Possession of the Heart

by Commander_Shepard

Summary

Bill had discovered simply looking at her made him feel...good. He could watch her flit about her daily things for eternity. Every silly mannerism she possessed, her crudely loud sneezes, her disheveled chestnut mane, her nervous preening— he adored her.

Why waste time tormenting her when he could be swooning over her like this?

Notes

This was a Fiverr commission!
"I really wanted you to like me, Mabel."

"I know."

Bill pressed his one pitch eye close to the cheval glass in front of him. He pet his forefinger against the back of the mirror as he surveyed the enchanting figure lingering just on the other side.

Pretty Mabel...whirling about the room in today's outfit. Her soft hands clung to her long skirts as she twirled in them with nary a care. She flung her shoulders back on a contented laugh that Bill never wanted to end. Her freckled nose wrinkled on her too lovely face. She brushed any creases away from her clothes, aligning her seams a final time before she sprinted for the door. Her footsteps echoed and disappeared in the distance.

Bill had to confess, Mabel had blossomed into such an enticing creature. Years passed so quickly in his realm, it'd only been an instant and that toothsome bright grin had grown into an alluring peckish smile on her pink lips. He sighed just to think of her beaming expression.

Joy was becoming on her gorgeous face.

Bill had discovered simply looking at her made him feel...good. He could watch her flit about her daily things for eternity. Every silly maneurism she possessed, her crudely loud sneezes, her disheveled chestnut mane, her nervous preening— he adored her.

Why waste time tormenting her when her could be swooning over her like this?

Bill's musings were cut short— he'd been staring blankly at the mirror before him, lost in thought, when Mabel chanced back into the attic.

His black heart thudded harder to see her again.

Mabel ran for the dresser seated beside her bed. She yanked the drawer open and shuffled frantically through its contents for something.

Bill could hear Dipper calling up to her from the other room.

"You find them yet?" His voice echoed.

Mabel held her treasure aloft with a triumphant whoop. "Just found em!" She hollered back down to him, jingling her quarry in hand. Keys.

Where could they be headed? His curiosity burned.

Mabel took the chance to snag a perfume from the dresser top and spritz herself before dashing out the door once more.

Bill hurried to the room's far window, another pane he could peer out from his world. What must be Dipper's car sat running warm in the driveway.

That's right...it wasn't even Summer. It was January and these two decided to drop on by. Why?
Had they graduated their schoolings?

Dipper leant against the driver's side door casually, his feet kicked up as he waited for his sister to emerge. He canted his head over his shoulder when she came out, gave her a grin before slipping into his seat.

Bill could just barely make out the duo's conversation.

"...Gideon's....till seven?"

The dream demon pressed harder and even dashed to his lookout at the Mystery Shack entrance for a better listen, but the car windows were rolled high and the duo was already halfway up the narrowing driveway.

Bill cursed his lack of vantage. He had many peepholes scattered throughout this town. If it was Gideon's the two siblings were headed, then Bill would be making his way there, too.

It'd occurred to him that not having Mabel in his sights was...an annoyance. He despised the world less for having her in it, and to keep an eye on her was beyond pleasant. He clasped his little hands together menacingly, ciphering out the next window he could peer out.

He traveled through familiar dreamscape till he reached the parallel to the Gleeful manor. He scanned hard and found a triangular crack in a tall mirror mounted on the wall inside the humble home.

Looked like Lil Gideon was having a lil get together. He waited patiently whilst the clean-casual party attendees milled about in a friendly fashion, chatting on about their daily mundane lives. Bill rolled his eye around the room, squinting hard for any sight of his lovely Mabel. He heard her sweet voice before he saw her.

Mabel and Dipper passed around the corner, linked arm in arm as they cut through the crowd. Mabel murmured something low to him and nodded to the clear dining room ahead.

Bill's black hands clinked against the glass and Pine Tree looked over his shoulder instinctively, hackles forever risen with that boy. Like he had a sense when Cipher was around, or at the least, the paranormal.

Dipper turned back obliviously with a scratch to his neck and began leading his sister away from the crowds. Bill followed suit behind them, traveling in the reflections lining the walls. Out the corner of his eye, he caught Gideon Gleeful making his way to the duo. A cordial smile spread across his rosy face as he greeted them near the dining table.

