued, “And when they find out you’re the same girl from the Chat Noir scandal…” He trailed off.

“We’re fucked.” You completed the sentence for him. It gave you a weird, happy feeling in your chest knowing that you were Adrien’s first girlfriend. You knew he had other lovers in the past, especially as Chat, but it still made you happy. That happiness came with a price though.

You felt Adrien give a small nod, his head moving against yours. “Paparazzi and reporters won’t leave us alone, and with all these akumas, I’m afraid I won’t be able to be by your side and give you the support you need.” It was your turn to squeeze his hand in silent support. “We can think more about it when you get a job and me and the girls stop Hawkmoth.”

When you get a job. He wasn’t even thinking about the possibility of you not being able to do so. You swallowed dry, feeling the weight of responsibility on your shoulders get heavier.

“That seems like a good plan,” Plagg said in a drowsy voice.

“Marinette found a lead that might take us to Hawkmoth,” Adrien said. He brought your intertwined hands up and kissed your fingers. “We’ll end this soon, so please don’t go after him.”

You removed your head from his shoulder to look at him. “I didn’t—”
“You and Alya were asking about Marius during lunch. You still think he’s involved, don’t you?”
Even in the dimly lit room, you could see the skepticism in Adrien’s eyes.

You sighed, removing your hand from his. “There’s something about him, Adrien. I know you and
Marinette already investigated him, but I think he’s involved somehow.”

“That boy has always been a little weird, always trying to compete with blondie here,” Plagg
motioned to Adrien with his paw.

You scratched the kwami’s ears and heard him purr. “Is it true that he was a model like you,
Adrien?”

The model gave a little nod, as if he didn’t want to encourage you to ask more. “He used to work for
my father’s company, but after the war, he stopped modeling altogether. I don’t know why.”

You yawned and closed your eyes, feeling your last remains of energy evaporating. You would have
to search more about Marius’ modeling career later. Even if Adrien didn’t agree, Marius was the only
clue that you had about Hawkmoth. You had this feeling in your gut that told you they were
connected; you just had to find evidence and then prove it. But you would continue your
investigation another time, because at the moment, Adrien’s body was warm against yours and all
you wanted was to lose yourself in his warmth.

“I brought us dinner,” Adrien said, shuffling on the bed. “It should be cold by now, but we can
reheat it in the microwave.”

You groaned in protest, letting your body go limp against his. You just wanted to sleep. “But I’m so
tired.”

Adrien kissed the top of your head. “I know, love, but you need to eat something.” He grabbed your
hand and got up. “C’mon.”

He gave you a gentle pull, and you let out a long sigh before following him out of bed. Plagg
protested with a huff. It seemed that he also wanted to sleep.

You let Adrien guide you through the dark room. A yelp left your mouth as you tripped on a duffel
bag on the ground.

“Oh, sorry!” Adrien pushed it out of the way with his foot, before resuming to pull on your hand.

You looked back at the bag as you followed him. “Is that yours?”

The blonde nodded. “I brought pajamas and some other stuff since I’m going to sleep here today.”

You sniffled before saying, “You can sleep naked, kitty. I don’t mind.” Your seductive voice didn’t
work so well mixed with the nasal tone, but you were too tired to care.

“Maybe when it’s not so cold.” Adrien looked over his shoulder and winked. “I’ll do it in the
summer.”

You squeezed his hand. “Can’t wait.”

“Guys, the food. Focus.” Plagg flew over your heads, going to the kitchen.

Adrien sighed. “Plagg, stop ruining the mood every damn time.”

The kwami gave him a toothy grin, seeming very pleased with himself. “Why? It’s officially one of
my hobbies now. I should call myself,” Plagg made a dramatic pose in the air. “The mood-breaker.”

You snorted. He was so cute.

Adrien huffed. “I think cheese-destroyer fits you better.”

Plagg’s eyes shined. “Oh, I should add that one to the list as well.”

You laughed at the two, but then grimaced when your throat hurt. It seemed that you were really getting sick.

