A Necessary Life

by DarkmoonSigel

Summary

An unusual pairing of a thuggish psychopath and a sweet yet sheltered man with Asperger's syndrome. Loosely follows the plots of both movies the character are based from, but ignores a lot of the other characters in either (ie no Gabi, no Charlie, no Beth, etc....). Set in Manhattan but Nigel falls in love with Adam the way he fell in love with Gabi.

Notes

Story inspired by oneblacksheep who introduced me to this pairing in their story 'The Earth's Core Is Pretty Deep'. Go check it out. They update better than I do. :)

See the end of the work for more notes
A very dangerous man was dying, because even the best of predators could meet their match from
time to time. This was one of those times, Nigel gritting his teeth and wishing he had stayed in
Bucharest like Darko had bitched at him to do instead of coming to Manhattan to do business in
person.

The wound that ran down his left side was deep, the gash long and wide enough that Nigel had to
keep a hand and pressure on it to keep living long enough to beat and threaten some scared vet to
sew him back up.

Hospitals were not an option for him. Being drugged and hooked up to machines would make him
ridiculously easy to find and kill, especially now that he had all the wrong people looking for him.

That and doctors tended to call in unwanted attention from the police for his type of injuries. Nigel
was a bad man who did not want his sins looked into. They tended to run a little too red, dark, and
dead.

His current predicament was proof enough of that. It was lonely at the top, but even more so, it
was dangerous. Betrayed by someone on the inside, going to his own people here would pretty
much equate to assisted suicide. Someone was always hungry, looking for an opening, and would
be more than willing to try their luck while he was weak and wounded, especially when he was
not in his own place of power. Darko with their version of an army was only a phone call away,
but with an ocean and a fucking 14-17 hour flight between them. Nigel still didn’t know who had
tried to get him killed either. It would be safer to keep his head down and just disappear for a little
while. Nothing like making your enemies think that you are dead to surprise the hell out of them
later on with a bullet to the back of the skull.

No, if he was going to die, it would be on his own terms which were dwindling down side by side
with his seconds. Nigel didn’t even have any idea where he was anymore, the dying man
wandering down randomly picked back alleys and side streets of Manhattan to avoid notice. A
coat that wasn’t his, and damned if he could remember where he’d gotten it from, was pressed
close to his body to hide all signs of him losing life.

When he noticed he was no longer moving but the world was still spinning, Nigel realized he had
fallen down. He couldn’t find the strength to get back up, the bad man finding that he had one hell
of a view while on his back. As far as he could make out from his surroundings, Nigel gathered
that he was in a park of some kind. Twilight was beginning to set in, his amber brown eyes hazily
watching the stars come out one by one.

“You seem to have fallen down.” came a voice from somewhere overhead, like God was speaking directly to him in a somewhat monotone voice.

“Yeah? Imagine that.” Nigel growled, his own voice rough with accented pain. His hands fumbled for his cigarettes, but got lost in their mission in the folds of his stolen clothing, the coat falling open to reveal all his secrets.

“I don’t have to imagine. You fell right in front of me. You appear to be hurt as well.” the voice told him, still sounding neutral about it.

“No shit.” Nigel mumbled. He really wished that his hands would stop shaking. He could feel himself giving up the ghost fast. Sighing, Nigel found that he regretted not being able to smoke one last time.

“Are you in pain? You look like you are in pain.” the voice asked, sounding as toneless as ever. It was starting to really piss Nigel off.

“I feel fucking peachy.” Nigel didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. His last conversation in life was really kind of confusing.

“Oh…I’m….um….I don’t know…what than means. H-how do you feel peachy?” The voice stammered, finally beginning to sound something other than dull. Nigel could almost believe he was talking to an actual human and not some hallucination his mind made up due to blood loss.

“Fuck. Just…” Nigel never got to finish that sentence, his body finally giving up on him. Nigel closed his eyes and got lost in the darkness that followed, his sight leaving him like comets.

OoOoO

Truth be told, Nigel hadn’t expected to wake up at all, except he did, in waves of heat and pain that would have made him throw up if he had anything in his stomach. His body was cooking itself from the inside out, the wound in his side feeling more like a branding from the infection that pulsed through it with its own vivid life. The body aches and chills of fever told Nigel that he was still very much alive, but sick enough he couldn’t do much of anything else about it, but lie there and suffer.

A cool cloth, moist and welcome, was placed against his skin, over his eyes and effectively blinding him. He won’t have moved it for the world though as he heard himself cry out weakly in relief from it, muttering word of thanks in the first language that came to mind. It was like heaven was cooling the hell of his skin.

The treatment continued over the rest of him as well as a soft cloth moved across his body, cleaning off the sweat and sickness from it. Even if he had wanted to, Nigel was too weak to protest. The hands that cared for him were gentle, kind things though that laid him back upon cool, clean smelling sheets when they were done with their task.

Drifting back into unconsciousness, Nigel realized that someone was reading out loud to him, though he couldn’t make out what it was about. He fell asleep hazily wondering why anyone would name something in space Sirius after a dog, or if there was even such a thing as spacedogs. For the first time in his life, Nigel dreamed of stars.

OoOoO

Consciousness was fleeting at the best of times for Nigel. Sometimes he woke up to water being
pressed to his lips and fingers working over his throat to help him drink. Other times, he awakened to the taste of milk in his mouth, taking some of the aching hunger out of his belly.

More often than not though, Nigel blinked into waking to the sound of that monotone voice, still disembodied yet so close, reading to him. He started to live for that voice, that low soft voice that only came truly alive when it starting talking about space and everything else up there. It took several tries on Nigel’s part to mentally keep up, but eventually, he realized that he was being informed about the entire Milky Way and all its many contents.

When not reading, the voice was still somewhat unvaried, the owner of it cheap with his emotions. It only really took on life when it told Nigel about the mysteries of black holes, the delicate natures of nebulas, and the lonely journeys of comets. Nigel feigned sleep to listen to it longer, peeking out from under his eyelids to catch glimpses of a curly haired man sitting on the floor beside the bed with a book balanced on his knees, always cast in shadow by the lamplight he read under.

