I could just eat you up (but not literally)

by orphan_account

Summary

Hannibal breeds Will. A love story in bodily fluids.

Notes

This is just porn. Porn, porn, porn, porn, porn. Utterly shameless, cliché porn of the lowest calibre. I hope you get off on it, you pervy sick-os!

Also, I’m aware that I didn’t use the term “dowry” in exactly the right way. It probably would have made more sense to call it an “omega-price” (bride-price) but roll with it, ok? Ok.
There are a few keenly interesting things about Will Graham.

For one, he is the most fidgety person Hannibal has ever met. If he has a drinking straw, he’ll chew it. He nibbles his cuticles until they bleed. He shreds his paper napkins, picks at loose threads from his sweaters. Hannibal suspects he does this so he has something to focus on rather than other people’s faces: a simple defence mechanism to avoid engaging others on a deeper emotional level.

Another thing is that Will has “abnormal empathetic insightfulness”, as Jack so eloquently puts it, which rules out a possible autistic-spectrum diagnosis. To work as a forensic profiler with the FBI at such a young age is practically unheard of; Will has already helped to solve a number of high-profile cases in his short time with the BAU (except of course, the case that matters most), and doesn’t Jack enjoy toting him around like a well-trained puppy that can perform a particularly cute little trick.

Most interesting thing of all, however, is that Will Graham is an omega.

Hannibal had concluded this shortly after his first few meetings with the young, fresh-faced detective. Specifically, Will is an unmated omega masquerading as a beta in order to stay employed with the FBI. Hannibal is nothing if not a connoisseur of human behaviour, and although Will doesn’t quite smell like an omega, he certainly acts like one, lacking the natural self-assuredness of his alpha and beta counterparts. Like Will, most omegas are quiet to the point of withdrawn, yet are reliant upon others for emotional support: classic Cluster C behaviour. What really tipped Hannibal off, however, was the way that Will always avoided eye contact with him. Omegas are thought to do this with foreign alphas out of instinctual deference. When he does make eye contact, it seems forced, unnatural, as though he’s constantly reminding himself to act more "beta".

Hannibal is sure Jack knows, simply by the way Jack obsessively shadows him around every crime scene like a protective mother hen – reluctant, perhaps, to let him be alone with other alphas. It had been Jack’s idea for Will to visit Hannibal’s practice, in the hopes of sorting out whatever neuroses that are bound to arise from working with the BAU. In that time, Hannibal found himself becoming more and more attracted to the omega; he had sensed that there was something different about him from the start. To avoid raising eyebrows, Hannibal had extended his dinner invitation to both of them, but was both pleased and uncharacteristically caught off guard when Jack cancelled at the very last minute. So, when Will showed up on his doorstep, alone, beautiful and lost, with a bottle of mid-priced pinot noir, Hannibal’s predatory instinct went into overdrive.

The thing is, Hannibal is not just an alpha. He’s a thoroughbred alpha: homozygous for the alpha allele. It’s quite rare, but it endows him with certain advantages over heterozygous alphas. For one, his sense of smell is sharper: up close, he can detect Will’s fresh, clean omega scent through the rancid beta musk. He packs on muscle easily. He has more haemoglobin in his blood stream, delivering twice the oxygen to his muscles and granting him almost inhuman endurance. He has better lung capacity and his heart pumps more blood per beat than an average man’s. In short, Hannibal is built to fight off the competing claims of rival alphas. Any omega who could have him as a mate would consider him or herself quite fortunate, indeed.

It’s not just that Will is an omega, either. It’s not even that Will happens to be an especially lovely omega, although that certainly doesn’t detract from his appeal. Mainly, Hannibal thinks, it’s because they must be compatible mates: perfect complements to each other emotionally, physically, genetically. And Hannibal would know that’s not something one comes across every
day; he’s already had more than a few omegas offer themselves up to him in the hopes of being pair-bonded, and who could blame them? Hannibal’s a thoroughbred with money and status to boot. Strong and vital, he’s sure to sire healthy, genetically fit children. He could afford any omega he desired.

The only omega he wants, however, is Will.

Will hides his status well enough to pass, Hannibal supposes, by masking his natural scent under layers of pheromone blocking deodorants and synthetic beta scent. No way would an unclaimed omega be able to work with the FBI; those alphas would have eaten him alive if they could properly scent him. Hannibal’s superior sense of smell, however, was not so easily deceived. Strange - seeking work in the outside world is not characteristic omega behaviour; most are content to busy themselves solely with house and hearth. The world can be a hostile place for an omega without an alpha at his or her side, particularly when that omega is as lovely as Will.

He’d have to be very talented for Jack to go through all the trouble to hide his true identity like this.

“Good?”

“Yeah, good. Really good. Delicious.” Will says, rushing to swallow so he wouldn’t speak with his mouth full. “This really is too much....You shouldn’t have gone through all this trouble for only me, Dr. Lecter.”

“Not at all, Will. Your promotion to the special investigations unit is a worthy celebration. Shame Jack could not make it, but it’s probably for the best. I thought it only proper for us to have to get to know each other since we will be working together so intimately.” Will shifts in his seat and smiles weakly, as though he knows he’s entered in the lion’s den but is too committed to the farce to be able to back out now. “And please, no need for formalities. We’re friends here, yes? Just Hannibal is fine.”

“Hannibal.” Will repeats, testing the sound of it across his tongue. “Such a strange name.....but you must get that a lot.”

Sweet, neurotic Will: his leg trembles restlessly under the table with pent-up, nervous energy, particularly when he says or does something he thinks he shouldn’t have. Always fidgety – but then, that might just be a by-product of the suppressant medication. His body must be craving the catharsis only a proper heat will bring. Hannibal suspects he channels his repressed urges into obsessive-compulsive and somatic outlets. Pity. Having an alpha to rut and gentle him would do wonders for his anxiety disorder. Without the natural release that estrus cycles provide, Will’s body would no doubt go into a full-blown heat at the slightest provocation. It would only take one small crack for the dam to burst.......  

“I prefer to think of it as distinctive.” Hannibal says, cutting into his lacquered duck breast briskly, deigning to play along with this trite, genteel dinner party small talk for now. There certainly are other sounds he’d prefer to be hearing Will make.

“Why would your parents name you that? I mean,” Will pauses, unsure of how to continue. It’s charming, the way Will is naturally afraid of offending him: omegas have evolved to want to please alphas since they have little means of defending themselves should the alpha choose to attack. When he continues speaking again, it’s in a softer, more supplicating tone. “I mean, it’s just unusual is all.”

Hannibal sits back in his chair languidly and places his napkin on his cleared plate. “What do you
know of Carthage?"

Will fiddles with own napkin, anxious of giving the wrong answer. “Oh. Um, Hannibal, the
general? Didn’t he cross the Alps with a bunch of elephants or something?”

“Yes, very good. I was named after him. One of the greatest military commanders of all time.”
Hannibal says. “He came so close to defeating the Roman Republic in the second Punic war – so
close to wiping its existence off the face of the earth. Do you know what would have happened had
he succeeded?”

Will shakes his head. His curls bounce a little with the movement and Hannibal pictures how they
would look splayed across his pillow.

“Imagine a world without Rome’s legacy, without the legal, infrastructural, political and
geographic foundations that Rome laid down. Without Rome, there would have been nothing for
Christianity to cling to in its infancy. There would have been no collapse, no barbarian invasions.
No Dark Ages, no Renaissance. The Western world might never have existed at all.”

It’s quiet for a minute as Will considers this. “Huh. I never thought of that.”

There is a long silence and Will squirms in his chair, clearly uncomfortable. He pushes his food
around on his plate, tracing small designs in the sauce.

Once the silence becomes intolerable for him, he says, “My name’s pretty plain, but I guess I have
kind of a strange middle name: Shannon. Like the river in Ireland. People in America use it as a
girl’s name but, uh, it’s actually unisex.” He winces slightly, like he wishes he’d thought of
something better to say. Hannibal has noted before that Will finds it hard to carry a one-on-one
conversation without having Jack present to act as a buffer.

“William Shannon Graham.” Hannibal says thoughtfully, although he already knew this from
reading Will’s file - but then again, his file also lists him as a beta. “It suits you.” He adds a hint of
warmth to his voice, just to see how Will will react, and is pleased when the corners of Will’s lips
tug up in a small smile.

“Yeah you too,” Will says, then takes another bite of his duck breast. He clarifies: “I mean, your
name suits you. Not many guys could pull it off. Hannibal. Dr. Hannibal Lecter.” His leg jitters
under the table and he makes a self-conscious chuckling sound. It’s rather enchanting, the way
Will rambles nervously to fill the silence. He must feel the way he looks – distinctly out of place
among Hannibal’s fine things: the aged leather-bound books, porcelain cabinet, belle époque
antiques. Unkempt and fragile as he is, Will Graham is to become Hannibal’s most valuable
 treasure.

“Do I frighten you, Will?” Hannibal inquires politely, like he doesn’t already know the answer.
Most omegas find Hannibal’s natural alpha-scent rather intimidating, more so when they’re
unmated.

“No,” Will unconsciously picks at a nail, and Hannibal raises his chin slightly in a subtle act of
dominance, seeing through the lie. Will revises: “Well.....yes, a little. But you have quite the
reputation at the BAU. I mean, the guys on the force all talk about you. They say you’re the most
brilliant forensic psychologist on the East coast. It just a little....nerve-wracking is all, to work with
someone like you.”

Hannibal waves his hand flippantly, although he already knew this. “I hear about you as well.”
Will looks up hopefully. “You do?”

“Yes. I know you closed the angel-maker case. Very impressive, for one of your age.”

Will blushes shyly. Responsive to praise, yet modest. Perfect.

“I wish we could have brought him to trial, though. Bastard killed himself before we had the pleasure.” He sighs. “Well, the important thing is that that psycho is off the streets.”

“Would you care for dessert?” Hannibal rises, taking his and Will’s plate.

“Yeah, that sounds great – um, do you need any help?” This must make him uncomfortable, as an omega, to have an alpha clear the table for him. Soon enough, Hannibal will let him assume his natural role: Will will do the dishes for them after Hannibal’s prepared their meal, will make sure Hannibal’s suits are all dry cleaned and pressed for the upcoming work week, will scrub Hannibal’s kitchen floor on his hands and knees, rump in the air. The thought alone sends an unexpected pulse of heat down Hannibal’s spine.

But for now, Hannibal shakes his head and gestures with his hand as Will makes to rise. “No please. Sit. Relax, finish your wine. You’re my guest, Will.”

Will obeys reluctantly and sits back down in his chair. He takes a larger than normal swig from his wine glass.

One thing Hannibal has come to appreciate about Will is his sincerity, particularly in regards to his compliments. He could not be deceiving if he tried, which is why Hannibal takes it at face-value when he takes a bite of his salted caramel crème brûlée and exclaims, “God, that’s amazing. That might be the best dessert I’ve ever had. I would have never guessed you were so good at cooking,” he takes another bite, “Well, except for the fact that your dinner parties are all anyone talks about.”

“Fine food is among life’s greatest pleasures,” Hannibal says. “Among other things.”

“Well you’re certainly talented. I can barely boil an egg,” Will says, taking another bite and making a tempting little mmm sound out of sheer pleasure. Hannibal watches as a tiny bit of the dessert dribbles down his lip and is promptly licked away with a smooth swipe of Will’s pink-slick tongue. Hannibal swears Will will be his undoing.

After supper, Will insists that he help Hannibal with the dishes, and Hannibal relents, if only to watch Will scour the dirty pots, forearms-deep in soapy water. He’s passing the scrubbed plates to Hannibal one by one and rambling idly about life with the BAU, about Jack, about his insomnia, about his parents, anything and everything. He still thrums with nervous energy, but at least having something to do - something within his natural comfort zone – is helping him open up somewhat. Hannibal listens patiently, taking each plate from Will in turn with his dish towel to dry.

Will is halfway through recounting the last time he’d sleepwalked and awoken in a nearby farmer’s field when one of Hannibal’s fine porcelain plates slips from his soapy hands, shattering on the hard kitchen tile.

Will freezes mid-sentence, eyes wide in instinctual fear. “Oh God, sorry! Shit. I’m so sorry, it just slipped.....” He crouches down on the floor and tries to gather the larger shards. “I’m such a klutz.....”

“It’s alright.”

“Fuck, I’m so sorry....I could replace it, or something. I....or was it part of a set?”
He scrambles to collect all the pieces, even the smallest slivers, as if he could undo the damage by the sheer speed with which he clears away the evidence.

It’s only then that the significance of their respective positions becomes apparent: Will kneeling on the floor, Hannibal standing over him. The urge to approach him hits Hannibal hard in the chest, and he does so, cautiously, as though Will were a wild mare that needed breaking in. He has to be patient lest he prompt a startle response in the omega: Will is programmed to flee at the barest hint of a threat, and although Hannibal’s undoubtedly physically stronger, Will is probably much, much faster.

Carefully, carefully.....

“Easy, easy now,” Hannibal’s not sure if he says it aloud or just thinks it. Will is as flighty and skittish as a newborn fawn; Hannibal is mindful of the fact that one wrong move and he’d run. Oddly, that just made Hannibal want to keep him here, warm and safe under Hannibal’s protection, all the more.

There’s my good boy.

It feels like a huge accomplishment when Hannibal finally brings his hand to rest on Will’s soft curls, even though Hannibal’s barely made three steps towards him. Will immediately stills. For one tense moment, Hannibal thinks Will will bolt, but instead he exhales, leaning into the caress until his forehead is resting flush against Hannibal’s strong thigh. Hannibal pushes a little further and slides his fingertips just under Will’s shirt collar to caress the downy skin on the back of his neck. Will lets out another breathy sigh. He likes this, kneeling at Hannibal’s feet. It is, after all, an omegan modal action pattern, a display of complete surrender and trust. If Will’s status wasn’t obvious before, it certainly is now.

This close, Will’s scent is salient enough that Hannibal can practically taste it. Underneath that repulsive synthetic beta scent, Will smells fresh, clean, untainted by the musk of a rival alpha, as pure and immaculate as freshly fallen snow. Showy as it may be, the primal urge to dirty Will with his own scent so that all the other alphas would know this one was his bubbles fervently in Hannibal’s chest. Will may not acknowledge it, my resist it, may try to mask it under chemical camouflage, but deep down he craves the authoritative dominance of an alpha-mate like every other of his kind. And Hannibal will be the one to cater to this need.

Will takes a shaky breath in, scenting Hannibal in return and unconsciously clinging to his pant legs. Hannibal holds very still to allow him access. Hannibal himself is not unaffected; the arousal he’d been feeling all evening prickles inexorably underneath his skin as Will performs this enticing little display of submission. Hannibal hadn’t intended on making his proposal tonight, but his restraint is beginning to fray - he’s already shown far more restraint than most alphas in his position. In a moment of uncharacteristic impulsiveness, Hannibal decides that this will happen tonight. This will happen now.

Hannibal tilts Will’s face upwards with a finger under his chin and leans down, taking care not to startle his skittish omega. He just needs one kiss. One kiss and the floodgates will be opened.......

“Wait, Dr. Lecter,” Will says breathlessly, cheeks flushed, breaking the silence. He starts as though he’s just awoken from a hypnotic reverie. “Wait, I can’t do this.....we shouldn’t –“

Hannibal pulls back.

“You knew, didn’t you.” Will states, his shoulders slumping. “You knew before I got here.”
“For some time, yes.”

“Was it that obvious?”

“I would not be much of a cognitive-behavioural therapist if I could not tell an omega from a beta.”

“Please don’t tell anyone what I am,” Will says softly, looking at some faraway spot on the floor. He doesn’t move to stand up. “If the guys at the bureau knew......”

Whether he would like to keep his secret is moot; he’ll be pregnant soon enough, probably even from this upcoming heat cycle. He needn’t worry - Hannibal will kill anyone who dares to touch him.

“You’ve suppressed too many of your heats,” Hannibal says gently, stroking his hair. “It’s not good for your health, Will. How long has it been since you’ve had one?”

“I don’t know. Not since I was seventeen. Eight years.”

Hannibal indulges in the thought of seventeen year old Will in heat, of him humping his pillow in his bedroom, fingering in his hole, trying desperately to find relief.... Pity Hannibal did not know him back then. He would have paid triple Will’s dowry for the honours.

“Eight years,” Hannibal says thoughtfully. Sixteen missed heats. “Why do that to yourself?”

Will ducks his head. When he speaks it is barely audible. “It makes me feel like an animal.”

“Will, Will,” Hannibal soothes, already finding himself wanting to calm his flighty omega, “Aren’t you tired of fighting your body’s natural desires? Of constantly having to put up this facade? It’s not wrong to want what you want, Will, to not be in control all the time. I can give you that. Let me ease your burden. I would take such good care of you.”

“The FBI needs me....” Will chokes out weakly, “Jack needs me. I see things, terrible things. People will die if I quit, Dr. Lecter, and if it’s in my power to stop it, then that is my cross to bear. If I were mated I’d have to stay at home, then what would happen? I....I couldn’t live with myself if someone died because of me.....because I was too weak......”

Of course. Jack, Jack, Jack. Jack is no doubt the one putting him up to this work, at the expense of Will’s own biological needs, to further his own career.

Hannibal pulls him up gently by the arm and presses him up against the counter. Will slumps in Hannibal’s grip, unresistant, as though he’s relieved to finally be able to relinquish control to an alpha.

“You still can work, Will. I wouldn’t stop you, and you wouldn’t have to hide anymore. My scent would repel the other alphas. You can have both, Will. You can work and I will take care of you.” Hannibal rests his hand on the back of Will’s neck. “You could do worse than to have me as your mate.”

“I should go,” Will says weakly, although he makes no move to leave. “I’m sorry, please, let me go. It’s not....it’s not legitimate....” He tries suddenly to squirm past Hannibal, but Hannibal crowds him up against the counter and traps him. Will’s burning hot against Hannibal’s chest and it’s crumbling Hannibal’s defenses.

“I’ll pay.” Hannibal growls. At this point, he’s willing to say or do almost anything to keep Will from fleeing. “I would never dishonour you like that. I’ll pay. Who is your guardian?”
“I’m twenty-five, I don’t need – “

“All unmated omegas have a guardian, Will, even twenty-five year old ones.”

Will swallows, hesitant to say it aloud. “Jack.”

It is as Hannibal suspected, but he feigns surprise. “Jack? Not your parents?” It’s amazing that Will is still a virgin, seeing that Jack has had mating rights to him all this time. Jack might be a pair-bonded alpha, but he is only human, after all.

“Jack paid my dowry to free me from my obligation to be mated so that I could work.” Will adds in a quiet voice: “I don’t think he’ll be very happy about what we’re doing.”

Hannibal doubts that. In fact, this must be exactly what Jack has in mind, sending his unmated, beautiful omega ward into a wealthy alpha’s home, to tempt Hannibal like this. If Hannibal were to take Will’s virginity without proper compensation, Jack could sue him for many times Will’s original dowry price. Hannibal knows Jack’s fallen on hard times since his wife was diagnosed with cancer; perhaps Will is becoming more of a financial burden than an asset and Jack is seeking to get rid of him and make some money on the side.

Hannibal envisions grinding up Jack for a lovely Québecois mince meat tortière.

“I’ll reimburse him. Double, triple, whatever it takes.”

Will shivers. “Then I’ll belong to you.”

“Ah, but you want that, don’t you Will?” Hannibal leans more of his substantial weight against him. “Look what I could give you. You know we’re compatible, that we’re a perfect match. You would be mine, yes, but you’d be more free than you’ve ever dreamt possible. Or do you want to live as Jack’s property for the rest of your life?”

Will’s resolve is sinking. The instinctive urge for him to submit is beginning to overpower his rational mind. He just needs a little push in the right direction.....

“Do you want me to force you?”

Will freezes, eyes wide and innocent, and makes the most beautiful whimpering noise, high pitched and airy. The desire is there, underneath the fear. Hannibal can smell it, like heat and fevered sweetness. Will wants this. His body wants this. And, more importantly, Hannibal wants this.

Hannibal repeats, more insistently this time: “Do you want me to force you, William?”

Will shrinks against the wall, eyes are glued to the floor, lips pursed, as Hannibal waits patiently for his answer. He could force Will either way; He’s bigger, stronger, more muscular. He could rape him through his heat. He could pay Will’s dowry and have legal mating rights over him, regardless of whether he had Will’s consent or not. He could move Will into his home and forbid him from leaving without Hannibal at his side.

Hannibal could do these things.

But he won’t.

And he thinks Will must know this.

It feels like an age before Will finally, subtly, nods his head once in acquiescence. It’s the in
Hannibal’s been waiting for.

Hannibal leans forward, keeping Will in place with the firm weight of his hand on the back of his neck. He kisses him tentatively, needing to get just the right amount of saliva into Will’s body to help ease him into compliance. The natural analgesics, anxiolytics and oxytocin in Hannibal’s saliva will help induce the sexual response reaction in the omega by stimulating his dopaminergic pleasure pathways, overriding his suppressant medication and causing a hormonal domino effect that will ultimately trigger a heat. He eases Will’s mouth open gently with his tongue, taking heed not to rush. His patience pays off: Will moans and surrenders completely to the kiss. Encouraged, Hannibal fumbles with the collar button on Will’s shirt and slides his open palm under the fabric, down Will’s front, reveling in feel of his smooth, dewy skin. Soon Will will be too far gone to resist; Hannibal estimates he’ll be fully sexually receptive within a half hour.

But that scent. *That beta scent.* He wants it off. He needs to be able to scent Will properly, without having that wretched musk taint him. Hannibal breaks the kiss to find Will charmingly dazed, his eyes glazed over.

“I want you to go take a shower. Scrub that filth off your skin. I will take care of Jack.”

Will nods demurely and Hannibal guides him to his master suite. He seems hesitant, at first, to cross the threshold of Hannibal’s bedroom, but complies when Hannibal tugs gently on his hand. Once he pads into the bathroom and closes the door, Hannibal reaches for his cell phone.

Jack answers on the fourth ring.

“You must think you’re very clever,” Hannibal says without preamble.

“I don’t *think* so. I know I’m clever,” Jack replies, that smug bastard. “You’ve been eyeing him for some time, haven’t you, Dr. Lecter? Don’t think I didn’t notice.”

“How much?” Hannibal doesn’t have time for these games.

“He’s a virgin omega. Good-natured, obedient, eager to please. Fertile too, I have his medical records. He’s worth a pretty penny, I would say. I’m sure I could find more than a few alphas who’d be willing to loosen their purse strings for him.”

The thought of another alpha buying Will - *touching* Will - is distinctly unappealing. Hannibal growls into the receiver.

“If you send him back to me deflowered I’ll have you arrested.”

“I’ll pay. How much?” Hannibal repeats, imagining what Jack would look like going limp, the spark extinguished from his eyes, blood pooling on the floor underneath his lifeless body.

“I never meant to do this to you, Dr. Lecter, but you must understand the bind I’m in, what with my wife’s health problems. Times are tough. But tell you what: I’ll cut you a deal. Allow him to continue working in the field and I’ll lower his dowry-price. ”

“I was never intending on keeping him locked away at home.”

Jack pauses, perhaps必须ing his courage: “I want one hundred grand for him.”

Hannibal is somehow not surprised. It’s probably a bit excessive, but an exceptionally lovely omega’s dowry could run upwards of seventy, eighty, ninety thousand dollars. If Jack thinks this is an exorbitant sum, he’s underestimated how wealthy Hannibal truly is. Moreover, he’s
underestimated just how badly Hannibal wants Will for a mate, and Hannibal is not about to dishonour Will by haggling to lower the price.

“But he is pretty, isn’t he? Blue eyes, that mop of curly brown hair, long legs. Grew up dirt poor in Louisiana – his parents did not know his true value. Can you blame me for trying to turn a profit?”

Hannibal hears the shower turn off and is suddenly acutely aware that Will is naked just behind his bathroom door. There is no way Hannibal will back away from this now, not when he’s so close....

“You’ll have the money in your account by morning.”

Jack clicks his tongue. “I knew we could come to an agreement. Once it clears I’ll Fedex the papers to you. Pleasure doing business, doctor. I hope you enjoy your evening.”

Hannibal immediately calls his accountant, who is probably none too pleased about being bothered at this hour with Hannibal’s money transfer, but puts on a friendly enough charade for one of his most important clients.

“One hundred grand? For an omega? He must be something else.”

He is, Hannibal thinks, but doesn’t say so.

Hannibal hangs up just as Will emerges from the shower, wrapped in a white terrycloth robe, wet curls plastered to the side of his face. His lips are coloured the most attractive shade of dark pink with increased blood flow, and his pupils are dilated: the telltale symptoms of an oncoming heat. The chemicals Hannibal’s fed him are beginning to take effect, and he’s starting to pump out heat-pheromones in return. Hannibal wants to devour him.

“It’s settled.” Hannibal states, and Will swallows nervously.

“How much did he want?”

“A fair sum.”

“Tell me.”

“You didn’t go cheap, if that’s what you’re wondering.”

“More than fifty?” Will asks, and Hannibal doesn’t respond, so he continues incredulously, “Sixty? Seventy?”

Hannibal makes a noncommittal gesture and Will takes it as the affirmative.

“That’s.....that’s ridiculous. Twice what Jack paid for me. I’m not – I’m not worth that much.” Will sputters, but underneath his modesty Hannibal detects a flare of pride flash across his features. Omegas are known to take pride in their inflated dowry-prices; it can even physically arouse them. It is, of course, a status symbol, a sign that their alpha suitors are wealthy enough to provide for them and their future families.

Will is wrong, of course, but rather than say so, Hannibal decides to show him.

Hannibal rises from the bed.

“Come here.” Hannibal says, and Will obeys, shuffling closer until their bodies are almost touching.
Hannibal reaches down and slowly unties the belt on the robe, then brings his hands up to gently tug it off Will’s shoulders. Will twitches nervously, but Hannibal shushes him with a caress to his cheek. The robe lands in a pool at Will’s feet, leaving him completely exposed.

Hannibal inhales sharply in as he drinks in the sight.

Unclothed, Will’s frame is decidedly more omega than beta—willowy and lithe, built for flight rather than fight. His skin is smooth, pristine, unblemished, dusted with a trail of dark hair from his bellybutton to the patch at the base of his cock. He’s lean with slim hips and long legs: a Ganymede, St. Sebastian, or Antinous. That he’d been hiding such beauty under those dumpy, ill-fitting clothes for so long somehow only makes Hannibal find him lovelier. There are a few old, yellowish bruises on his upper arms—Hannibal doesn’t want to ask about them now, but if Jack had been the one to put them there, Hannibal won’t give him much time to enjoy his windfall.

Will shrinks a little under his gaze, clearly self-conscious to be nude while Hannibal is still fully dressed. Nonetheless, he doesn’t flinch away when Hannibal finally reaches out to reverently trace the contours of his body with his fingertips.

“You are beautiful.” Hannibal breathes, and Will ducks his head bashfully. Like other omegas, he likes knowing his alpha finds him attractive.

Leaning in, Hannibal scents the pulse point of his neck. Without those synthetic masks and deodorizers, Will smells ...like pure warmth, sweet and heady, like a muggy summer night just after a heavy rainfall, or wet cedar, or fresh unbaked dough. Hannibal sinks into that scent, pure omega, untouched and pristine, and lets out a feral growl that sounds foreign even to his own ears.