"My dearest Pines." He enjoined them.

Gideon took Mabel's dainty hand in his own and brought it up to his lips. He kissed the emerald ring adorned on her middle finger, eyes never leaving hers.

Bill assumed she'd recoil, given her prior distaste, but she only laughed. Mabel then welcomed him into a warm hug— one that made Bill's ire skyrocket. Dipper proceeded to take Gideon's hand in a near brotherly shake.

"I thought Dipper here wasn't coming with you till next year" Gideon recalled as he leant against the dining table. "No matter the circumstance, I'm happy the both of y'all could finally join me!"

Bill gawked silently from his placing in the mirror on the wall. These three had become friends over the years, and he hadn't even noticed? How preoccupied he'd been with other things...
Little Mabel had sprouted full in the meantime, growing into a young woman without his observance. Even Gideon was strapping now. Not so lil anymore. He kept Mabel in his shadow, nearly two heads taller than both siblings.

Mabel had to crane her neck just to look him in the eyes.

Bill suspected a hint of feminine approval in Mabel's gaze. She let her hazel eyes linger a second too long on Gideon's broad shoulders. Bill seethed from his placement and eyed a few possible host candidates bustling about.

One bumbling waiter struck an applicable chord within him. The other catering staff seemed to take no notice with him. When the went on breaks, he was left out from the circle. He had no phone in his pocket and no hope in his eyes. Just cigarettes and a thin wallet.

A lost soul that was just begging to be replaced— and such a conventionally attractive form, too. Would Mabel fall prey to those tortured grey-blue eyes? The boy's hair needed taming and his posture demanded immediate improvement, but there was potential in him nonetheless.

Bill kept track of the busboy, and waited for him to take another leisurely break on the Gleefuls' patio. He'd make his move when that poor boy was alone. The mortal was hardly using his vessel constructively as is, Bill would see to it that his full capability was met. A befitting, and surely welcomed, transaction.

Mabel elicited a throaty laugh at something Gideon said, her soft hand patted his chest as she wiped a tear from her eye. Bill saw a blush creeping across Gideon's freckled cheeks, his eyes fell to where Mabel's hand lay.

Bill's vision flashed red. Mabel's hands flitted back to her sides and she looked to her phone before murmuring something about the restroom. Gideon pointed to the hall on his right and she hurried down it with haste, giving her brother a momentary wave.

Coincidently enough, Bill's hunt for the day wandered out the back door and on to the patio. How convenient.

Bill trailed behind him, following in each reflection he could before manifestation was imminent.

The busboy lit up a cigarette that'd been tucked behind his ear. His disheveled blonde hair fell dead in front of his lusterless eyes. Seemed as if this boy needed a pilot. Like living had been such a burden on his weary mortal soul.

Who can blame him in this world?

Bill weighed his options here. Why exactly did he want this human vessel? This could be a waste of time and energy— though redundant in his godlike state. But it seemed that whenever the Pines family became even minutely involved with his scheming, things went awry, and if one was to be the forefront of his endgame... he wasn't sure how this would pan out for him.

Half-way through the cigarette and Bill thought of that pretty pink perfume Mabel had spritzed on herself just earlier today. If Bill possessed a human host, he could take Mabel's warm body in his arms— he could linger in her decadent scent for hours, twirl her silken hair round his boney fingers.

Bill would finally know how Mabel's skin felt beneath his own hands. What little noises she'd make when Bill had her tucked beneath him.
This young man looked no older than Mabel herself. Must only still be in his mid twenties. *Perfect.*

Bill watch as the human took a seat on a stone bench, resting his tired head in his hands. His eyes half lidded as he looked past Cipher.

"Hey, buddy, why the long face?"

Waiter boy snapped to attention. The cherry fell from his cigarette. He peered around, checking to see if he was as alone as he'd once thought.

Bill choked back a laugh. No need to petrify the boy. He doubted the man would need coaxing to a well needed break in existing. Hell, Bill should be getting paid to steer this meat sack around for a couple of weeks. This was a blessing in disguise, the kid just didn't know it yet.

"W-who…? Hello?" The boy asked out loud, his voice choked. Disbelieving. Like maybe he'd just imagined that voice calling to him.