Then a morning came that Nigel woke up and found that he could stay awake without a whole lot of effort on his part, his skin cool for once to the touch. His side still hurt, but it was a manageable sort of pain, one he could live with. Forcing himself to sit up with a deep seated groan, Nigel looked around to find that he was in someone’s bedroom, lived in but neat as a pin. It was a tidy space with calming blue walls, white accents, and space theme to it, the spaces between decorated with framed pictures of star systems. Strangely enough, there was what looked like a space suit, the white puffy kind that astronauts wore, hanging beside a double door closet.

“You’re awake.” said the voice that had carried Nigel through the worst, the one he had started to equate to some unseen higher power.

He found it actually belonged to a man who looked about a decade younger than himself with dark curly hair parted at the side and wide staring blue gray eyes that never quite seemed to meet his own. The man was carrying a glass of milk in hand and a glass of water in the other.

“Could you tell me your name? People are supposed to know each other’s names.” the man with the dull voice asked, setting the milk and water on the table beside the bed, but making no other move to come closer to him.

“I’m Nigel. Who the fuck are you?” the very bad man snapped, suddenly very aware of how naked he was now, how vulnerable he was in this stranger’s bed and even stranger company.

Oddly enough, the man didn’t seem put off by his state of undress or his rude manner.

“Oh….Adam. My name is Adam.”

OoOoO

One day, much like any other day in Adam’s life of carefully structured planning and routine, a man collapsed in front of him while he was stargazing in the park. The constellation Cassiopeia and the planet Mercury were both easy to see at that time of day even without a telescope.

“You seem to have fallen down.” Adam informed the man, hoping that he would realized this, get back up, and be on his way.

“Yeah? Imagine that.” the man mumbled low and gravelly. His hands were shaking as they moved over his body as if looking for something. It caused his coat to fall open, the man’s shirt more red than the white it was supposed to be. Adam also noted that the coat didn’t fit the man’s body well either or match any of his other clothing that was also ill fitting.

“I don’t have to imagine. You fell right in front of me. You appear to be hurt as well.” Adam said, just wanting to be helpful. The man was harder to read than other people, probably because he
was on the ground and not making much sense. As far as Adam could tell, he looked tired.

“No shit.” The man said, sounding sad or at least what Adam thought sad should sound like. Emotions were like ill fitting suits to Adam, much like the man's clothing, sitting over his skin wrong until he discarded them out of frustration or forgot to wear them at all. It felt like he had spent his entire lifetime changing clothes to find that nothing fit.

“Are you in pain?” Adam asked, watching as the man frowned up at him. He hoped the man would get soon and be on his way.

“I feel fucking peachy.” the man groaned, the sound of his voice seeming to be directly adverse to his words. Adam had no idea how one felt while being ‘peachy’. To his knowledge, which was considerable because he read all the time and retained everything that he read, a peach could be a fruit or a color or both. It wasn’t an emotion though. He liked peaches though and from his people watching, Adam knew that other people liked them to, so being peachy was probably a good thing. Except that man didn’t look good. He didn't look well at all, his skin tone reminding Adam of his father's own at the funeral parlor, all pale and waxy. Adam hadn't liked the shade of it then and he didn't like it now. He didn't understand why peaches were even a variable in this equation.

“Oh…I'm…um….I don’t know…what than means. How do you feel peachy?” Adam felt flustered now, hated that he felt this way, hating that he had to ask. The familiar feel of confusion made his hands shake when people talked at him instead of to him. The man would probably think that he was stupid now. Or weird. One of the two probably. Things had only gotten worse now that his father was gone and no one was there to explain Adam's situation to strangers when things went awry.

“Fuck. Just…” the man whispered, his voice dimming out as his body seemed to turn off, going limp and prone.

Staring down at the man, Adam felt unsure about what to do now, vague panic setting in as his day began to derail. Some part of him informed his forethought that people usually reacted to such occurrences by seeking out aid. Adam felt confident enough to do that. The man was very hurt, Adam could tell that much from all the blood. It was unsettling on some level that Adam couldn’t quite connect on. He just knew he didn’t like blood. It smelled funny to him, like metal.

This was a dilemma though. Would he have to call the police….or would he have to call an ambulance? Or both? What if he had to go with the man to the hospital? Adam didn’t like hospitals or doctors for that matter, and police scared him.

Furrowing his brow, Adam tried to think of another option. He thought about calling his friend Harlan, but Harlan didn’t fix people. His father’s army buddy fixed cars and doors and other broken things. Adam didn’t know anyone else who could help though or would be willing to. To Adam's knowledge, none of his neighbors were medical professionals either. The other people who lived in the apartment building were nice enough even if they thought he was weird and tended to avoid talking to him. Adam reasoned out for himself that if he didn’t want to talk to strange people or go to the hospital that he was it, that he was this man’s help.

Satisfied with his decision, Adam knelt down, looping an arm under the man and lifted him up the best he could. The man was heavier than he expected, but Adam managed to carry him up to his second floor apartment. If anyone noticed Adam dragging a half dead looking man covered in blood, they didn’t want to get involved and would probably only start caring if there was a smell.

As he balanced the man against him to open the front door, Adam could feel blood seeping into his clothing, wrinkling his nose at it, not liking the feel or smell. He would have to do laundry sooner now because of it and that was going to throw off all his other chores. The strange man’s
clothing were just as ruined, and would have to be cleaned as well.

Though his father was dead and had been for about eight weeks now, Adam couldn’t bring himself to put the man in that empty room, the space kept just the same as the day his father had left for the hospital and never came back. It was mentally easier for Adam to handle putting the man in his own bed. Adam supposed that he could sleep on the rug. It was only a little smaller than his twin bed and it was almost in the same spot as the bed.