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Marius’ fingers pressed into the soft skin of your throat. “You should’ve known you wouldn’t be able to stop me.”

You tried to rip his hand away from your neck as you gasped for air, but it was futile. Julien was a few meters away, only watching as Marius choked you. He had a blank look in his eyes, as if nothing out of the ordinary was happening.

“You’re useless,” Marius whispered to you and then pushed you back.

You stumbled, filling your lungs with air again, and turned to run. Your body collided with something hard and large hands gripped your arms, keeping you in place.

Chat Blanc’s lips formed a wicked grin in the darkness. “Hello, chérie.”

His hands glowed purple and your skin began to dissolve. You screamed.

Adrien called your name, urgency lacing his tone. You opened your eyes and blinked a few times, staring at the dark ceiling. A dream. It was a dream. Your chest heaved as you tried to control your breathing. You passed a hand behind your neck, feeling it slick with sweat.

Adrien stroked your arm, his skin cool against yours. “It was just a nightmare. You’re okay.”

He handed you a glass of water, which you downed in a few gulps. It felt like your whole throat was made of sandpaper. You coughed and lay back down on your back.

Adrien put his arm around you. “Was it about Hawkmoth?”

You froze for a moment and then nodded. It had been about Hawkmoth in a way.

Near your head, Plagg sighed in his sleep. The kwami hadn’t been touching you, so the dream had been your subconscious fault. You wished your mind wouldn’t expose your own fears to you in such an aggressive way anymore.

“I’m going to stop him, my love,” Adrien whispered in the darkness, putting his head on your chest. “Don’t worry.”

You shifted a little and hugged him closer, your cheek pressed against his head. You didn’t have the heart to tell him about who you had really dreamed about.

Chapter End Notes
Like I said on twitter, this chapter was supposed to be a part of a bigger chapter, but not only it became a separate one, I also had to cut it into two parts because it had 11k words. That means another chapter is coming next week, yay!

I also got enough coffees to write Chat's POV of Ch. 33 (omg!!!thankyouguysloveyou), but maybe I'll wait a bit to post it since we already had a POV chapter recently.

If there are any mistakes, I'll have to edit them later since I'll be traveling to Rio today by bus. Wish me luck!
Sick Bacchus (Part 2)

Chapter Notes

Hello everyone! Thank you for the kind words about the trip! Everything went well and I got back home safely after watching a samba and a tango show, and also a folkloric Brazilian dance from the northeast region, all in the span of three days. Rio is a beautiful place and it's also full of history.

Anyway, I hope you enjoy the chapter :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You weren’t exactly expecting another akuma attack when you went out to buy art supplies for the contest. You had barely managed to leave your bed, your body taking twice the amount of effort to do even simple tasks, but the theme of the Paris Art Contest would be revealed tomorrow, so you had to be prepared.

You were officially sick, as the fever and tiredness – that seemed to come from deep in your bones – suggested. Adrien had been reluctant to leave you in the state you were in, but you managed to convince him you would be alright. You knew it was a lie, but you couldn’t keep him from taking care of his errands. He’d scold you if he knew you went out, since you had told him you wouldn’t even go to college, so you’d keep it a secret from him.

Your hands were holding more bags than you had anticipated when you left the store. You could never control yourself in art supplies stores. You knew you had to be careful with your money, since the internship only gave you enough for you to survive and the money you had brought with you from your country was already scarce, but it was stronger than you.

When the door of the store closed behind you, a dark butterfly flew away. You furrowed your brows as you watched it go. What was up with all the butterflies?

A flash of lightning made you snap your head up. The sky matched one of the paints you had seen in the store, a dull gray color. The rolling thunder that followed promised that more rain would greet Paris soon. You just hoped you could get home before the storm began.

“Beautiful day, isn’t it?”

With a raised brow, you turned to the side and saw a guy with bright teal colored hair. A microphone with a pop filter in front of it was near his mouth, and when you followed the cords of the device, it connected directly into his neck.