Will is becoming more receptive in Hannibal’s arms, rolling his hips against Hannibal’s and arching his back—symptoms of an oncoming heat. His sex is smaller than an alpha’s or beta’s, a vestigial organ that produces sterile seed, but is nonetheless responsive to stimulation. Hannibal rubs at him until Will’s gasping audibly with every stroke, then reaches around, past the soft flesh of his ass, to rub at Will’s hole with the pads of his fingertips. Hannibal’s cock twitches to find that Will is already so wet the slick is starting to seep down his thighs.

At that, Hannibal’s formidable willpower collapses. He’s achingly hard, his mind swims. The urge to rut throbs in the base of his skull, in the very marrow of his bones. When Hannibal kisses Will’s again, it’s urgent, frenzied, open-mouthed and sloppy so that more and more hormones are forced into Will’s system. Hannibal kneads the flesh of Will’s back perhaps a bit too harshly, grips his hips a little too forcefully, but only because Will needs to be handled, Will craves being handled, and suddenly Hannibal’s not even sure he’s entirely in control of himself, either.

Will tugs at Hannibal’s now rumpled suit plaintively. “Please take it off.” His voice is higher, sweeter. More omegan. “I want to feel your skin against mine.”

“You will,” Hannibal promises. “Easy, now, down you go.”

Hannibal guides Will down onto the bed by the back of his neck and Will instinctively assumes the classic lordosis pose—on his elbows and knees, legs spread, pelvis tilted up and buttocks raised invitingly to prompt the alpha to mount him. It’s a textbook perfect presentation, one that provides the best angle for deep penetration. It virtually ensures Hannibal will spill himself deep, deep within, thereby maximizing the omega’s chance of being impregnated. Will waggles his ass in small figure-eight motions and it’s the closest Hannibal’s ever come to believing in God.

“Mate me,” Will says, his voice a breathy whimper, “Breed me. Please, Hannibal. I need it. I’ve waited for so long.”
Hannibal strips himself of his suit faster than he ever thought possible and crawls on the bed behind Will, taking hold of his slim hips and kneading his ass until his flesh parts and the small puckered hole comes into view. Hannibal lets out a low, animalistic growl at the sight: tight, gleaming slick and pink – as only unmated, virginal omegas’ holes are. It is the most enticing sight known to any alpha. After his first knotting, it’ll turn a slightly darker color as a testament to Will’s new status as a mated omega: Hannibal’s mated omega. It’s remarkable that an omega of Will’s age and attractiveness has remained unknotted for so long. Hannibal would have liked to savour him like a bottle of Chateau Margaux, but finds he’s too frenzied with heat-fever to have much self-control anymore.

The first round of mating is usually done to establish the alpha’s mastery. Omegas enjoy being made to submit, even if they are resistant at first, because they need to feel the primal strength and virility of their alpha protectors. Hannibal knew this on a purely intellectual level, but finds himself acting accordingly on instinct, as nature intended. Hannibal positions himself behind Will, between his invitingly parted legs, and runs his hands up and down the length of his flank, then around to finger his pert, rose-coloured nipples. Will arches his back in response, clawing at the sheets and presses himself back, greedy and wanting.

"Please, please, please," Will is chanting, as if it’s the only word he knows – the only word that matters.

"Are you certain, Will?" Hannibal asks, although his answer is superfluous. At this point, Hannibal wouldn’t stop even if Will asked him to. Couldn’t stop. "You want me to mount you? Say it, Will. I want to hear you say it."

"Yes, yes, please Hannibal, do it, I need it, I want it to be you – oh....."

Hannibal rubs the tip of his cock against Will’s hole and watches it clench rhythmically in anticipation. Applying firm pressure, Hannibal begins to press in until finally the rim gives way and, in one fluid motion, his cock is sheathed in Will's sweet, tight heat. The sweetest, most broken sob escapes Will’s lips as he is penetrated for the first time. Will feels incredible, velvet hot and slick inside, taking every inch of Hannibal’s cock so, so smoothly. Hannibal pulls out until just the tip of his cock is holding Will open, keeping still until he can’t bear it anymore, then slams in again with a sharp, violent snap of his hips so that Will would not mistake that he was being rutted by anything but true thoroughbred alpha. Hannibal smacks him on the ass once, twice, then curls himself over Will so that his body is enveloping the omega’s. He immediately begins to fuck him in smooth, firm motions, enough to rock Will’s body forward and back with every thrust. Will makes the most beautiful breathy noises with each punishing shove of Hannibal’s cock into him, his heat numbing the pain and heightening the pleasure. His skin is burning hot against Hannibal’s chest.

“Good.” Hannibal rasps into the sweat-sweet skin on the back of Will’s neck, one hand fisted in Will’s soft curls to hold him in place. ”Good boy. That’s it, Will, take it all. You feel incredible, so hot and tight. Take it deep for me. No one has ever touched you like this, hmm?”

"No one," Will groans, "Only you. Only you, Hannibal, forever."

There is only so much one can learn about alpha/omega copulation from medical textbooks, Hannibal discovers, as he’s fucking Will into a million tiny shattered pieces. For instance, he was not prepared for the euphoric high of having a fertile, receptive omega underneath him, writhing on his cock. The beta couplings he’d enjoyed in the past pale in comparison – like the difference between a fine artisan Roquefort and the mass-produced garbage Americans inexplicably seem to enjoy. Hannibal feels himself reacting in response to the heat pheromones Will is now emitting, as
though they were meant to do this, meant to be together. It’s now certain they’re compatible: Will is just so damn responsive under him, moving his body in tandem with Hannibal’s with the singular goal of being impregnated. The urge to be bred, it seems, is as great as Hannibal’s need to implant his seed deep into the omega’s body.

"I'm going to come deep inside you. You want that, Will? Hm? You want to carry my child? I want everyone to stare at you, at your beautiful plump, swollen belly, and know that it is mine. Know that I did this to you. Because you are mine."

He punctuates his statement with sharp thrusts of his hips. There will be a time for soft lovemaking, but for now, Will needs it hard and fast and brutal. Hannibal tugs at Will’s hair, nips at his shoulder, leaves finger shaped bruises along his skin.

“Yes, I need it, please Hannibal, breed me, make me yours....oh, fuck.....”

“Come for me, Will, my beautiful boy. Come for your alpha, I want to feel it.”

Obedient little Will. He climaxes right on cue, crying out hoarsely into the pillow. Hannibal thrusts in to the hilt and holds himself there – he can feel his knot beginning to swell, and if it’s not positioned in exactly the right place, Will will either push it out or the tie will be painful for him. Will arches his back and tilts his ass up to facilitate the knotting process; his body is doing everything possible, it seems, to coax Hannibal to spill deep inside.

“Ah,” Will whimpers, “It’s big, too big...”

“You can take it, darling, I know you can. Just try to bear down on me....that's it......good boy....”

Will rolls his hips experimentally to accept Hannibal’s knot, his insides shifting to accommodate the bulbous protrusion. Then, suddenly Hannibal is coming with a feral roar, spurting hot torrents of come inside Will’s passage. It’s the most intense feeling Hannibal’s ever experienced and unquestionably the most satisfying orgasm of Hannibal’s life – both physically and emotionally. Prompted by orgasm, Will’s inner muscles stimulate Hannibal’s cock, pulsing rhythmically to milk every drop of come from the shaft. The contractions are so intense that it would expulse an inferior beta cock; only alphas are built to properly breed omegas.

When he can’t hold himself aloft anymore, Will collapses on the bed, spent, and Hannibal has little choice but to follow, laying flat atop his omega’s back and covering him completely with his body. There is nothing more soothing to an omega than being gently smothered under the weight of their alpha, particularly after a coupling. Hannibal’s knot will keep them locked together for a good hour, unless Hannibal can wring another orgasm from Will in that time. Hannibal can no longer actively thrust, but if he can make Will come through other means, the natural contractions of Will’s passage will coax yet another round of sperm from Hannibal’s cock, thereby maintaining Hannibal’s knot for a longer length of time and increasing the likelihood of impregnating Will.

Once Will’s ragged breathing evens, Hannibal twists his head around to kiss him, both because he wants to, desperately, but also because it will transfer more bonding hormones into Will’s system. If all goes well, Will will form a pair-bond with Hannibal. Should that occur, he’ll be hesitant to leave Hannibal’s house (especially if he becomes pregnant), which to him will smell warm and safe and comforting - a primal nesting reflex. Hannibal would also be able to gentle Will through his panic attacks, ease his anxiety with a simple touch or a kiss. The flood of oxytocin coupled with the knotting process is known to induce a bonding response in omegas, but it can also be facilitated by certain utterances: promises of fidelity, affection, and the like. Hannibal knew of this phenomenon intellectually, but the words seemed to flow off his tongue seemingly of their own accord, as though he was always meant to say them, as though he couldn’t hold them back even if
he tried.

“I will take good care of you,” Hannibal rasps into Will’s ear after he breaks their kiss. He’s got him by the throat now, relishing the feeling of the blood rushing through his jugular with every staccato heartbeat. “Such good care of you. I will protect you, shelter you, provide for you, comfort you.”

As much as Will’s rational mind would probably hate that kind of cliché alpha-talk, his omega primal brain, the part that evolved to be concerned for such basic, fundamental needs, yearns for it like an oasis in the desert. Will can’t help that he’s been hardwired by nature to seek a mate that can give him those things; nor can Hannibal help the fact that he wants to give them to him, more than anything. As expected, Will responds as omegas are wont, grinding himself back onto Hannibal’s knot and rolling his hips as though he were trying to experience the sensation of Hannibal’s cock filling him from every angle.

“Yes,” he says, his voice hoarse from the constriction around his throat, “Yes, fuck.”

“I will kill anyone who dares to try to take you from me,” Hannibal continues, and he means it. God, does he mean it. If a rival alpha so much as smells him, Hannibal would serve Will their heart on a silver platter.

“Hannibal,” Will moans, working his hips more urgently around Hannibal’s knot and rubbing his own cock against the mattress.

Hannibal noses at his throat, taking in the rich smell of his sweat. “I will take good care of you, Will. You and the children you’ll bear me.”

At that, Will moans and comes a second time. The rhythmic contractions immediately induce another orgasm in Hannibal, who growls and floods Will’s insides with another round of semen. After a few moments, Hannibal manoeuvres Will onto his side (cautiously, so as not to tug at the place where they are tied) and lifts his leg so he can spoon him comfortably with the knot still nestled within. Will is exhausted, clearly, but still wanting, and it’s Hannibal’s duty as his alpha to relieve him.

“One more,” Hannibal nips at Will’s ear.

Will whimpers. “I can’t. It’s too much.”

“You can. You want to do this for me, Will. Let me give you more.”

Hannibal reaches down to where they are still joined, and rubs at the tender flesh stretched taut around his girth. Will inhales shakily and Hannibal probes further between Will’s legs to the space between his balls and his hole, pressing up into him to increase the pressure his knot is putting on Will’s sweet spot. Will jerks and cries out, already oversensitive. Hannibal can feel that spot inside of Will, engorged with blood, can feel where his cock is nudging up against it every time Will exhales. If Will won’t move, Hannibal will handle him. Hannibal takes Will’s hips in his hands and rolls them manually so that he’s pulsing over that spot gently with the tip of his prick.

“More than seventy, Will.”

“Wh – what?”

“More than eighty. Do you have any idea what you’re worth to me?”

“Oh,” Will sobs, throwing his head back as Hannibal makes him rub at that little spot just so. “Oh
my god, Hannibal...

“One hundred thousand, Will,” Hannibal rasps, and suddenly Will’s coming again, emitting a broken, pathetic cry as he does so. He humps himself back and clenches his inner muscles sporadically and once again Hannibal’s coming too, spurring hot threads of come deep into Will’s passage over and over and over again. After he descends from the high, Hannibal can tell that the heat-fever has cleared: Will has been sated, although Hannibal suspects that by morning he’ll need to be bred again. His heat could last a week, maybe longer – who knows, considering how long he’s been suppressing them. Hannibal will have to clear his schedule to take care of Will’s need. But for now, they are both too exhausted to do anything except lay there in the same position in which they finished, basking in the afterglow of orgasm, with Hannibal’s arms wrapped tightly around Will’s waist. Hannibal rubs lazily at Will’s belly as he patiently waits out the knot. The alpha in him imagines that it feels almost distended from the amount of semen Hannibal has pumped into him, that if only he could somehow work it deeper by his ministrations he could ensure fertilization. Will is his, finally his, he thinks possessively, tightening his arms around his omega. He knows he’s being as affected by this as much as Will is, that bonding hormones are coursing through his brain to cement his bond with his mate. He would never have dreamt for it to feel so....intense. He can’t describe it as anything other than bliss, lying here with his omega, relishing the skin-on-skin contact and the erratic in-and-out of Will’s breath against his chest. Hannibal swears he'll never let him go.

Will swipes down his face, trying to mask the tears prickling the corners of his eyes. Hannibal is not an empathetic man, but something about having an omega – his omega - in distress pricks at his mind like a splinter, and he feels the instinctive, yet uncharacteristic, need to soothe.

“Are you alright?”

“Yeah,” Wills sniffles, “I suppose. I didn’t expect it to be like this.”

“I’m not hurting you, am I?”

"No, no," There is a heavy pause. “It just.....I feel....overwhelmed. Like it’s too much. It’s good, but.... I can’t explain it, it’s just too much.”

That means the hormonal changes are beginning to take effect. To Hannibal’s infinite relief, Will is, in fact, beginning to pair-bond. It’s sealed.

“I will be good to you, Will.” Hannibal shushes, petting Will’s curls in an effort to gentle him through the experience. He presses a kiss to the back of Will’s sweaty neck. The lingering heat-pheromones make him smell so wanton. “I meant it when I said it.”

Will must trust him on this, because he’s already calming down and nuzzling into Hannibal, nestling himself deep into the curve of Hannibal’s body. His breath hitchs once, twice, but he’s otherwise completely still: stiller than Hannibal has ever seen him. No doubt it's because he's no longer fighting an upwill battle against his nature, because he's found a proper outlet for his pent-up energy. As the moments pass, his sniffles gradually grow softer, his breathing evens out. His hair is mostly dry now; his curls splay angelically across the pillow, just as Hannibal had envisioned.

“One hundred? Really?”

Hannibal smiles. “Only.”

Will turns his head and twists his body, as much as the knot within him will allow, and tentatively
sweeps his lips across Hannibal’s. The kiss is gentle, languid, perfectly sweet, with none of the
frenzy of the heat. When Will pulls back, his eyes are wet and tears are catching on his dark
eyelashes. In that moment Hannibal swears Will is the most beautiful thing he’s ever seen.

“I’ll be worth it, I promise.” Will says quietly, breaking the silence.

Hannibal never believed otherwise.

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~ One month later ~

Having another body in his home is a new (and somewhat trying) experience for Hannibal,
particularly when said body is nesting and is busy reorganizing all of his things. Hannibal has to
remind himself over and over that it’s just a biological reaction to being mated - Will is asserting
his territory through the laborious process of rubbing his scent all over Hannibal's house - because
Hannibal can’t find a single damn thing anymore and it's beginning to drive him crazy. It’s not as
though Will had many belongings of his own to integrate into the household, no doubt because
Jack had kept most of his paycheck all those years. It felt rather tragic that all of Will’s worldly
effects had fit into three measly moving boxes. Hannibal vowed that from now on Will will have
everything he could ever want - everything that's in Hannibal's power to give him.

And that is how Hannibal came to find himself unlocking his front door with a golden retriever
puppy tucked underneath his arm.

“Will, darling,” he calls, “I'm home.”
Chapter Notes

I caved to peer pressure, so here are some more dabbles in my ABO universe, because you people are clearly waaaay freakier than I had anticipated. Porn 2.0 with a side of plot, but I used my A material in the first chapter so I had to get creative. Breaking out more biopsychology (and art history, natch) for you kinky mo fos! Science is fucking sexy.

For all the peer-reviewed papers he’s read, for every double-blind experiment he’s supervised, Hannibal has honestly had little firsthand, personal experience with omegas. He does not have many omega patients at his practice; they tend to find him, as an alpha, too intimidating and choose instead to be referred to a beta specialist. Granted, clinical psychology is not a typical alpha pursuit. Central to the method is forming a good patient-therapist rapport built on empathy and mutual trust – which, for alphas, does not come naturally. The only omegas Hannibal’s conversed with, for the most part, were those that tried to tempt him into mating with them. How very gauche.

Of course, Hannibal had learned all about them in medical school, and further still as a psychologist. They are peculiar little things, with unique reflexes, modal action patterns and personality traits.

For instance, take the startle reflex. Omegas are known to habituate much less readily to a startling noise than either alphas or betas. It is thought that it was in their evolutionary interests to respond to every possible threat, much like modern prey animals do. Hannibal noticed this phenomenon within a few days of having Will move in. They’d been sitting at the breakfast table, enjoying the morning meal, when a bird flew into a nearby window. Hannibal had barely blinked, but the loud thunk was enough to make Will bolt upright, half tripping over his chair. He’d laughed awkwardly about it afterward and apologized for overturning his coffee cup. Jumpy little thing.

It’s also known that omegas have a natural aptness for all things domestic. If they work, they tend to choose professions that draw on their natural strengths: empathy, nurturance, compassion. The fact that Will held a job at the BAU for so long is nothing short of remarkable. All that time he’d been out with Jack, in the open, with foreign alphas, and probing grisly crime scenes no less – it’s a wonder his mental health had not degenerated completely.

Certain disorders that would be characterized as psychopathological in either alphas or betas are considered normal, even characteristic, of omegas. Agoraphobia for one: a psychopathology when diagnosed in betas, certainly, and almost unheard of in alphas. Conversely, it’s quite a natural thing for omegas to be anxious in large unfamiliar open spaces. Omegas form a radius of “safe space” in and around the territory surrounding their homes. It takes time to expose an omega to their new surroundings before they begin to feel comfortable enough to travel without an escort. Some alphas choose not to undergo this process with their omegas, effectively trapping them at home.

Hannibal is not that kind of alpha.

It took patience, certainly, to familiarize Will with the neighbourhood surrounding their home, but Hannibal can’t pretend that he didn’t like the way Will clung to him underneath the umbrella,
linking his arm through the curve of Hannibal’s elbow as they strolled up and down the well-
manicured streets. He showed him his favourite bakery, the dry cleaners, that liquor store that
carries that beautiful dry chardonnay Hannibal likes: places Will will have to know if he’s going to
help Hannibal run their household.

Once Will had moved in, the first order of business was purchasing a corner canopy bed: a bed
designed specifically for alpha/omega couples. It’s meant to be placed in the corner of the room,
flush against two walls. Thick velvet curtains hang from the other two sides, heavy enough to
block out all outside light. Beds like these cater to omegas’ ingrained need for a dark, warm,
enclosed space in which to sleep. Evolutionary theorists speculate omegas feel too exposed in open
air, and that they require these types of small den-like spaces in order to feel safe and comfortable.

And Hannibal wants nothing more than to make his omega feel safe and comfortable.

“Well?” Hannibal asks, once the movers had left. “Do you like it?”

Will thumbs the heavy forest green upholstery, seemingly in awe, then tracks his fingers over the
intricately carved mahogany bedposts. Like everything Hannibal buys, the bed is extravagant, yet
tasteful, oozing sophistication and opulence without being garish.

“It’s beautiful,” Will says simply. “I....don’t know what to say.”

“Try it out,” Hannibal pulls back the curtain and gestures with his hand. “Go on, then.”

Will sits down on the edge of the bed, looking up at the heavy canopy and running his hands over
the bedspread. Then he scoots back towards the inside wall: the side he’ll be sleeping on.

Hannibal, as the alpha, will take the outer side, forming a protective fourth wall with his own
body. If Hannibal is not there to sleep next to Will, Will can close the curtains completely and feel
secure enough with the consoling scent of his alpha still lingering on the fabric.

Will lays back and Hannibal follows, resting next to his mate, propped up on the pillows. The new
mattress is perhaps a bit softer than Hannibal would have liked, but he was willing to make this
concession for his mate’s comfort.

They lay there silently, side by side, for a few moments. Will is totally still, serene. Then, timidly,
he laces his slim fingers through Hannibal’s.

“Thank you.” Will clasps both his hands around one of Hannibal’s and brings it up to his cheek in a
gesture of gratitude. His warm, damp breath is dewy on Hannibal’s palm. “It’s perfect.”

Hannibal smiles. “Good. I’m glad you like it.”

“I bet I won’t have so much trouble falling asleep in here. The one Jack bought for me let in too
much light, was too flimsy. I never liked it much.”

And, presumably, Jack did not sleep with Will. Even though they were not mated, it would have
eased Will’s anxiety somewhat to have a familiar alpha’s scent on his bedding. Jack is attached to
his pair-bonded mate, true, but to have kept Will in limbo for so long, wanted yet not, useful yet
not, left cold through his most fertile years.......Hannibal growls. To think that Will had spent eight
years sleeping alone! Eight years when he could have had an alpha – Hannibal – at his side. What
a waste.

“Jack did not take care of you,” Hannibal states, more of a statement than a question.
“He did his best,” Will replies, fingering the comforter. The subject is clearly upsetting him and although Hannibal wants to pry, he decides that that now is not in the time – not when Will is lounging so temptingly on their new bed.

“I want to......to please you.” Will says abruptly, turning towards Hannibal and leaning up on his elbow.

It takes Hannibal by surprise. Although Hannibal has already fucked and knotted him through a heat cycle, Will still acts as prim and as skittish as a virgin in bed, unsure of how to be more sexually forthright with his alpha – if Hannibal would even like him to be more sexually forthright. Since the night they first mated, he had never once initiated sex – not that Hannibal ever expected him to do so. It’s not like omegas to be directive; they are quite content to let their alphas take charge and rut them at their leisure. Will doesn’t quite know how to touch Hannibal, whether to touch him there, whether he should even touch himself. It’s not as though Hannibal hasn’t been enjoying his timidity, the way he so completely relinquishes control to him when they fuck. It’s just as much Hannibal’s own nature to want to dominate as it is Will’s to submit.

His innocent little omega, so naive and delicate. Hannibal can’t decide if he wants to protect him from all harm, or rut him so mercilessly he’ll be marred with bruises. Until he screams.

The strategic intent behind this advance is not lost on Hannibal. It might be, Hannibal thinks, that Will feels rather unworthy of him. Hannibal knows people talk about them, wondering what an inconsequential, unknown omega like Will is doing with an alpha of Hannibal’s calibre. That’s not to say that Will is not a perfectly desirable omega - Will is, after all, Hannibal’s compatible mate - it’s just that Hannibal simply has so much to offer: status, wealth, virile alpha seed. He could have had any omega he wanted. He could have chosen some well-bred omega from a moneyed family. An omega with political connections, perhaps, one that’s been to finishing school and who knows how to act with social grace and tact. Well-read, polite, companionate. One that knows how to please him.

But no. Instead Hannibal has Will. Sweet, neurotic, bumbling Will.

It’s not as though Will’s insecurities are unwarranted. Despite his significant contributions to the BAU, Will is seen as just another low born, social-climbing omega desperately seeking a rich alpha to provide for him. The knowledge that so many parents had sought to mate their omega children to Hannibal (and were spurned, Hannibal is quick to emphasize) only aggravated Will’s profound feelings of inadequacy. Even Jack flippantly referred to Will as white trash - a flower that, against all odds, somehow managed to blossom among a field of weeds.

Hannibal also thinks Will had been hurt by how precipitously Jack had discarded him. It’s clear Will fears Hannibal will do the same thing: toss him aside when once he finds a more suitable mate to warm his bed.

An inferiority complex if Hannibal’s ever seen one.

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“Does that happen all the time?” Will had asked on the drive home after Hannibal had treated him to a celebratory dinner at one of Baltimore’s most upscale restaurants.

Hannibal already knows where this conversation is heading, but he humours his new mate: “Does what happen all the time?”

“Omegas throwing themselves at you.”
Hannibal smiles inwardly but keeps his face neutral. “What would make you say that?”

“That omega waitress. She was flirting with you.” Will says flatly, although Hannibal can sense the indignation lurking underneath. “Right in front of me. She knew I was your mate.”

“Ah,” says Hannibal, finding the little flare of jealousy on Will’s part rather endearing. Omegas are deferential to alphas, but can be rather vicious to each other if they feel their territory is being encroached upon.

“It does, doesn’t it? ‘Cause you’re a thoroughbred? ‘Cause you’re rich?”

Hannibal brings his Bentley to a stop at a red light and quirks an eyebrow at Will. “Does that bother you?”

Will looks at his lap, but when he speaks, his voice is quiet but firm: “I won’t share you, Hannibal.”

Won’t. His little kitten has claws.

“Already making demands, William?” Hannibal says, amused.

Will thumbs his shirt buttons. It must not feel natural for him to be making demands of an alpha, especially since they’ve only been mated for less than forty eight hours. “I just don’t want you to take a second omega, that’s all.”

Hannibal hums thoughtfully. It would be within his rights to do so, providing he could afford another dowry and the costs of keeping another mate. The law allows him, as a thoroughbred, up to four omega consorts. Not that he ever would, of course; he’s quite satisfied with his bonded mate. But he is intrigued at how much Will would be willing to fight him on it. So he says, “I could, though. You’d still be my first, my pair-bonded mate. You’d have precedence in my household. Any of my subsequent mates would have to defer to you.”

Hannibal can tell this conversation is making Will anxious. He doesn’t say anything, but the furrow of his brow is indicative enough of his displeasure.

“No?”

“No, Hannibal.” Will tries to say it with finality, but his voice wavers, as though he’s trying to stop himself from pleading. He probably would beg, if Hannibal did not relent. He’d assume a supplicating pose, on his knees, and beg, if that’s what it would take. The thought has a certain appeal, but there would be a time for that. He just needs to be reassured of his alpha’s affections. He needs to know that he’ll never be unwanted again.

Hannibal smirks, finally giving in. “Stubborn boy,” he says, lightly teasing, and Will visibly relaxes. “I can see how you lasted so long with the BAU”.

Will looks up, so pitifully hopeful. “So you won’t?”

Hannibal takes Will’s hand, raises it to his lips, and presses a kiss to the warm skin in promise. “I won’t.”

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“I want to please you,” Will repeats, but his voice is steadier this time.
Hannibal glances over at his omega and tucks a wayward curl behind his ear. It would be cruel not to allow Will to express his gratitude in this manner. “I know you do,” Hannibal places Will’s hand on his cock and presses it down, urging Will to stroke at him. “You’re a good boy.” The overt sexual contact is making Will uncomfortable, but he steels his face in determination. He’s never touched Hannibal’s cock like this; Hannibal’s only ever taken him from behind, and even then, Will had been too fevered with heat to feel self-conscious anyway.

“Take it out,” Hannibal suggests, and Will does, unzipping his fly and drawing out Hannibal’s hardening prick. Hannibal groans when Will’s finely boned hand finally encloses around his cock – so unlike his own thick capable fingers. Hannibal’s alpha cock is decidedly larger than Will’s; from the look on Will’s face, it must feel rather foreign, perhaps even intimidating. He holds it, charmingly, like he doesn’t quite know what to do with it.

“Just like that, up and down,” Hannibal says, guiding Will’s hand. “That’s it. Good.”

Will’s face is pure concentration. So eager to please, his little omega. This is, after all, the only way he knows how to repay Hannibal’s generosity.

Hannibal allows this to go on for a few moments, more to acclimatize Will to his cock than anything else, because he’s not going nearly the speed for Hannibal to achieve orgasm. Besides, Hannibal’s not interested in spilling between Will’s fingers. It would be waste now that he has an omega to properly service him.

“You know what would really please me?” Hannibal ventures, and Will ceases his ministrations to look up at him. “If you put it in your mouth.”