Taking off all the man’s clothing because they were all so filthy and smelled bad, Adam saw the source of the problem. There was a huge cut in the man’s side and it was leaking. It looked all red and wrong and out of place. Touching it caused the man to moan in pain but not wake up. Going to his small library of random books, Adam remembered his father acquiring several medical volumes at some point, some of the few that didn’t pertain to Asperger’s syndrome.

Retrieving the books to sit down beside the now naked and still unconscious man, Adam read all the chapters in the books about wounds and things that could happen to a person while having them. Applying all that new knowledge to the situation at hand a couple of hours later, Adam knew that the man had a fever and the stitching in his side was poorly done and infected.

Adam made a list of all the things he needed to do for the man like he would his chores, marking them off as he finished each and every one.

OoOoO

The man would moan in his sleep. Adam was glad for it even if it did wake him up. It meant the man was still alive, but Adam wondered if the man was having nightmares. It sounded like he was. Unsure of what to do or if he should try to wake the man (all the books said that rest was important), Adam did what his father would have done, had done for him in the past when he felt too overloaded and panicky.

Clicking on the nightstand light and opening one of his favorite books about the Big Bang theory, Adam started to read, losing himself the sweeping creation of the galaxy. By the time he finished, it was morning and the man was sleeping peacefully. Exhausted yet feeling somewhat pleased, Adam got up off the floor to go start his day as per usual.

OoOoO

The man was still very sick, sick enough that he hadn’t woken up to go the bathroom. The bed was now a mess and Adam would have to do even more laundry. Going to work had been a mistake, Adam realized as he cleaned up the man, the sheets, and the mattress. He put towels under the man just in case it happened again. He had more towels than sheets.

The man shifted in his sleep as Adam cleaned him off, the stranger’s skin hot and sticky to the touch. It didn’t feel right to Adam, not dry and cool like his own. After doing some more research, Adam crushed up aspirin to dissolve it into water, helping the man drink it bit by bit. Adam didn’t know how to make him eat so he gave the man milk to drink because that was food but in liquid form so it counted.

When he put a cold cloth on the man’s forehead, the stranger seemed to wake a little bit, mumbling out foreign sounding words Adam couldn’t understand, but memorized anyway. He spent the next couple of hours keeping an eye on the man and looking up the meaning of the words on his laptop. Some of them were Romanian and some of them were Danish. None of them made any sense in the order they were spoken so Adam put them on the back burner of his mind to remember and research more thoroughly later on.
Adam made more lists to take care of the man now that he had to make the stranger his sole focus for now. He called into work, letting them know that he needed some time off so he could establish a new set of routines, at least for now. The man would eventually get better, he would leave, and then Adam could go back to his safe little existence. He had acquired some vacation days from Replay Inc. and his boss seemed amiable enough about giving him time off despite the project being left uncompleted. Adam decided he needed to take some of Harlan's advice about life and just focus on the problem at hand, that being the stranger in his bed.

This could be good for him though. Harlan was always telling him to try out new things. Adam would try having a houseguest.

OoOoO

When he was just getting used to the new set of chores to follow, the man woke up, sitting up on his own in Adam's bed. He still looked tired but he seemed to be really awake for now, the good kind of awake. Adam wondered what language the man would be speaking in today. So far, he had said words in French, Norwegian, Swedish, Romanian, and Danish as well as English. It was kind of exciting, a new surprise followed by hours of interesting research every time the man spoke.

“You’re awake.” Adam said, because he was pretty sure he needed to say something. ‘Hello’ didn’t seem to be the right thing to say, and he couldn’t say ‘Good morning’ either cause it was already late in the afternoon, but you were supposed to say something when someone woke up.

At the moment, Adam found it easier to look down at the glasses of milk and water he carried in hand. Remembering belated that eye contact was polite and he should at least attempt it, Adam glanced back up to find the man staring at him, his eyes remarkably intense and bright. The man’s eye reminded Adam of the Trapezium cluster of brown dwarf stars in the Orion Nebula. They also made Adam feel nervous for some reason.

“Could you tell me your name? People are supposed to know each other’s names.” Adam asked, setting the milk and water on the table, but making no other move to get closer. The man’s body language was tense and angry. Adam could tell that much, but didn’t know what to do about it.

“I’m Nigel. Who the fuck are you?” the man said quite abruptly, confusing Adam even further still. The man’s body conveyed anger but his voice was calm, almost soothing in tone. Adam realized his mistake though, why the man must be so angry with him. He hadn’t introduced himself first like a good host was supposed to.

“Oh….Adam. My name is Adam.”

OoOoO

TBC?
I took the stars from my eyes...

Chapter Summary

Nigel is awake now so Adam and him have a conversation and some dinner together. Not Beta read

Chapter Notes

Some info-
I made Nigel's gun an American make and model because it's stupid to travel overseas with a weapon. It draws attention that bad people doing illegal things prefer to avoid, and Nigel is the type of guy who would know where and how to easily get a gun.

Some dialogue taken and used from 'Adam' to help set tone and character. I do not own anything.

Ok, also I feel the need to point out that Nigel is not a good guy. He is a violent psychopath with an obsessive personality. Poor Adam should be running, but then we wouldn't have a story so schmeh. Keep that in mind when he does some fucked up shit later in the story.

Chapter title from 'Cosmic Love' by Florence and the Machine.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Well Adam, where the fuck are my clothes? Have you enjoyed looking at my cock?”

Glaring, Nigel spat out the words. He didn’t know where he was, who this Adam kid was, or why he was naked. Something was off about this guy too. His face was too blank, and his eyes couldn’t seem to meet Nigel's own for any longer than a few seconds at a time when at all. In Nigel’s world, that meant guilt of some kind. Him being naked and in that presence of shame, fault, or remorse did not bode well for anyone, though his ass was surprisingly about the only thing that wasn’t sore.