You quickly transferred all the bags you were carrying to one hand and shoved the other hand inside your pocket to press both buttons on your pager.

The man grabbed your arm, making you scream. A camera sprouted from his back and focused on your face. You tried to move, but you couldn’t look away from the camera. People on the street screamed, running away.

“Hello everybody and welcome back to Truth Serum Youtube channel!” The villain exclaimed in a
high-pitched voice. “I’m here with the girl that’s rumored to be dating Adrien Agreste. What’s your name and where are you from?”

The answer came tumbling out of your mouth without your permission. You clasped your mouth shut when it stopped, feeling nauseated.

“Wonderful!” The guy smiled and then narrowed his eyes. “Weren’t you also involved with Chat Noir at some point?” Your head moved up and down. You gritted your teeth. No! Stop!

The villain’s smile grew. “How scandalous.” He rolled his shoulders and his camera got closer to your face. “And now the one million dollar question. Are you dating Adrien Agreste?”

You felt the words forming in your sore throat, demanding to be let free. You bit your bottom lip hard and every muscle in your body grew tense as you refused to obey. But you knew you wouldn’t be able to resist for much longer; your sick body was already getting exhausted from the effort.

“So?” The guy tightened his hold on your arm. “Spill it.”

The Youtuber’s camera got yanked backwards by a yo-yo cord and he screamed in pain, letting go of you. Your vision got blurry as your body relaxed. The bags you were carrying hit the floor, and your knees buckled.

Chat scooped you in his arms before you fell to the ground. “Chérie! Are you okay?” He looked down at you with wide eyes, his frantic pupils searching your face.

“I’m a little dizzy.” You managed to say. Your body didn't seem to have any ounce of energy left in it.

“Stop!” The villain screamed as Ladybug tied him up with her yo-yo cord. “I need to know the truth!”

Chat glared at him and said in a low voice, “The truth is that you’re done for.”

“Do you see this, guys?” The villain said in his microphone. “Chat Noir is trying to stop us from discovering the truth!” A giant scissor sprouted from his shoulder and cut Lady’s yo-yo cord, letting him free.

The Youtuber tried to move the camera to focus on you and Chat, but Queen Bee came flying and kicked him to the ground.

“Oh, an interview? I want in!” She landed and adjusted her hair.

The villain tried to get up, arms trembling. “I don’t want you, stupid insect!”

Queen Bee stepped on top of him, making him drop back to the ground. “Wow, rude.”

Chat gave Ladybug a nod and held you closer to his body. “Hold on, princess.” Gathering a bit of energy, you held his neck in a loose embrace and pressed your face against his chest. He began to run down the street.

“No! You can’t hide her forever, Chat Noir!” You heard the Youtuber scream, but the sound got weaker with each step Chat took.

Your stomach flipped when Chat jumped onto the roof of a building.

“That was close,” you muttered, thinking back at how the villain had appeared out of nowhere.
Maybe you should buy a stun gun or pepper spray to defend yourself.

“What were you doing there?” Chat jumped over a street, and you closed your eyes. Your stomach wasn’t happy with all this moving around. “Didn’t you say you would stay at home?”

You flinched at his serious tone. “I did… But I had to buy some supplies for the art contest.” Your face fell when you remembered the bags you had left behind. “I lost everything I bought.”

Chat jumped again. “You’re more worried about that than your own health?” You kept quiet. You knew he wouldn’t like the answer. He was silent for a moment before saying, “I’ll try and get the bags for you.”

“Thank you,” you said in a small voice and kissed his chest.

Chat stopped at the edge of a building. You recognized the place; it was near your flat. The cat hero seemed to think for a moment.

“Hold tight,” he said.

You tried your best to do as he said and then he was jumping again.

“You can open your eyes now, chérie,” he said after a few moments, his voice laced with amusement.

Your eyes fluttered open. You didn't even realize you had closed them. You looked around, recognizing your surroundings. You were in your flat’s balcony, but why?

“There were people near the entrance of the building.” The blonde explained upon seeing your confused expression.

