The Other

by BeCreative

Summary

Peeta is being Hijacked.

This is his journey through pain, insanity, and most of all,

Darkness.

Notes

MOST IMPORTANTLY, this fic is going to go wonky at the end. This is Peeta being tortured and hijacked, so his thoughts aren't exactly in order by the end of this. Sentences that could be run-on sentences are intentional, the repetition is intentional, and there's a lot of things that need to kinda be read from the point of view of someone who has lost their marbles, especially the stuff in italics at the end, (you'll see). My best advice would be to disregard your sense of structure for a bit, but feel free to tell me in the comments if anything feels waaaaay too cumbersome or silly-sounding!

Hope you enjoy reading, and hopefully you enjoy my attempt at torture and pain—jeez that sounds worse in writing.

See the end of the work for more notes

Peeta loathed the darkness.
He would wake up, bruised, aching, sometimes still screaming from whatever they—they—had decided to do to him that particular hour or minute. They could stab him, shoot him, chop him into little bits, as long as he could see, he could stay strong, could stay sane.

But when they took that away from him, the resiliency vanished quicker than the electricity that flowed through the water pooling at his feet, pruning his bare, beaten, bleeding toes.

They—they—caught onto this quicker than snakes to struggling mice, and began to incorporate it into his daily dose of Hell. One more thing to break him, one more thing to crush what was left of him, one more thing to leave him gibbering senseless words to the air around him that was thick with his own pain.

They—they—began plunging him into the smothering darkness in the middle of their stabbing and shocking, and their bladed machines would attack him from angles he could not see, could not predict, could not prepare for.

If he wasn’t already screaming when the lights were on, it drew unearthly howls from him when they were extinguished.

He wished he wasn’t so weak. He wished he wasn’t so pitiful. But the dark was what disturbed him, what discomposed him, and so the dark stayed.

They asked him questions, if asked was what you could call it. They—they—would scream their questions at him, voices high and piercing, ringing through his ears so loudly that they would bleed, and tears would push themselves down his face, no matter how forcefully he bit his lips to prevent them. He bit and bit and yet they would still come, tears from his eyes and blood from his mouth and ears running down his cheeks, his chin, down onto the metal table that was colder than his fingertips long after they lost circulation from the shackles that constricted his wrists.

And all the while, their tools and machines were working away.

The darkness was always what truly unraveled him in the end. It was always what made him stop talking sense, and start screaming and screaming until they deemed him unfit for any more questioning. They would wheel him away, drag him back, back to his cell, his cave, where the darkness stayed with him. Their questions stayed with him too, even if he lost the capability to answer them.

He never answered them, not that he had the answers they wanted anyway.
He knew.

_They_ knew.

But it was all part of the game.

They would ask him questions he could never answer, punish him for not knowing, for not being useful. They would shock him until the electricity vibrated in his molars long after he was unhooked, they would inject him with hallucinogens that would make his skin peel away, his eyes boil in his head, his bones twist and melt, they would burn him until he begged for death.

But death was not part of the game, at least not for him.

Death would be too easy.

The others around him were not so lucky.

They taunted him with death, telling him of the sweet, sweet wonders of the supposed afterlife, of the escape from the cell, from the pain, from the knife. They hooked him up to machines that would probe the very insides of his mind, and would croon beautiful, awful things to him. They told him they would kill him if he only told them what they needed, and of the glorious, inky darkness that would come over him, until it was the only thing left.

And he would scream.

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with him.

The Other stayed, and the Other became a friend, a companion, the only one he had in this place of savage agony.

Eventually, torture was not the only thing on his daily agenda. The time came when they brought him to a clean, white, brightly lit room that made him pant with anxiety. They strapped him to a chair with leather fastenings, and injected him with syringes full of white substances that made his blood boil, and his skin bubble and froth until he was sure he was no longer human, just a thing, a Mutt.

The burning sensations started a few short seconds later, and searing pain shot through every filament, fiber, and thread of his body. His limbs would have flailed had they been free, but he was securely tied.

The only thing left to him was his voice.

He howled until it gave out, and he could scream no more, and the next thing he was aware of, was being hooked up to the machine, the one that spoke to him, that looked into his mind and saw the only things that kept him alive.

The machine saw her.

It always saw her.

It always saw how he felt about her, and he hated himself, because he couldn’t even keep her memory out of this tainted place, he couldn’t even keep the one thing that mattered to him safe from their prying eyes.

His voiceless mouth opened and closed in agony, even as the machine spoke soothing words to him.

Do not fear, it said. When you leave, you can make her pay.
And Peeta shook his head, because he knew what they were trying to do, what they were trying to make him think, and we would not let them do that to him, to her.

*Her.* The Machine agreed. *She has deceived you.*

And Peeta and the voice inside him knew that it was wrong, and that everything this machine was saying, was imposing was wrong, and suddenly out of the darkness of his mind, the Machine brought images to the surface, their brightness as blinding to him as heaven’s fire to a sinner. He writhed on the table, and yet even as he moved in one world, his eyes were open in another, one of the past.

It showed him the games, and the cave. Peeta’s skin twitched as he remembered the pain he was in while he was there, and yet he would rather suffer through a thousand caves than stay here, his mind open, his body weak and exposed . . .

In the cave he had a chance, and a choice. In the cave he had Katniss.