“Your clothing was dirty. I washed them for you.” Adam said, moving to his closet to retrieve his guest’s stuff, all neatly hung up or folded with his phone, wallet, and gun placed on a shelf inside for safe keeping. The gun was a ColtM191, single action, semi automatic, magazine fed, recoil operated pistol that chambered a .45 ACP cartridge. Adam had looked it up. Though the dark pants had been fairly easy to clean. the white short sleeved button down had taken forever to get all that blood out. Adam was proud of himself for doing so. When he was younger, he wouldn’t have thought to wash Nigel’s clothing at all. “While your penis is aesthetically pleasing, I did not experience sexual excitement from it.”

Adam yelped in surprise when he was suddenly slammed up against his closet doors, dropped Nigel’s clothing onto the hardwood floor. The owner of it had a steady hand on Adam’s throat,
keeping him pinned in place with it or else he would have knelt down to pick them up. Adam stared back into bright amber eyes that seemed to burn now, wondered what he had done to offend as he struggled to breath with Nigel’s fingers digging painfully into his skin.

“What the fuck did you say, you little cocksucker!” Nigel growled. The wound in his side was protesting the sudden movement and ill thought decision of force. The rest of his body was chipping in on that verdict as well. Nigel could already feel his legs and arms beginning to shake from the exertion. If he kept this up, Nigel could tell that he would be back in bed unconsciousness again sooner than he would like. He was already starting to feel dizzy.

“I have never sucked cock.” Adam managed to gasp out instead of begging for his life like most other people usually did while in this position. If anything, he just looked mildly confused with a slightly furrowed brow, even though Nigel could feel the man’s body tremble beneath him. “I apologize if you didn’t hear me though. I’ll start over for you. Your clothing was dirty. I washed them for you. While your penis is aesthetically pleasing, I did not experience any sexual excitement from it.”

The only thing that changed was the tempo of Adam’s words, the man seeming intent on getting out the information as quickly as possible despite their repetitive context. Nigel stared back in complete and utter shock, letting Adam go as he stepped back. Instantly regretting that movement, Nigel’s body lost strength faster than he would have liked by tilting off balance, the man stumbled over his own feet.

“Shit.” Nigel muttered as he felt himself start to go down. This was going to hurt. To his surprise, Nigel was saved from falling over by Adam, who caught his arm in time, even going so far as to ease the wounded man back onto the bed. Nigel tried to wrap his brain around it as he was laid back with gentle, familiar feeling hands. The man that he had just had by the throat with malicious intent was coming to his aid like he didn’t have fresh bruises on his throat.

“What the fuck is wrong with you? Are you some kind of saint or just like the rough stuff?” Nigel asked, trying not to pant for air though the pain. That had been a stupid move on his part, letting his temper get the best of him while he was still so weak.

“You’re…upset.” Adam told the bed, though it was an educated guess on his part. His throat hurt now where Nigel had pressed down on it. He had definitely missed a cue somewhere in the line of conversation, and now Nigel was mad at him. Adam didn’t want to tell him about the Aspergers though, about his condition. If he could, Adam wanted to play pretend at being normal just a little bit longer.

“That’s putting it mildly.” Nigel snorted, chuckling despite himself. He looked over to where his clothes lay on the floor, internally debating his odds of getting up off the bed again for them. His body told him to fold on that bet.

The house always wins in the end, Nigel thought sourly, wetting his bottom lip with his tongue. “Could you hand me my pants?” he made himself ask, tapping down his pride to do so. To his relief, Adam just nodded as he retrieved the article of clothing. To his annoyance, Adam left everything else on the floor where it was. Pants were a good start for now, Nigel biting his tongue to keep from groaning as he slid them on, the shifting aggravating his side. He definitely needed more time to heal.

“Why are there towels on the bed?” Nigel asked, now that he was more aware of what he was laying on. The choice of bedding was unusual and kind of scratched up against his bare back.

“You kept making a mess. Towels are easier to change out and wash than sheets. I have only two sets of sheets that fit the bed, but twelve towels of assorted colors.” Adam explained, happy that
Nigel was still talking to him and was looking calmer about it. He picked up the rest of clothing to place it on the bed beside Nigel, unsure if the man wanted it still but it couldn’t stay where it was on the floor.

“Mess? You mean I shit myself?” Nigel interrupted with a grimace, looking down at the towel’s positioning again. That at least answered why he was naked. He couldn’t imagine this Adam, already pegging him for a neat freak, wanting to diddle him while covered in his own crap and piss. “Wait…Did you clean me up?”

“Uh, yeah. Yes.” Adam nodded, blinking owlishly. “Yes. The first day…”

“Why? You don’t know me.” Nigel interrupted, at a loss and not really wanted to know the amounts in detail. People got paid to do things like that. In his world, random strangers didn’t do that for people they found in the street. Nigel knew he had the devil’s luck that this Adam guy hadn’t called anyone official.

“It smelled and I read that you could get bed sores while laying in your own excrement. There is this bacteria…” Adam latching onto to topic with relief, happy he was able to talk about something he knew about with Nigel. The medical books had turned out to be quite interesting. They weren’t on the same peak as the universe in Adam’s mind, but they had definitely gotten a foothold in Adam's attention.

Staring back in a sort of confused awe, Nigel let Adam ramble on about some god awful conditions he could have contracted if he had been left to lie in his own shit, the man’s dull voice picking up in fervor and excitement the longer he spoke about pus and seeping wounds. To Nigel’s further surprise, he found that he recognized that voice, the fall and pitch of it sounding like strange music to him.

Closing his eyes so that he could focus on the sound of it fully, Nigel remembered that voice, that dulcet tone that had helped him in his greatest time of need, giving him something to live for by telling him about the odd natures of planets he would never go to and the beauty of black matter he didn’t understand no matter how many times it was explained to him in excessive detail.

“…I-I’m sorry. Have you heard too much about flesh eating bacteria?” Adam cut himself off when he saw that Nigel’s eyes were closed, dropping his gaze to the floor to study the grain of it. He worried that he had made the man fall back asleep.