Bill decided to waste no more time in the build up of his Big Reveal. He made himself visible to the human with a flash of smoke and a tip of his hat.

"*Jesus Christ!*"

Bill cackled and held up his hands in defense. "Hey-hey! Whoa! No need for name calling, kiddo!" Bill chided, giving the waiter a final once over. He circled his specimen approvingly. This form would be adequate for now, at least.

He slipped his black hands across the name tag pinned to the human's chest.

"Cornelius?" Bill scoffed and tore the thing away. "That's a terrible name. I'm not using that, hope that doesn't void contract." He trailed, giving his bow tie an adjusting tug.

"C-contract?"The bewildered human breathed out past his shuddering.

Bill offered him a courteous bow. "Introductions are in order, seeing as I know your atrocious name." He whirled his black cane for punctuation. "The name's Bill Cipher, and boy do I have a deal for you."

The boy's trembling seemed to ebb away as Bill carried on menial conversation. He floated a few feet from the boy, giving him space to breathe. Humans needed to do that, right?

Cornelius pulled at his own bowtie. Awful colored fabric, but it'll do. "A deal?" He looked to the crumpled cigarette lying between his feet. His hands shook as he combed them through his hair. "I...I don't even know what you are."

Bill tsked. "Well now, that's not what's important here, my boy. Now see— I'm a *god* of sorts, and that entitles me to some powerful magicks." He drifted nearer to Cornelius and perched on his shoulder, giving each one a good pat. These'll do nicely. "Magicks I can use to make your *wildest* dreams become absolute reality." He enticed, wriggling his fingers.

The boy rubbed his arm pensively, obviously uncomfortable to look Cipher in the eye, but the metaphorical clock was ticking, and sustaining a corporeal form on his own in this realm was tiring.

"Come on kid, I know you've got dreams." He cajoled, offering his hand up, all too ready to seal this deal. "If you let me possess this body of yours for a teensy bit, I'll make it forever worth your
The boy tensed. "Possess me?" He scoffed. "You're kidding." Must be some lick of sense in that head of his, but for all the cruel things Bill was worth—there was no use in being dishonest. He simply needed a vessel. He'd even give the boy if this worked like he planned? Well, he'd be renting this body for months on end.

The kid would be getting paid for part-time about a win-win.

Bill pressed his finger over the thudding heart in Cornelius' chest. "Now I know exhausted when I see it, and it's plain to see that you're barely managing in this world as is." Bill murmured mock soothingly. "So, why don't you take a little mental break, say for a week or two? Let me be in total control. You rest. Linger in my dreamscape." Bill would make it pleasant for him.

The boy was reasonably hesitant but Bill could see he more than had his attention. His interest.

"Listen kid, all I need is a yes or no." Bill offered up his hand for a shake. "Think about it, for the nex-"

"Could you really get me cash?" Cornelius rushed, interrupting Bill's persuasion, though it seemed a bit unnecessary at this point. "Like a lot of money? When? H-how, in what form?"

Bill laughed. "I can get it to you any way and in any amount. I can make a stack of it stand up and walk to your front door." He had him. Hook, line and sinker. "All you gotta do is shake." And linger in what was basically purgatory for a few weeks.

The human looked to Bill now, a hint of resolve in those exhausted eyes. It was almost sad how little a fight this boy put up, though Bill supposed that was all the better for the both of them.

Bill splayed his fingers and a blue aura flashed around his hand. Swallowing it up in a azure flame that flickered wildly. Volatile.

"You won't feel a thing, scout's honor." Bill relayed honestly as Cornelius reached for him.

The boy paused only for a second. "Just...don't hurt anybody."

"Oh I wouldn't dream of it, boyyo!" With that, Bill snatched the human's warm hand. With a single tug, he wrenched Cornelius' tired soul free. His body fell limp in a crumpled heap on the patio, his skull cracking against the corner of the stone bench.

Bill winced for his host, but dove into him nevertheless.

Cornelius was breathing awed in the background, whirling about his new plane and marveling at his weightlessness.

Bill sat up with a groan, pain blooming from the gash cut across his hairline. He rubbed his hands there and hissed between his teeth to find blood there.