You stared at the closed window-door. “I can’t open it from here.”

Chat hummed and put you down on the ground with careful movements. He put one arm around your torso. “Can you stand?”

You waited for any indication that your knees would buckle and throw you on the ground again, but it seemed that your body had regained some of its strength. So you nodded, and he let go of you.

Chat grabbed his baton and it transformed into some sort of lock pick. You gaped at him as he kneeled in front of the door.

“Ta-da!” He shot you a smug smile when the window-door opened.

You rubbed your runny nose and frowned as you walked inside. “I thought you had said this lock was better than my old flat’s one.”

“It is better.” Chat shrugged as he followed you and closed the door behind him, keeping the cold wind from entering. “It’s just no match for me.” You rolled your eyes, trying to suppress the smile curling your lips.

You plumped down on your sofa with a relieved sigh and looked back at him, seeing he was still standing near the door. “You’re going back?”

He nodded, passing a hand through his locks. “This attack wasn’t a coincidence. Hawkmoth is watching you, princess.”
You sniffled. “So it seems.” You thought back to the dark butterfly. Maybe that hadn’t been a coincidence as well. “I saw a black butterfly before the villain appeared. It happened in the other attack as well. Doesn’t he use those to akumatize people?”

“Yes… So that’s how he’s doing it,” Chat muttered to himself. “I’ll try to get some info out of that guy. Hawkmoth needs to pay for what he has done to you.” His hands began to glow a bright green and black particles surrounded his fists. “That fucking bastard,” he said in a low voice as he stared at the ground with a scowl.

Images of Chat Blanc flooded your mind as you stared at Chat’s hands. JiYong’s screams rang in your ears as if he was right in front of you.

“Chat,” you said, and he looked up at you. His eyes began to soften when they met yours, but you could still see the rage in them, burning like a powerful fire. You glanced at his hands and said in a quiet voice, “Your hands.”

He looked down and gave a few steps back, almost hitting the door behind him. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath. The glowing got weaker until it vanished completely.

“I’m sorry.” Chat approached you and kissed your forehead. You noticed he had his hands behind his back, away from you.

“You don’t have to apologize for that,” you said, trying to vanquish the memory of Chat Blanc’s power from your mind.

The blonde gave you a small smile before opening the window-door and stepping outside. “You should rest, chérie.”

After taking a cold medicine and lying down in your warm bed with the heater on, you sent Alya a message.

You: I think black butterflies are spies of Hawkmoth, not just akumas

You began to put your phone down when it vibrated. You looked at the screen and saw Alya had already answered. That was fast.

Alya: really? why?

You: two villains attacked me after I saw the butterflies these past days

Your phone rang while you were typing, startling you. The name on the screen showed it was Alya calling. You sniffled, trying to breathe through your stuffy nose for the umpteenth time, and took the call.

“Allô?”

“Did the villains specifically go after you?” Alya asked.

“Yeah. Both of them had some connection with the rumors about me and Adrien.” Your voice cracked a little and you cleared your throat. “This one was trying to make me admit we were together.”

“Why would Hawkmoth want your relationship to be public?” Before you could give her an answer,
she continued. “Wait. Does Chat know you and Adrien are dating? Because if he doesn’t, Hawkmoth can use that—”

“He knows!” You rushed to say and then continued in a quieter voice. “Chat knows.” You didn’t want Alya to think that you were cheating on Chat with Adrien. You didn’t want her to think you were that type of person.

“Oh.” She was silent for a moment, and then you heard her laugh through the speaker. “Adrien and Chat Noir, huh? I never knew Adrien was into polyamory stuff.”

You forced out a weak laugh. “Yeah…”

“Well, if the word gets out, you’re screwed,” Alya said. “And I guess Chat will be worried. It makes sense.”

You sighed and turned to lie on your back. “I know.” Maybe that’s what Hawkmoth wanted, to affect Chat through you.