The softening end of the melodic voice got Nigel to open his eyes again as the other man’s tone turned into flat and dead as it trailed off. Nigel found that he didn’t like it.

“I-I’ve been talking too much. I…talk too much when I get excited.” Adam explained as he fidgeted in place, not knowing what to do with himself.

Nigel hadn’t stopped him though, like most other people did when they got tired of listening to him speak. Now that his eyes were open again, Nigel didn’t look bored or what Adam observed as bored in people when he spoke to them at length, with pained tight expressions and glassy eyes.

“I’m starving. Do you have any food?” Nigel asked, his trance broken now that Adam had puttered out. He looked over at the glass of milk on the nightstand with distaste. His mouth already felt sour with it.

“‘Yes.’ Adam answered, staring blankly at some spot over Nigel’s shoulder.

Running his tongue over his lower lip before dragging his teeth over it to tap down his temper, Nigel tried to decide if Adam was fucking with him, was just dumb as a brick, or something else entirely. Because his survival usually depended upon it, Nigel was pretty damn good at reading
other people. As far as he could tell, Adam was a straight shooter, probably one of the most honest people Nigel had ever met, foolishly so at times but completely honest. Nigel reasoned that he had been saved by some sort of human unicorn.

“Can I have some food?” Nigel prompted, watching as Adam sprung into motion like someone had flipped an ‘on’ switch in his head.

“Oh…yes. Of course. I'll heat up some macaroni and cheese for us. I have chicken and broccoli too.” Adam nodded, moving toward the kitchen. They could have dinner together. It was kind of, sort of, the right time for it. Still a little too early, but better than later. Adam could work around early. Late was harder for him to cope with.

Against his better judgment and his body’s complaints, Nigel got off the bed to follow Adam slowly, holding his left side as he leaned up against walls for some sort of support. It confirmed he wasn’t going anywhere fast anytime soon that was for damn sure. Adam hadn’t kicked him out though, even after their ‘misunderstanding’.

Nigel was panting out hot puffs of pain when he got to the kitchen in time to see what Adam had in his freezer before he closed it. It was full of exactly three kind of things—frozen broccoli, frozen cooked and sliced chicken, and Amy’s organic macaroni and cheese. When Adam opened a cupboard to get down some plates, Nigel realized he had better like All Bran cereal because that was all there was for breakfast.

Looking around because he was kind of stuck where he was at the moment, Nigel peered about from his spot in the hall between the kitchen and what looked to be a spacious living room with its walls lined with lots of books and heavy older furniture, including an older looking but maintained piano. In all of Manhattan, he couldn’t have found a better hiding spot though, but something was bothering Nigel about this place. The apartment looked far too big for just one person in a city where space was costly. The furniture was more forthcoming than his host, telling Nigel that another person lived here. The living rooms décor didn't match the bedroom's in the slightest other than knickknacks were spaced evenly on their shelving.

A list of chores on the front of the fridge confirmed it, a neat dry erase graph chart dividing up what needed to be done around the place between ‘Adam’s chores’ and ‘Dad’s chores’. Adam was represented by squares and ‘Dad’ was circles. ‘Dad’ was crossed out in dry erase marker though.

“Where is your father, Adam?” Nigel asked cautiously. He didn’t hear anyone else moving around in the apartment. A family member could mean trouble for him.

“Queens. My friend Harlan says Queens is where everybody goes to die because they can’t tell the difference.” Adam said quietly as he finished his task. He attempted to smile as he made the joke. People were supposed to smile when something was funny. When Adam checked Nigel’s face though, he found no sign of cheer there.

“Harlan said it was a joke.” Adam said, crestfallen. There was a reason he didn’t try to be funny. Not seeing the expected expression, Adam let his own fall off his face. Shifting nervously, Adam placed the plates on the table. He really wanted to get out his laptop and watch ‘The Actor’s Studio’ like he usually did at dinnertime. He didn’t know if he would be able to eat his food now without it.

Normal people didn’t watch TV at the table, did they? They talked. His dad knew about his condition, about the necessity for patterns and rituals for Adam to keep calm and mentally level. Nigel wouldn’t. Nigel would expect him to talk, but not talk too much. Adam found he was beginning to prefer his houseguest unconscious even if he did have to clean up his mess from time
to time. Extra laundry was preferable to dinner conversation.

“Your father is dead?” Nigel asked, pushing himself painfully off of the wall to stumble over to the table. With relief, he took his seat heavily with a huffing groan. As soon as he was able to, Nigel planned on hunting down and murdering the fucker who had done this to him, even if he had to kill most of New York’s underworld and burn half this city to ash to do so.

Looking down at the macaroni and cheese carefully not touching the chicken or broccoli that shared the plate with it, Nigel hoped that organic didn’t mean it would taste like moist cardboard. He would have preferred red meat, but the cheesy pasta smelled like ambrosia and he was hungry enough to eat his own arm right now. Nigel glanced up at his strange host in time to see Adam only nodded his answer, the man preferring to twitch standing up rather than choosing to sit down and join him.

“My condolences.” Nigel said, digging into the food. Chewing, he nodded to the empty chair. “Sit down and eat. I don’t bite.”

“I-I have to watch my show to eat…” Adam stammered, giving into the need to grab his laptop and set it up on the table. Keeping his head ducked down to avoid the stare he just knew would be there, Adam quickly loaded in a DVD, the Julie Robert’s interview episode in particular. That one always seemed to calm him down the best. She was so smiley.

Nervous glances cast over at Nigel found the man more intent on eating than making conversation or watching what he was doing. Adam decided to take that as a good sign as he sat down in his chair, the soothing rich tones of James Lipton putting Adam at ease enough to enjoy his own food.

“Didn’t get along with your old man?” Nigel prodded when Adam didn’t look any sort of way about his father’s demise, more involved with his show. The man beside him bothered Nigel like having a sore tooth would. He just had to keep touching the problem with the tip of his tongue to see what fell out.