Birds flitted about in a nearby stone basin filled with water. Bill shooed them away before scooting on his knees to inspect his marred face in the reflection. Blood dripped onto the surface and he scooped a handful up to wash the worst away.

Cornelius drifted by his side, seeming already content in his new uncorporeal form.

"What is it that you need a body for if you've already got this kind of magick?" He asked brazenly, lounging on his back in the air, his face turned up towards the bright evening sky.
Bill surveyed his new face with approval. He grinned, flashing his teeth. A toothsome smile, but white and even. He stood on foreign limbs, his knees wobbling before he regained composure.

Just like riding a bicycle.

He brushed his lanky fingers down his breast coat, leaving no wrinkles behind as he made his way to the backdoor of the Gleeful manor before he called back. "Because, you fool, to win a girl's heart— you need your own!" Bill patted his hand across his chest triumphantly, his gait proud as he waltzed inside- a new man.

Cornelius did not choose to follow.
Hey fuckers. I've had this one chilling on my computer for weeks now. Have at it! Read the after-notes for a pro-tip from me to you!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

This human's heartbeat foreign in his borrowed chest. Bill rubbed a gloved palm over his thumping breast, the steady rhythm pumping on just as before. Like this body wasn't even aware it'd just aquired a new pilot.

That steady thumping only increased the further Bill waded in the crowds. Blood coursing through his veins was so odd. So very odd and so loud. He could hear the bones rubbing against tissue, could perceive the sound his muscles made with every movement.

Bill was hyper-aware in this state. The pain in his temple bloomed with each pulse. He could feel it trickling down his face.

These human excreted any and everything, didn't they? Bill aimed for the restrooms, hoping for a sink to nurse his first wound in. He hurried along the hardwood floors, pressed passed faceless guests as he made his way.

He spotted Pine Tree dead ahead. A too-human panic set it before Bill's rational took over. There was no possible way Dipper would know it was him. Why would he even suspect it?

Bill grinned to himself, his mouth setting into a crooked, toothsome smile. Gideon and the Pine's boy were talking low to one another, discussing something in hushed voices. Dipper nodded and Gideon seemed all too happy at that reaction.

He squinted at them, never minding the path ahead of him when he careened into another human.

A soft, lovely human. His Mabel.

Bill gasped for the first real time in his life and nearly fell on his ass. Air was forced into his lungs and he choked on it right in front of her pretty face.

That already annoying heartbeat was now hammering in his chest and jumping into his throat. Pounding hard enough for her to hear.

Mabel's hands flitted to her mouth to hide her shock. "Oh my- I'm so sorry, sir." She whirred out an apology, her eyes full of concern and sunbursts. Impossible to look away. He was starstruck like never before. "I wasn't watchin' where I was going. I really coulda hurt you."

Without thought, Bill clutched at his breast coat, earning a light laugh from the female before him. If he'd been smitten with Mabel before...now he was ruined.

He drug a shaky hand down his face to gain his bearings, and winced when he brushed across his wound.

"Oh geez." Mabel mused, one gentle hand reaching for his face. "You're already hurt!
You're **bleeding.**" Her fingers were careful not to touch. Gods, as if he even cared at this point. It was bliss to simply have her this near.

Bill hadn't even stumbled out a word to her. Hadn't even tested his voice on her yet. And here she was— the light of his dark life, brushing her graceful touch across him so openly, amidst all these people. She hadn't the slightest idea who he is.

Would she recant her tenderness if she knew who truly inhabited this body?

*Most assuredly.*

Bill found his words once again and asked her playfully, "How's my first impression going?"

Mabel cracked a smile, her rosy cheeks dimpled and pink. From this close, Bill could see the light dusting of freckles kissing her nose. Where *he* aspired to kiss. He could smell the enchanting wash of her perfume. It was all he could do to keep from leaning in for a deeper telling of that fragrant aroma. He could better marvel at the sheen in her chestnut hair, so tempted was he to plunge his hands into those tresses and bury his face amongst them.

"It's going better than you think, champ." She snorted, tossing him a teasing wink. Blissfully unaware. "You need some clean up help?" She asked concernedly, her head tilting to the side.

He swallowed thickly, his attire suddenly feeling entirely too tight on his mortal form. He tugged at the bow tie round his neck, loosening it a degree.