Will’s face instantly reddens, his apprehension is as obvious as a marquee. “I’ve never done that before.” He stammers. “I.....I don’t know how.”

“Try,” Hannibal coaxes, bringing his hand to rest on the back of Will’s neck – the best place to grip an omega to wrangle them into submission. “I’ll guide you. Here, come here.” Hannibal easily manoeuvres him so that Will is kneeling between his parted legs. Will clumsily strokes Hannibal’s cock a few more times, too embarrassed to look up at his alpha.

“It’s big,” Will mumbles, bewildered. He hadn’t yet seen Hannibal’s cock up close, after all.

“Just start with the tip, then,” Hannibal encourages, increasing the pressure on the back of Will’s neck until he yields and sinks down until Hannibal’s cockhead is just past his lips.

Will keeps his hand firmly rooted at the base of Hannibal’s cock, perhaps to make him feel like he has some control over the situation, then tentatively laps at the head like a little kitten. Hannibal allows this, giving Will time to familiarize himself with the taste. Hannibal himself is not unaffected: Watching Will’s slick, bubblegum pink tongue suckle at his prick is enough to wring a low rumble from the base of Hannibal’s throat. He couldn’t come from this, but the sight alone....

As much as Hannibal delights in Will’s virginity and is enjoying the spectacle, it soon becomes more frustrating than anything. The urge to simply slam Will’s head down and thrust into his throat is become too overwhelming to ignore. Hannibal is done playing, and wants Will to start blowing him in earnest.

“Why don’t you try sucking it a little?” Hannibal coaxes, and Will looks up at him briefly, fretfully.

“I don’t.....” He stutters.
Hannibal hushes him. "I thought you said you said you wanted to please me?"

Will nods once, just barely. "Yes," he whispers.

"Just tuck your teeth behind your lips. You’ll be good, I know it. Down." He drags Will’s towards his hard cock and Will dutifully opens up to take him in. He sucks the head and a frisson of pleasure pulses in Hannibal’s belly. “Good boy.” Hannibal murmurs. “My beautiful boy.”

Will is clumsy, sloppy, inexperienced, all nerves and no technique. But he’s trying, clearly, and there’s something to be said for enthusiasm. The fact that Hannibal’s the one to be doing this, to be training his omega to please him, his first, lent a perverse satisfaction to the whole thing.

Will runs his tongue along the bottom of Hannibal’s prick as he sucks. He’s warm and soft and wet inside, but even in his eagerness Hannibal senses trepidation too: Will is hesitant to take him deeper.

Hannibal pulls Will up with a wet pop, and a pulse of heat shoots down to his cock when a string of spit and pre-come lingers, connecting his cock to Will’s lips. Will moves to wipe his mouth with his sleeve in self-consciousness, but Hannibal stops him. He likes him like this, lips wet and glistening, debauched, and just a touch humiliated.

“Here,” Hannibal pats his leg. “Up, on my leg. Straddle it.”

“Why?”

“You’ll like it. Come on.”

Will unquestioningly shuffles himself so that he’s resting astride one of Hannibal’s thighs. Hannibal grips Will’s hips and holds them firmly, then grinds his leg up, enough that Will is raised a few inches. Will’s breath hitches and he makes a strangled oh sound as Hannibal’s leg rubs up against Will’s cock.

“See? Isn’t that better?” Hannibal says. “You try. Move so that it feels good.”

Tentatively, Will rolls his hips, establishing a slow rhythm. One day Hannibal will have Will ride him, just like this, make him fuck himself on his cock, make him take his knot while seated on his lap.

But not today. Today Hannibal wants to brand him.

Hannibal motions him down again, and Will obediently takes his cock back into his mouth, swirling his tongue over the head. This time, Will has to rest both hands on the mattress on either side of Hannibal’s waist to keep his balance so that he can grind down onto Hannibal’s thigh and take his own pleasure.

“Ah ah,” Hannibal taps his cheek, “Mind your teeth.”

Hannibal twists his fingers through Will’s soft curls, and tugs him down further than Will had dared on his own. Down, down, until the head of his cock is finally breaching Will’s throat. Will sputters and tries pull back, but Hannibal’s hand is firm on his head.

Hannibal’s voice is calm and steady when he says, “That’s it, darling, you can take it. Just stay calm. Take it all for me.”

Will is choking now, and still Hannibal holds him in place. Tears are forming at the corners of his
eyes as he tries to breathe in through his nose. His throat involuntarily contracts around Hannibal’s prick and Hannibal groans.

When it’s clear he’s had enough, Hannibal lets him up. Will pulls back, wheezing. The unshed tears finally trickle down his cheeks: an offering of his suffering for Hannibal’s pleasure. His face is blotchy, cheeks pink, and his lips glisten with spit. He’s a mess. He’s exquisite.

Hannibal thumbs tenderly at a teardrop “Are these for me?”

“It’s too big,” Will rasps. “I can’t breathe.”

“You’re doing so well,” Hannibal assures him. “I’m close, so close. Just a little more, William.”

By now, Will is looking unsure, a bit panicked, and although Hannibal is enjoying Will’s subjugation, he also doesn’t want to damage him – any more than necessary, that is. So Hannibal tugs him forward and presses his lips against his omega’s, gently easing Will’s mouth open to transfer anxiolytic saliva into his mouth. He works Will open until the kiss grows sloppy and relaxed, all tongue and lips. It does the trick: when Will sits back on Hannibal’s thigh, the anxiety he’d been feeling has dissipated, to be replaced by a dreamy, glazed over look.

“Down, boy,” Hannibal prompts, and Will meekly curls forward to take it in again. By now, he’s grinding himself unabashedly against Hannibal’s thigh and moaning around Hannibal’s cock. Perhaps if Hannibal pairs pleasure with a lack of breath enough times, Will will get off on being choked alone....

Encouraged, Will picks up the pace and starts bobbing his head more vehemently, rubbing himself off in time with each swipe down Hannibal’s prick. His hands are gripping Hannibal’s thighs as if to ground himself, and when Hannibal urges him down once more, Will goes without resistance.

“You’d give me your last breath, wouldn’t you?” Hannibal muses as Will swallows futilely around his cockhead. “You’ll do anything to please me.”

Hannibal can feel his orgasm building at the base of his spine. His knotting glands are beginning to swell, so he grips the base to apply firm pressure. Will gags, and suddenly Hannibal is coming with a throaty roar. Startled, Will pulls away, but he can’t go far with Hannibal’s other hand rooted in his curls. The first ropes of come spill on Will’s tongue, the rest on his lips, chin, cheeks and eyelashes: marked with Hannibal’s scent.

Will looks impossibly ravished and obscene with his young face sullied with Hannibal’s release, mouth agape and panting, a thin strand of spit and come hanging from his bottom lip. He glances up at Hannibal briefly to gage his reaction, to make sure his alpha is pleased.

And Hannibal is pleased.

“My darling boy,” he croons, taking Will’s dazed face in his hands. “My little lamb.” He affectionately wipes a streak of release off Will’s cheek and presses it Will’s lips, pushing in until Will gets the idea and dutifully licks Hannibal’s fingers clean with a swipe of that pink tongue. His cheeks flush red either from self-consciousness or at the lack of breath. Perhaps both.

“Good?” Will asks imploringly. So, so eager to please.

Hannibal smiles. “Perfect.” In one smooth move, he grips Will’s shoulders and flips them over, reversing their positions so that Will is lying flat on his back with Hannibal looming over him.

“You want to come?” Hannibal asks, but it’s obvious from the way Will is continuing to hump his
hips against Hannibal’s leg.

“Yeah,” Will says shakily.

“Look at you, so wanton. Getting off on being choked on my cock. Do you even know what you do to me?” Hannibal keeps one hand pressed firmly around Will’s throat and snakes the other up under Will’s shirt, bunching it up to reveal his pert little rosebud nipples. Hannibal envisions what they would be like when Will becomes pregnant, if he’d milk under Hannibal’s caress. He thumbs over a bud and Will arches off the mattress, throwing his head back and rocking his pelvis up, seeking contact. Christ, doesn’t Will fall apart so beautifully under his hands. “Sensitive, are we?”

Will can’t seem to respond anymore, so Hannibal tugs at Will’s fly and slips his hand underneath the waistband to rest his palm over Will’s prick. He rubs at him, back and forth, Will bucks up into his touch.

“I can see how desperate you are. Desperate for me. Aren’t you, Will?”

“Please,” Will whimpers.

He’s close, and Hannibal knows just what to say to push him over the edge.

“There is no one else, Will,” Hannibal says, and shoves two fingers deep inside, where Will is warm and wet with arousal. “You know that, right? Only you. Only you, my darling. Always.”

Will cries out and arches his back, coming violently through Hannibal’s fingers. He shudders and his insides clamp down as if he was trying to keep in a knot. Even around his fingers the sensation is maddening. Hannibal is hesitant to pull out even after the pulses grow weaker. He loves how slick Will gets when he’s aroused, how much his body has evolved to want to pleasure his alpha, how Will is so rumpled and ruined and obscene. If Will wasn’t so absolutely exhausted, Hannibal would think nothing of working up another erection with which to fuck him. Instead, Hannibal kisses Will again, stifling Will’s gasping breaths with his own mouth until Will is quiet and sated.

At least the bed is properly christened.

***

As the days pass, Will begins to relax around Hannibal in slow increments. He’d been rather wary and unsure of his alpha, even after their mating, but that’s to be expected. For being so able to enter into the minds of serial killers, he still has trouble reading Hannibal. But then, Hannibal has spent years carefully crafting the image he projects to the world. Not a word or gesture out of place in his perfectly calculated plein air disguise. And as much as he loves his little omega, he can’t have him scuttling off to tell Jack about Hannibal’s less palatable proclivities.

As much as he dislikes how uneasy Will is in his presence, Hannibal understands why he feels the need to be cautious. Betas and omegas regard their alpha counterparts with a muddled mixture of trepidation, admiration, and, quite often, mistrust. Alphas tend to cluster at the extremes of society: at best, they are natural leaders; strong and capable, ruthless when necessary, astute and ambitious. They make the best politicians, military commanders, lawyers, businessmen. Every American president has been an alpha; the monarchies of old practiced alphaic primogeniture, wherein the throne would pass to the first born alpha. In rare instances a beta might inherit the crown, perhaps temporarily acting as regent for an underage alpha, but an omega monarch? Unheard of. No way would an alpha debase him or herself by allowing an omega to rule over them.

At their very worst, however, alphas are narcissistic, lack empathy, callous, incapable of feeling
guilt, impulsive, aggressive, manipulating others indiscriminately to suit their needs, and brimming with raw, primal, unbridled sexuality. The most violent criminals are all alphas, and almost all known cases of dissocial personality disorder, as characterized by the ICD-10, are found in alphas. *Psychopaths*, as Hannibal knows he is.

But Hannibal knows he would never hurt his mate.

No, not unless he needed it.

That’s why it feels like a victory when Will initiates conversation with Hannibal at all. He begins delicately, talking about the weather, about the dog he had as a child, about Hannibal’s cooking.

The fact that he pointedly avoids discussing the time he’d spent with Jack, even when Hannibal gives him an opening to do so, does not go unnoticed. Hannibal does not pry, but he swears he will unearth whatever lurid secrets his omega is hiding from him.

“What’s with the painting?” Will asks one night, nodding to the artwork over the mantle.

Hannibal cocks his head. That question has been burning underneath Will’s skin for some time, and Hannibal had let it simmer, waiting for the moment for Will to work up enough curiosity to ask.

“What about it?”

“Well, I mean.....the swan is looking right up the woman’s.....” Will’s voice trails off. Hannibal finds it rather adorable that he gets flustered so easily. In a lot of ways, Will is still quite virginal. “......you know.”

“Leda and the Swan, François Boucher. Early 18th century French. The painting is based off a Greek myth. Zeus took the form of a swan to seduce and rape the beautiful Leda.”

“Oh.” Will says. “That’s weird”

“Greek Mythology usually is.” Hannibal confirms, standing back and admiring the painting. A rape scene: like Europa, the Sabine women, the daughters of Leucippus, it is an excuse, on the one hand, to offer up a banquet of flesh for the viewer’s consumption; on the other, an invitation for the viewer to enter in the painting and act upon that sensual flesh, *ravish* it, at their pleasure. A metaphor for pure, boundless power. It holds a certain appeal for a man of such *particular tastes* as Hannibal.

His most valuable possession.

.......second most.

“Boucher’s works were quite titillating for their time. This one in particular is unique because it depicts pubic hair and external genitalia, which is unheard of in traditional renderings of the female nude, at least until Courbet’s *L’Origine du monde. “*

“Huh.” Will says, although Hannibal is quite certain Will doesn’t know what painting he’s referring to.

“Boucher was especially well known for his portraits of Madame Pompadour, the mistress of the king.” Hannibal continues, thumbing the frame reverently. “Rococo. Art of pure sensuality and indulgence.”
Hannibal turns to Will, “And I am a man who enjoys his indulgences.”

***

It might have been a mistake, Hannibal thinks in hindsight, to have allowed Will to argue him on the point of a second omega. Not that he ever would take one, but it wouldn’t do to encourage such impudence. And as much as Will wants to please Hannibal, he can be remarkably obstinate when he puts his mind to something.

“I want to watch you do it,” he says firmly, watching Will stand at the sink. “All of them.”

Will exhales and his jaw tightens. His natural inclination is to follow Hannibal’s order, but he also doesn’t want to have to pour out the chemicals he’s been hiding behind for so long. Will is proud, particularly for an omega; although he is most at peace when Hannibal can coax him into his natural state, he still fights it when he can, cleaving to his beta disguise like a security blanket. The beta identity is an ill-fitting shoe. Hannibal knows what’s best for his omega, knows what’s best for Will’s mental health. He’s going to make Will dispose of them himself; a symbolic act to drive the point home: *this is what you are, and there is no shame in it.*

Hannibal does love his theatrics.

“Come on, now.” Hannibal prods, and this time Will obeys, hesitantly pouring out the synthetic beta scent and the pheromone blocking deodorant under the running tap. Hannibal winces when the foul odour of it fills his nostrils.

“Good. This too.”

Will pauses when he’s handed the heat suppressants medication. Hannibal doesn’t pressure him, choosing instead to stand behind him in quiet authority. Forcing him outright would diminish the sweetness of his surrender.

Will rolls the pill bottle between his fingers then mumbles something that Hannibal doesn’t quite hear.

“What was that?”

Will repeats softly: “I don’t want to do this. Please.”

Hannibal knows Will doesn’t want to do this, knows he hates the lack of control he has over his body when he’s in heat, hates the way alphas harass him when they smell it on his skin, hates the way he is so pliable to his mate’s demands when he’s in the throes. But most of all, Hannibal suspects, Will does not want to become pregnant, although he’d never dare to say so to Hannibal’s face. The heat suppressants double as a contraceptive agent: as male omegas are only fertile during their heats, suppressing heats also inhibits fertilization. Hannibal did not miss the relief that washed down Will’s face when the doctor told him he hadn’t conceived during his last heat: it had come on too fast and was askew from the years of chemical inhibition. Hannibal was reassured that it would reset itself with time. It was only the flash flood of hormones that had made Will so....shall we say....receptive to the idea of bearing Hannibal’s child. But what Will wants is irrelevant. Hannibal is the alpha and he will not have his omega poison himself with chemicals in front of him. Moreover, there is no greater pleasure for an alpha than to rut an omega in heat. It’s his right as Will’s alpha and he will not be denied.

“William, I’ve already told you what the long-term consequences of that medication are. It’s
aggravating your generalized anxiety disorder and your insomnia. It’s not natural, it’s not healthy, and I won’t have them in my house.”

“Please don’t make me. Hannibal, I need this……”

“Don’t you trust me to know what’s best for you? As a doctor? As your alpha?”

“You want me to have heats,” Will whispers, but his tone is slightly accusing. “You liked it. You want me to get pregnant.”

“You will not speak to me like that, do you understand?” Hannibal snaps bitingly. The darkest part of Hannibal wants to say, I paid enough money for you, and if you won’t do as I say, I’ll find another omega that will, but that would be a low blow, a strike at the heart of Will’s deepest insecurity.

Will’s will is faltering. He clings to the bottle like a lifeline, but Hannibal’s his lifeline now.

“This is for your own good, Will. Throw those pills down the drain."

Will doesn’t move. His adam’s apple bobs as he swallows nervously. He doesn’t blatantly refuse, but he doesn’t comply, either.

Stubborn little thing.

Hannibal steps up right behind him so that their bodies are flush against each other. He rests his hand on the back of Will’s neck and gently, gently pushes him down over the counter, until Will’s cheek is resting on the granite next to the sink. Hannibal rolls his hips up against Will’s ass, not because he wants to fuck right this moment, but to force Will into a mounting position: an evolutionary display of dominance over subordinate social members. Hannibal keeps the pressure on the back of Will’s neck, pinching his grip perhaps not enough to be painful, but certainly enough to be uncomfortable. Then, Hannibal leans his entire weight on his omega so that Will can feel his superior strength, his greater mass, the power in his muscles. Will is still underneath him, panting under the strain of taking Hannibal’s weight. The position is altering his thinking, making him more compliant.

If Will doesn’t obey after this, Hannibal will have to beat him. It would not please him to lay a hand on his omega, but he’ll do what’s necessary to make his point. He hopes it would not come to that.

Hannibal ruts a little more forcefully against Will’s ass. He’s beginning to get half-hard, and he wants Will to feel it. “I made you feel good during your heat, didn’t I? Don’t try to deny it, Will.”

Will makes a soft whimpering sound in reply.

“Haven’t I been good to you, Will? Kind? Given you everything you want?”

“Yes,” Will concedes, barely audible.

“And all I ask in return is that you give me this. Let me have you as an alpha is meant to have his omega. Let me claim my right.”

Will goes quiet and Hannibal senses he’s won. He eases his weight off of Will and Will straightens up somewhat. Trembling, he unscrews the cap on the bottle and dumps the pills down the drain; resigned to his omegan identity.
“Good,” Hannibal says, pressing a kiss into the back of Will’s neck in reward and snaking his arms around Will’s slim waist. “There’s my good boy. My little lamb. You’ve made me very happy.”

****

The tension hangs heavily over the household for the next few days. Will is chafing visibly, and although he is wise enough not to argue the point further, it begins to grate at Hannibal’s nerves. This is his home, and his omega should endeavour to make it warm and welcoming, not storm about like a sulking teenager. Hannibal feels he’s already been far more understanding than most alphas in his place. Ultimately, he remains confident that Will’s little tantrum will pass like a summer storm; Will can’t deny his omegan nature forever. All he needs, Hannibal surmises, is a few nights of uninterrupted sleep.

Besides, Hannibal would be lying if he said he didn’t at least partly enjoy his omega’s tempestuous spirit.

Jack calls shortly thereafter. There’s a new serial killer running rampant (a rather amateur one at that, but Hannibal doesn’t say so) and he needs Will’s insight on the latest crime scene. Hannibal wants to forbid it, but he’d struck a deal with Jack, and Hannibal would be damned before he’d retract on his word. Besides, Will is adamant.

“I want to go.” Will says firmly. “I can do this.”

His little indomitable omega. Hannibal asks if he’s sure one more time, just to give him an out if he needs one.

He doesn’t take it.

“I’ll be fine. Jack will be with me.” Will sounds like he’s trying to convince himself too. “I’ve done this before. It’s just for a few hours, Hannibal.”

True, but this would also be his first day as an undisguised omega. A prickle of apprehension nags in Hannibal’s mind. He doesn’t like sending Will out without him to keep watch, especially with all those other alphas milling about, but then again, he had no reason not to trust Jack’s word. Although Hannibal cannot stand the man, Hannibal had to grant that he’d been nothing but civil and fair throughout their transaction.

Jack comes for Will early in the morning and Hannibal sends them away, but not before shooting a searing glare at Jack in warning:

*If he is harmed I will kill you.*

Still, he’s not surprised when Jack calls him at work later that day. Not surprised, but not happy either.

“Your omega is having a panic attack,” Jack says flatly. “You better come pick him up.”

Despite the abrasion Will’s been causing at home, Hannibal can’t help the fierce protectiveness that surges in his chest. It was a mistake to allow Will to go back to work so soon after his mating, and without Hannibal there to supervise. He could ask Jack to try and gentle Will a little, but having a foreign alpha touch him might make Will’s condition worse. Besides, the thought of Jack laying his hands on his mate made Hannibal cringe in distaste.

“What did you do?” Hannibal snarls.
Jack sighs, as if this whole thing is nothing but an annoyance. “There was an altercation – “

“What happened?”

“If you’d just let me finish,” Jack says, exasperated. “I suppose one of my alphas got a little too close. He just sniffed him, that’s all. Will does smell different today. You can’t blame them for being a little curious. These things are bound to happen when omegas work closely with alphas.”

Hannibal can hear whimpering on the other side of the line. “Put him on the phone.”

Jack doesn’t tarry. There is a scuffling noise, then a voice on the other end croaks, “Hannibal?”

“William,” Hannibal’s voice immediately loses its hard edge. “I’m coming to get you, alright? Just take deep breaths for me.”

Hannibal had thought Will would protest, given how stubbornly he’d insisted that he could go back to work, but instead he’s unresistant. “Kay... Okay....” Will’s breath hitches. “Just...Hurry.”

Hannibal hangs up and immediately cancels the rest of his afternoon appointments.

He arrives at the crime scene in record time, pushing through the ropes of alpha and beta investigators to try and get at his mate. They part for him warily and shoot him assessing sidelong glances: alphas don’t get along very easily.

Hannibal finds Jack first, loitering on the outskirts of the pools of people and smoking a cigarette. Hannibal could kill him for daring to look so heartlessly unaffected.

“Where is he?” Hannibal growls, not bothering with a greeting. He doesn’t have time to deal with Jack right now.

Jack nods in direction to the parking lot and exhales a puff of smoke. “My car. The grey one with the tinted windows.”

“We’re not through here,” Hannibal raises his chin in a gesture of alpha aggression and holds it for a few seconds. Jack slits his eyes, but otherwise doesn’t respond.

Hannibal turns and half-jogs towards the car. Up close, he can barely make out Will’s profile through the tinted glass. He taps once on the window and Will jumps, startled, then reaches over the backseat to unlock the door. It will be easier to soothe him in an enclosed space.

Hannibal slides in and immediately gathers his mate into his arms. Will’s face is blotchy red, eyes wet. He’s shaking.

Even though it pains him to see his mate in distress, there is still something so heart-wrenchingly beautiful about Will when he’s broken like this.

“I didn’t mean for this to happen,” Will sniffles, contrite and avoiding eye contact. “The alphas...they were all staring at me as soon as I got here. They knew. I didn’t even have to tell them. They could smell me – smell you on me – and I.....” He shudders, “I’m sorry, Hannibal, I didn’t want to drag you from work....I thought I could handle this, I really did...” He chokes.

“Hush.” Hannibal says, pressing his palm underneath Will’s curls, over his forehead, his one hand spanning the entire length of Will’s delicate face. He’s burning hot and sweaty with distress, but he automatically leans into the comforting touch of his alpha. Hannibal slides his hand down until he’s covering Will’s eyes. He’d once read that omegas find having their eyes covered calming.
Will quiets immediately, mouth slightly ajar, dark eyelashes brushing his cheeks. Hannibal holds his hand over Will’s eyes until he is still.

“Let’s go home, alright?” Hannibal suggests after a few moments. Will nods and allows himself to be led back to Hannibal’s car.

They drive home in silence, save for the occasional residual hiccup and the pitter-patter of rain against the windshield. Will doesn’t say so, but Hannibal can tell he has a headache. Can feel it like a phantom limb.

“I think I need to rest for awhile,” Will says as they walk through the front door of their house.

Hannibal takes his coat. “Whatever you need.”

Will thumbs at his sleeves sheepishly. “Will you gentle me to sleep?” His tone is so supplicating, so meek, Hannibal would have a heart of ash to refuse.

Hannibal thaws. “Of course. Go settle in. I’ll be up shortly.”

Will nods and pads up the stairs.

Once he’s out of earshot, Hannibal picks up the phone.

“Keep your alphas under control,” Hannibal hisses into the receiver. “They startled Will.”

Jack sighs impatiently. “It was your choice to take him off the synthetics, Dr. Lector. What did you expect? You forget I’m the one who preserved his virginity all this time. You should be thanking me.”

Hannibal growls. “I won’t have my omega reeking of rancid beta and furthermore, you swore you would ensure he was kept safe.” Hannibal clenches his fist as if he was already preparing to fight. “He was accosted, Jack, because you let him out of your sight. You know I don’t like this....business....you put him through for your own selfish advancement at the bureau. It’s wreaking untold damage to his mental health, and the pills only made it worse. I upheld my part of the bargain, but if this happens again I’ll forbid Will from ever working with you again, deal or no deal. I won’t have him endangered like that. Do you understand?”

There is a pause on the other line. Jack is obviously bristling at being scolded by a fellow alpha. It’s not unusual for alphas to butt heads, and Jack and Hannibal have always had a terse relationship at best. He’d be lucky if Hannibal doesn’t butcher him like a suckling pig for the thoughtless way he’s treated Will all those years.

Finally, Jack says, “It won’t happen again.”

It’s as good an apology as he’ll get. Hannibal growls. “See that it doesn’t.”

Hannibal hangs up and climbs the stairs to the master bedroom. Will is lying in the canopy bed, nestled half- underneath the covers.

“If you want to stop, you can stop,” Hannibal says, sitting on the edge of the bed

Will shakes his head. “I don’t. It’s important that I keep doing it. This is my gift.” He spits the word out with venom.

It is true that Will is unique in that regard. Hannibal theorizes that an overabundance of mirror
neurons - the so-called source of human empathy – is what allows him to read into the minds of serial killers. Omegas in general are known to have more mirror neurons than either betas or alphas, which explains their natural nurturance and astute social reading skills. For omegas, learning to ascertain other’s intentions and respond accordingly is not simply a useful tool; too often, it’s a matter of survival.

“I had a word with Jack. He’ll be more careful now.” Hannibal slides his hand back onto Will’s hot forehead, and Will practically moans, closing his eyes. It’s amazing how his omega practically melts under his touch.

“Is that good?” Hannibal strokes his thumb across his soft skin. He doesn’t even have to ask. He knows it’s good. He can feel his omega calm through his fingertips, and oddly, that sensation is calming him down too.

“Yeah. Yeah, s’good.” Will breathes.

“How’s your head?”

“Mmmm. Better.”

Hannibal settles himself on the bed and Will curls himself against Hannibal’s body, resting on his side with his head on Hannibal’s chest. In this attitude, it’d be easier for Hannibal to gentle him on his back – on the omegan tailbone pleasure point. Hannibal slips his hand just under Will’s shirt and lays it on the part of Will’s back that lies just above the flesh of his ass. Will makes a soft whimpering sound in encouragement, so Hannibal presses down harder.

“That feels nice,” Will murmurs into the fabric of Hannibal’s waistcoat.

And they lay there like that, for some time. Hannibal can’t pretend he doesn’t enjoy how lovely Will looks when he’s so peaceful, how Will’s body heat seeps through Hannibal’s clothes, how soft and inviting the skin of his lower back is. Moreover, he enjoys the fact that he’s the one who can do this to him.

Hannibal is relaxing too, languidly rubbing small circles on Will’s tailbone. And that’s when he hears it –

A purr.

An omegan purr.