The question made Adam stare back at him blankly with his brow slightly furrowed like he was trying to make sense of Nigel’s words. It made the man wonder if he had remembered to say the question in English. He watched Adam eat, the man’s attention held by the show. It was obvious he had watched it before though, Adam speaking along with the interview in-between bites. Realizing it was pointless to talk to him right now, Nigel rested back in his seat, watching Adam gesture with his fork and zone out from reality. Amused and slightly miffed that he was, Nigel found that he rather enjoyed the odd little show he was being given, Adam in his own little world of the Actor’s Studio and cheesy pasta.

“You don’t seem all that upset about it.” Nigel pointed out with a shrug when Adam was done and his show over. Pushing his empty plate away so that he could lean his elbows up on the table, Nigel leaned over into Adam’s space to look the strange man in the eye. Or at least tried to, Adam’s eyes elusive things that danced over every other surface in an attempt to elude his steadfast gaze. “Or anything else for that matter.”

“Uh, sometimes i-i-it’s hard for me to, um…” Adam flinched, helplessly gesturing down at himself. It had finally come to this. He couldn’t even pretend to be normal long enough to make it through one dinner with another person. Nigel would need to know about him now before the situation got too far out of hand. “It’s called Asperger’s syndrome.”

“Okay.” Nigel said. He didn’t know what the hell that was. He watched as Adam stopped restlessly moving about, falling back into the odd stillness of his as he stared at some spot behind Nigel.
“One thing about it is not knowing what people are thinking.” Adam explained at a loss. He hated feeling so helpless while talking to people. Everyone else made it look so easy, being able to see those hints in faces and hear those clues in voice, telling each other what they were feeling. “Like right now.”

“So you don’t know if I’m angry, happy, sad, or just considering taking a piss?” Nigel asked, fascinated by the concept. Adam’s lack of reaction to his threats made more sense now. He hadn’t recognized the danger that Nigel carried about his person like a second skin because he couldn’t. “What does that feel like? To have no fear?”

“I feel fear. I’m afraid right now talking to you, and having Aspergers doesn’t feel like anything. It just it. My brain works differently from NTs.” Adam told him, hoping that Nigel would understand him, could have the capacity for it. His father had, and Harlan did to an extent by long association.

“NTs?” Nigel tried out the word, finding no reference for it.

“Neurotypicals…um, like you….” Adam stuttered. “Sometimes I can’t understand them… especially when they mean something different from what they are actually saying.”

“The word you’re looking for is ‘lying’. Everyone lies, Adam.” Nigel grinned, finally back on a topic that he could understand.

“No. Most Aspies are really honest.” Adam shook his head, wanting to Nigel to grasp what he was trying to say. This was exhausting trying to maintain eye contact and keep the other person engaged. Adam felt like he was failing at both, his eyes more on his empty plate and the menu screen on his laptop.

“So that’s why you said I have an aesthetically pleasing penis. I believe sexual excitement was also mentioned.” Nigel grinned, the expression widening when Adam looked more relieved than embarrassed. The man’s contrary reactions or lack there of were almost charming in a way. Nigel had never met anyone like Adam before in his life.

“Yes. When I was younger… I would have just thought you were sexually excited because I was. That’s called mind blindness. I had to learn to ask what other people are thinking.” Adam said, making it a point to look at Nigel’s jaw line, speaking to it. He jerked back when Nigel leaned in so that their eyes would meet. “H-have I upset you?”

“No, not at all. All people are screwed up in the head, some more fucked up than others. Even me.” Nigel said easily, studying man beside him with fresh insight and new eyes. If Nigel had to use a word to describe Adam, the word ‘sweet’ would have to be it. Nigel didn’t know a lot of people who could fit into that term but Adam could, and Nigel found himself liking that. Liking it a lot.

“Be nice to get an honest answer from someone for once.” Nigel murmured, meant more for himself than to Adam who perked up.

“I can do that.” Adam said. The act of lying and lies in general made him upset. He couldn’t understand them most of the time and because of that, people thought he was dumb for it. They couldn’t seem to grasp that he could see a lie when it was presented to him. What he couldn’t understand was the reasoning behind the lie. That almost upset him more than the lie itself.

“Good. I’m still hurt and I need to stay here. Can I stay here with you, Adam?” Nigel asked bluntly, wanting to see how this played out now that he kind of knew what was going on. He could already feel that he needed to rest again, real food in his belly making him sleepy.
“Oh…um, yeah.” Adam smiled and kept smiling because Nigel was smiling. His guest looked happy. Adam was relieved that he could convey the same feeling for once.

While Adam washed, dried, and put away the plates and such, Nigel slowly walked himself back to the bedroom that would be his new home for a little while longer. Practically falling onto the mattress, Nigel shoved the towels off of it with disgust. They landed beside a pillow on the floor with a cover folded neatly beside it. It didn’t take long for Nigel to figure out where Adam had been sleeping, the injured man not knowing how to feel about that.

Adam reinforced that thought by coming in to sit down beside him on the floor, neatly folding the towels to set them aside as if for later. Nigel noted that Adam sat like a little kid with his knees curled up to his chest and his hands folded on top as he stared vacantly at his closet like it was the most fascinating thing in the world.

“I need to sleep.” Nigel told him, not sure if he wanted Adam to leave or stay. The indecision about it confused him. He shouldn’t want anyone by him while he was this injured.

Instead of leaving, Adam turned on the lamplight and selected a book from a nearby stack Nigel had failed to notice. Without further ado, Adam began to read aloud to him.

And there was his salvation, that voice. That beautiful voice full of wonder, delight, and life making Nigel relax despite everything that had happened.

Turning his head to stare at Adam, Nigel found himself admiring his strange caretaker, this man who had picked him off of the street and had taken care of him when Nigel was so sick he couldn’t even take care of himself. Adam had soft looking lazy curls, dark and shiny as chocolate satin, styled more out of habit because someone had told him to rather than actual intent of allure. Nigel realized that was probably clean shaven from the exact same reason. The eyes fixed to the page were blue and clear with just enough soft gray in the mix to save them from looking cold and lifeless. Delicate features and plush soft looking lips drew Nigel in even further, enough so that he reached out a hand to cup Adam’s face, making the man stammer to a halt and look up over at him.

