shatter
by connanro (noseybookworm)

Summary

Prompt fic. Klaus is well versed in the stories of heroes and villains. He knows how a hero is made, how a man is broken, but it only serves to make his own situation more frightening. Post Miserable Mill.

Notes
	hanks to elaienar for beta’ing this for me!

there are a lot of words that klaus can use to describe himself--knowledgeable, bookish, reserved, determined. words are klaus’s strength; they are what he knows, what he understands. his words keep him in control, keep things from spiralling from his grasp. but his words only have so much power.

(speechless is word which here means silent, struck dumb by grief, without words. klaus is rarely speechless save by choice, but that cold, cloudy day on briny beach he’s speechless with shock and grief. he is unable to pull a word from his dictionary of a mind to describe how he feels, how his heart freezes cold and cracks. he is speechless, and mr poe’s constant cough is the only thing that breaks the silence.)

klaus tries. that’s who he is. he’s read many of the books in their vast library (yet there’d been so many he’d left untouched before the house burnt, before their life was consumed in flames) and many, many of them tell stories of people in unfortunate situations who persevere. the purpose of
stories is knowledge and the purpose of knowledge is wisdom and klaus tries so hard to stay strong, not to be consumed by the cold tension inside him, empty, silent. klaus is a child of words, born and bred in the library. the silence scares him, and he feels his grip slipping, the cracks in his silent heart deepening.

(alone is word which here means solitary, without friends, by one’s self. alone is a word klaus should not apply to himself. he still has violet and sunny. he still has family. but more and more often he finds himself silent, speechless, alone in his head without a book in his hand or a story to guide him. he feels lost. he feels--)

unfortunately, as klaus knows well, one can only try for so long. he’s read books of people surviving: surviving grief, surviving catastrophe, surviving life. he knows people can survive. but he also knows people can fail. he’s read the tragedies as well as the comedies and he knows that he can only hold on for so long before he falls apart, that there is only so much time before--

(shatter is a word which has two meanings: it can be used to mean break or fly suddenly into pieces. it also can mean to shock, to crush, to devastate. klaus knows words, and this is the one that comes to mind when he finds himself with blank spots, finds himself losing time. he can’t remember. he--he thinks he was? he remembers his glasses. broken. shattered. he feels out of control. he’s lost. violet and sunny are afraid and he--his heart is too worn and the cracks are too deep and his memory and body too untrustworthy. klaus knows how stress fractures develop and he knows the physics of erosion but he can’t understand how to pull himself together. he can’t call for help. he’s alone. he has to win this battle himself. he can’t. he doesn’t know how to pull the fragments together. he doesn’t know--)

klaus has only lived for twelve years, which means he is young. words commonly linked to youth and child are lively, innocent, buoyant. klaus doesn’t feel young. he feels tired. he feels older than he thought possible: lifeless, cold. the words klaus associates with child are home, safe, loved. the words he associates with himself are lost, tired, broken. klaus should be a child. but klaus is not young. klaus is not full of life. klaus is. klaus is--

-- broken. cold. shattered

klaus is afraid.

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