It’s soft, barely audible at first, but then grows louder as Hannibal continues rubbing the base of Will’s spine. He almost stops breathing lest he disturb it. Will doesn’t seem to realize he’s doing it; the omegan purr is an involuntary reflex (but much like a tic) but it can be actively suppressed given enough active concentration. It is only known to occur when an omega feels perfectly safe and cared for by its pair-bonded alpha. It also can’t be faked.

The sound resonates through Hannibal’s chest, vibrating against his skin: a long, continuous, unbroken rumble. In that moment, Hannibal feels such unadulterated fondness for his mate that the urge to keep him safe and protected burns hotter than ever before. Of course, he knows he’s programmed to react this way. It’s just a natural biological reaction to his mate’s bonding signal. Still, it’s rather humbling to know that his mate trusts him enough to lay with him like this, gentle him like this, purr for him like this.....

His stubborn, willful mate. Despite everything, Hannibal does want him to be happy.
In fact, he’d do anything to make him happy.

***

~Later~

“I was thinking Zama,” Will says one night as he lounges on the couch with the puppy resting on his stomach. He’s enamoured with the animal, and although Hannibal finds it profoundly gratifying that he was able to please his mate so, he had made it clear from the beginning that he dislikes pets and that its care will be strictly Will’s responsibility. Hannibal hasn’t moved to touch the animal since he had brought it home; each time it tries to jump onto his lap he unceremoniously sets it back on the floor. He ignores it when it paws at his legs, and he swats at it when it’s making too much noise (when Will is not present, of course). The dog quickly learned that Will was the more willing recipient of its love and subsequently refocused all its energies onto its preferred master like a laser beam. In a few short days, the dog has become rather protective of Will, barking at Hannibal every time he opens the front door of his house. His house, as though the thing was defending its territory from an intruder. Dumb little creature. He’d be rid of it in a heartbeat if it were up to him.


Will looks at Hannibal rather impishly. “The one where Hannibal was finally defeated.”

The gentle taunt takes Hannibal by surprise. Will would have never been so bold as to tease an alpha unless he felt safe enough to do so. It’s good-spirited and friendly, and Hannibal smiles, despite himself.

There is profound affection in his voice when Hannibal mutters, “You cheeky little thing.”

Will smiles back. “She’ll win over you yet, Hannibal.”

Chapter End Notes

Speculated content of next chapter: Will’s next heat cycle. And possible ramifications of said next heat cycle *waggles eyebrows* And puppy, of course.
Also, the painting I discussed here is the actual one featured in the show
I lied. Chapter after this will (probably) feature Will’s next heat. In the meantime, here is some Other Stuff. Also I don’t really envision this having a story arc or anything. This is just a bunch of Stuff That Happens, culminating, of course, in Porn. Feedback is always welcome! Thank you everyone who has been reading and kudos-ing and commenting on my story! Muah <3 My continued appreciation to Whalebarf, whose mind is as depraved as mine and who helps me brainstorm all this perverted shit. iluuuuuuuuu

Will had begged Jack not to send him to therapy with Hannibal. He knew what his problem was. He wasn’t sleeping, and even when he did, he was so fevered with nightmares he’d wake up more exhausted than the night before. He just needed a good night’s rest, that’s all. He longed for a Zopiclone, but Jack had decided to wean him off after he’d developed so much of a drug tolerance that it took two whole pills to knock him out. After that, Will was lucky to get an Ativan only if he was having a serious episode.

It wasn’t as though Hannibal was a cruel man. In fact, Hannibal seemed to sense Will’s trepidation and made sure to speak to him slowly and softly without making any sudden movements. They’d first been introduced in passing, when Will had been on business with Jack. Will knew right away: Thoroughbred.

It was in the way he carried himself: confident, commanding and upright, completely secure in the knowledge that the world would bend to meet his whims. Eyes so bottomless and unwavering, as though he could pierce every secret Will’s ever had. They were opposites in every respect: where Will is endlessly restless, Hannibal is stoic; Will is fragmented where Hannibal is solid and unyielding.

Of course Will was afraid.

When they’d locked eyes, Will felt an inescapable gravitational pull between their bodies, drawing them together, at once terrifying and exhilarating. Hannibal’s scent was nothing like Will had ever experienced before: enticing and dangerous and powerful, musky and masculine, like leather and smoke and bourbon. Without even realizing it, Will found himself slipping into omegan patterns of behaviours when Hannibal was present, and he had to continuously remind himself who he was supposed to be. It was a constant, exhausting struggle not to simply sink to his knees at Hannibal’s feet and supplicate, and the mental effort made him jittery and nervous. Deep in his primal mind he knew, instinctively, he’d be replenished under Hannibal’s capable hands, that in his embrace Will would find sanctuary from the frenzied turmoil of his own mind. He wouldn’t have to think anymore. He could just close his eyes and......be.

But that was impossible, so Will was, as usual, stuck. He played his beta role to his best ability, but his every moment in Hannibal’s presence made him feel like he was treading water, constantly gasping for breath, muscles aching with exertion, just barely keeping his head afloat. All he really wanted to do was drown.........
Will awakes to the sound of rustling outside the bed. He takes a deep breath in and knows Hannibal had been sleeping next to him: his scent is imprinted on his Egyptian cotton sheets, rich and reassuring.

Hannibal is tying his Windsor in the bathroom mirror. His hair is fleshly slicked into its signature style.

Will sits up and swipes a hand over his face.

“Good morning,” Hannibal smirks from the doorway to the master suite bathroom.

“Morning,” Will says groggily. “What time is it?”

“Seven-thirty. You certainly slept well,” Hannibal says warmly, tucking the knot underneath his throat. “I hope you feel well-rested.”

Ten hours. Ten full hours of dreamless, uninterrupted sleep. Again. Will has never slept so well in his entire life. After his heat, Will slept almost twelve hours a day for a whole week. It’s hard to explain - he felt so blissfully empty, so still. He figures his body must be catching up all the hours he’d missed while he was living with Jack. God. He hopes Hannibal doesn’t think he’s lazy.

“Yeah. Thanks.”

“Good.” Hannibal pulls his suit jacket on. “I have an early appointment, so I regret that I must take my leave. There is food in the fridge, if you’re hungry.” Hannibal walks towards the bed and presses a kiss to Will’s forehead. “I will be back this evening. You’ll be alright?”

“Yes.” Will is used to spending time alone, yet all he really wants is to pull Hannibal back into bed, lay his head on his chest, and listen for the comforting thump thump of Hannibal’s heart.

“You know my office number. I’ll see you tonight.” Hannibal says. He grabs his wallet and briefcase and is out the door.

Will climbs out of bed, strips out of his nightclothes and starts the shower, allowing the warm water cascade over his body for far longer than necessary. He dresses in his usual sweatpants and t-shirt; he doesn’t envision himself being able to step outside just yet, so might as well stay comfortable.

Zama is waiting at the bottom of the stairs, barking eagerly and wagging her tail in excitement when Will finally comes trudging out of his bedroom. She rears on her hind legs and scrapes at the infuriating barrier at the base of the staircase that keeps her from her master every night. Hannibal’s only stipulation when he brought her home was that she is not to be allowed upstairs - a condition Will readily agreed to. Will would have agreed to pretty much anything if it meant getting a puppy. Besides, he knows Hannibal isn’t fond pets.
Will steps over the barrier and scoops the puppy up, immediately pressing a kiss to her little forehead. “Morning, girl.” She wriggles in his grasp, as if to nestle herself further in his embrace. Will has always liked dogs more than people. He felt safe with them, where he hardly ever felt safe with people – alphas especially. Dogs are so uncomplicated. He didn’t have to be on guard or pretend to be someone else. They don’t care that he’s an omega. Sometimes it feels like that’s all anyone cares about – who’s fucking him, who isn’t, how much his alpha paid for him. Why does it have to be such a big deal?

Will sets her down and pours food into her doggy dish. Hannibal might not like her, but he still buys her the expensive brand name dog food, like he couldn’t bear to have anything less even for his dog.

With Zama’s needs attended to, Will turns to his own gurgling stomach. Hannibal has stocked the kitchen with fresh fruit, eggs, and bread, but all Will really wants is that cereal Jack used to buy for him. Will is a creature of habit: he never liked to deviate from his routine if he could help it. Of course, moving in with Hannibal was a whole new and frightening transition – his world uprooted once again. Can you blame him if he clings to old habits for a modicum of stability?

Will opens the pantry to find that Hannibal had, in fact, purchased a new box. Of course he had. He’s been doing his best to make Will feel welcome in his home, and Will had to go be a little brat when Hannibal made only one request in return – a request that was within his rights as an alpha to make. Will is fully aware that Hannibal could have beaten him for being so impudent, but didn’t. He wondered how hard Hannibal would hit if it came to that?

He’s still having trouble believing this is all real. It happened in a whirlwind – overnight, he was mated, knotted, bonded. It’s terrifying and amazing and overwhelming and everything he’s ever hoped and nothing like he thought it would be…..Sometimes he still has to pinch himself to tell him that this is real. He’s Hannibal’s now. This is his home. His mate is kind and patient and he should be grateful for his generosity.

Still, that didn’t make being at the forced into the open as an omega any easier. He had forgotten what it was like to have alphas stare at him, scenting the air after he passes. Mortensen just came out of nowhere, cornering him against a wall before he could flee, sniffing at his pulse point obscenely. It felt so violating, even though the alpha didn’t touch him. Something seemed to snap in Will’s brain and he just felt like he needed his mate more than oxygen. Hannibal would have defended his honour, he knows it. Hannibal would have killed that other alpha. Will can’t explain why the thought fills his belly with heat.

After breakfast, he had little to do except wait around for Hannibal to return. He could clean, Will supposes, although Hannibal’s house is as immaculate as the man himself. Will knows he has a maid service come in once a week to do the brunt of the housework, but Will ought to ask Hannibal to cancel it so that he could make himself useful. He’ll take Zama out and let her run around in the backyard for a bit, but he’s not comfortable enough to take her for a walk yet. He’ll need Hannibal to come with them on walks until he’s familiar with the layout of the neighbourhood.

He occupies himself the way he has been for the last week that he’s moved in: rummaging through all of Hannibal’s things. He can’t help it. It makes him feel less out of place, makes this feel like his home too. Hannibal’s scent is everywhere and Will feels the urge to blend his own scent in so that other omegas will know that this territory, this alpha, is his. It just seems like an important thing to do. Good thing Hannibal’s away - he feels fucking ridiculous rubbing himself up against Hannibal’s furniture like an indolent housecat. Will spent eight years feeling out of place at Jack’s and he never wants to feel that way again. If Hannibal minds that he hasn’t been putting things
back in exactly the right place, he hasn’t been saying so.

He decides to cook for Hannibal. Bake fresh bread, he could do that. Alphas like coming home to a warm house with fresh baked bread. He’s nowhere near the cook Hannibal is, but Jack and Bella never seemed to complain before. When Bella had him prepare their meals, he only ever made simple things like stir frys and pasta and chicken, but then again, he doubts Hannibal would be so easily impressed. The thought of having his cooking offered up to Hannibal’s cultured palette is more than a little nerve-wracking.

“What should we make?” Will asks himself and Zama, who is sniffing at his feet. The assuring click click of her paws against the tile floor makes Will feel less alone when he’s home by himself all day. He finds Hannibal’s recipe book in a kitchen drawer: *Veal Noisettes, Gallinejas, Pomegranate Pani Puri.* What is this shit? There is no way Will could make a recipe like that. Hasn’t Hannibal ever heard of taco salad?

Will takes stock of the available ingredients in the fridge and pantry. Looks like he’ll have to improvise.

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Hannibal is greeted with a peculiar medley of scents when he arrives home that evening. Will’s, the dog’s, fresh bread, and the cutting smell of something burning.

“Will?” He calls, when his omega doesn’t immediately appear at the entryway to take his coat like usual. The puppy barks at him from the doorway but scurries off when Hannibal approaches – it’s only brave until Hannibal comes near.

Will is sitting at the kitchen table with his hands folded neatly in his lap. His t-shirt is splattered with red sauce and his face is flushed hot. The kitchen is a mess: flour everywhere, his pasta machine clogged with pallid, lumpy dough, dirty dishes stockpiled in the sink.

“I tried,” Will huffs in exasperation.

Hannibal looks over Will’s creation: a burnt lasagne, crusty and black, and wilting overcooked asparagus.

“We’re having garlic bread for dinner.” Will says morosely. “It’s the only thing I didn’t ruin.”

In any other situation, the state of Hannibal’s kitchen would fill him with ire. His kitchen is his holy shrine, the atelier wherein he crafts his finest masterpieces. Still, his omega’s gesture is rather sweet, despite the poor execution. Hannibal’s lips tug up in a small smile.

“I like garlic bread,” Hannibal chuckles, taking Will’s head in an embrace. Perhaps a little plebeian for his taste, but Will *is* trying, after all.

“I’m sorry…..”

Hannibal shushes him and pets his hair. There is flour in it. “It’s alright.”

Hannibal releases him, pulls two plates from the cupboard and hands one to Will, who takes it with a mumbled thanks.

“I think this calls for a little bit of wine,” Hannibal says, uncorking a new bottle of Carmignano. “You look like you could use a drink.”
Hannibal pours two glasses and hands the half full one to Will. He lifts his glass, “To my mate, Will. May he grace my table with his cooking for many years to come.”

Will laughs a little through his embarrassment and takes a small sip. “Yes, very funny. I can do better than this, if you’re wondering.”

Will watches as Hannibal takes a bite of the garlic bread, his oceanic eyes brimming with such unadulterated hope. So, so eager to please, his little omega......

“It’s good,” Hannibal says at length. “Really good.”

Will sits back in his seat, visibly relieved. “Good, I’m glad.” Will takes a bite of his toast, chews it thoughtfully, then looks around at the chaos. “I’m sorry about the mess. I’ll clean it up, I swear.”

He doesn’t, in the end. He finishes his glass of wine perhaps a little too fast and his head begins to droop until he’s cradling it in his arms like it’s too heavy for his slim neck. No wonder: omegas have incredibly low alcohol dehydrogenase levels, which slows down their metabolic breakdown of alcohol. They get intoxicated easier and stay so for far longer. Hannibal knew this, but was taken aback at how profound and immediate the effects were. Will went from normal to severely intoxicated in minutes. He’ll have to remember not to pour him so much next time.

“I don’t know how you do it,” Will slurs. “You and your fancy comestibles.”

“Comestibles.” Hannibal repeats slowly.

“I’ve never even heard of half of the ingredients in that recipe book of yours, and those cooking gizmos you’ve got? Jesus. It’s almost like you could kill a man with some of those things.”

Hannibal quirks an eyebrow.

“And I worked on it all afternoon,” Will grumbles. “I looked up how to make the noodles online. It said prep time would be one hour and thirty minutes.” He slumps back into his chair, reaching for his almost empty wine glass. “Google lied.”

“I think that’s enough,” Hannibal says, motioning with his hand for Will to set the glass down.

Will shrugs, unperturbed, and obeys. “I made it for Jack sometimes, although not from scratch. This was my first time from scratch.” He giggles suddenly. “Dunno if you could tell.”

Hannibal considers for a moment. “What else did Jack have you do?” He asks conversationally and takes a sip of his own wine. “Besides cook?”

“Oh. Um,” Will closes his eyes for longer than a blink. “I cleaned for him.”

Obviously. “You went to crime scenes.”

“Yeah, sometimes. When Jack told me to.”

“But you didn’t like doing it.”

“Didn’t like what Jack wanted me to be.” Will takes another bite of his garlic bread. “This isn’t bad, actually. Everything is good with enough butter on it.”

Hannibal wrangles him back on subject. “Did you want to stop?”

“Yeah, after I ruined the first batch of pasta dough I almost caved and ordered pizza.”
“Going to work with Jack, Will. Did you want to stop?”


There is a lull in the conversation as Hannibal gauges the situation. It is as good a time as any; Will is drunk and unguarded.

“Why didn’t Jack fuck you, Will?”

Will’s head lolls to one side.

“I dunno,” Will says after a beat. “I think he sorta wanted to. He almost did once........but Bella found out. She wasn’t happy ‘bout it.” Will thumbs his wine glass, swaying slightly, then snorts out a mirthless laugh. “She really hated me.”

“Is that when Jack started sending you to me?” Hannibal asks, fitting the pieces of the puzzle together. It hadn’t been Jack that had given Will those bruises. It had been Bella.

“Didn’t want me around anymore,” Will mumbles. His head has fallen forward onto the table and he cradles it in his arms. When he speaks again, his voice is muffled and only half-audible: “.....said I didn’t even have the decency to wait till she died to try and worm my way into his bed.....”

“You tried?” Hannibal prods.

Will makes a strange groaning sound. “I don’t feel well.”

Hannibal sighs, sensing he won’t get much father with the conversation. He gathers Will’s limp, sluggish form in his arms and carries him bridal-style up to their bedroom. He lays Will gently down, changes him out of his day clothes, slides him under the blankets, then goes back downstairs to attend to his kitchen. He sighs again when he takes in the scope of the mess. Is having an omega supposed to be this much work?

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Will had been so relieved when Jack came home with a prescription for heat suppressants. He hated being in heat. He’d only suffered through three of them in his life after he had gone through puberty, but that was still three more than he would have liked. His beta father had to lock him into his bedroom for days to keep him from wandering off and finding some random alpha to mount him. If Will had lost his virginity without a proper mate, he would’ve been dishonoured and his family would’ve been cheated out the dowry money they so desperately needed. His father would have probably kicked him out and then where would he be? He’d have wound up as one of those omegas.

Being in heat without having an alpha was like being slowly boiled alive: His skin burned, he was flushed with sweat, he writhed in his own skin, seeking touch. He jerked himself off, and when that wasn’t enough, he fingered himself, over and over again. He was too ashamed to ask his parents for a vibrator, although deep down he knew that wasn’t what he needed either.

Whatever alpha took him had to pay enough to pull his family out of debt. Will had had a few suitors from his hometown, but they all balked at his father’s negotiable price. The first alpha to
make a decent offer (and follow through) was Jack. Jack had the money to pay when no other alphas in his hometown did. After the deal was struck, Will packed up, said his goodbyes, and cried the entire plane ride from Baton Rouge Metropolitan to Baltimore-Washington International. Seventeen, to be mated to an alpha twice his age and who he barely knew; taken away from his family and friends, sentenced to life as a second omega for an alpha who was already pair-bonded: little more than a hole to fuck and an extra set of hands to work around the house. Will knew from the beginning Jack would never love him – because he loved Bella.

It was a relief when he determined Jack wasn’t going to fuck him – probably at Bella’s request, but still. Instead, Jack kept him to work for the BAU, which was an unexpected turn of events, to say the least. Will could not refuse him this when Jack had been so graciously keeping a roof over his head, feeding him, clothing him, getting him the pills he needed to put him to sleep.

Putting on the beta scent was like slipping on a different person’s skin. He didn’t have to be himself anymore – he was Will Graham, beta. Suddenly, there were no more lingering looks from alphas, no catcalls even when Jack wasn’t around to stare down the assailants. People treated him differently: less like a fragile little creature and more like a capable, independent human being.

Trouble was, he hated it. Will was none of those things. He hated being out in the open, hated how panicked he got whenever he thought that an alpha could see through his disguise. He felt at once completely free and completely trapped, and it made him awkward and socially withdrawn. He was exhausted simply by having to maintain his disguise day in and day out, to say nothing of the fact that he barely slept anymore. Every fibre of him screamed for release.

It could be worse, he told himself. He could be stuck with an alpha who beat him, who called him names. He wanted to be grateful to Jack, really he did, but he never felt like Jack’s home was his too. He was less a family member and more an intruder. Will was certain Bella hated him. Why wouldn’t she? She’s an omega herself, but for whatever reason, was not able to bear Jack children. They had been together for as long as Will’s been alive. And Jack has the audacity to show up at her door with a fertile omega boy half her age? Will doesn’t blame her for reacting the way she did. Will wouldn’t have wanted to share his alpha either – if he had been mated, that is. He’d want his alpha to sleep next to him, every single night.

Bella was the rare type of omega who worked outside the home (in an all-omega administrative unit of the BAU), but was dogmatically particular about how her household was to be run. She expected Will to have their cleaning done, to cook if she was going to be late, to do the laundry while she was at work. They came to an uneasy understanding as the years passed: she tolerated him, and he stayed out of her hair. He’d banish himself to his basement suite when she wanted time alone with Jack, and she was civil enough, even when Jack wasn’t around to keep the peace. It wasn’t terrible, exactly, but Will longed for something more.

It grated away at him every day like a parasite. This wasn’t his home. Imprisoned in an identity that wasn’t his, stuck in no-man’s land. He hadn’t had a decent night’s sleep in years. At least if he were mated to Jack, Jack would be required to spend a few nights next to him. That’s all he wanted. Someone to lie down next to him and keep him warm in the darkest hours of night.

Jack had asked what he wanted for his twenty-fifth birthday.

I want to be loved.

Since he couldn’t have that, he asked for a dog. Bella vetoed it.

Will got an electric blanket.
He couldn’t take it. He wanted to be touched. He needed to be touched. He was terrified of being sent to an unfamiliar alpha’s bed and the thought of Jack having him made him queasy, but being alone like this was much, much worse. No matter what, he simply felt...trapped.

One weekend, when Bella was away visiting her sister, Will made a point not to put on his synthetics after he’d showered. He stripped and laid himself down on his bed, jerked himself off until his body was wet and ready.

And waited.

He called out to Jack as soon as he heard his familiar footsteps overhead.

His heart was pounding and his hands felt clammy. Blood roared in his ears. He was cold, wanted nothing more than to put his clothes back on. Will couldn’t think of another time in his life when he’d ever been this nervous. He arranged himself lewdly, on his hands and knees so he could maybe pretend that he wasn’t actually doing this.

“Mate me, Jack,” He pleaded once he sensed Jack at his doorway. His voice didn’t sound like his own. “Please. I want you to.”

Will rolled his hips in a way he instinctively knew alphas would like, showing off that most intimate place that no one had ever touched before. Will couldn’t see Jack’s face from where his head hung between his shoulders, but he heard him make a strangled “Jesus Christ, Will,” which may or may not have been a good sign.

Will’s breath stopped as he heard Jack’s footsteps behind him. He felt so vulnerable like this, exposed to an alpha’s scrutiny. It didn’t feel intimate. It felt degrading: Will’s personal rock bottom. He didn’t know what would be worse – if Jack fucked him or if Jack turned him down.

Anything had to be better than the way he’d been living these last eight years.

After what felt like an eternity, Will felt Jack’s fingertips grazing along on his hips, running down his flank, warm and powerful: the touch of an alpha. Will jumped at the touch, then exhaled shakily. His back arched of its own accord in preparation. Jack was so close. Good, he told himself. At least now he knew what was going to happen. It’s decided. He didn’t have to think anymore. He braced himself -

Jack removed his hands and Will was left cold. Colder still, was Jack’s voice: “I can’t.”

Will collapsed and slunk off the bed, mortified beyond reckoning and unable to stop the tears that pooled unbidden in his eyes. He pillowed his head in his arms against the side of the mattress in an attempt to disappear. His throat constricted so tightly he almost choked. The first sob wracked his body with enough force to make his whole body tremble.

He couldn’t stop. Couldn’t breathe. It felt like a tidal wave breaking on the shore. All his pent-up disappointments, all the nights he had spent alone when Jack was upstairs with Bella, his frustrations, his longings. Jack didn’t want him. Jack never wanted him - not when he was seventeen, not when he was twenty five. Jack wouldn’t even fuck him when he presented himself like a fucking whore. How could he be so stupid? Will was just so tired.......

All he could do was cry.

Jack wrapped a blanket around him and awkwardly patted his back a few times, trying to comfort him in a clumsy way. Jack didn’t bother gentling him - it never worked before – but, still, Will ached to be held for once, to be told everything would be alright, to be pressed flush against a
warm, strong body.

Jack did none of these things. He stayed for a few moments, frozen and unsure, then gave Will an Ativan, which Will took without question. Jack left without another word, and Will laid himself on his bed until his sobs eased away and he drifted into a numb, dreamless sleep.

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It is around eleven thirty when Will stirs besides him.

“Hey,” Will hazards. He still looks a little tipsy, but is evidently no longer drunk.

Hannibal looks down from the book he’d been reading. “Hello.”

“I don’t do well with wine,” Will confesses, voice croaky. “I should have maybe told you that.”

Hannibal rests the book on his nightstand. “How do you feel?”

“Like I probably won’t throw up.”

“Probably?”

“Like I won’t throw up,” Will revises, and Hannibal smirks.

“What about the kitchen? I meant to ......oh God I fell asleep,” he moves to rise, but Hannibal stops him with yet another sigh.

“It’s fine. I took care of it.”

“Oh.” Will lies back down sheepishly. And he should be embarrassed: having his alpha clean up his mess is not something that any omega would be proud of.

Perhaps it’s the lingering effects of the wine, perhaps he’s less shy since Hannibal has taken him, perhaps he’s trying to mitigate his guilt; whatever the reason, Will suddenly reaches down underneath Hannibal’s sleep clothes and grasps his cock. Hannibal groans, and only partly from surprise.

“Let me take care of you, then,” Will offers, looking up at Hannibal, shy but determined. A better man would refuse. Hannibal is not a better man.

Hannibal nods and pushes Will’s head down.

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Will comes out of the change room in Hannibal’s choice, shoulders slumped in utter self-consciousness. He doesn’t like it, but Hannibal is not discouraged and smiles anyway.

“Ah,” Hannibal purrs, “You are a vision. See how much better the robin’s egg blue is compared to the crimson?”
Will seems unconvinced, but the compliment lands nonetheless. He can’t help taking pleasure in being told that his alpha finds him attractive.

Will turns in the mirror, wrinkling his nose and tugging at the trousers. “I don’t think these fit. They’re too tight.”

They might be. Just a bit.

“Nonsense, Will. That is how they are meant to be worn,” Hannibal assures him. He loves the way the trousers accentuate Will’s slim hips, his lean thighs, the firm curve of his ass, the way his waistcoat nips in at his narrow waist. All the alphas will stare. They’ll want him, but with Hannibal on his arm, none would ever dare approach. Will had hid himself away behind baggy, ill-fitting clothes for a reason. Hannibal won’t have his omega running around in such rags.

Hannibal twirls a finger in the air. “Give us a spin.”

Will does, hesitantly.

Hannibal rises from his seat and brushes Will’s shoulders reverently. “Look at you,” he breathes. There is no hiding his omega frame with these clothes. So slight and delicate, yet tough enough to handle being mounted by an alpha half again his size. Omegas are stronger than people give them credit for. “You don’t like it?”

Will pointedly avoids looking up at Hannibal.

“It’s beautiful, really. And it’s not that I’m ungrateful. It’s just......not something I’m used to,” Will says uncomfortably, skirting around Hannibal’s question instead of just bluntly telling Hannibal he hates it.

“Don’t you want to look nice?” Hannibal says softly, tilting his head down to try and catch his omega’s eye. “Make yourself attractive for me?”

Will shuffles his feet, then nods.

In reward, Hannibal presses a quick kiss to Will’s cheek. “You’ll get used to it. We’ll take this in charcoal,” Hannibal calls the attendant over his shoulder, “And the dove grey.”

“Very good sir,” She says, and gathers the suit pieces.

“I don’t even like opera.”

“Have you ever been to an opera?” Hannibal counters.

“Well.....no. Not exactly.”

“Trust me, you’ll like it.”