“Be careful, ok? I have to go now. I’ll try to search more about this villain and also look into this butterfly stuff. Maybe we can use it to our advantage.” Her voice got breathier, like she was walking somewhere. “I’ll keep you updated. À plus!”

“Good luck! À plus!” The call ended, but your words seemed to linger, leaving a bitter taste in your mouth. You wished you could go out with Alya and investigate, but you would probably end up being targeted by the villain again. All you could do was wait, and your sick and feverish body suggested that sleeping was also a great option.

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You tapped your hands on the kitchen counter as you waited for the water to boil. You closed your eyes, hoping that it would alleviate the heaviness in your head a little. Your body was begging you to lie down and sleep again, but the raised voices coming from your living room made you ignore its pleas.

After defeating the akumatized villain, Adrien and the girls had come back to your flat to have an emergency meeting. Thankfully, they had been able to bring back your bags with the art supplies, so you wouldn’t have to buy everything again. You should be feeling ecstatic, but concern was taking over your mind. Adrien hadn’t talked much since he had arrived and would avert his eyes every time you made eye contact with him. It made you think that something must have happened during the fight. You just had to find out what.

“Someone needs to stay by her side.” You heard Mari say. “The akumatized people are only going after her now. She was targeted before, but not like this.”

You had already told them you had ordered a stun gun online, but apparently that wasn’t enough.

“I said I can do it,” Adrien said in an agitated tone.

Mari didn’t seem to agree. “If you do, the rumors will get out of control.”

“Why don’t you guys just admit that you’re together?” Chloé asked.

“It’s not that simple, Chloé,” Adrien answered. “With all this happening, we can’t afford to deal with a scandal. You saw what that crazy fan did.”
Silence filled your apartment, being disturbed only by the water boiling inside the electric kettle. You turned it off and poured the hot water into three bowls. You didn’t have coffee, so tea would have to do. You would get one for you as well, but your body was already feeling too hot and feverish as it was.

“We can take turns to stay with her,” Mari was saying as you carried a tray with the bowls to the living room. The top of the Eiffel Tower glowed against the dark sky in the distance.

They all turned to look at you. Adrien got up quickly and took the tray from your hands. “You could’ve asked me to help you.” It didn’t go unnoticed to you how he refused to look you in the eyes.

You watched as he put the tray on the coffee table. “You don’t have to worry so much, Adrien.” He didn’t answer and just grabbed one bowl before sitting on the sofa again.

“How are you feeling?” Marinette asked as she grabbed two bowls and gave one to Chloé. The blonde thanked her, and Mari sat back down on an armchair.

“I think my cold is getting worse,” you sat on the sofa by Adrien’s side. “But I already took some medicine, so let’s hope it helps.”

“I hope you get better soon.” Mari smiled. “Oh, and thank you for the bowls. Most foreigners think it’s weird.”

You smiled back. “No problem.” Drinking tea and coffee from bowls instead of cups was a French costume you had learned about recently after spending time with Adrien in his flat. It had seemed odd at first, but you grew fond of it.

“Is this plate for us?” Tikki asked, pointing at the tray. There was a plate filled with cheese, cookies, and small croissants for the kwamis. When you nodded, Tikki beamed and flew to the tray. “Oh, merci! You didn’t have to.”

“Merci beaucoup, mademoiselle.” Pollen gave you a little bow and followed after Tikki.

Plagg rubbed his face against your cheek, making you chuckle, before going to the plate as well.

Silence fell in the room as the heroes drank their teas and the kwami enjoyed their treats. You looked at Adrien, watching as he tilted his bowl, almost hiding his face in it. He didn’t seem to have any bruises or scratches from the fight this time, or maybe you just couldn’t see them. As if sensing your gaze, he looked at you and made eye contact for a fleeting moment before looking away.

You blew a pent-up breath through your mouth. “Alright, what happened in that fight?”

Marinette and Chloé shared a look while the kwamis did the same. All of them were smiling as if they shared a secret between them, which you were pretty sure they did. All you knew is that you wanted in.

Adrien was eagerly drinking his tea, as if pretending he didn’t hear your question.