*But what really happened?* The machine queried, its unwelcome voice resonating through Peeta’s broken mind, and through the skull containing it. *She deceived you for her own purposes. She used you for her own survival. You know what she told you, that she didn’t love you the way you thought she did. You do not remember correctly.* And Peeta wanted to howl, because it wasn’t true, he was sure of it. He remembered everything correctly, it was in his head.

It was in *his* broken, hallucinating head . . .

And suddenly, panic.

Peeta gasped for air. How could he trust his memories if he knew what they had done to him here? How could he trust a mind that he himself knew was shattered beyond repair? That had been tampered with?

The Other in his head awoke, and sent a soothing wave to him. *Then trust nothing.* It said. *Because if you treat everything as false, then you have no fear of being tricked.*

Yes. In some sick way, it made sense. He would have to trust nothing but The Other. The Other had warned him. The Other could be trusted—for now. And someday he would find someone to
tell him what was real and not real.

If someone had told Peeta he would miss the darkness, he would have told them to go screw themselves, and then he would have laughed, and laughed, and laughed until his very bones echoed and ached with it.

Although, reflecting back, he probably wouldn’t have had the voice to do any such thing. Screaming does tend to wear out the vocal chords.

Back to the point, Peeta never would have guessed that he would prefer the mindless, lonely torture to the white rooms that hurt his eyes, and white machines that hurt his mind, and white injections that hurt his veins, and white memories that he couldn’t trust.

That he would never trust.

That was the only way he could make sure he kept straight what was true and not true.

It didn’t make much sense to him either.

But The Other assured him it would be worth it.

Don’t worry. It told him one day, as Peeta wandered lost and forsaken in the depths of his own insanity. Soon you can trust your memories again, and you can kill her—the Mutt.

For a brief moment, the world froze, and it suddenly seemed as if Peeta had stepped off a cliff. He wasn’t falling, but he felt like it. His stomach lurched and roiled, although he couldn’t for the life of him tell why.

In his mind he looked up, and he looked down, but there was nothing to be seen. He noticed with a shiver that there seemed to be a bright light coming from the top of the cliff. He looked below at what should be the bottom, the end to a fall, the punctuation mark to a sentence, but all he saw
was darkness.

It was a relief to his eyes, for once, the sheer nothingness of the ebony expanse below. He squinted back up at the top, before he felt himself slowly descending into the cool darkness.

Yes. He agreed, the uneasiness slowly fading from his stomach as he drifted into the black. Soon.

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It seems strange how little it takes to break a man.

Peeta often reflected on this as the machines spat lies and poison into his mind. They told him how beautiful Katniss was, how much he loved her, and he knew he couldn’t trust them. He knew better than that by now.

Everything they said was a lie, it was the only way to make sure he could tell right from wrong.

He knew it made no sense.

He didn’t particularly care.

He just had to keep the memories safe—for what he didn’t particularly know—he just did.

He knew he was broken, he knew it.

The Other kept him sane. The Other would talk to him. They would plot together, figure out how to kill this Mutt, this girl he could not trust, because they—they—were telling him he could.

They always lied, but this time he had outsmarted them. He had figured out not to trust them, never, never, never.
When we get out, we kill her. The Other said.

Yes.

It was the only thing that made sense anymore.

She was the cause to his pain, the reason to his imprisonment, the root to his problem, and only killing her would ensure the safety of him, and everyone else.

Yes, we kill her.

And then it is all over, they cannot use her against us.

No more would he have to see her face in his head, as they told him how much she had done for him. He had seen his own true memories, and the things she had done, the people she had selfishly sacrificed, the hellish horrors and savagery she had inflicted on the innocents when she had been in the Games. He knew what she really was, The Other told him so.

No more. They cannot fool us any longer. We will KILL her.

Yes, we will KILL HER.

We know how, we know how to make her suffer.

Suffer?

Doubt.

Yes. And everyone needs to know she is untrustworthy. They may not know, and it is our job to
warn them.

Suffer?

Yes she must suffer, you know what she had done to you—to your family.

Suffer?

Yes. We suffer, why should not she?

Yes.

Yes, why should not she.

When we get out, we kill her.

It was circles in his head, circles and circles and circles,

a dog chasing its tail no matter how dizzy it gets,

a never ending cycle of question and answer until eventually he could no longer tell which was mind, which was instinct, which was real, which was false, or for that matter, which was Other and which was him.

He found himself okay with that. The Other was the only thing he could trust.

Peeta was The Other, The Other was part of him now.

Ironic considering it had started as such.
One day, the white disappeared. The white machines, the white rooms, he was in the darkness.

He could hear no intruders in his mind, he could not feel their presence.

He was alone for the first time since he could remember.

That was, if he could *trust* what he remembered.

He felt lonely, and missed The Other, until he remembered they were One now.

For now, he could wait for his opportunity to kill the Mutt, and he could just enjoy the darkness.

Peeta relished the darkness.

Peeta *was* the darkness.

End Notes

Thank you so much for making it through, hopefully you're not too turned away by the lack of sense in the last little bit there!

This was my first hunger games fic, and I was always curious as to how the capitol hijacked Peeta, and I always felt that some sort of reverse psychology or something was involved, so I tried my best to put down what I imagined happened.

Absolutely any comment is welcome, whether it be criticism, praise (I can only hope), favorite lines, or tips, seriously please leave ANYTHING below!!

Thank you again for reading, hope yall enjoyed it! :)

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!