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The opera itself, while pleasurable in its own right, is not what Hannibal enjoys most about these society events. It is a venue for him to soak in the rich tapestry of human behaviour, to catalogue the little micro-expressions that so subtly reveal a person’s true nature, to observe the pretentious circus that is characterizes the lives of Baltimore’s well-to-do. These people have come to watch the performance, but Hannibal is here to watch them. To see and be seen, that is the point. An exercise in conspicuous consumerism: after all, what good is an 18k rose gold Jean Schlumberger
Hannibal herself is not above such things, of course, but at least he is aware of it.

Will wears the designer clothes Hannibal purchased for him with grudging acceptance, but to his credit, doesn’t utter a word of complaint. Hannibal knows it makes him uncomfortable, the way the other alphas’ gazes graze over him like a fine specimen on display, but then again, Hannibal can’t deny how much he likes it when Will’s hand reaches for his for comfort. Hannibal squeezes it in reassurance.

“They’re all staring at me,” Will says.

They are, but Hannibal doesn’t affirm Will’s suspicions. “There are many other omegas here, Will, you’re not the only one.”

“I mean, they know I’m not one of them, these.....socialites.”

Hannibal brings Will’s hand up to his lips and kisses it. “And that, Will, is exactly why I chose you.”

Will’s eyes round, but before he can speak, he’s interrupted by a prim, East Coast accent:

“Ah! Dr. Lecter!”

A portly, yet impeccably dressed middle aged woman glides towards them.

Hannibal easily slips into his mask. “Mrs. Edwards,” he greets, “You look ravishing, as always.”

She preens under the flattery. “You’ve been absent from your box for far too long. We were beginning to think you had tired of our company.”

“An impossibility, I assure you.”

Mrs. Edwards flashes an oily smile. “Where are my manners? This is my daughter, Cora.” She pushes forward a slight young woman with large brown eyes towards him: an omega girl who has just barely come of age. Her mother must be zoning in on eligible alphas like a homing pigeon. “Cora, sweetheart, this is Dr. Hannibal Lecter. He is one of the opera’s most generous patrons.”

Hannibal smiles, but does not offer his hand. It would be improper to do so to a foreign omega, even in the presence of her guardian.

“A pleasure to finally meet you, sir,” she says coyly with a small curtsy. She’s polite, at least. Pretty enough, not that Hannibal’s interest is piqued. She brazenly smiles up at him from beneath long eyelashes and Hannibal guesses her mother had trained her to do this.

At that, Will seems to tuck himself against Hannibal’s side. He’s strung tight like a bow, inwardly seething, but he knows better than to show it. It’s rather adorable, how possessive omegas can be of an alpha: adorable, that is, until an alpha tries to add another to his or her household. Taking a second or third omega can wreak havoc on the domestic peace if they do not get along. That is why if an alpha chooses to practice polyomeganry, it is usually consanguineal: the practice of taking omega mates that are already related in the hopes that they would be more cooperative with each other. It’s a good idea, in theory.

Mrs. Edwards seems to finally notice Will for the first time. She smiles but it doesn’t reach her eyes. “And who do we have here?” she says, trying to keep jovial although the disappointment is
already rife in her voice. No way she’d have her daughter mated as a second.

“This is my mate, William,” Hannibal says, and Will dips with a small bow of his head.

“Oh, your mate. How lovely,” Mrs Edwards says, although her face by now has fallen. She thumbs her long string of pearls. “I hadn’t heard you had taken a mate, Dr. Lecter.”

“I hadn’t announced it. It was rather spur of the moment. He is just too irresistible.” Hannibal snakes his arm around Will’s waist.

“So the infamous Hannibal Lecter has finally been tied down” Mrs. Edwards says musingly, before turning to address Will. She looks him up and down, evidently not impressed. “We were all wondering who would claim the most eligible thoroughbred in Baltimore. I’m sorry, William…..” her voice trails off and she looks at him expectantly.

Will starts, unsure if he should answer the direct question. Hannibal nods in encouragement.

“Graham.” Will finishes softly. His eyes skirt back to Cora, seizing her up, and Cora slits her eyes in return. A fight between them would be something to see. Hannibal wonders how vicious Will would be if he felt that his place in Hannibal’s bed was threatened. Watching omegas fight can be quite erotic…..when they aren’t yours, that is.

Mrs. Edward’s keeps that phoney smile plastered on her face. “Oh, of the Bridgeport, Connecticut Grahams? The Graham shipping magnates?”

Will seems to shrink even more against Hannibal. “No,” he mumbles. “Of the Rosedale, Louisiana Grahams.”

“Ah.” Mrs. Edwards says, vindicated. If Will came from high society she would know, that insufferable busy-body. Hannibal can tell she’s brimming with curiosity as to how much Hannibal had paid for this nobody omega. To her, Will is the kind of omega a powerful alpha like Hannibal would take as a third or fourth: pretty, fresh, tight, but otherwise unremarkable. Certainly not as a first, not as a pair-bonded mate. Mrs. Edwards is clearly unable to wrap her mind around this.

“Well, congratulations to you both.” She raises her champagne flute in a toast.

“Thank you, Margaret.” Hannibal smiles genuinely, enjoying the fact that, ipso facto, she’s drinking to her adversary. He can’t help but find this whole scenario a touch amusing.

Having determined she’ll get nothing else out of this interaction, she says, “Well, we best get to our seats. I do hope you enjoy our production, Doctor, and that you will visit us again promptly.”

“I’m sure it will be exquisite.” Hannibal assures her.

Mrs. Edwards smiles, then nods her head. “Gentlemen.” She takes her leave, Cora in tow. Hannibal watches their faces turn dark one they think he’s no longer watching and imagines how succulent she’d be with a lovely balsamic red wine sauce.

Will is still (delightfully) smouldering when Hannibal turns towards him. “Would you like a little bit of champagne before the show, Will? Or a soda?”

“Can we just go up?” Will says sullenly. His eyes still track Cora from across the lobby, as if he could make them both spontaneously combust if he concentrated hard enough. Hannibal nods, and guides him up the stairs.

Hannibal has a private box on reserve overhanging the right flank of the theatre. Thick, heavy red
curtains drape over either side to lend some privacy to its occupants. It offers a spectacular view of
the opulent 140 year old Beaux-Arts opera house and a bird’s eye view of the stage.

“Well, this is something,” Will says, awed, as he looks over the balcony. Then he adds resentfully,
“Nothing but the best, as usual.”

Hannibal’s mood darkens. As cute as his little flares of jealousy are, Hannibal is beginning to tire
of Will’s pouty, self-deprecating attitude. An omega should always endeavour to be as pleasant and
companionate as possible. Will has wound himself tight; he needs a little.....catharsis.

“I know you’re upset,” Hannibal says, leaning in and speaking lowly, “so I will ignore your tone.
But I intended on enjoying my evening tonight. You wish to sour it with your petty little
dramatics?”

Will’s eyes flash. “Petty? You saw the way that woman looked at me......like white trash from
some scummy backwards Louisiana bayou. Because I am.” Will turns his head to disguise his
mounting distress. “I don’t belong here. I don’t belong with you.”

Hannibal forces Will to turn to face him, all trace of amusement gone. “You think I want Edward’s
little stuck up brat?” Hannibal chides. “I thought I made myself clear. I chose you because I want
you – you and no one else.”

Will melts a little at this. He never seems to know quite how to handle Hannibal’s proclamations of
affection. “I just.....”

“You still doubt my desire for you?”

Hannibal leans in closer, resting his hand on Will’s neck and thumbing at the fine hairs just above
the collar of his suit jacket, then pulls him in for a wet, opened-mouthed kiss as the house lights
dim.

The sweeping overture begins: two heart stopping pulses of music, followed by soft, layered
harmonies that slowly build into a crescendo. The sound resonates through the opera theatre,
overwhelming the senses in a way that only a live symphony can. Don Giovanni: It’s ironic
bordering on the cliché that a man such as Hannibal should enjoy an opera about an aristocratic
libertine who is ultimately dragged to hell for his sins. Unlike Don Giovanni, however, there are
no demons hunting Hannibal for his crimes. There is no God to pass judgement on him, no eternity
in hellfire awaiting on the other side. The only person who stands a chance of bringing the
Chesapeake Ripper to justice is, in its own rather beautifully ironic way, the meek little omega boy
sitting next to him.

Such sweet harmony.....

“Why don’t you come sit with me?” Hannibal whispers in Will’s ear as he pats his leg.

Will shoots him a look. “You’re joking.....”

Hannibal is most certainly not joking. He reaches out, untucks Will’s skinny tie from his waistcoat
and wraps it around his fist. Hannibal tugs it firmly, testing its give, and Will’s head jerks. Before
he can object, Hannibal pulls him in for another messy kiss. Hannibal wastes no time in sliding his
tongue between Will’s lips. Will will need to be very relaxed for what Hannibal has in mind.....

“Come here, that’s it,” Hannibal guides Will by the tie onto his lap so that Will’s warm back is
pressed against Hannibal’s chest, then knocks Will’s legs apart so they are bracketing his own.
Will is a warm weight on top of him, but is slight enough that Hannibal is still able to see over his
shoulder. His ass is pressed tantalizingly flush against Hannibal’s clothed dick.

“Isn’t that better?” Hannibal says into Will’s ear, one hand bracing Will’s waist, the other still firmly fisted in his tie.

“Someone might see,” Will says meekly, but doesn’t struggle in his embrace. He never offers much resistance after Hannibal’s kissed him. He wants to obey.

Yes. Someone might see. Someone who Hannibal knows is sitting in the theatre box opposite his, whose daughter Hannibal is currently not fucking. Someone whose opera glasses are probably fixed on him right this moment. Hannibal smiles in that direction over Will’s shoulder. There won’t be any more socialite parents itching to mate their omegas to him after this.

“It’s dark,” Hannibal assures him. “We have our own private booth. Everyone is watching the opera. Besides,” Hannibal rolls his hips slightly, “This is rather cosy, is it not?”

Hannibal reaches down into Will’s lap and starts unbuckling the leather belt. Will jolts makes a small yelp of surprise, then tries to pry Hannibal’s fingers off.

“Shhhh,” Hannibal shushes into the sweaty skin on the back of Will’s neck. “Hush, Will. Do you want them to hear you?”

“What are you doing?” Will whispers back a little frantically.

Hannibal loops Will’s tie once more around his fist so there is barely any slack. “I want to show you how much I desire you.”

“Not here,” Will pleads, but Hannibal’s hand is already slipping down Will’s trousers and expertly rubbing at his prick. Will gasps and wriggles in his alpha’s lap, making Hannibal’s cock twitch in interest.

“Easy, Easy,” Hannibal soothes. “Just relax. Enjoy the sensations. The music, the view, my touch.”

Despite his protests, Will’s body can’t help but respond to the contact; after a few moments, one of Will’s hands settles atop Hannibal’s to guide him into his preferred rhythm. Will grips the balcony banister in front of him with the other in an attempt to steady himself in Hannibal’s lap. Meanwhile, Hannibal untucks Will’s dress shirt from his trousers and runs his hand up underneath Will’s shirt, over smooth, heated flesh. Will makes a soft gasp of pleasure and Hannibal kisses the hot skin on the back of his neck in reward. His moans are the perfect complement to the soaring arias coming from onstage.

“There you go. I knew you would like that.” Hannibal breathes. “My beautiful boy.”

When Hannibal determines Will is sufficiently aroused, he guides Will down using the tie as a lead so that he’s leaning forward on Hannibal’s lap, bent at the waist at a forty five degree angle. Holding him in that position, Hannibal snakes his other hand down the back of Will’s pants to cup his ass. Will moans and arches his back as much as he’s able – a half-hearted attempt at the lordosis reflex - but he can’t execute it correctly from the way his legs are straddling Hannibal’s thighs. By now, he’s gripping the gilded balcony railing so tightly his knuckles are turning white.

Hannibal slips his hand down between the cheeks, kneading the flesh there, then further still to where Will is hot and wet and needy. Hannibal doesn’t have to touch him to know he’s ready. He can smell the arousal on Will’s damp skin.
“Look at you, so slick for me, you filthy little thing. You like this, don’t you?” Hannibal circles the tight ring of muscle with the tip of his finger and already envisions himself slipping his cock inside. “You like being on display?”

Will humps his hips back and groans.

Hannibal pushes two fingers inside and the muscle gives with little resistance. Will tries to buck but he’s caught by the tie around his neck; Hannibal’s grip is firm and unwavering.

“I think you do. I think you like being beautiful for me, an ornament on my arm, tempting the other alphas. How they yearn to touch you, your lean legs, slim waist, the way only I can. I would kill anyone who tried,” Hannibal whispers his filth directly into Will’s ear, “I would serve you their hearts on fine porcelain. Because as I am yours, you are mine.”

Hannibal fucks his fingers in and out, two then three, all while keeping Will immobile in his lap, until Will is a whimpering mess.

“What?” Will chokes out.

“What?” Hannibal asks in a low predatory whisper, and when Will doesn’t respond, Hannibal tugs Will’s makeshift leash and continues, “You want something more, hmm? You want me to rut you, right here?”

Will’s head falls and clasps a hand over his mouth to stifle a moan.

It’s as good as a written invitation.

“Good, good boy,” Hannibal says, pulling out his fingers to work his belt and fly open. He’s so, so hard and desperate to sink into his omega’s tight heat. Once his cock is free, Hannibal tears Will’s trousers down just enough to expose the mounds of his ass, then arranges Will so that the leaking tip of his cock is pressed flush up against Will’s entrance. Will wriggles either in anticipation, embarrassment, or nervousness. Perhaps all potent mix of all three.

Will gasps aloud as Hannibal simultaneously tugs him back upright and thrusts himself inside, his moans muffled by the soprano’s particularly well-timed high note.

Hannibal rumbles low in his chest when he penetrates his omega to the hilt. He’s tight as ever, hot and slick with arousal. Will might say he doesn’t like being put on display for prying eyes to see, but his body is reacting like that of an wanton exhibitionist’s.

My little omegan whore, he thinks in a haze of lust, but stops himself before he says it aloud. He would never utter that word to Will.

Will whimpers as his hips swivel, seemingly of their own accord, in time to the swooping runs and arpeggios. He can’t go far with the noose wound tight around his neck, however, so instead he grinds himself down until the rim of his hole is rubbing up against the ridge of Hannibal’s pubic bone, seeking extra stimulation. In this position, Hannibal is unable to thrust; he knows the only way he can come is if Will does so first, so bringing Will to climax becomes Hannibal’s singular goal. He uses his hands – one at Will’s waist, one at his neck - to steer the rocking of Will’s hips, like a cellist plays a cello.

“Hannibal....” Will begins, but is cut off by a tug on his tie.

“Shhh, Will. Keep quiet. Just move so that it feels good.” Hannibal emphasizes his point with a particularly sharp jerk of the tie, and Will sputters as it is drawn ever tighter around his elegant
“You hear what she’s singing? *Batti, batti o bel Masetto,*” Hannibal croons, the Italian flowing off his tongue like black silk. “Beat me, beat me. The beautiful peasant girl begs her lover to punish her for succumbing to the charms of the rogue Don Giovanni.”

“*Starò qui come agnellina le tue botte ad aspettar.* Beat me, beat me, I will stand here as meek as a lamb to await your blows. She loves him so much, Will. She would do anything for him.”

Will must like fucking himself this way – slow and deep – because he’s rolling his ass in small circles around Hannibal’s prick, taking his own pleasure. His eyes squeeze shut in agonizing bliss as Hannibal’s prick rubs up against that sensitive little spot inside him, over and over again.

“Just like you, my little lamb. You would take it all for me, wouldn’t you? Whatever I’d give you, my hand, my words or my cock. I could make you beg for punishment, if you needed it. You’d come undone so beautifully under my blows.”

“Hannibal,” Will sobs, “Oh, fuck....”

“Just like now. I play you like a master musician plays his instrument. I know just how to pluck your strings to make you sing. Sing for me, William. I want to feel it.”

Will throws his head back on Hannibal’s shoulder, panting, then slips his free hand down his pants to rub at himself. It only takes one stroke before he comes with a pathetic moan, fucking himself back onto Hannibal’s cock spastically to ride out his orgasm. The stimulating contractions of his omega’s hole automatically prompt Hannibal to climax, but before his knotting glands can swell to lock them together, Hannibal pulls Will forward, slipping out just enough to avoid being tied. He spills like that, coating Will’s inner walls with release. It’s enjoyable, certainly, but somewhat less satisfying than if he was able to bond his mate with his knot as nature intended. Hannibal is far too practical a man for that right now.

Usually Hannibal comes so deep inside Will that when he pulls out there is no trace, but this time there is a thin rope of semen trickling from Will’s hole: a testament to their debauchery. Hannibal reverently pushes it back in with his thumb. Even after being fucked open, the muscle immediately clamps itself tight, greedily trying to keep in Hannibal’s release. There is a certain amount of perverse pleasure in knowing that Will will have to sit through the rest of the opera with Hannibal’s come inside him. He won’t soon forget who he belongs to.

Hannibal loosens the tie and Will coughs, taking in three gulping breaths and rubbing at his neck. It takes a few moments before they are able to reassemble themselves: Hannibal tugs Will’s pants up and tucks away his own spent prick. Will rearranges his rumpled tie with trembling hands.

“My darling,” Hannibal says, turning Will’s head. His omega’s eyes are glassy from orgasm and unshed tears. Now that he’s been sufficiently broken down, Hannibal must carefully put him back together. “You make me very happy, do you know that?” Hannibal presses his mouth to Will’s, and is pleased to find Will pliant and boneless, all traces of indignation gone. He’s been emptied, refined, like iron ore in a smelter. Purified by the heat of the furnace.

And what a treasure lies within....

“You’re crazy, you know that?” Will murmurs, limp in Hannibal’s lap.

Hannibal responds by squeezing his arms around Will’s narrow waist and breathing in the sullied omega scent, tainted with Hannibal’s mark. He smells like *sin.*
“Only where it counts.”

Chapter End Notes

The aria in question here
Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

Omg, you guys, what incredible support xoxoxox I had no idea people felt so strongly about this story!
The reason I took it down to re-edit is because I felt some critiques had a point (I do appreciate constructive criticism). I made the changes I felt were necessary, and I think it’s better now, but I stand by my decisions as an author. This is a dark story, Hannibal is a dark character, and this is set in a dark world. I understand this won’t be everyone’s cup of tea, and that’s fine. It’s impossible to cater to everyone’s desires, and this is my story first, after all.
And yes, I draw on some real-world injustices to help world-build, that’s part of my kink. You know why? It feels like I’m reclaiming some of the shitty misogynistic things that have happened to me. Bringing them under my control in a twisted way. There is perverse satisfaction in that. I would never, ever condone this stuff in real life, and I do not claim this is supposed to be a healthy relationship. I’m a porn writer! This isn’t Pulitzer material here, I ain’t no Dickens. I’m shit at real plot. I write gratuitous smut for people to fap to, lol. So chill!!
Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to comment and message me! You guys are so encouraging to a newbie writer like me, totally recharges my smut-producing batteries <3333 Especially Dangereuse and Whalebarf, I would totally bearhump the pants off you both. Rawr!
Here it is, reposted for (hopefully) your enjoyment!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The knock at the door comes at exactly 7:47 in the evening, when the sky is beginning to darken and only the residual heat of the mid-July sun lingers, muggy in the air. It’s hot, and they can’t afford air conditioning, so his mother opens all the doors of their simple house and tries to form a draft to suck out all the overheated air. Unfortunately, this only brings in mosquitoes and flies, so she hunts them down with a swatter, stony with determination. Everything must be perfect.
Will knows the knock comes at exactly 7:47 because Jack was running late; he said he’d be here at 7:30, but it’s his prerogative to leave them hanging like this. Will and his parents had been sitting on pins and needles since that morning, when his mother had taken him to get a haircut to tame his mop of curls (they’ve since gone frizzy with humidity) and to the salon to have someone excavate the dirt that’s permanently clogged underneath his fingernails. They’ve been watching the clock since seven, in case Jack came early, and been sitting virtually on the edge of their seats since 7:26, when the moment of his arrival was so imminent time almost ceased ticking altogether.
He’s almost beginning to think the alpha won’t come, which is either relieving or crushing (Will’s not sure which)...... but he does, eventually. Everybody jumps with the knock on the door, and his father waits for a few moments to make it seem like they weren’t just sitting in the kitchen, twiddling their thumbs, waiting desperately for his arrival.
“Will, there is someone here I’d like you to meet,” his dad calls, and Will swallows his nerve, trying not to think about how this man could change the course of his entire life.
“This is Agent Jack Crawford. He’s with the FBI. Isn’t that exciting, Will?”

“Hello, Will,” the alpha smiles. He’s tall and broad, as male alphas are, with deep intelligent eyes and dark mocha skin. Will’s a little instinctively scared, but the alpha seems friendly enough, and keeps his arms at his sides in a gesture of non-aggression. Will wonders, fleetingly, what his mixed children by this alpha would look like. “You remember me? I was at the police bureau a few weeks ago.”

“Yes, of course. A pleasure to meet you, sir,” Will says softly, dipping his head in a small bow like he’d been taught.

The alpha continues smiling, but it does nothing to still the frantic hummingbird pace of Will’s heart. Will’s father invites the alpha in, and the three of them take a seat in the modest (yet impeccably clean) living room. Will sits at their feet, like a good omega. It’s probably a little conservative and old-fashioned for the omega to sit on the floor at these kinds of meetings – they wouldn’t do it like this up north, Will thinks – but here in the deep South, people are sticklers for tradition. Omegas stay home, take care of the house, are helpmeets to their alphas, raise the kids, bake fucking pies for fucking bake sales.

Does he even want that? He’s not even sure, that’s the fucked-up part. He wishes he was one of those independent, free spirited, progressive omegas he sometimes reads about when he’s holed away at the library – ones who don’t need or want to be mated, who can take care of themselves. Will isn’t so strong. His last heat was the worst yet, and at it’s peak he’d have done almost anything to have an alpha mount him.

“I heard how you helped solve the Lakeside Butcher case. Very impressive. That had us stumped for years.”

“Thank you,” Will mumbles.

“Will is a very bright boy.” His father says proudly, but then again he might just be trying to show off. “Very bright. Got his mum’s looks too.”

“I see that,” Jack says musingly. “You seem to know quite a bit about abnormal psychology.”

Will shuffles his weight in modesty. “It’s an interest of mine,” he says shyly, “I read the entire DSM, and everything by Hervy Cleckley.”

“Really,” Jack smirks, genuinely impressed it seems, not condescending like most alphas are when Will talks about his intellectual pursuits.

His father adds quickly, “But he’s a good worker, too. He’s real helpful around the house, he grew the garden out back himself.” His father ruffles his hair, “Nothing like fresh vegetables straight from the garden.” His father talks about him like he’s not even present, listing his traits and accomplishments, and Will winces internally when his father uses the word obedient. Like he has an option. He’d have to obey this alpha whether he wanted to or not, and if Jack wanted to beat him for being insolent, his parents would probably supply the switch.

His thoughts are interrupted when Jack reaches out to him. “May I?” Jack asks, directing the question to Will’s father.

Will’s father nods in assent, and Jack gently takes Will’s wrist in his hand, and brings it up to his face. He sniffs at the pulse point there, and Will’s breath hitches. Jack noses at the delicate flesh, scenting him, and Will swallows down the urge to pull his hand away. He’s never been so close to
an alpha before.

“You wanna see him too?” His father offers softly, “If you wanna see him, that can be arranged....”

Will freezes. He knew this was coming, and still his cheeks burn, the humiliation crawling under his skin. His father went through great pains to make sure Will remained untouched, so of course he’d be expected to prove it if the alpha so demanded. Will will be glad to be relieved of his virginity after he’s mated; maybe then he’d be granted a modicum of freedom.

“That won’t be necessary,” Jack says, and Will suppresses the sigh of relief at not having to strip off his clothes for the alpha’s inspection. “Will seems like an upstanding young man, I’m sure he’s pure.”

“He is,” His father confirms, “He’s a good lad.” His father addresses him, “Will, why don’t you go in the kitchen and make Agent Crawford and I some lemonade?”

That’s his cue to leave so that his father and the alpha can talk business, discuss the terms and auction him off like some prize heifer. He shuffles into the kitchen, somewhat shaky on his legs, where his mother is waiting with baited breath.

“Well?” she whispers urgently. “How’s it going?”

Will takes the lemonade he’d premade out of the fridge. There was nothing about today that wasn’t orchestrated to the smallest detail. Be friendly, but not too friendly. Smile. Be polite, modest, speak only when you’re spoken to, our family needs this, how could you be so selfish?

“Good, I think,” Will says flatly.

“He’s still interested?”

Will shrugs. “I guess.”

“Oh,” she says, clasping her hands together, “Oh honey, I’m so proud of you,” His mother beams, like this is his biggest accomplishment – like he wasn’t the first omega to graduate high school at the top of his class, like he hadn’t helped solve Mrs. Blanchard’s murder by reading the clues the Bower County Police Department missed. No, landing a moneymate will forever be his greatest achievement. Wait, scratch that – bearing a child to a moneymate would be his greatest achievement. They’ll probably etch it on his tombstone: William Shannon Graham, Brood Mare.

She fusses with his hair, tucking wayward curls behind his ear and Will flinches away.

“Here, pinch your cheeks, bring a little color to your face. You look so pale.”

“Mom, it’s fine.” Will says, swatting her hand away.

“Don’t be sour, Will. Nobody wants a sourpuss for a mate. No, don’t use those glasses, take these,” she hands him two from her fine set, but not before inspecting them thoroughly. “You better not be scowlin’ like that for Jack.”

“I wasn’t,” mumbles Will.

“I think he really likes you, he could provide for you. Not like that police officer. You should consider yourself lucky he’s interested.”
Yeah, lucky. Lucky that some hotshot alpha is deigning to take him as a second. Darren might have been poor, but at least he was closer to Will in age and he didn’t already have a mate.

His mother pokes at the corners of her mouth in a silent gesture to remind him to smile, and sends him back out. Will says nothing, rolling his eyes when he turns away from her, and takes the tray of lemonade and scones back out into the living room. Jack and his father are laughing about something, like old friends, and Will can’t help the flash of anger he feels towards his father, for thinking this was a good idea, for selling his son so young to pay the debt he’d accumulated after his business went south. He serves Jack first, then his father. He doesn’t need to look at Jack to know his eyes are boring into his skin and it’s making him uncomfortable.

“So Will,” Jack addresses him, enveloping Will’s hand in his own, “I know it’s a bit rushed, and I do wish I could court you properly, the way you deserve, but – how about it? Would you like to come back to Baltimore with me? You won’t want for anything, I swear it.”

Will’s eyes skirt to his father, who is staring at him with a firm expression, friendliness gone:
If you say no there will be hell to pay, boy.

Will ducks his head. His eyes water and he smiles to hopefully pass it off as tears of happiness. What other choice does he have?

“Yes,” he says shakily, “I will.”

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As much as Will likes to consider himself well-educated for an omega, Will admits he knew embarrassingly little about sex going into his mating arrangement with Jack. Sex was not really something that was talked about in his small backwater Louisiana hometown; heaven forbid he’d have received some kind of sex ed growing up and gotten ideas. Hell, whenever one of his classmates went into heat and was dutifully taken out of school for a week, it was said they were “indisposed” or “unwell.” No one would ever just come out and say it: Adam can’t come to school today, he’d let any alpha that looks his way fuck him. Will knew this much: Jack had rights to mate him, breed him, and had pieced together the basic mechanics of sex from hushed whispers and seedy late night television. But the experience of it, of what the alpha would do, of what was expected of him, was totally unknown to Will. That in itself was terrifying.