Where was his Cipher carisma? Mabel had reduced him to a babbling puddle within seconds.

"I don't want to inconvenience you, Miss…?" He cocked a brow. Operating two eyes was a breeze, as easy as breathing. Painful, but it worked— like the rest of this body. Was this just what it felt like to be alive?


Bill's face heated, he could feel blood rushing to his cheeks despite his best efforts. "Enchanting name for such an enchanting creature." He grinned, obviously more charming than predatory— for she smiled in return.

"You're rotten!" She laughed brightly, giving his chest a soft pat. A chaste touch— sent chills down his spine. Now he could see why Gideon's gaze had been raptured on her hand before.

Speaking of the towering oaf, he was looking right this way. Wine glass in hand as he motioned for them casually. Dipper peered over as well, eyes sharp when he saw his twin cohorting with a stranger so closely.

Mabel peeked over Bill's shoulder. "That's my brother over there." She pointed, earning her a wave from both boys. "Oh god, he'll fuss at me for beating you." She joked.

They took that as invitation and began their way over here, much to Bill's distaste. He swallowed down a grimace just in time.

Dipper plastered on a smile for Bill, Gideon doing the same per hospitality.

"Talking with strangers, Mabel?" Dipper jeered teasingly.

"You can't make friends any other way, now can you, Dip?" She retorted back. Her tongue sharp
before she winked haughtily up at Bill. She enjoyed getting a rise out of her brother. "You two, meet my new acquaintance here—Mr. uh...oh." She pressed a finger to her lip. "Sorry, I didn't catch your name."

Bill blanched, his tongue heavy like lead in his mouth. So unused to having a tongue. So unused to having teeth.

Dipper and Gideon introduced themselves like any normal boys would, polite and friendly. Unsuspecting in any way.

He gave a tug at his bow tie, swallowing down the lump in his throat to stumble out a name.

Chapter End Notes

Next one of you who makes me check my fucking inbox to find a comment that literally just says 'MOAR' or 'UPDATE NOW' I'm coming to your fucking place of residence and I'm gonna grab your toothbrush and fuck my ass with it.

TL;DR: Say nice words to the ppl who bust their dicks writing fanfiction. Please and thank you.
Bill's tongue felt like ash in his mouth. Unusable and clumsy just like the human's appendage it so rightfully was. Blood that wasn't even his own flooded his borrowed cheeks. He could feel the heat of his blush burning across his face. Surely they could all see it as well.

Thousands upon thousands of names came to the forefront of his mind in a blur. Toby? Facetious? Names that couldn't be spoken in human tongue, or thought quietly in the human mind.

"It's Cornelius, isn't it?" Mabel chimed in his flurry of thoughts, her delicate hand extended to touch the pin holes dotted on Bill's chest. "I saw it on your badge earlier." His heart fluttered there just beneath her fingertips. Hammering hard— just for her.

Bill regained his bearings quickly enough, he nodded appeasable with a serene smile. "It sure is. Please, you can call me Clemont for short."

Dipper laughed by his sister's side. "Wouldn't Bill work better?"

That ashen tongue turned to rot. He swallowed thickly, trying to soothe his futile worries. They don't know. None of them are even aware.

Gideon gave a snort of his own. "Or Corn?" His rounded nose wrinkled when he smiled. His eyes constantly hovering to Mabel. He thought no one could see it. The same affection Bill held for Mabel was rivaled in Gideon's gaze.

He thought he could win her over with jokes? Bill choked back his signature cackle to laugh along breezily with their toying.

"So you must be Mabel's brother, I take it?" Bill asked mock obliviously, unable to stop the subtle lean towards her. His form itched to be close to hers. What would her soft hair feel like beneath his palm? "You're all friends of here?" He motioned towards Gideon politely.

The trio nodded in near unison, all grinning to each other. Content in their friendship. Something hurting seized within Bill, and he masked a sneer just in time.

"I'm Dipper." The Pine's boy introduced, before digging his elbow into Mabel's side. "If you couldn't tell by looking at us-" He stood on his tippy toes, just an inch shy of his sister's height. "We're twins."

Mabel pressed a hand to her collar. "I'm the older one, but you can see that, right?"