“Well?” You asked.

Mari looked at Adrien and tilted her head. “Do you want us to tell her, or…?”

Before Adrien could say anything, Chloé leaned forward on her armchair and put her bowl down on the coffee table. “Alright, let’s get this over with.” Her eyes were glimmering with mischief as she
looked at you. “The Youtuber guy got Chat with his camera and told him to share a deep secret, and cat boy over there blurted out that he wished his chérie was rougher with him.”

“Oh.” Your eyebrows shot up.

“In bed,” Plagg said as he ate a piece of cheese. “You forgot about that part.”

Tikki shook her head. “You’re the worst, Plagg.”

“I see…” You glanced at Adrien, feeling butterflies flutter in your stomach. He was staring down at his tea as a flush crept across his cheeks. You tried not to smile, but the grin on your face didn’t want to cooperate. You put a hand on the model’s thigh. “You don’t have to be embarrassed because of that, kitty. At least you didn’t share your secret identity, right?”

“Right,” he said through gritted teeth. “Anyway, can we go back to the other discussion?”

“His face is so red.” Chloé cackled, throwing her head back. “Why didn’t you tell me about this, Marinette? I would’ve come back to Paris earlier just to witness it.” Mari put a hand over her mouth, her face reddening from the effort of trying not to laugh.

“This is nothing,” Plagg said. “You should’ve seen him when they met.”

“Guys,” Adrien warned.

“I thought it was cute.” Tikki gave a small shrug.

“Did he embarrass himself?” Pollen asked, a curious look in her eyes. The other two kwamis nodded, huge grins on their faces.

“You have no idea.” Plagg chuckled. “There was one time when he—”

“Bon dieu!” Adrien groaned and passed a hand over his face. “Can we please focus?”

“Aw, I wanted to know more.” You pouted. He gave you a serious look, which didn’t work too well with his cheeks flushed as they were. You chuckled and patted his thigh; you would talk more about Chat’s deep secret later. “Alright, sorry.”

The model sighed and put his empty bowl on the coffee table. “This is the second akuma attack in a row where the akumatized person went after you and tried to make the rumors about us grow somehow.” You nodded to show him you were paying attention. He continued, “We’re thinking about one of us keeping you company from now on.” He glanced at the girls. “Mari thinks it’s better if we aren’t seen together, so she or Chloé will take turns to go out with you when you need it.”

“And I’ll keep doing patrols around your flat when Adrien isn’t around.” Chloé smiled, the mirth from moments ago still present in her eyes.

“Alright.” You twisted your hands on your lap. They would be like your bodyguards, which meant they’d have to stop doing their own things to take care of you. “I’m sorry for being such a nuisance.”

“Don’t say that.” Adrien grabbed one of your hands in his. “You’re not a nuisance.” You tried to huff, but your clogged nose made it difficult.

“We don’t mind, right, Chloé?” Mari looked at the blonde, who nodded in response.

“I came back to Paris to help with what I could. Protecting you will be easy for us, don’t worry.” She winked.
You looked down at your lap and stroked Adrien’s hand absentmindedly. It was during times like these that you wished you had some sort of superpower. If you had, you’d be able to protect yourself and also help the miraculous heroes. But that wasn’t possible.

“Do you think Hawkmoth knows you two are dating?” Marinette asked Adrien.

Adrien shrugged with one shoulder. “If he has been spying on us, it’s possible.”

“But why would he want your relationship to be public?” It was Chloé’s turn to ask.

Adrien glanced at you and caressed your hand with his thumb. “Maybe for the same reasons we don’t want it to be.”

“To make our lives a living hell.” You slumped on the sofa. You didn’t even want to imagine how that would be, but you already had an idea from your previous talk with Adrien about the subject.

“It makes sense. You would be stressed and Chat would get distracted because of that.” Mari stared at her bowl, deep in thought. “Maybe that’s what he wants. To distract us. Maybe he knows we found out about that warehouse.”