He’d masturbated before, here and there, although his parents never condoned it. Alphas masturbate, that’s a given; they have high sex drives, high stamina - the better to rut their mates through their heats. But omegas......well, proper omegas wait until they’re mated before they should even think about experiencing sexual pleasure. That’s what he was told, anyway. Will couldn’t see how any omega could resist touching him or herself during a heat – just to take the edge off the fever for a moment or two. Still, Will could never get himself off without a liberal helping of guilt. Some ideas are hard to shake.

Hannibal had since reassured him that it’s perfectly normal for young, fertile omegas to masturbate, but was also quick to emphasize that as a mated omega, Will’s sexual energies should be focused first and foremost on his alpha. That suited Will just fine, because no orgasm he’d ever given himself could compare with the freight train that is an inner orgasm. Will had only ever managed external orgasms alone by rubbing his cock (and sometimes humping pillows, Will hates to admit). They felt good, made him feel somewhat less desperate; but they were focal, shallow and, in the end, supremely unsatisfying. He knew he wanted something inside, especially during
his heats, but was too ashamed to try anything other than fingers – not that he could reach, anyway. God forbid he uses a toy or a cucumber or whatever and ruin his precious, precious virginity.

The orgasms he gets from being rutted by Hannibal are.....unlike anything he’d ever experienced before. The warmth begins inside him, deep in his core where he’s being rubbed and stretched, then slowly builds into a crescendo until the pressure is so great his whole body goes rigid with anticipation. Then comes the release, sweeping over his body like a torrential tsunami, so powerful it makes him spasm and moan like a man possessed. It goes on and on, long after the first tidal wave of pleasure, until he aches with it, overstimulated, but unable to stop. His entire pelvic floor contracts rhythmically, massaging his alphas cock to nurse every drop of semen out and deep within where Will craves it most. His body is programmed to ensure Hannibal’s pleasure and acts accordingly, without any conscious input on his part. Knowing Hannibal has taken pleasure in his body heightens his own satisfaction. When Hannibal spills inside him, it’s like a searing brand, claiming Will as Hannibal’s own. For the first time in Will’s volatile life, he feels stable. Rooted.

After the sex comes the tie, and that, more than the sex itself, is what Will relishes most. Being knotted....is intimate, Will can’t think of any other way to describe it. True, he feels sore and wrung out and exhausted and oversensitive, but at the same time, it’s a high unlike any other, tied not only in body but also in mind. Hannibal had shown him different positions to make love, but the only way their anatomies fit so that Will can take the knot comfortably and securely is for Will to be in the traditional mounting position. Not that Will minds. Not being tied is as unsatisfying as not having an orgasm – perhaps more so.

It’s probably his sentimental schmoopey omegan nature talking, but lying knotted to his mate, drenched in their combined scents – it’s more than a mere physical act. It’s like.....like he’s being pierced to the very core; held open in his deepest vulnerability. Exposed. Present. Transcendent. There is no future, there is no past. Nothing on earth matters. He’s swaddled, confined, restrained and completely safe. The reassuring pulses of Hannibal’s damp breath against his neck and the steady throbs of Hannibal’s heartbeat inside him are constant reminders that he has Hannibal’s full attention, as Hannibal has his: a true pair-bonded couple. Will has never felt so wanted in his life.

Hannibal’s cock is heavy, very heavy, sitting taut in his insides, the knob at the end applying gentle pressure to his plump sweet spot – that place inside he never even knew existed until he started having sex. No matter how hard Will clenches, he can’t dislodge Hannibal’s cock - not that he wants to. He can come like this, over and over, oversensitive and aching. Sometimes, Hannibal reaches down to where they’re tied and massages the skin around the rim of his hole, where he’s stretched around the unforgiving girth of Hannibal’s prick. His fingers probe, seemingly to ensure Will is properly stoppered, and then press up, right underneath his hole, intensifying the pressure on Will’s prostate. Other times, Will rides his hips in tiny up-and-down motions on the solid skewering length, having discovered that the ridges at the base of Hannibal’s prick happen to feel incredible against the sensitive rim of his entrance. So good, in fact, that he often can’t help but hump himself back onto Hannibal’s cock. This, Hannibal says, serves to work his semen deeper.

As soon as Will comes, Hannibal invariably comes as well; their pleasures are inextricably linked.

It’s on a night like this, where Will is four times fucked out, half-asleep and exhausted that he notices it for the first time. Will starts awake, suddenly completely lucid, then swallows hard against the urge bubbling in his throat. A purr. A stupid omega purr.

“Don’t suppress it on my account,” Hannibal says warmly, nosing at the hairs on the back of Will’s neck. He certainly sounds proud of himself.

If Will weren’t so depleted, so utterly wrung out and emptied, he might’ve felt embarrassed about
It’s weird. I’m just...not used to it.” On the exhale he feels another inadvertent deep rumble, and Hannibal squeezes his arms around him tighter, growling softly.

“I can feel you do it, inside.” Hannibal runs his hand down Will’s flank, strewing goosebumps in its wake. Down, down, to the place where they’re still joined, as if in emphasis. “You feel good, Will.”

Will’s mind foggy with sleep and post-orgasmic haze, and it’s hard to muster the energy to try and suppress it, so he just allows the sound to vibrate in his throat uninhibitedly. He hadn’t done it in years - not since he was a kid, when he was small enough for his mother to hold in her arms. Does that mean he loves Hannibal? He feels safe, yes, and cared for, and he is grateful to his mate for everything he’s given him.

Will nestles into Hannibal’s embrace, held so tight he can’t even move, and sighs as Hannibal strokes his hair.

Perhaps this is all love is.

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It takes time for Will to settle into life with an alpha, as a true bonded mate. Hannibal often works until late in the evening, so unless he’s called away to do work for Jack, Will is usually left to mind the house by himself. That equates to a lot of time alone. With Hannibal’s encouragement, Will decides to start a garden in the backyard. It ends up taking quite a bit of work, not that Will minds. Will enjoys gardening and is good at it. He likes being outside within the safe enclosure of Hannibal’s fenced-in yard, with Zama frolicking about, chasing insects. Call him sappy, but there is something rather cute about young seedlings just barely poking up out of the soil, green with fresh life. Satisfying, too, when those seedlings begin to grow and blossom and fill the garden with sweetness. How pleased Hannibal will be when Will’s garden comes up and they’ll have nice fresh vegetables to enhance their meals.

While Hannibal is the undisputed master of the house, there is no question that the garden is Will’s domain. Will organizes the layout of the garden to his liking: He plants rose bushes, petunias, snapdragons, and daffodils up against the house; lettuce, potatoes, onions, carrots, green beans, and zucchini out back; lilac, parsley and dill near the kitchen window. Hannibal is not outdoorsy - certainly is not one get a little dirt under his fingernails – but sometimes he’ll sit outside on the patio with a glass of wine as Will works, eventually calling Will over to sit beside him on the patio swing. He’ll pet Will’s curls and kiss him on the temple, which, stupidly, feels rather rewarding in and of itself.

“What do you think?” Will asks as he sits underneath Hannibal’s arm, but he’d proud even without Hannibal’s praise and doesn’t bother to hide it.


Will takes a sip from Hannibal’s wine glass without asking, just to feel that not-so familiar burn and sweet dulling sensation. Hannibal has had to regulate his alcohol intake since he destroyed the kitchen, but still allows a few stolen mouthfuls here and there.
“The vegetables will come in soon,” Will says, “but I don’t think we’ll get much. The growing season was a little cut short. Next year it’ll be better.”

Hannibal hums in response and toys with Will’s hair. It’s becoming easier and easier to sink into comfortable silence with Hannibal. He’s not naturally chatty, and is usually spent after a day at work to want to make idle conversation. Well, that’s okay. Sometimes it’s just nice to be held.

Other evenings, after supper, Hannibal takes Will out to walk Zama around the neighbourhood. Will is grateful for this indulgence, since he knows Hannibal would much rather be at home with a fine aged scotch than standing outside in the rain watching Zama try to pee on everything. Slowly, Will starts to get a sense for the area, and soon enough, he feels confident enough to head out on his own. The neighbourhood is clean, upper-class, well kept; secure enough for non-heated omegas to go about their business unmolested. During the daytime, Will sees a lot of unaccompanied omegas and betas taking their children to the nearby park, going for jogs along high-traffic trails, playing Frisbee with their dogs. They talk and laugh as they watch their kids play, sometimes having picnics along the shore of the lake. Will can’t help but be a little envious. It would be nice to make some new friends around here, but the neighbourhood omegas seem to have their own well-established social circle – a social circle that clearly doesn’t include people like him. He doesn’t know how to approach them and introduce himself, opting instead for a nervous wave whenever they happen to glance his way.

Hannibal smirks when Will tells him this - the affairs of omegas must seem so petty and frivolous compared to the grown-up world of alphas. Well, maybe they are; but even so, his condescension makes Will chafe a little bit. Just because Hannibal has no need for company outside his own home, doesn’t mean that Will couldn’t do with a little socializing. Will’s not an extroverted person by any means, often finding himself very anxious in social situations, but it’s been years since he’s had someone he could really talk to, and as much as he loves his mate, Hannibal can be rather distant and not prone to idle chatter. Preferably, Will would like someone he could talk to about omega things; someone who’s been there, has had first-hand experience, who could give good advice. Will is still pretty new at being mated, and rather unsure what’s normal and what’s not.

“I’m serious.” Will whines, “I haven’t had any good omega friends since I left Rosedale. I....it’s a little lonely at home while you’re at work.”

“There’s always the dog,” Hannibal suggests, not looking up from the morning newspaper.

Will purses his lips and rinses the last of the pots from breakfast. “Yeah, I know....it’s just....it would be nice to have someone who talks back.....y’know. To swap recipes and stain removal tips and stuff.” Will says, surprised at the unintended bitterness in his voice.

“And yet you do not want me to take a second,” Hannibal says musingly – his way of ending the conversation.

Will shuts his mouth and says nothing more.

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Despite Hannibal’s indifference, Will is undeterred, and spends many of his afternoons sitting under one of the park’s huge elm trees, trying to focus on this book or that while watching the other omegas do yoga out of the corner of his eye. Some of them are pretty bendy -Will wonders if alphas like that.....

On one of these breezy afternoons, Will is half-asleep under an especially dry tome when a flicker of movement catches his attention. Will blinks several times, adjusting to the brightness. A child
from the playground, perhaps no older than a toddler, is reaching out cautiously to pat Zama’s head. Zama sniffs her hand, but is otherwise too lazy to bat away the annoyance. The child is fair, very, very fair, with ghost-like wisps of white-blond hair haloing her head. Will thinks for a minute that Hannibal’s child would be coloured like that, but with black eyes rather than blue.

“Hello there,” Will says gently, but he’s clearly not the one the child is interested in. He sits up and brushes bits of leaves out of his hair. “You want to pet the doggie? Where your mama, huh?”

“Madison!”

One of the omegan mothers walks briskly towards them and swoops up the child in her arms. She looks especially expensive up close, clad in designer yoga pants and perfectly coiffed honeywheat hair – the kind of omega that’s still a size four even though she bakes the best chocolate chip cookies and whose house is always immaculate even when there is no company to appreciate it. Will feels rather frumpy in comparison, the dirt from the garden still lodged underneath his fingernails. “Madison, what have I told you? You stay where I can keep an eye on you. I’m sorry about that,” she says, addressing Will.

“No, no, it’s okay. Zama’s really friendly.” Will says, “She can pet her if she likes.”

The woman seems to think for a minute, seizing Will up. “If it’s okay with the nice gentleman,” she eventually agrees, setting the toddler back down. The child goes right for the dog again and taps Zama’s head with no real finesse. Zama allows this, seemingly resigned to her fate, and yawns sleepily.

“Nice puppy, huh Maddie?” The mother coos down at the child, but watches carefully in case the dog’s easy mood should sour. “What breed?”

“Golden retriever cocker spaniel mix,” Will says, smiling through his nerves and suppressing his Louisiana accent.

The omega mother eyes him curiously. “You must be new around here. Just started seeing you around.”

So they have noticed him, watching them from afar like some pervy alpha. Will clears his throat, a little embarrassed. “Yeah, I, uh, just moved in a few months ago. The brick house on fifth.”

“Oh, really?” she says, intrigued, then raises her eyebrows at Will’s choice of reading material: Alphaic Antisocial Personality Disorder. “Doesn’t that thoroughbred live there?”

Will closes the book and tucks it under his arm self-consciously. Of course she knows him. “Yeah. He’s my mate. Dr. Lecter.”

“Huh.” She says, but it sounds more like who would’ve thought. The single syllable echoes relentlessly in Will’s mind: Huh. What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

“Well, I won’t keep you.” She tugs at the child’s hand. “Come on, Maddie. Say bye-bye to the doggie.” The child doesn’t, probably shy, but Will smiles anyway.

“It was nice meeting you,” Will says automatically, and she nods and turns back towards the playground. When she rejoins her omega friends, they circle around each other and collectively turn their heads to peer at him. Will feels his cheeks burn, but he pretends to ignore it by staring blankly at a random page in his book until they meander to the other side of the park. Once it’s clear he’s no longer a subject of their speculations, he gathers his things and hurries back home.
Perhaps it’s his social paranoia talking, but Will swears they were picking him apart: his hair, his clothes, his glasses. They could tell he’s an outsider, that he’s sorely out of place in this neighbourhood of wealthy alphas and their trophy-mates. They must’ve been wondering what he was doing there, how he managed to score an alpha – a thoroughbred, loaded enough to afford that brick house on fifth. He can almost hear their whispers: *You’ll never believe what he was reading....*

Will cleans Zama’s paws before letting her loose in the house and chews his lip thoughtfully. Great. How could he show his face at the park, knowing all the omegas talking about him behind his back? He’ll have to find some new route to walk Zama.

It’s still bothering him come nightfall, but Will makes a point not to mention it to Hannibal. What’s he going to say? *The other omegas on the playground are being mean to me?* Hannibal would laugh, then probably tell him he’s overreacting, explain to him that this is just another manifestation of his insecurities. Will sometimes wishes Hannibal would take him more seriously. Even if he is just being paranoid, it would be nice to have a little support.

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Will spends the next day avoiding the park, choosing instead to devote time to his garden and household chores. When Zama is napping, it’s very, very quiet, and Will kills some time picking through Hannibal’s vast library collection for reading material. Will had always been a voracious reader when he could get his hands on a book or two, not that his parents ever encouraged him. Back home, the nearest library was miles away and it’s not like reading would help him be more fertile or some shit so, as far as his father was concerned, why bother? At least Jack had had the decency to take Will to the library when he had the time, often in conciliation after he and Bella had had some kind of fight.

Granted, Hannibal does have some very interesting books, many of which centre around Will’s pet interests – forensics and psychopathology. One in particular catches his eye – *Omegan Biospsychology*. It looks like an old university textbook. Will flips through the glossy pages, reading snippets here and there, glancing at diagrams and hormonal feedback loops. It’s unsettling how Will finds he adheres to the descriptions in the book, as though he weren’t a unique human being with his own traits, characteristics and interests. No, he’s an omega, and omegas act *this way for these reasons*.

Will lingers on the chapter about sexual behaviour, pregnancy and birth, and is, quite frankly, astounded at the depth of information that was denied to him. Here are all the answers to the questions that have been eating at his mind ever since he first started having heats, right in front of him, so easy. All his life, he felt like he was stuck in this body and yet knew nothing about it. The illustrations and charts do little to ease his anxiety about what’s expected of him as an alpha’s mate, but at least they offer some kind of explanation of why Will is the way he is:

*Although male omegas are biologically male in that they have XY chromosome, they differ from their alpha and beta counterparts in their foetal development. All foetuses begin female, and only develop male characteristics if the foetus is exposed to testosterone at the proper developmental stage. It is thought that male omegas receive this dose of testosterone at a later stage than either male alphas or betas, resulting in some female reproductive capacities. A fertile male omega, while rare, is not unheard of, and successful childbirth by male omegas have become much safer with the advent of modern obstetrics.*

Humph. Yeah, that’s much better than the olden days, when male omegas would often spontaneously abort from lack of proper nutrition and medical attention. But lucky Will,
Hannibal’s got the financial means to support Will through a pregnancy........Not that Will doesn’t want to bear a child for Hannibal.....exactly. It’s just.....what if he can’t carry it to term? Even with medical care, male omegan pregnancies are high-risk, and certainly rare enough to earn stares and leers while out in public. Will would hate to have people gawk at him like a side show freak for nine months. Then again, if he can’t bear a child, he’ll be shamed. Will’s high dowry price was, in no small part, due to his supposed fertility, and Hannibal would be within his rights to ask for his money back if he suspected he’d been misled. Will can hear his mother’s voice already. She’d blame him if he miscarried; after all, he has every advantage working in his favour. A child, she says, would bind Hannibal to him forever.

Or do you want him to pass you off like Jack did?

If Hannibal abandons you, don’t think you can show your face back here.

Did you hear what happened to Robbie?

Will physically shakes off the thought. Hannibal wouldn’t. No.

Will closes the book and places it back on the shelf, feeling queasy. Awake from her nap, Zama trots in and circles at his feet, sensing his distress. Will reaches down to scoop her up and she licks his nose reassuringly.

Even if he can’t bear a child, he’ll always have Zama. But would that be enough?

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It takes Will a good week to finally muster the courage to go back to the park. He has as much a right to be there as anyone, and he won’t let his paranoia get in the way of enjoying the rest of the nice summer weather. Yes. Besides, he owes it to Zama for putting up with his neuroses all the time. Zama is stupidly enthusiastic when she figures out where they’re going, tugging on her leash so that Will is practically jogging behind her. She leads him back towards the playground, where, predictably, the chic omega mom brigade is enjoying a morning latte over gossip, yoga mats slung over their shoulders like quivers of arrows. Will smiles and waves nervously when they look over at him, more to show that they aren’t getting to him than anything else. He can still feel their eyes boring into his skull as he passes. If they don’t want to be his friend, it’s no skin off his teeth. He doesn’t care. He doesn’t.

“Hey! Wait up!”

Will ignores it at first, assuming it isn’t directed at him, but the voice says it again more insistently, and Will has to turn to acknowledge it. The same omega woman whose child he’d met the previous week is trailing after him, all bouncy ponytail and perky tits. Will stops and waits for her to catch up.

“Hi,” She says simply once she reaches him, squinting even through her sunglasses. She pauses, as if going over what she’s about to say in her head. “I realized I didn’t introduce myself the other day. I didn’t mean to be impolite. I’m Jen.” She offers her manicured hand, and Will takes it with his own.

“Will.”

Jen smiles amicably. “Listen, uh, this might be a bit forward of me, but Maddie’s having a birthday party on the sixteenth. It’s just a casual get-together, a barbeque in the backyard. I was
thinking, it would be nice if you could join us, and, y’know, get to know the neighbourhood.” She waves her arms in emphasis.

She seems sincere, and Will returns her smile, feeling more than a little guilty for having judged her before. All that worry for nothing! Fuck. He is paranoid. “Yeah. Yeah, I’d like that. Thank you, that’s very kind.”

“Great,” Jen says, raising her hand to shield her eyes against the sun. “You can bring your puppy, if you want. I’m sure the kids would like that. We’re across the park, that way, house number six-thirty.”

Will smiles brightly. “I’ll be there.”

She pulls a pad of paper out of her oversized purse and writes the details down. Will thanks her again, and they part with a small wave. Will kicks himself for the rest of Zama’s walk.

He is excited to report this turn of events to Hannibal that evening over supper. Hannibal doesn’t share his enthusiasm, eyeing Will in between sips of red wine.

“What date did you say?” Hannibal asks carefully, cutting into the last of his steak.

“The sixteenth. Friday. At two.”

“This Friday?”

“Yeah.”

It’s quiet for a minute, and Will turns his attention back to his supper.

Hannibal twirls his wine glass stem, considering. Finally, he says, “No.”

Will looks up from his plate, the word harsh and foregrounded against the silence. It doesn’t register in his brain for a good couple of seconds. He hadn’t realized he’d been asking Hannibal’s permission just now. “Wh-what?”

“I said no, I forbid you from going.” Hannibal says coolly.

“Why?” Will blurts out before he can stop himself. “I don’t see the problem. It’s just gonna be omegas there, no alphas. I’ll give you the address, and I’ll have my cellphone, and...and I’ll be home by suppertime—“

“My decision is final,” Hannibal states, and Will’s mouth drops at the injustice of it all.

“That’s not fair,” Will chokes out in protest, “Hannibal, that’s not fair, you know how important this is to me! I told you, I told you that I wanted to meet new people—“

“You’re going to go into heat soon, Will, and it’ll be too dangerous for you to go outside.”

Will pauses a moment, disbelieving.

“That’s impossible,” Will stutters. “It’s two months too soon. I’m not due for weeks.”

This does not lessen Hannibal’s confidence in his assertion. “Your cycle is skewed from the years of suppressants. Your body is trying to re-set itself, in part, I suspect, from the constant exposure to my alpha pheromones.” Hannibal sniffs his wine in the glass before he takes a sip. “I can sense it on you. By Friday it will be too late.”
Will’s mouth closes, just as he’s about to argue some more. How could Hannibal know? He’s a doctor, sure, and an alpha, but Will knows his own body damnit. It’s been eight years since his last heat, but he remembers what it felt like in the days just prior. His parents had him vigilantly monitor his symptoms so that they’d have ample warning before it hit. Planning is key; the last thing any omega wants is to be stranded outside during his or her most sensitive time. Sure, nowadays omegas might be able to go outside with minimal harassment, but during a heat, even the most good-natured, liberally minded, placid alphas can become frenzied with primal lust if they catch scent of some hapless omega’s heat-pheromones. It’s safest for everyone if they’re kept securely sequestered away until the heat burns out. It’s an inconvenience, sure, but a fact of life. Still, Will can’t help but feel like Hannibal is making some kind of mistake.

“There’s time,” Will insists. “I don’t feel it at all, none of the pre-heat symptoms. I used to get a really tender chest a few days before, I don’t even have that yet. I’m not....” Will blushes, then lowers his voice, embarrassed. “I’m not slick.”

“I won’t hear another word about it,” Hannibal gets up, wiping his mouth one final time with his napkin before setting it on his empty plate, then excuses himself from the table to leave the clean-up for a very incensed, dumbstruck Will. “I want you to start your lock-in tomorrow.”

Tomorrow. That means no party, no chance to even try and find Jen to explain. Hannibal’s voice leaves no room for argument, and he retires to his study before Will can protest any more.

Will goes to bed early that night, trying to avoid talking to Hannibal in case he says something that would get him smacked upside the head. He feels completely normal, and is becoming more and more convinced that Hannibal has misjudged his condition. Well, Will hopes Hannibal is wrong. Better to think this is some kind of mistake than to think Hannibal wants to keep him at home to be mean. Or worse, keep him tucked away and isolated on purpose. Friendless. The more Will thinks about it, the more he comes to believe that this whole thing is so, so unfair.

Will is still seething the following morning, and the day after that, when the party was scheduled to take place, but knows better than to be anything but affable and pleasant. He still feels nothing. No hot flashes, no disgusting pre-slick on his boxers. He doesn’t mentioned the party, and Hannibal doesn’t bring it up either, seemingly secure in his mate’s obedience. Well, as much as Will feels uneasy at the thought of defying his alpha’s express order – even one as blatantly unjust as this – he hates thinking of himself as a stereotypical omega pushover. He knows his body, and going into lock-in this early is just plain dumb. Besides, Will doesn’t have Jen’s phone number, so if he doesn’t show, she’ll think he blew her off, and what kind of start is that to a possible friendship? No. Will is going to go, if just for an hour or two. Hannibal would never know, he’s booked solid that day, and Will knows for a fact he won’t be home until well in the evening. Just make an appearance, introduce himself, and come straight home.

That’s the plan, anyway.

The day of, Will sends Hannibal off as usual. He’s careful not to do anything out of the ordinary, hoping Hannibal will think the party is totally out of his mind. Will is dutifully sweet when he sends Hannibal off to work, handing Hannibal his coat and keys, pressing a quick kiss on his lips. As soon as his car is out of the parking lot, however, Will kicks into high gear, rushing through his chores so that nothing would seem amiss when Hannibal returns home. Then, at quarter after one, Will gathers Zama to make the trek across the park to Jen’s. Will Google maps the address in preparation. Her house is on the opposite side of the park, which means venturing further afield than Will is used to. Still, Will is determined, and isn’t going to let his stupid agoraphobia get in the way.
Will sets out towards the park as usual, Zama trotting happily at his feet. “Going on an adventure, huh?” he says to her, trying to air out his nerves a little. Deliberately going against Hannibal’s wishes pricks at Will’s conscience, and a little voice inside his head is nagging him to go home. Will does his best to swallow it down, attributing it to his weak, anxious omegan nature and to the overcast weather. It had been stiflingly hot that morning, and now ominous black clouds are amassing in the east. Not great for a barbeque, but Will reasons they might simply hold the party indoors.

Will feels okay when he’s on familiar territory, but the further Will progresses from his usual route, the fewer people he sees, and the more nervous he gets. Zama seems to sense the oncoming storm, and whimpers fretfully at Will’s feet.

“Shhhhh, shhh, it’s okay,” Will says absently, wondering if he’d taken the wrong trail and had wound up on the opposite side of the park. Was he supposed to take that right, or should he have gone straight? There is nobody around he can ask. The park is totally empty, probably due to the darkening weather. Within minutes, it’s beginning to sprinkle steadily, and Will huffs in added frustration. Now he’ll be late and sopping wet. He’s about ready to say fuck it and head back home, when he hears the first clap of thunder in the distance. Zama barks, alarmed, and tugs at her leash frantically.

“Zama! Hey! Shhh, girl, it’s okay,” Will soothes, trying to calm both of them down at once. He picks the thrashing dog up in his arms and wraps her in his jacket to keep her dry. This is bad. He should just turn back. Sometimes he doesn’t know where he gets these stupid ideas from. He hopes Jen won’t be insulted.....

“You alright?”

Will starts, whips around to find a lone figure standing some ways behind him. He didn’t realize he was being followed. From the man’s frame, he’s either a large beta or an alpha. As the man approaches, Will apprehensively settles on the latter.

“Yeah, I uh, my dog got a little spooked,” Will says. “She doesn’t much like storms.”

“Ah,” he says, “Isn’t she a cutie,” It might be that paranoia again, but Will senses he’s not referring to the dog, and it’s making his skin crawl. Will has a natural mistrust of strange alphas, and it doesn’t help that he’s lost, alone, and stuck outdoors with one. “What’s her name?”

“Zama,” Will says softly, cradling the dog close as if she were a shield.

“Aww, precious.” The alpha says cloyingly. “I had a retriever just like her growing up. Kind of takes me back. Would you mind if I pet her?”

“Um,” Will says, not wanting the unfamiliar alpha to come any closer. “She’s a little nervous around strangers.” I’m a little nervous.

“Oh.” The alpha says, but is clearly not discouraged. “Well, okay.”

Will doesn’t like the way he’s standing: shoulders rolled back, hands tucked in his pockets, but elbows spread. He’s puffed up, confident, where Will wishes he could just collapse into a tiny ball. Alphas tend to do that to him, and he hates them for it.

“So what are you doing out here all by yourself? Going somewhere?”

“I, uh, I’m trying to get home. I just need to be pointed in the direction of Fir Street.”
The alpha lifts an eyebrow, takes a step closer. “You’re walking? It’s gunna storm soon, shame to get those pretty curls wet. I could give you a ride....”