"Yes, you just ooze maturity, Mabes."

Bill laughed emptily with them, dimly noting that Gideon was keeping that stark gaze.
on him instead. He rubbed his chin, his thumb brushing across his mouth in thought before he snapped his fingers.

"I knew I recognized you. You're part of the wait staff, yes?" Gideon asked, eyeing Bill's shirt, the two tiny pinholes where a name plate had been pinned just earlier.

Bill's efforts had all been for naught. Escaping that name had been hopeless.

That knot in his throat swelled up once more, making it hard to even swallow thickly around it. His collar felt too tight. Why was answering simple human's questions this stressful?

Saving Grace Mabel swooped in once again to ease some of the tension.

"He's off the clock now, Gideon." Mabel teased, earning her a pinkened blush from the Gleeful boy. "And he needs a wash. Look at that face!" She attested, gesturing to the still bleeding wound cut across Bill's hairline. He'd hardly noticed it at all with Mabel in his presence.

"I think the grown man can take his own bath, Mabel." Her brother jeered, mockingly.

She punched his shoulder, harder than he expected because the boy stumbled back on his heels. "Not a bath, you silly. I'm just gonna help him clean up that sore."

Bill thought it cordial to insist that he take care of himself, but then again…

"I just need to know which way a restroom is." Bill chimed in, adjusting his bowtie for the umpteenth time. Did that kid even tie this damned thing right? "Thank you so much, Miss...Mabel, was it?" He asked kindly, toying with the idea of kissing her hand like Gideon had done. That'd put a twist in the Gleeful boy's knickers.

Mabel swatted his idea away with a dramatic, "Pffftttt." She waved her hand and linked an arm with Bill. Like the two had been friends for ages.

It was almost painful how trusting she was.

"Come on, Corn, it's right this way." She winked up at his chastely. "And yeah, it's Mabel. Mabes. Whichever suits your fancy."

*Please, dark gods, don't let them call me Corn for the duration of my stay on this retched coil.*

Bill pretended to be modest. Humbled by her offer. "Thank you, Mabel." He breathed as she led herself to slaughter, arm in arm with the dream demon.

"Of course! I nearly flattened you earlier, this is literally the least I can do." Her heeled feet clicking rhythmically against the marbled floor. The lavatory was a ways down this narrowing hall, but he wasn't focusing on the distance ahead. Only the softness of her side pressed slightly against his. The sway of her hips as she walked along.

The freckles on her nose were looking entirely too kissable. Why did this squishy little meat sack make his corrupt soul sing?

She was everything he wasn't. Alive. Mortal. Beautiful. Kind. Forgiving. So so so foolishly trusting.

There was more than just blood in her veins and a beating in her heart, she loved being alive. She was imbued with life in all aspects. He felt stronger just being near to her.
All too soon, her slender arm slipped away from his. She pushed open the restroom door and memories in this boy’s brain hinted that Cornelius had been impressed. Awed by the wealth and moneyed layout of a simple bathroom.

Christ, there was a fucking chandelier in the shitting room.

Bill rolled his eyes. Gideon was a much better improvement to his father, but how long would that prove true?

*Till he tries for Mabel's hand.*

The thought of that pompadour oaf on one knee before her had his stomach flipping and queasy. The worst part, that human piece of him feared above all else...that'd she say yes.

"Hey, you're awful quiet there bud, are you feeling okay?" Mabel pressed forward, till the backs of his knees hit the commode and the was bustling about for supplies. "Tell me if you get sleepy. I don't want you concuss or...concusting? Is that a word?"

Bill couldn't help but laugh. Her mannerisms. Her speech. Everything about her was enjoyment.

Mabel perched her hands on the sink and turned the warm water on. She hurried to the linen cupboard and returned to Bill with towels in hand. A pleasant smile spread across her gentle face. So heart achingly beautiful…

He was nigh mesmerized by her, simply watching her wordlessly as she strode around the bathroom like a familiar setting. She ambled to the cabinet and plucked free cotton balls and a phial of antiseptic, she presented them proudly for him, giving her wrists a jingle as she danced back to him.

Was she always so carefree?

"I can take care of my own wound, this isn't necessary." He offered emptily.