That instantly piqued your curiosity. “Ware—” You covered your mouth and nose with your hand and sneezed.

Adrien put a hand on your forehead. “You’re burning up. When did you take a cold medicine?”

“A few hours back.” You sniffled and leaned away from his hand before turning to Marinette. “You found a warehouse?”

Adrien sent Mari a pointed look. “We should discuss this later.”

You scowled at him and pulled your hand away from his. “Don’t you dare! I’m involved in this, I deserve to know.”

“I agree,” Plagg said before he scarfed down a piece of cheese.

Adrien ignored the kwami. “I know you will try to investigate it, chérie, and I can’t let that happen.”

You rolled your eyes. “It’s not like I’m going to go there after him, Adrien. Can’t I know more about the person who’s targeting me and my friends? And not to mention the person I love?”

Mari put a hand up before the argument could escalate further. “If I remember well, Adrien, you used to get mad at me a few years back when I didn’t tell you much about the miraculous or master Fu.”

The model narrowed his eyes. “This is different.”

Marinette stared at him with a neutral expression. “No, Adrien, it isn’t. As your partner, she’s now a part of our world, even if you want to protect her from it.”

The two stared at each other in silence for a moment, none of them backing down. Chloé grabbed her bowl from the coffee table and slowly sipped her tea, sharing funny looks with Pollen.

Adrien then glanced at you and sighed, shifting on the sofa. “Fine.”

Mari gave him a satisfied smile before turning to you. “We suspect that Hawkmoth has some sort of involvement with our college and we’ve been investigating the place for months now. A few days back, we heard some of the staff talking about a deal that would be made at a warehouse in Pantin, a
“And we’re going there to check what this is all about.” Chloé shrugged. “That’s it.”

“Hawkmoth used warehouses in the past to aid his robberies.” Tikki flew to Marinette’s shoulder, carrying the last cookie from the plate. “We think that maybe he’s planning a big robbery like last time and that’s why he’s trying to distract us.”

“Yeah, that’s the gist of it.” Mari got up and stretched. She looked to the window-door. “And talking about plans, we should be going before the storm begins again. We still have to do some patrols.”

You watched as the girls transformed and got ready to leave. Adrien had silently gathered all the bowls and the tray and took them to the kitchen. He still hadn’t come back.

“Don’t worry about that grumpy fool, he’s just worried.” Ladybug smiled and gave you a cheek kiss.

“And embarrassed.” Queen Bee snickered. Lady gave her a small jab in the ribs, and the blonde scowled at her. “Ouch, Bug!”

“Thank you for telling me about the warehouse.” You smiled.

“No problem.” Lady smiled back. She opened the window-door, letting the merciless cold in, and stepped outside. “Get well soon!” She then glanced at your clothes and grinned. “I love your scarf.”

You looked down, touching the piece of clothing. You were so cold earlier that you had decided to use the scarf inside the apartment. “Oh, it’s the one you—” When you looked up, Lady was already gone.

Queen Bee glanced at the scarf and rolled her eyes. “I bet she made it. The narcissist.” She blew you a kiss. “Get well soon, sweetie. Good luck.”

You quickly closed the door when the blonde left as well. You shivered from head to toe and sneezed a few times. Maybe you should drink something warm and take more medicine.

You turned around and saw Adrien standing in the middle of the room, a steaming mug in his hands. You could smell the scent of honey coming from it.

“Here,” he extended the mug to you.

You took it from him with a smile. “Thank you, Adrien.” He only nodded and went back to the kitchen. You followed after him and saw Plagg sitting on the counter, focused on licking his paw.

You perched yourself on the edge of the table in the middle of the room. “Marinette gave you a scarf at the party last year too, right?”

“Yeah,” Adrien said as he began to wash the dishes.

“What did she say to you?” You sipped your tea and hummed in contentment when you felt it warm up your body.

Adrien’s hand stopped in mid-air for a moment, before he continued to clean a plate. “She said I’d find a use for it.”

You licked your lips. “And have you?”