“No!” Will blurts out a little too fast, then tries to smooth it over: “No, thank you. That’s kind...but my mate is coming to pick me up.” Will lies, hoping the idea of a rival alpha male would be enough to put him off. Unfortunately for Will, it isn’t.

“It’d be no trouble at all, really. My car is just back there....”

There is no way Will will get into a car with an unfamiliar alpha. He forces himself to stand his ground. “He’ll be here any moment.”

The alpha smiles, but it is hollow and doesn’t reach his eyes. “Not much of a mate to leave you stranded in the rain like this.” He inhales deeply, and his eyes suddenly grow dark.....

Will feels the barest trickle of damning slick inside, and the realization hits him like a cannonball to the gut:

This alpha smells him.

Will is going into heat, just as Hannibal said.

And Will didn’t believe him, because he’s a stubborn little twat.

Dread wrenches his stomach into a tight, painful knot.

The alpha’s eyes are dilating, all pupil, and his shoulders are hunching in a predatory stance, like he’s about to pounce at any minute. He’s beginning to frenzy. He’s going to frenzy at the scent and he’s going to attack, could even savage Will if he loses control of himself. The anxiety must be plastered ostentatiously across Will’s face, because the alpha tries to lighten his voice and says, “Aww, come on. Don’t be afraid. Smile for me, I’m bet you’re real pretty when you smile.”

“I should go,” Will says, starting to shake. “I’m sorry, I’m late. It was nice meeting you.” He turns to walk away, clutching the dog tightly in his arms, in the direction opposite from where the alpha had come. His instinct is to run, but the alpha might get insulted, and he’d been trained his whole life not to be insult an alphas. At this point, he doesn’t even care if he’s going in the wrong direction – he just needs to get away, now.

“Aw, don’t be like that. Where’re you going? I’m just trying to pay you a compliment,” the alpha calls after him, misleadingly upbeat, but the irritation is beginning to seep into his voice.

“I’m sorry, I have to go,” Will says shakily, hating how he’s the one apologizing to the alpha. He’s in serious danger – out here in the open, exposed, lost, defenceless. Will tries to swallow down his panic, but he’s sure the alpha can read his distress. His heartbeat quickens when he hears the alpha’s footsteps trail behind him.

“Don’t be a bitch. Come back here! I’m talking to you! Hey!”

Will can’t keep up this pretence anymore: every fibre of his body is telling him to run, run far and fast and hide, and he breaks into an adrenaline-fuelled sprint, clutching a very frightened Zama to his chest.

Will’s sprinting in no particular direction; all he knows is he has to put as much distance between him and the alpha as possible in the shortest amount of time. The raindrops hitting his eyelashes blur his vision and it’s becoming harder and harder to think. He has no plan, no cover. Zama
thrashes in his arms, terrified at the roll of thunder and her master’s panic.

_Run, run, run._

Distantly, he sees a public park washroom, and before he knows it, his feet are guiding him towards it.

_Run, run, run. Find cover. Hide._

Will is fast, but he’s weighed down by the frightened dog, and the grass is becoming slippery with rain. Will loses his footing going down a hill and stumbles with a sharp yelp. While scrambling to right himself, Zama wriggles from his grasp and takes off, startled by an ill-timed clap of thunder.

“Zama!” Will screams, “Come back! Zama!” He wants to catch her, but his main instinct is to keep running towards the shelter, and Will hates that his self-preservation wins out.

Will’s crying by the time he reaches the washroom, the alpha hot on his heels. He bursts in the door and slams it behind him. No sooner does he lock it, the alpha rams the door, making it groan under the strain of his substantial weight. The alpha tries the doorknob next, and when that holds fast, resorts to pounding on the door in a pheromone-induced mania.

“Open up!” he yells, kicking the door for good measure “Come on, you frigid bitch, open this door. I know you want it.”

Will’s panting, half soaked with rain, frantic. He left Zama. He left Zama. He’s a horrible person. He’s so stupid and selfish. She’s out there, scared and wet and alone with that....fucking _animal_, and he’s trapped in here....and what now?

“I can smell it on you, boy. The slick. You’re wet for it ,” Will hears the alpha’s voice muffled outside the washroom door. “Little breeder, why’re you running around outside like that if you ain’t asking for it?”

“Leave me alone!” Will screams. “Just leave me alone.” Will reaches for his cell phone, but can hardly dial Hannibal’s number through the violent shaking of his hands. “Fuck,” he says to himself as he repeatedly hits the wrong keys. He could call 9-1-1, but the thought of having more alphas swarm around him in this state is even more terrifying. He only wants one alpha – his own. Hannibal is going to be so angry with him, but what other choice does he have?

Hannibal picks up on the second ring.

“Hannibal?”

“Will?” Hannibal’s voice on the other end is calm and steady. Evidently picking up on the note of panic in Will’s voice, he asks, “What’s wrong?”

The door rattles and Hannibal must be able to hear it.

“I’m trapped, there’s an alpha outside, he can smell me....” Will blabbers incoherently, letting out an involuntary omegan whimper after the alpha tries to kick down the door.

“What? Where?” Hannibal’s voice is dark but business-like. “Are you safe?”

His panic supersedes his fear of confessing to Hannibal.“I don’t know, I don’t know, somewhere in Elm Park, oh god, Hannibal, he can smell me.....”

The alpha curses, ramming the door, and Will clutches the phone like a lifeline. He catches a brief glimpse of his wet, wild-eyed reflection in the bathroom mirror: he looks every bit as panicked as he feels. “In a washroom. I locked myself in, but he’s outside, he won’t leave. I’m going into heat, and he knows....”

“Think Will,” Hannibal says. “I need you to think. Where is this washroom?”

Will tries, but the relentless banging on the door is too distracting. He prays it holds fast; if the alpha gets in, that’s it. Will would stand no chance of fighting him off.

“A red water tower.....” Will says through his hitching breath, “I remember a red water tower, just ahead of me, and a small pond – and, oh god, Zama got away.....“

Hannibal grunts. “I’m coming. Do not open the door.”

“Hurry.” Will pleads, “Please don’t hang up.”

Will hears Hannibal slam a door closed, an engine revving, and takes a deep breath to try steady himself. Hannibal’s coming, and he’ll take care of this. Hannibal’s coming, and everything is going to be fine.

“Gotta come out sometime, sweetheart,” The alpha taunts.

“My alpha’s on his way, you better get out of here,” Will warns, clutching his arms around himself. “Just you wait, he’s going to fuck you up, he’s a thoroughbred.”

The banging ceases abruptly, and it’s eerily calm aside from the relentless pitter-patter of rain against the roof, Will’s heavy breathing, and the static of Hannibal on the other line.

“Is he gone?” Hannibal asks, steady as ever.

“I don’t know,” Will whispers. “I don’t know, I don’t know....”

Hannibal hums. “Just stay put.”

Will nods even though no one is around to see it.

When next the alpha talks, it’s low and predatory and full of quiet threat. “If you don’t open this door right now, I’ll snap your dog’s neck.”

Will freezes. No. He’s bluffing. Zama got away. Will saw her run away – didn’t he? Oh fuck, Will doesn’t remember. She could’ve ran towards the alpha. He was so focused on reaching shelter -

“I’ve got your dog. I swear to God, I’ll kill it.”

“Fuck you,” Will says shakily, trying to fortify himself. “You’re lying.”

“You’re alright?” Hannibal asks over the line.

“He says he has Zama. I don’t know, I can’t see, there’s no windows –“

“Shhh, shh,” Hannibal hushes, although he doesn’t sound all that soothing. His voice is all ice and steely determination. “Calm, Will. Whatever you do, don’t go outside. I’m almost there.”
Will sinks to his knees, curling himself against the rough brick of the bathroom walls. It’s quiet outside again, but he doesn’t dare open the door to check. Every now and again, Hannibal shushes him to remind him he’s still on the line. Will doesn’t want to ask what Hannibal will do once he gets here; all he knows is that when he does, he’ll take care of everything.

He hates this, he does. He hates being in heat, hates his treacherous heat-stink, hate having alphas lining up around the block to rape him. Because it’s his fault that he’s emitting these pheromones, his fault that alphas would fight to the death for the chance to rut him. His body is a ticking fucking time bomb, and there isn’t a damn thing he can do about it. And of course, like some dumb helpless omega princess, he has to sit here and wait for his alpha to rescue him – again. He may have hated pretending to be a beta, but nothing could be worse than this.

His breathing begins to steady as the minutes tick by with no sound from outside. The symptoms are becoming worse, and so abruptly too – as though the preparatory pre-heat period were condensed from a few days down to a mere hour. He feels a sluice of wetness inside and cringes, hating that even now his body is desperate to be bred. He can’t stop thinking about Zama, envisioning her alone, scared.....or even dead on a highway. Will shudders. If something happened to her because of his selfishness he’ll never forgive himself.

“T’m pulling up,” Hannibal says at length. “I think I see where you are.”

Will swallows, worrying his lip between his teeth. “Is he still outside?”

Will hears the sound of Hannibal’s car door close. There is a pause before Hannibal answers gravely, “Yes.”

Will’s heart thumps as a fresh burst of adrenaline courses through his body. “What are you gonna do?”

Hannibal grunts. “I’m hanging up, now, Will. Do not come out until I say.”

“No – wait, Hannibal – “ Will starts, but the line goes dead, and fresh panic courses in his veins. Seconds later, he hears Hannibal shout something outside, but it’s unintelligible through the door. The other alpha barks back a reply, and then one of them is growling. From then on, all Will can make out is scuffling sounds, curses, growls and grunts of exertion. Will desperately wishes he could see what is happening. The reality is beginning to sink in – if Hannibal loses, he could die, and Will would be absolutely, terrifyingly, alone.

This would all be his fault.

Will rests his head against the door, in a silent prayer for Hannibal to pull though....

Please.

Please.

Will might’ve spaced out a little, cradling himself on the dingy bathroom floor as the grunts grow even more feral. Someone is getting the upper hand, Will thinks, but the sound is so distorted he can’t tell who. After a few tense moments, all goes quiet, and Will perks his head up, straining his ears for an indicative noise. The silence is somehow worse. Then, after a few stifling moments, someone raps at the door.

“William, open the door,” Hannibal orders from outside, voice ragged.

Will sobs in relief, like he had been holding his breath this whole time. It’s okay. Everything is
okay. He picks himself off the floor, wobbles to the door on unsteady legs, and unbars the lock.

Hannibal pushes the door open immediately, with enough force that Will has to jump out of the way to avoid being hit. His face is flushed and grim and his hair is uncharacteristically dishevelled. His suit is soaked from the rain, splatters of blood across his jacket and knuckles. Will quickly scans for evidence of the other alpha, but can’t see much through Hannibal’s bulk in the doorway. Hannibal reeks of thick primal alpha-pheromones - of frenzy - and even through his fear Will’s arching his back in preparation for the rut.

“Insolent boy!” Hannibal growls, grabbing Will by the scruff and giving him an authoritative shake. Will gasps in surprise; Hannibal’s never handled him like this before; there is deceptive strength in those finely boned fingers. “I gave you that order for a reason. I was trying to protect you, and you see what could have happened? Hm? Have some scum alpha strew his filthy seed inside you? Inside that which I have paid for?” Hannibal’s eyes are two impenetrable pools of tar, and for the first time in a long time, Will is afraid of him. Even so, Will can’t help the throb of arousal in his belly – the possessiveness, the desire, the aggression writ so plainly on Hannibal’s sharp features like the worst kind of aphrodisiac. The heat is making him ache for his alpha, and somehow the fact that Hannibal’s probably just killed another alpha for the right to mount him is making him wetter.

Will cowers instinctively. “Hannibal, you’re hurting me.....”

Hannibal slaps him across the face suddenly. “Good, you stupid thing, maybe now you’ll listen to me. I told you you’d be early. I could smell you from outside.”

“I didn’t feel it,” Will pleads, clawing at Hannibal’s grip on his collar and whimpering in distress, “Hannibal, it was so sudden, I thought I’d have time. I’d have never left if I’d felt the symptoms – “

Hannibal growls and shakes him. “And if you’d been bred? Knocked up with some trash alpha’s offspring? What good would you be to me then?”

Hannibal is dark, agitated, throbbing with baleful, thunderous energy. Will tries not to take to heart what he’s saying. It’s the heat, he tells himself, the frenzy. Still, it cuts, that Hannibal should think of him as nothing more than mere chattel.

“You don't mean that....” Will says softly, hurt. "Hannibal, you don't mean that, do you?"

Hannibal holds him for a pause, still panting heavily, then snarls once more and releases his neck to grasp him by the upper arm. “Come on then. Keep your eyes down.”

“Wait, wait.” Will digs in his heels suddenly, “We have to find Zama! She’s still out here, she ran off. She’s probably lost, scared. We can’t leave until – “

Hannibal turns on him, pointing his finger in Will’s face. “You know what I risked to come here after you? Hm? I don’t give a fuck about the damn dog. You’re in heat, and I’m taking you home, where you’ll be in lock-in until I say so. Do you understand?”

Will doesn’t dare try to talk back after that; his chest feels heavy, laden with his alpha’s displeasure. But then again, the thought of losing Zama is unbearable. He wants to protest, but he’s afraid, and Hannibal’s got him in a vice grip to half-drag him back towards the parking lot. Will keeps his eyes fixed on the ground as Hannibal orders, and Hannibal drives them home in tense silence. His frenzy is beginning to fade now that the immediate threat has been neutralized, but Hannibal pupils are still blown-out with lust and silent aggression.
“I’m really sorry,” Will repeats in between hitched breaths when the confining quiet becomes unbearable. He’s never seen his mate so angry, and Hannibal doesn’t answer, which only makes it worse. Will picks at a loose thread on his jacket sleeve.

When they enter the house, Hannibal locks the door behind them with an audible click, then slides his soaked Burberry jacket off his shoulders. Will stands in the entryway dumbly, waiting for instruction. He can sense Hannibal’s not done with him, but knows better than to ask questions when Hannibal is still so livid.

Finally, Hannibal says, “We will not speak of this again. Do you understand?”

Will nods, swallowing thickly. Even through his fear, the darkness in Hannibal’s voice sends a frisson of pure want straight to Will’s belly. His mate might’ve killed that other alpha, with his bare hands no less, and the basest, most primitive part of Will’s brain finds that terribly, terribly arousing.

This alpha is strong. Powerful, vital, fearless. Full of health and vigour. He is tall and broad, able to protect and provide. He would kill for the rights to your body, would risk his own life for the chance to breed. It is only fitting, then, that he should claim your heat as his prize.

Hannibal’s face is cold and unreadable. “Go upstairs and strip out of your clothes. Wait for me.”

Even through the building heat-fever, Will hesitates. His worry for Zama hasn’t abated, but he’s scared that if he asks Hannibal about her again, it’ll aggravate him further. For the time being, he should make himself as pliable and as repentant as possible; it would be a mistake to exacerbate Hannibal’s ire. Maybe then, after this is over, he’ll go search for her....

Will pads up the stairs and peels off his sopping clothes as he was bid, feeling minutely comforted now that he’s within the familiar confines of their bedroom. He’s completely nude by the time Hannibal joins him, looking him over with overt desire. Will balks, shrinking in on himself and feeling especially vulnerable without his clothes to protect him. The rift between them is making Will anxious, particularly now that the heat is amplifying his need for his alpha’s soothing touch.

Hannibal seems to sense this, and sighs with exasperation, which helps to ease the friction somewhat. He slowly approaches his fretful omega and takes his head in his hands.

“Oh Will,” Hannibal begins, searching Will’s face. His eyes are softer, but Will knows the heat-pheromones are eating away at what’s left of Hannibal’s restraint, and he’ll want to rut soon. “I was only trying to keep you safe.”

“Yeah,” Will whispers.

“The things I do, what I said ......It’s because I love you, very, very much. You know that, right?”

Will nods his head and swallows dryly. This is the first time Will’s ever heard Hannibal tell him he loves him, and Will tries to focus on the sound of Hannibal’s smooth accent forming those words so that he can replay it in his mind when he needs it, over and over.

“I know.”

Hannibal kisses him on the forehead, but doesn’t pull away immediately, instead choosing to nose at Will’s hairline and inhale deeply.

“Mine,” Hannibal breathes, tracing his palms down Will’s neck, his bare shoulders, to his narrow waist. His touch just feels so right on Will’s hyper-sensitive skin.
“Yes,” Will agrees, muddled, “Yours.”

Will doesn’t have any time to calibrate himself before Hannibal is pulling him in for a domineering, messy kiss – calm detachment giving way to pure lust. Hannibal’s grip on him is getting tighter, more urgent, possessive and painful; elicited by the heat-pheromones Will is no doubt churning out. It’s known that some alphas lose control of themselves and end up savaging their mates - often unintentionally during the impassioned throes of a rut. That they should sometimes turn on their own mates is an unfortunate by-product of their natural alphaic exuberant physicality. Will is lucky, however. Hannibal is a good mate to him, and never leaves more bruises than he has to - not that Will minds. The power in his grip is so perfectly alpha, so claiming, while the kiss makes Will feel light-headed and malleable. He’s practically dooey by the time Hannibal pulls back to thumb away his tears.....Will didn’t realize he’d been crying. The smell of his mate swarms Will’s senses, thick in his nostrils like burning incense, and Will can’t really think anymore.

*This alpha is in his prime. He has good, viable seed. He will sire fit, healthy children.*

“Hannibal,” Will mews, arching himself to rub against his mate. If he was in his right mind he’d probably be embarrassed, but he’s not in control of himself anymore, having given himself over wholly to the heat. There is nothing left of Will Graham but pure instinct.

Will loves the way Hannibal handles him – knows just where to place his hand, his weight, his strength so that Will can tell exactly what Hannibal wants him to do. It’s like being led in a dance: Hannibal signals to him and Will moves as he is bidden, as seamlessly as a choreographed waltz. When Hannibal places his hand over the back of Will’s neck, Will automatically yields under its insistence. *Get down*, the pressure is telling his mind. *Get down. On the floor, on your knees, bow your head.*

Hannibal easily guides him onto the bed, so that Will is on all fours with Hannibal behind him. His back involuntarily curves up so that he’s presenting himself to the alpha in a brazen display of receptivity. *Show what you have to offer. Show your eagerness, your fertility. Show your slick, your hunger.*

This is what Will needs. Will needs to be mounted, needs to have this alpha spill inside where his body craves it most. Will needs to be fucked, used, owned, stretched beyond capacity, made to take more when he’s already past his limit. Will needs to feel his alpha’s greater strength, his weight, the power in his thrusts. And then after, when Will is so exhausted from orgasm he can barely lift his own eyelids, he needs to be tied, held, needs to drift into sleep with his alpha’s knot still lodged deep inside him.

Hannibal gives him that, and more.

Because Hannibal is a good mate.

The kind Will doesn’t deserve.
Yes Hanni is a dick, ok. He’s a psychopath, a narcissist. Not to say that he doesn’t care for Will – he does. But I picture him as loving Will more like an object than as a person. A very, very valuable object - a treasure, even – but an object no less. That’s how psychopaths view others. They’re incapable of empathy, and their objectification of others is what allows them to justify their selfish, twisted desires. Why else would Hannibal feel entitled to kill and eat people? If this chapter seems OOC it’s because the heat has exacerbated his alpha possessiveness, made him even more controlling. Also, this is Will’s POV, which sees things differently that Hanni’s POV. Hanni paints himself in a better light, lol. I’m switching back to Hanni POV next chapter, maybe then what he does here will make more sense. Till then! Xoxox Teresa
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

Omg you guys, WHY DO YOU LIKE THIS FIC?? This has been baffling me for months. I mean it’s great you do (I’m not complaining!) but I’m quite frankly just dumbfounded at how popular it is because it’s so, so stupid and there are waaaay better hannigram fics out there, imo. I’m not saying this to get more “OMG BUT I LOVE IT” comments either. Just because I think it’s dumb, doesn’t mean I don’t have fun writing it, or that ya’ll shouldn’t like it. I enjoy a lot of things that are dumb. I make no claims that this is anything other than gratuitous smut with just enough plot to make it somewhat cohesive. Feel free to keep commenting/kudosing it though, if you’re inclined, haha!

And I do apologize to any comments that I didn’t respond to last chapter. I got kind of...overwhelmed. I feel like an asshole for not replying to people who wrote long thoughtful comments. But I do appreciate them a lot! You guys are awesome. Anyway, here is more of the same crap. Hanni gets off, Will gets knocked up, yadda yadda yadda. And some puppy fluff. Warnings for mpreg, vaguely dubconny somnophilia, Hannibal still being a bit of a jerk but not really, and barftastic domesticity.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will is warm. Hot even, as Hannibal runs his hands down his flank. The heat’s given him a fever, raised his temperature several degrees, and the doctor in Hannibal would be concerned if he too weren’t consumed by the need to rut. Hannibal’s prepared their den well; here, in the dark confines of their shared bed, the omega feels safe, warm and cared-for, and he spreads himself willingly at Hannibal’s touch, lush and receptive.

Will is warm and he is wet. Beads of sweat are pooling at his temples and curling the soft brown hairs at the base of his neck, oozing that heady mix of primal pheromones. The scent comes off him in great pulses, throbbing, and Hannibal drinks it in like ambrosia. Nowhere is the scent strongest, however, than down where he’s slick, that place only Hannibal gets to see. Hannibal kisses the base of his spine, on his tailbone pleasure point, and the omega shudders, dropping his head down onto the pillow beneath him.

Will is warm and he is desperate, and he arches gratefully into Hannibal’s touch. He moans, writhes, begs, curves his long pale neck to his alpha in submission, in contrition, for absolution. He’s perfect like this, Hannibal’s precious little omega boy; could not be more beautiful, more enticing. His heat is the greatest delicacy he could offer to his alpha; his fertility the greatest gift. He’s as ripe and sweet and succulent as a Georgian peach. So, so ready to be plucked. Unlike his last, dry heat, this time there is no mistaking that he’s fertile. Hannibal can smell it on him, and he lets himself succumb to the instinctual need to bury his seed deep, where it will take root and blossom.

Hannibal kisses lower, savoring the scent streaming off Will’s skin in thick rivulets, and thumbs over his hole, dark pink and swollen in preparation. It clenches tight in a kiss over the pad of his finger, and Will’s breath hitches shakily.
The skin between the swells of Will’s ass is smooth, downy, and naturally hairless. A feast of flesh.

Enticed, Hannibal licks a stripe along the sensitive muscle. Will tastes the way he smells, but stronger. Hannibal growls into him.

“How Hannibal...” Will whines in surprise, fistin the sheets. His muscles shift under his skin as he writhes, alive and youthful and vital. “Oh god, Hannibal.”

The ring parts for Hannibal’s tongue, even though Will bucks almost hard enough to dislodge him. Hannibal raises his head.

“Calm, Will,” Hannibal murmurs, and strokes the back of Will’s neck soothingly until his keening slows to a slight tremor. When he sinks down again to taste at Will’s sweetness, Will still jerks, but this time towards the stimulation.

“Oh my god,” he chants. His voice has become higher, breathy, scraped raw. He unconsciously parts his legs to allow Hannibal access. “Ah! Fuck! I - ”

“But yet,” Hannibal says darkly, pulling away lest he tip his boy over the edge too soon. When Will climaxes, Hannibal wants to feel it on his cock. “Don’t come until I have you.”

Will whimpers at this, his hips rolling mindlessly against nothing. “I need it....I need...Hannibal, please.”

Yes, he needs it, he’s fevered with it, incoherent, and Hannibal is not one to deny his precious omega anything. Not that he could resist anyway; the rut has clouded his thinking, narrowed his focus so that the omega presenting before him is lit as though from a faraway spotlight, while the rest of the world lies in blackness.

Hannibal’s revved and still riding the high of his victory. That other alpha, that rival scent near his boy, had riled him like nothing else ever had, and had made the claim Hannibal’s sole, single-minded purpose. This omega is his to rut, truly and fully, and Hannibal will kill anyone else who dares interfere. Hannibal’s earned this; it is his due and alphaic right.

Hannibal mounts the omega without finesse, and his body, so slick and wanting, breeches easily to admit him. The first liquid clench swims Hannibal’s sight, and he roars his pleasure in a voice that doesn’t sound entirely his. The omega is radiating heat even from the inside, and Hannibal wants to touch him everywhere, especially deep within, in that place where only his alpha master is allowed to sink.

Intellectually, Hannibal knows he’s rut this omega almost every day since they were first mated, but this time it somehow feels different. Perhaps it’s in the way Will is warm and sweet and receptive....but then again, when is he not? Or is it in how his scent has become laden and earthy, like a freshly tilled field? Or in how he undulates in perfect tandem with his alpha as Hannibal begins to thrust?

Whatever it is, Hannibal knows, knows, that on this night Will will conceive, and it spurs him to go harder, faster.

Hannibal pulls Will back onto his penetration with each thrust, making him gasp each time he rubs over that spot inside him. He doesn’t even bother with Will’s sensitized little prick this time, and neither does Will - too busy, as it were, trying to keep himself from collapsing with each brutal snap
Hannibal’s certain he has the sexual prowess to make him come just like this, just from being stretched and filled and used in the way omegas are meant. Will takes it so well, so good. No passive flower, his arousal has synced to Hannibal’s and he matches his alpha in need and desperation.

“You’re going to give me a legacy, Will,” Hannibal breathes into Will’s ear, unable to help himself. “You want that? You want to carry my child?”

“Yeah,” Will pants, straining under Hannibal’s weight, “Yeah, Hannibal, I want that.” He gasps. “Put a baby in me, *fuck*.”

It’s the heat talking, of course, expressing what cognisant-Will would be too shy to vocalize. His omegan body wants this, craves this, whether Will’s ready for it or not. Hannibal, meanwhile, couldn’t hold himself back even if he tried.

The mental image of Hannibal planting his seed deep is almost enough to almost bring him to orgasm.

“Then you’ll be mine,” Hannibal growls. “My omega, heavy with my cubs, and every other alpha will be able to smell it on you, be able to smell *who* did this to you.”

Hannibal is less than gentle about it, spurred on by Will’s heat pheromones, and perhaps just a tad punitive. Hannibal would never *savage* him; even in rut, he’s careful, calculated. He’s only as rough as Will can handle. Will may be an omega, but he’s young and healthy. His body has evolved to take it like this; a few bruises will only imprint on him his alpha’s superior strength. Hannibal can be brutal, yes, but he would never completely lose control; not on his sweet little lamb.

Hannibal is swelling up, the knot beginning to tug at Will’s rim as Hannibal pistons in and out of him, forcing him to slow the pace of his thrusts like an anatomical speed bump. Eventually, the knot becomes too large to fuck with, filling to almost its full size just as Hannibal slips out to knock Will’s knees further apart. It would be a tragic to squander the opportunity to tie his heatsick mate, so Hannibal stuffs it back in, but only halfway, so that Will is stretched taut around the knot itself. Will cries out and fists his own hair. Even through the rut, Hannibal is collected enough to take perverse pleasure in holding him open at the widest point, force him to take the full girth of Hannibal’s cock. Will can take it. He’ll take *anything* his alpha gives his. As an omegan mate, he can sometimes be difficult, but as an omegan lover, he’s *exquisite*.

“Good boy,” Hannibal murmurs. “You take it so well.”

Will claws at Hannibal’s thighs desperately.

“Oh god,” he moans, rocking back in a futile attempt to get Hannibal deep where he needs him. “Please just shove it in, it – ah! It hurts, Hannibal– “

Hannibal admires the way the rim has stretched like a hot seal around his knot, but he’s not able to hold himself back for long. Hannibal finally sinks all the in, and Will exhales in a breathy groan of relief. Finally, they’re slotted together the way nature intended, with Will’s insides conforming to accommodate the knotted prick.