“Did you want me to stop reading? It helped you sleep before.” Adam blinked at him, his face a lovely open thing. Such a thing was rarity to a man like Nigel whose own existence was a long line of brief, meaningless relationships purely based on pleasure, and brutal violence he found invigorating and fun that sometimes involved killing people.

With those soft clear eyes that wandered, Adam’s face held such an innocence about it, Nigel didn’t know if he wanted to ruin it or protect it. What he did know was that he wanted to own it, mark it, make it all his. The thought of anyone else noticing this about Adam stirred up the embers of Nigel’s temper. That pit of white hot rage that kept him alive, made him who and what he was, a very bad man who was in the habit of taking what he wanted. Once his mind was set on something, Nigel would make the world burn and bleed until he got it, and only death itself would be able to pry it away when it was his.

Too wounded and tired to do anything about it just yet though, Nigel let Adam go, but not before running his hands through those curls to find the locks just as soft as he imagined. The cool sensation of feeling that warm silken hair between his fingers cooled Nigel’s temper to ash as something else entirely began to grip at his heart, a growing need like an addiction.

Unsure of what to do now that Nigel was touching him but not in the bad way like before, Adam started to put the book away when his arm was grabbed. Startled by the contact, Adam looked up to meet those intense amber eyes, half lidded yet burning like strange stars.
Made plaint by confusion, Nigel was able to tug Adam to him by his arm, pulling him up into the small bed. Adam found himself rearranged so that Nigel could place his head in Adam’s lap with one of the man’s long muscular arms thrown over Adam’s legs as if he kept him there. Confused but not uncomfortable where he was now, Adam stayed still, feeling Nigel breath in his lap and his hand begin to caress his leg, all the new sensations rhythmic and soothing.

“Keep reading. I love your voice, darling.”

OoOoO
TBC

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading. Your comments enjoy being strangled by Nigel and get off a little on it, you sick little perverted puppies you. Your kudos ignore it all in favor of eating dinner with Adam.
After many reassurances that Nigel was fully capable of going to the bathroom all on his own, and wasn’t that an odd repetitive conversation, Adam went back to work on Monday after taking a week off to care for his strange guest. It gave Nigel free reign of the apartment, the very bad man from Bucharest doing some snooping around out of boredom and old habit. The end result was somewhat disappointing.

Most of Adam’s DVD’s consisted of ‘The Actor’s Studio’, though there were some odd choices as well that made Nigel wonder. Adam’s diverse collection of porn was kept side by side with bagged and boarded issues of ‘Playbill’, but on the upside, Nigel found his wallet, phone, and gun in the closet beside the neatly arranged yet uniquely separate collections.

Checking his messages and texts gave Nigel the impression that everyone thought he was dead with the exception of Darko who told Nigel in so many words to call him when he was done fucking around. Still not knowing who had betrayed him, Nigel decided it would be beneficial to let everyone in the organization just keep presuming that he was a corpse for now. When he showed back up on the scene, it would be to the symphony of a massacre, one composed of his wrath, other people’s pain, and a whole lot of useless begging. With vengeance, inner darkness, and his gun in hand as his sidearm, Nigel would make them all pay for this inconvenient indignity with a wave of spilled blood.

For now though, Nigel healed slower than he would have liked, and wandered around a stranger’s apartment, looking into drawers and peeking into spaces. In a stroke of good luck, Nigel found his soft pack of cigarettes in the infrequently used bedroom bin, along with his Zippo lighter. He figured it was safe to presume that Adam didn’t like smoking. He would have to remember to open a window or something. Nigel couldn’t even bring himself to feel pissed about it, too amused by the thought that Adam had tolerantly kept his gun, but had disposed of his smokes with extreme prejudice.
His poking around did turn up more than a few books about Asperger’s syndrome though. Curious and having nothing much else to do except watch crap American morning television, Nigel took some of the books back with him to the bedroom after helping himself to another bowl of All Bran. It was like chewing shredded petrified cardboard, but at least it was filling.

Asperger’s was more complicated than Nigel realized as he read up on the characteristics, causes, and management for the condition. From what he gathered, Adam was a highly functioning, self sustaining example of his disorder, though he obviously had the telltale marks of it. The apartment’s contents was proof enough of that, Adam displaying an Aspie’s pursuit of very specific and sometimes very narrowed areas of interest. Space in general seemed to be Adam’s main focus, though he seemed to have a thing for telescopes as well.

Talking with his hands seemed to be another trait, one that Nigel had noticed and chalked up to an Italian upbringing, rather than a mental tic. He learned that repetitive gestures were another core part of the disorder along with inability to maintain eye contact. Aspies could also be unusually sensitive or insensitive to light, sound, and other stimuli, like touch. Nigel was willing to bet it was the former for Adam.

Socially, Apies were limited due to their lack of empathy, their inability to demonstrate it. It made them unable to understand social psychology, the give and take of relationships and common day to day interactions. The incapability of recognizing other’s emotions could reflect in their own mannerisms and facial expressions, their speech stilted, word inflection off, and responses adverse to what was going on around them.

As Aspie presented with the death of a loved one could be more upset by the person’s sudden absence in their life and the loss of what they could attribute to it as apposed to grieving for what the person had meant to them on an emotional level. Because Adam still had use of the chore graph, ‘Dad’s chores’ was simply crossed out in dry erase marker. A neurotypical would see it as a painful reminder of a loved one’s absence, and taken it down. Nigel realized that as an Aspie, Adam saw the list as just a list, with no emotional attachment to it.