*Don't you go. Don't you dare go.*

Mabel grinned. "Ah, don't worry about that. Just here to help." She trailed, her tongue bit between her teeth as she dabbed a clean cotton ball with hydrogen peroxide. She stooped before him, the collar of her dress fell open a hint more.

The swell of her breasts were visible and hanging right in front of his face. He could feel that blushing heat returning to his cheeks. A better man would look away...but Bill was hardly a man in the first place, now wasn't he?

The bite of antiseptic pulled him from his thoughts. His wound burned, his eyes watered when she pressed the cotton to him. Fresh pain felt nicer when it came from Mabel, it seemed.

His lids drooped contentedly while Mabel tended to him so dutifully. She hummed a tune and reached for a clean towel. Without thought of his own, Bill grabbed for her wrist. She elicited a soft gasp, her mouth opening to question him.

Bill savored the feel of her skin under his palm for as long as he could. He touched a hand to hers and gods almighty, she looked right into his eyes. His heart skipped another beat. She was abusing this poor organ of his. You could just replace these babies nowadays, right?

"Cornelius, is something the matter?" She asked calmly, her voice not the least bit shaken. She'd never imagine that the human boy she was caring for was the dream demon of her childhood
nightmares.

Aromatic chestnut hair spilled across her shoulders, just barely brushing across the one hand clutching his bouncing knee. This body had so many nervous ticks and habits. If Bill were to shut his eyes to the outside world and listen in to this tired brain in his head, he'd relive all the boy's memories. Childhood. Public College. A dead end waiting job.

Even the latent ones that this human boy had surely forgotten were even there. Dark and scary things that mortals like to keep hidden in the back for a later days. Or never.

Nothing traumatic as of yet, but Bill could feel the pain in this human's form. Sadness was a chemical, and boy, was this host teeming with it. He'd gotten Cornelius's body, all the control, but damn if he wasn't still stuck with humanity's fallbacks.

Fear was no longer something Bill could shut off. Anger wasn't something he could wield like a physical weapon. This plane was so very very different than the ones he'd ferried across all the millenia.

Not a single universe had someone like Mabel.

He'd noticed that even a smell would bring memories rocketing to the forefront of his mind. The cigarette scent on the tips of his fingers, the wash of lavender in lovely Mabel's hair…

It was like living in slow motion and he loved it. Being human was something he could get used to. Especially if he were to remain human...with her. Even the sadness that love wrought was almost addicting.

He released her hand playfully, laughing it off briskly. Easily.

Bill wasn't cruel enough to call Mabel naive. There was no inclination that the man she was tending to at the moment was the most wicked being in the multiverse. All of him wanted to string her along. Give her a wonderful Summer here in Gravity Falls, entice her to remain here forever. With him.

Yet...a tiny —human— part of him was screaming for Mabel's freedom. He pinched that futile flame out easily enough.

"Sorry, there was a spider." He excused promptly.

Mabel's eyes lit up. "Really?" She asked innocently, drooping her head to look at the underside of the bathroom sink. "Must have hurried off fast when he saw you."

"Must have." Bill agreed listlessly.

Mabel went back to her melodic humming, her tongue clicked against her teeth as she gently—oh...so gently— dabbed the congealed and crusted blood from his sweating forehead. She didn't mind a bit, she didn't even flinch or sport a hint of a grimace.

Though he supposed, blood was not an uncommon site for Mabel.

*All the torment I made her endure as a child...*

He hissed between his teeth when cold air blew across his wound.

"I know it hurts, but atleast you don't have to worry about infection. Or flesh eating bacteria." She noted as if she were commenting on the weather. The was a nihilistic impression to this girl and
even she didn't know it yet.

Bill chuckled lightly and watched on as Mabel flitted to the medicine cabinet once more, she needn't rummage through a thing. She knew exactly where the bandages were. Seems Mabel knew this layout very well.

Uncomfortably well. How many times has she been in this house? Gideon must have invited the Pine's family over often enough, if not atleast to apologize for his past transgression, but to make nice with them. Patch things up and be redeemed and forgiven in Mabel's loving eyes.

He was content to live in the fantasy that Mabel would grow to love him for himself.

Chapter End Notes

Leave a lil shout out below for yours truly. *poses*

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