“*Is this what you needed*?” Hannibal would’ve taunted, if he weren’t momentarily rendered mute by the pleasure of finally nesting his knot. It’s so satisfying, on the most base, animalistic level. He’s vaguely aware that Will is coming, just from having the knot rub at his inner walls. Hannibal can feel his muscles clench, can hear him cry out from overstimulation, and it’s enough to make
Hannibal spills, painting Will’s passage with come.

Hannibal looks down, at where they are joined, where his honeywheat pubic hair rests right up against the cleft of Will’s perfect ass. His thick shaft is buried so deep in his boy, he can’t even see the root. Will kneads at his belly with one hand as though he could feel Hannibal through his stomach. The thought of Will’s distended belly, plump and full with his alpha’s release, sends shivers of profound satisfaction up and down Hannibal’s spine.

Dopey in post-orgasmic haze, Will relaxes into the knot, insides clenching rhythmically to milk all the semen out of his alpha. His body syncs with Hannibal’s so that each throb of the knot is coupled with a analogous muscular contraction – evidence of their physical compatibility. Will may still be in the throes of heat, but he’s much calmer now, momentarily sated. By the end of the night, Hannibal’s made him come three more times, spilled three more loads inside him. If Hannibal were a lesser alpha, he’d certainly be shooting blanks.

The final knot secured, Hannibal manoeuvres Will into the position he likes best – on their sides, spooning - to wait it out.

Will purrs, too exhausted to hold it back, and the pleasurable tremors vibrate up Hannibal’s cock, into his very bones. It feels like the most natural thing in the world to sink his teeth in the junction of Will’s neck and break the flawless skin there.

Will yelps, but it’s impossible for him to move while he’s tied so, and Hannibal easily keeps him in place while he laps at the wound. He wants his scent to be imbedded in Will’s flesh forever.

“You marked me,” Will pants when Hannibal’s finally pulled off. He’s not struggling anymore, not with the torrent of painkilling endorphins coursing through his brain circuits.

“Yes.”

“Than I am truly yours.”

Hannibal squeezes him in confirmation. “Mine.”

***

Will sleeps for almost a week straight, until well past his lock-in’s completion.

Hannibal isn’t alarmed. He knows this is simply an evolutionary mechanism ensuring both that Will doesn’t overexert himself and compromise insemination, and that he stays put in the safety of his burrow. Hannibal’s sure he’ll be pregnant, but fucks him anyway for good measure. Pliant and sleepy, Will doesn’t resist Hannibal’s advances, and makes a sweet (if somewhat lethargic) lover. He’s so beautiful like this: all dewy skin, floppy hair and dreamy, slate-blue eyes. Hannibal rides the high of his rut, libidinous and insatiable, but tries to be less rough with his little omega so that conception would not be jeopardized. It helps to fuck him missionary, since in that position Hannibal better able to restrain himself. Will seems to like the intimacy this attitude offers, and makes docile little noises into Hannibal’s mouth as they rock against each other. It’s unfortunate that Hannibal has to pull out and roll Will onto his stomach to be able to tie, but it can’t be helped that Will has evolved to take it primarily from behind.

Hannibal reopens Will’s marking wound every time they mate, but he considers it a necessary cruelty. He has to make sure the scar is angry enough to stand out against Will’s pale flesh, so that all the other alphas will know that this omega is his. A visible mark can be a powerful deterrent to rival alphas.
As much as it pains him, Hannibal must return to work a few days after Will’s heat settles. The separation upsets Will, still clingy with hormones, and he claws at Hannibal’s jacket sleeve when Hannibal moves to kiss him goodbye.

“Stay with me,” he whines, eyes glazed over with heat-stupor. “I don’t want to be alone like this. I need you.”

“I will come home at lunch hour to check on you,” Hannibal replies primly, buttoning down his coat jacket. He can’t say he’s not tempted; it would be so easy to crawl into their little love nest and sleep and fuck away the rest of the heat. But Hannibal has business to attend to, and unlike Will, he’s able to muster the self-control to rise above such base necessity. That’s not to say, however, that in his mate’s leave he won’t be somewhat... distracted. It’s hard to concentrate on so-and-so’s emotional affair and so-and so’s social phobia when he knows that, at that very moment, there is a fertile young omega writhing in his bed, desperate for his touch. Would Will masturbate, trying to find some relief? Roll his hips against the mattress as he moans Hannibal’s name? Can he even reach climax at all, without Hannibal’s thick cock to scratch his itch?

“Dr. Lecter, are you even listening to me?”

Hannibal’s instantly snapped back to the present. “Yes, Mr. Visconti. Please, continue.”

***

Hannibal scour local news reports for information on his kill, but no one seems to be covering the story, which suggests that it’s being taken as a typical alpha mating dispute. These things are bound to happen when heated omegas are involved. Even if Hannibal were caught, no court would sentence a thoroughbred for protecting his omega. At worst, he’d get a fine for failing to ensure that Will was not properly locked down for the duration of his heat.

Mercifully, Will seems to have little recollection of the events that day. He knows what happened, but he can’t seem to remember anything beyond vague, murky details. Omegas experience the height of their heats like an extended fever-dream, often resulting in amnesia. In this case, the biological glitch is working in Will’s favor. Hannibal had frenzied - the rival alpha’s proximity to his heated mate had addled his thinking, and he’d said....unpleasant things. Things he’d never meant to say aloud, and certainly not to Will’s face. Up to that point, Hannibal had never experienced a frenzy state before. There was no releasing stimulus powerful enough to trigger him into one. He had always considered alphas that frenzy as savage animals, slaves to their passions, little better than dogs. Certainly, he never believed he’d be susceptible to such barbarous fervour......up until he’d felt the full force of it for himself, that is. He’d been utterly blindsided by the all-consuming instinct to fight, rut, kill. The frenzy had made him strong, agile, blind to both pain and fear – but in an unfortunate trade-off, it had also robbed him of his self-control. The only thing that seemed to snap him back to reality was Will’s omegan distress call, and even then, his mate could do little else to soothe Hannibal’s inflamed temper. Will’s violation is Hannibal’s violation, and his alpha pride would sooner fight to the death than suffer such an unforgivable slight.

Still, Hannibal relishes in the perverse pleasure of rising victorious over that other, lesser alpha. He had proven himself to be the greater of the two, and as is fitting, he will live to sire cubs that carry his own, superior genetics. Hannibal wonders idly if his opponent had a mate and cubs, and if they knew of their alpha’s demise. There was a time, not long ago, when the champion of an alpha face-off would win the right to kill the loser’s offspring and mate his omegas. Society has long since done away with such barbaric traditions, but there is no shame in indulging in a little fantasy. Had Hannibal lived in times long past, he’d have accrued a veritable harem by now.
There are some drives that even alphas like Hannibal cannot overcome.

***

As the days pass, the heat clears enough that Will’s able to join Hannibal downstairs for dinner without completely exhausting himself, and Hannibal makes sure he cooks nothing but the best for his potentially pregnant omega darling.

. They chat, and Will is good enough company, even if he sometimes goes quiet and contemplative.

Hannibal doesn’t have to guess as to why.

“Any word on Zama?” Will asks softly as he dries the last of the dishes. He’d been inquiring after the animal when the fog of his heat had momentarily cleared enough for him to think, but he’d ended up forgetting what Hannibal told him, and Hannibal doubts this time will be any different.

Hannibal doesn’t look up from his ipad. “No, not I’ve heard.”

“Did you call the shelters? The Humane society? I was thinking, we could put up posters, maybe offer a reward.”

“A reward,” Hannibal repeats.

“Well, we have to do something. Every day she’s out there raises the risk something bad will happen to her.”

What Will doesn’t say is that it was his disobedience that led to this to happen in the first place. It would be a fitting punishment if the dog was never found at all.

“She’ll turn up.” Hannibal says flatly.

Will turns on him suddenly, eyes flashing.

“You could stand to be more supportive. You know I love her more than anything and after what almost happened – “ His voice cracks. “I just want her back, and you don’t even care.”

Hannibal is genuinely taken aback by the outburst. “Will...”

Will turns his face away, and his shoulders begin to shake. Hannibal immediately senses his distress through their bond, and he is overcome with the need to soothe.

“Will,” Hannibal repeats, gentler this time, as he rises to gather his omega in his arms. “I’ll admit, I’m not fond of the dog, but-“

Will twists. “I’m not talking about the dog! I’m talking about me. You don’t care that this upsets me, do you? So long as I’m here, in your home, in your bed, that’s all you care about. Sometimes, I swear, you don’t give a damn about what I want at all.”

Hannibal takes Will’s face in his hands. Will’s crying openly and he thrashes when Hannibal moves to gentle him.

“No Hannibal, don’t. Don’t do that, you always do that when I get- oh.”

Hannibal’s palm covers Will’s forehead, and Will is instantly silenced. Hannibal holds him steady until Will’s breathing evens.
“I care about keeping you safe, Will.” Hannibal cradles his mate to his chest. “First and foremost. You are mine, and what is mine, I keep.”

Will is limp in his arms, exhausted, and doesn’t resist when Hannibal carefully guides him upstairs.

“Find Zama,” Will murmurs hoarsely as Hannibal lays him on the bed. “Please Hannibal, just find Zama. I’m so worried, I can’t – I couldn’t live with myself if something happened to her –“

“Hush,” Hannibal says, and gentles all the remaining troubles from Will’s mind.

***

Sure enough, on the Monday following the last day of the heat, the local animal shelter calls Hannibal at his practice to inform him that the dog had been found. The clerk on the other line is entirely too chipper, delivering this news with relish, as if she expects Hannibal to be over the moon to learn his mutt is hale and whole.

Hannibal sighs and jots down their address.

Zama whimpers when Hannibal shows up at the shelter, spooked by its own master. The animal clearly won’t come to him willingly, that’s for damn sure, and Hannibal can tell the clerk is thoroughly unimpressed. How easy it would be to snap the animal’s neck and tell Will it was never found. After all, Will will have more important things to busy himself with in the near future. He’ll be with child soon, and it wouldn’t do to have his mate’s attention divided. The thought is tempting, but Hannibal decides against it. He reasons that Zama’s absence is causing Will significant stress. The dog will placate him; keep his thoughts turned inward, towards the household, Hannibal’s household. Hannibal signs the release papers, but doesn’t bother leaving a donation. The things he does to please his mate.

Hannibal’s sure the dog pisses in the backseat of his Bentley out of spite.

Zama wriggles furiously in his arms as Hannibal carries her inside, barking and thrashing. The noise must be enough to rouse Will, because in an instant he’s looking down over the second story balcony. He’s rumpled with sleep, but his face is alight with excitement and relief, and Hannibal supposes that alone is worth the grief the dog causes him.

“Zama?” Will bounds down the stairs with more energy than Hannibal’s seen since before he’d started his heat.

“Yes,” Hannibal says, but it sounds more who else. In a flash, Will is reaching for the dog, and the animal seems just as thrilled to be reunited with its preferred master.

“I was so fucking worried, oh,” Will cradles the puppy to his cheek, and Hannibal hates the pang of jealously that hits him in the gut. Jealous of a goddamn dog, he must be losing his mind. “Hey, girl, hey. I missed you too! She’s okay? I mean, nothing happened to her?”

Enraptured, Will thanks Hannibal as almost an afterthought. He wraps his one free arm around Hannibal’s neck, and the dog yelps between them. Will kisses his cheek. “Thank you, Hannibal, god, thank you.”

Hannibal doesn’t get a chance to respond, since Will is already turning the kitchen. “Are you hungry, girl? You stink, what were they feeding you? I’m going to have to give you a bath. And a
haircut.” He sets the dog down to prepare its food, but even after he fills the dog dish, he crouches near it to pet its fur almost obsessively.

“I know you don’t like her,” Will says, finally addressing Hannibal. “So I really appreciate this.”

Hannibal can’t begrudge him his earnest, childlike joy. He is glad he was able to please his mate, even if it means living with dog hair for the rest of his life.

“You’re welcome.”

***

In the days that follow, Will’s heat passes, but the fatigue does not – it might even be getting worse. Not that Hannibal minds; it’s a relief to know Will is staying put, where he is safe and hidden away from prying eyes. When Will is awake, he’s somewhat able to accomplish small tasks around the house, even though the most trivial things seem to tire him to exhaustion. He weeds the garden, vacuums the dog hair (to keep Hannibal’s ire at bay), dusts and does the dishes. Ever the dutiful alpha, Hannibal comes home over his lunch hour to make sure Will’s well fed and hydrated, and even going so far as to start giving Will prenatal vitamins, “just in case.”

One particularly unremarkable Tuesday, Hannibal returns home from work to find that, as usual, his mate is fast asleep in their bed with the curtains drawn. His hair is wet, which means that at least he managed to wash himself, but not so vigorously as to scrub out the lingering heat-musk from his skin. Hannibal breathes him in approvingly; his scent has been intensified by the dampness - enough so that Hannibal can practically taste him in the air. His scent has gone sweeter, like dew on clover, and that is all the confirmation Hannibal needs: Will’s conceived. Hannibal’s already loosening his tie, smugly satisfied at his own potency.

Hannibal leans down to kiss Will on his mouth, finding it already ajar and welcoming. He works his tongue in and Will mumbles something as he wakes. His lips are plump and pink; he’s rosy-cheeked and flushed with hormones.

Hannibal easily manoeuvres Will flat onto his stomach and knees his legs apart, the better to peel his clothes down and expose the heart of him. Hannibal mounts him unceremoniously, covering the length of Will’s frame with his own, lips pressed over the still-raw mark, fucking him in long, lazy strokes. Hannibal’s hands are braced on either side of Will’s head and Will slithers his arms up to intertwine his fingers with Hannibal’s. Even in the haze of lust, Hannibal finds himself moved by the simple but sincere gesture, and is overcome by unabashed fondness for his mate.

Hannibal later suspects Will’s using appeasement gestures on him – the omegan counterpart to gentling. It doesn’t appear to be intentional; Will is ever innocent, ever transparent, and charmingly naive of the workings of his own body. While gentling is a biological phenomenon, triggered by the feeling of a bonded alpha’s heartbeat signature on the omega’s sensitized skin, appeasement is largely behavioral. It manifests differently in different bonded pairs, but the purpose is always the same: to ensure the alpha’s enduring affection for its mate. Evolutionarily speaking, it would certainly be in the omega’s advantage to fortify their pair-bond; an omega castout—especially one that is with child—would be exceedingly vulnerable. An appeased alpha is not one that would ever cause harm to its mate.

First came the most overt bonding signal: purring, which Will does exclusively when he’s lying tightly tucked at Hannibal’s side. His other signals are more subtle, but they grow in frequency as his pregnancy progresses, and thus become more noticeable. Sometimes he tilts his head when Hannibal speaks to him, baring his neck, and even rubbing provocatively over his mark. Other times he stretches, arches his back until his nipples tent his shirt. In public, he’ll often clasp one of
Hannibal’s hands in both of his, as though Hannibal were the only thing keeping him anchored on solid ground. His body seems to realize its own vulnerability; to displease Hannibal now would be akin to suicide. Without question, Will couldn’t survive without his alpha’s care and protection.

Whatever Will’s doing, it’s working: Hannibal feels their bond grow stronger with each passing day.

“Is this normal?” Will asks groggily after Hannibal’s tied him.

“Hmmmm?”

“This,” Will says, then yawns, but halfway through in turns into a purr and Will clears his throat self-consciously. Precious. “I’m so tired, I can’t get anything done. I slept for thirteen hours last night, and I still can hardly get up to let out Zama.” He grumbles. “First I couldn’t sleep at all, now I can’t seem to stay awake.”

Hannibal strokes his flank idly, admiring the way Will’s hipbone perfectly fits in the cup of his hand. “Post-heat exhaustion is common in omegas; your insomnia was probably the result of suppressing your heat cycles for so long. Your body requires release to reboot itself. It knows what it needs.”

“Does you think it means I’m....” his voice trails off. “....y’know?”

“It’s very possible,” Hannibal says, trying to hide the self-satisfied smirk in his voice by burying his nose into the junction of Will’s neck, where the latest wound from the marking is only just beginning to heal. Will jerks slightly when he’s rubbed, but knows better than to try to dislodge his alpha when he’s buried so snugly within him. “Would that make you happy, to have my cubs?”

“Yeah.” There is a note of uncertainty in his voice that Hannibal chooses to ignore.

“It would make me happy,” Hannibal says, unfazed by Will’s lack of enthusiasm. He reaches down to rub Will’s tummy for emphasis. Perhaps it might be wishful thinking, but Hannibal swears he’s already a little swollen. Considering the amount of semen he’s been pumping into Will these last few days, the idea isn’t entirely farfetched. “You’ll be so beautiful.”

Will snorts, disbelieving. “I’ll get fat,” He wraps his much smaller hand over Hannibal’s. “You’ll have to feed me and I’ll just lay here and do nothing like a lazy slob and get all fat and gross.”

“My fat little pregnant omega boy.” Hannibal affirms, and this time, in his tiredness, Will can’t help but laugh.

A doctor’s visit two weeks later confirms Hannibal’s suspicions. Hannibal beams openly at the news: he did that to Will. He put that baby inside him. He may be an older alpha, distinguished with age, but he’s still as virile and potent as the young twenty year old bucks he sometimes catches eyeing his mate.

Ever perceptive, the obstetrician notes the concern on Will’s face and reassures him with the same practiced, one-size-fits-all pregnancy spiel she no doubt gives all her patients: “Don’t worry. All your stats look good, you have a clean medical history. Your fatigue is perhaps more severe than most, but it’s nothing to be concerned about. This will all work out fine, we handle lots of male omega births at this center. In fact, we have the highest success rate on the East Coast. You’re in good hands.” She smiles, and makes an obligatory gaze to Hannibal for emphasis. “Do you have any questions before you go?”

Will shakes his head no. He looks very tired, even though Hannibal let him sleep in past noon.
Hannibal, conversely, feels energetic, revved, vigorous, and heady with success. Strangely’ he’s also aroused, now that he knows for certain Will’s been successfully bred. It wouldn’t be hard to work up an erection to rut him again. Even with his chronic fatigue, Will makes a lovely fuck.

Feeling generously inclined, Hannibal stops at an upscale cafe on the way home. Hannibal doesn’t partake (not one for sweets), but there is a certain voyeuristic pleasure in watching Will’s pink tongue dart to lick the whipped cream off the latte concoction he’d ordered. His omega is quiet, and looks even more skittish in public than he used to. Hannibal isn’t sure if it’s because of what happened in the park, or if Will’s agoraphobia has been exacerbated by his pregnancy. Either way, Hannibal is perfectly happy to keep Will tucked safely away at home, if that’s what he so desires.

“My mom will be glad to hear,” Will says musingly and smacks his lips. He has a tiny bit of froth on his upper lip, but Hannibal doesn’t bother telling him so. He looks so delectably young.

“You should call her.”

“Yeah. I’ll probably skype or something. You should be there with me when I tell her.”

Ugh, in-laws. The sniveling suck-up and the busybody.

“As you like.”

Will licks the froth away. Pity.

“I was thinking, can we.... wait to give them the news? Not that I want to, I just – just want to wait until we know.” Will pauses, then adds softly.“For sure.”

Will goes on, flustered. “It’s just, I don’t want to get their hopes up. It’s really early. I could still....you know.....lose it.”

Hannibal hums thoughtfully as he sips his black coffee. Will shifts in his seat, obviously ill at ease. True, male omega pregnancies can be risky, and are known to have a high rate of miscarriage. Will ought to be anxious about it, and not simply because Hannibal could humiliate him by demanding a refund of his dowry money in restitution should he prove to be infertile. If Will couldn’t bear cubs, he would no longer be able to demand Hannibal’s monogamy. Will has obstinately refused to share Hannibal since the first week of their mating, but his objections would mean nothing if he was unable to produce an heir. True, Hannibal has little inclination to take a second, (much preferring a peaceful home to playing constant referee to two headstrong omegas), but he could see certain upsides of that arrangement. A second would take the edge off Hannibal’s insatiable lust when Will’s too exhausted, oversensitive and fragile for a proper fuck. He or she would tend to the house when Will is incapacitated, and could even be another caregiver to their cubs. Hannibal could save the gentle lovemaking for Will, and rut the other as brutally as he so pleases.

Besides, what kind of thoroughbred only takes a single mate?

Up to this point, Hannibal has respected Will’s wishes on the matter, but if the worst should happen, he’d have little choice. Hannibal decides against saying so aloud out of kindness for his mate’s feelings.

“I’m sure it will be fine,” Will continues hurriedly, like he’s trying to wrap up the uncomfortable conversation or keep it from getting worse. “As Dr. Leung said, everything looks fine.”

Hannibal takes another sip. For its exorbitant price, the coffee here is cheap, watery.

It’s later that evening, when Will is lying with his head pillowed in Hannibal’s lap, channel surfing,
that he picks up on the conversation. He strokes the dog’s fur almost neurotically as it dozes at his side.

“I am glad, though.” he says, peering up at Hannibal. “I’m glad it’s yours, that you’re the sire. I hope I didn’t give you the wrong impression earlier. I’m just a little nervous about it is all.”

Hannibal quirks an eyebrow at him, attention diverted from the article he’d been reading on his ipad.

Will adds softly, “I don’t want to let you down.”

He tilts his head, exposing the long pallid column of his neck and showing off his barely-healed mark. Hannibal finally thaws, setting his ipad aside with a sigh.

“You won’t. I’m sure you won’t.” Hannibal pets Will’s forehead. Will soaks in the affection like rainfall on dry earth, letting out a breathy moan as Hannibal cards through his hair. “You’ll give me a beautiful, healthy child. The first of many.”

Will shivers in pleasure, hypersensitive to his alpha’s touch. “Yeah. I will. It’ll be smart and clever like you. And tall.”

Empty flattery perhaps, but it massages Hannibal’s considerable ego and pleases him nonetheless. In truth, Hannibal cares little for children, finding them altogether too loud, too dirty and too invasive. Still, there is something to be said for having a cub to raise in his image, to take on his legacy. Hannibal does not deny that he is a proud man - a textbook narcissist – but children are as close to an earthly immortality as he’ll ever get. He twirls a strand of Will’s hair through his fingertips.

“And have your curl.”

Will’s smile is dopey at the gentling. He reaches up to stroke at Hannibal’s face, although his aim is lazy and uncoordinated. “And your cheekbones.”

At that, Will sits up and brushes his lips against Hannibal’s. They kiss, and as ever, Will is warm and sweet.

“And a alpha.” He says. “I’ll give you an alpha. If this one isn’t, the next one will be.”

***

Hannibal renews his maid service’s contract to keep Will’s physical demands to a minimum. Will is still abnormally fatigued; a follow up doctor’s exam diagnoses him with a relatively rare but harmless hormonal condition that seems to only affect male omegas who have abused heat suppressors. Hannibal’s told Will should recover on his own so long as he’s kept warm, enclosed, well fed and hydrated. Not usually the nurturing sort, Hannibal is surprised to find he doesn’t mind caring for his incapacitated mate. In fact, he rather likes him like this; dreamy, meek and soft, burrowed into the comforters like a hibernating dormouse. It’s so easy to climb into bed next to him, pull the covers off and Will’s sleep pants down, and finger him awake. Even when Will startles, a kiss from his alpha soothes him like a hit of morphine. Will is so responsive, even in sleep; he slicks, rolls his hips in tiny circles, lets out breathy sighs. Hannibal even sucks a hardened nipple and delights when it produces a bead of sweet, creamy milk. Sometimes Will doesn’t wake at all and Hannibal coaxes his orgasm from him as he dreams.

With great flourish, Hannibal calls Jack to inform him that Will won’t be able to come read crime scenes for a good long while. He’s now indisposed, and frankly Hannibal doesn’t trust any alpha
around his beloved mate anymore.

“You knocked him up,” Jack says dully.

Hannibal grins into the receiver. He does like to boast, particularly to Will’s former master. “In the first heat.”

“Bastard,” Jack mutters, and hangs up the phone.

It’s when Will’s once-loose t-shirts begin to tighten around his middle that the reality seems to truly sink in for them both. In the rare instances when he’s out public, Will insists on wearing baggy sweaters that mask his condition. Will only agrees to accompany Hannibal to the yearly hospital benefit after a great deal of convincing on Hannibal’s part, and even then, he blanches when Hannibal hands him something more form-fitting to wear. The rounding curve of his stomach is so appealing, it would be a shame to hide it away. Hannibal is a proud man, and it pleases him greatly to show off his successfully bred mate. He’s still in his prime as an alpha, still as physically vigorous as ever, and Will’s expanding stomach is tangible proof. To be sure, those heavily botoxed gossip-mongers will spread the word until all of Baltimore high society hears. Will’s tailored shirt and vest are perhaps too small, and he periodically tugs it down, self-conscious. He must hate the attention, but Hannibal finds his little displays of modesty utterly precious. After that, Hannibal promises that he won’t make Will to come out unless he truly wanted to.

Hannibal finds it less precious when Will begins to throw up everything Hannibal cooks for him.

“No, Hannibal, I can’t,” Will pleads, covering his mouth with one hand to keep out the odor. “I can’t eat this, the smell.....”

“Will,” Hannibal says, impatient, ”You have to eat something. Your body is growing, and I’m worried you’re not gaining enough weight. Here. Just one bite. Just try it. You like boeuf bourguignon. Come on-”

Will gags as Hannibal tries to spoon-feed him some of the stew, and wrenches himself away.

“I know, I just....I can’t. I’ll puke, Hannibal, please.”

With a defeated sigh, Hannibal sits back. The dog circles them hungrily, but Hannibal will be damned before it gets any.

“I’m sorry,” Will says. “I guess I’m just really sensitive to meat these days.”

Sensitive to meat, yes, you could put it like that.. And cheese, and fish, and curry......

“Well, what will you eat?”

Will’s ears go pink. “It’s not really....up to your culinary standards.”

“Yes, well. I’m about ready to put you on a feeding tube.”

Will half-smiles, sheepish. “Tater tots.”

Hannibal narrows his gaze.

“They’re those little crispy potato things – “

“I’m familiar,” Hannibal bites. He has to mentally reiterate that Will’s a victim to his hormones, he
can’t really help his cravings. Still, the thought of Will ingesting all those preservatives makes him cringe with distaste. It speaks to his desperation that instead of refusing, he says, “That’s what you want?”

Will nods, still blushing, but firm. “With ketchup. Lots of ketchup.”

“Can I at least convince you to eat some vegetables on the side?”

“Ketchup is a vegetable.” Will says seriously, then laughs when Hannibal grimaces. Before he knows it, Hannibal’s being kissed, and can’t remember why anything else in the world matters.

Chapter End Notes

Lol you can see i just gave up at the end there. I almost, ALMOST had my finishing line as Hannibal telling Will his FACE is a vegetable. You’re welcome.
I’m just going to slap this with “completed” and call it a day. I told ya’ll there wouldn’t be a story arc! I’ve officially run out of steam on this verse. I’m really only good at (and interested in) writing porn and I have zero motivation to write kid!fic. But if anyone is so inclined to pick up where I left off, please have at ‘er! maybe include something about cannibalism and murders cos I clearly didn't give a shit about that, lol.
Hope you guys had fun and maybe fapped once or twice! I’d fap to it, but I’m in perpetual cringe mode when i reread my stuff, omgggggggg
My tumblr: teresa-dances-in-sequins.tumblr.com :)  
Xoxoxo Teresa

Works inspired by this one Sweet As Peaches On the Tongue by Dangereuse

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