He glanced at you, and you could swear you saw a dust of red on his cheeks. “Not yet.”
You hummed, taking another sip of tea. He wasn’t even responding to your teasing. That wasn’t good. He seemed really upset about the whole Hawkmoth thing.

You sniffled and tried to concentrate, fighting the urge to close your eyes and give in to the tiredness that began to take over your body. “So you want me to be rougher with you in bed, huh?”

Adrien almost dropped a bowl in the sink. You heard Plagg snicker. The blonde turned to glare at the kwami.

You shrugged and took a sip from the tea. “You could’ve just asked.”

Adrien let out a long sigh. “Please just forget about that. It was just Chat talking.”

You looked at Plagg and the kwami shot you an enigmatic grin. “Is that so?” You had a hunch there was more to it than just that.

“Yes.” Adrien washed the last bowl and put it to dry on the dish rack.

You yawned and felt tears well up in your eyes. “Are you upset about me asking about Hawkmoth?”

Adrien dried his hands on a dishcloth and finally turned around to face you. He leaned back on the counter and crossed his arms. You tried not to stare at his biceps but failed. “Marinette is right, you have the right to know. Just…” He slowly pushed his hair back with a sigh. “Just please don’t do anything reckless.”

You gave him what you hoped was a reassuring smile. “I won’t.”

Something clattered against the kitchen floor, making you and Adrien jump. You both turned to look at Plagg, who was frozen, his paw stretched out in a compromising position.

“Plagg! What are you doing?” Adrien demanded as he marched to the fallen plastic cup and put it back on the counter.

The kwami scratched the back of his head and gave him a coy smile. “Sorry, it’s stronger than me.”

You felt a laugh bubble from your throat and then you were laughing so hard your stomach began to hurt. A coughing fit interrupted you, and you downed the rest of the tea to stop the itchiness in your throat. You took a deep breath, chuckles still leaving your mouth, and your eyes met Adrien’s. He was staring at you with hooded eyes, a warm smile curling his lips.

You tilted your head and smiled back at him, noticing your eyelids felt heavier than normal. It was so early, and yet you were already exhausted. Stupid cold.

Adrien shook his head and took the empty mug from your hands. He put it on the counter and extended his hand to you. “C’mon, chérie, you should rest.”

You didn’t try to argue with him and put your hand in his.

After you took another cold medicine and lay on the bed, Adrien sat by your side and put his forehead against your feverish one.

“I’m sorry. You’re like this because of me,” he whispered.

You sniffled and tried your best not to cough. “It’s just a cold, model boy. I’m fine.”

“But I am still sorry.” He leaned in and gave you a chaste kiss on your lips.
You turned your face away a little. “I don't want to get you sick.”

“I have a strong immune system, love.” He touched your chin, making you face him again, and kissed you. You slid your hand around the nape of his neck and combed your fingers into his hair to pull him closer. A small moan left his lips and he disentangled himself from your grasp.

“I…” He swallowed, his breath a little ragged. “I need to take a shower. I'll be right back.”

He kissed your forehead before leaving the room. You watched with half-lidded eyes as he went, disappointed that you wouldn't be able to smell his perfume with your clogged nose.

“What a day.” Plagg landed on your pillow, turned around in circles a few times, and lay down with a sigh. You yawned and saw the kwami mimic you.

“Do you think they’ll be able to stop Hawkmoth soon?” You murmured in the dark, your voice coated with sleep.

“I hope so,” Plagg answered, his eyes already closed.

You hummed and closed your eyes as well. You tried to wait for Adrien to come back from his shower, but he was taking longer than he usually did, so you just let the waves of sleep take over your tired mind and hoped that your dreams would be lenient with you this time.

Chapter End Notes

For my smut-lover readers, a quite heated chapter should be coming soon ;) I'm thinking about changing the rate of the fic from mature to explicit. What do you guys think? It shouldn't change too much, but it'll make my life a little easier with describing things.

I'm already working on the next chapter. Hopefully I can share it with you guys before December begins ;)

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!