Because they could miss obvious social cues, an Aspie could be long winded about a favored topic of interest, making the conversation extremely one sided, the Aspie often misunderstanding or misinterpreting the listener’s reaction to the information. Which was why Nigel now knew more about flesh eating bacteria than he ever cared to.

Interested, he read on further, learning that talking to an Aspie could be off putting, and not just due to their tendency to reiterate upon topics they obsessed over. Their speech itself tended to lack nuances, coming off as flat and/or very formal, lacking or mistiming the rhythm, stress, or intonation in their vocal patterns. Sarcasm was not understood or generally used, people with this disorder tending to take whatever was said to them very literally.

Unlike other forms of autism, Aspies were not as withdrawn or adverse to socialization, some displaying an almost childish need for it. Most just lacked the ability to initiate it without some sort of awkward behavior or could maintain a relationship with another person who was unaware of their limited capabilities.

Absorbing all this information made Nigel wonder about Adam. Distracted himself from thoughts of vengeance, Nigel let his mind linger over thoughts about the man who had designated himself his caretaker. For some inexplicable reason, Adam had fit Nigel into his life and made him a part of it as misshapen a puzzle piece as Nigel knew he was.

To his knowledge, Nigel had never been anyone’s number one priority, that thing that was set above and before everything and anyone else. Well at least not by they own volition anyway, usually more aided by his gun being pressed into the back of their head or his fist connecting with
flesh. Something like that felt new. It also felt good, really good, to be cared for and about.

After being the focus of such intense attention, Nigel realized that he didn’t really know anything about Adam other than he had Asperger’s, he liked space, and his father was dead. Nigel didn’t even know what Adam did for a living, hadn’t bothered to ask the man such a simple question. He had seen Adam leave the apartment nicely dressed though, but not overly formal, so office work perhaps?

Opening the bedroom window, Nigel lit up a cigarette to blow blue grey smoke out into the street. Keeping himself hidden behind the curtain, Nigel tapped the pack to see how many cancer sticks he had left. He would have to ration them out, make them last. After finding them in the trash, Nigel couldn’t see Adam wanting to buy him cigarettes, at least not without a very long list of reasons why cigarettes were evil incarnate and bad for him. Second floor or not, he also couldn’t risk anyone seeing him, catching wind that he was alive or know where he was hiding while he fully healed. Knowing how cities worked, Nigel was well aware that eyes and ears were everywhere, and any information could be bought for the right price.

The thought of people like him getting their hands on Adam made Nigel’s gut twist and his upper lip curl, the man bearing his teeth at the very idea of it. No, he would be patient and wait out his wounds, give himself time to heal up. It would also give him the chance to get to know Adam better.

Now there was a thought that made Nigel smile, the expression slow and wicked.

OoOoO

“Where you been, Adam? You missed quite a few lunches last week. I was starting to get worried.”

Harlan looked over at his oldest friend’s legacy, that unique son of his. The fact that Adam had broken a regular routine was probably not be a good thing. Past experience had taught Harlan that Adam didn’t take change well. Most recently prevalent, his father’s death was a huge thing to adjust to, and Harlan had been waiting for some sort of fallout from it. He wondered if this was it.

“Home.” Adam said, taking a bite out of his sandwich. He people watched as per usual, completely unaware of the older man’s concern as he enjoyed his food and being outside. His work space at Replay Inc. was nice enough, all organized, quiet, and out of the way of office foot traffic, but all the social interaction could be tiring at times. He tried to understand it, but most of it seemed so pointless to Adam, especially when it appeared some people just came to work to stand around and talk instead of doing their job.

“Well, that’s good. How’s the job going?” Harlan worried for the boy, really he did. Now that his father was gone, Adam didn’t have an anchor at home anymore, someone to keep his head from getting lost in stars, the movement of planets, or whatever else was going on up there.

“I took a few days off. I called in to work to let them know.” Adam said, looking over at Harlan to see that the man was staring at him. Adam looked down to check his shirt to make sure he hadn’t gotten any stains on it. Seeing none there, Adam knew now that Harlan’s look pertained to something they were talking about, but in review, he couldn’t think of anything mentioned that was noteworthy.

“Oh Lord, I know I going to regret this but why did you stay home?” Harlan asked, expecting some long, drawn out update about what the universe was doing now.

“I was taking care of Nigel.” was the calm and totally unexpected answer, Adam taking another
bite of his sandwich.

“What is a Nigel?” Harlan was getting a really bad feeling, hoping to hell and praying to heaven that ‘Nigel’ was some stray cat or dog.

“My houseguest. My human houseguest.” Adam amended, smiling at the knowledge that he had someone staying at his apartment to eat meals and have conversations with. He wasn’t alone anymore, and even better, he was doing normal things that other people did.

“Since when?” Harlan’s bad feeling was getting more confirmed by the moment.

“Since Monday. Last Monday. Eight days.” Adam nodded, glad that he had something to talk about and Harlan seemed interested. Most of the time he just wanted to talk about ‘guy things’ which had always confused Adam about what those topics actually were and what made them masculine. For example, how was weather a ‘guy thing’? While some storms and other weather phenomenon were given names for tracking purposes, to Adam’s understanding weather was genderless. It was like people who made animals talk in stories for no reason. Adam just didn’t get it.

“And how in the hell did you get a houseguest?” Harlan felt like he was venturing out into deep waters here, not liking what was coming up out of the ocean. Godzilla was about to eat Tokyo in his mind.

“I found him.” Adam said in that blunt manner that made Harlan want to run his hands down his face in frustration.

“Found him? Like in an ad or a store or God help us all, online?” Harlan made himself ask, reminding himself not to judge. It wasn’t his place and Adam was a good kid. Wired a little different than other folk, but a good person none the less.

“On the ground.” Adam clarified without really doing so. Harlan looked toward heaven and prayed for some patience, wondering not for the first time how Adam’s father had done it and made it look so effortless.

“Adam. Adam, look at me.” Harlan said firmly, getting and keeping Adam’s attention for once. “Tell me about Nigel.”

“I found him on the ground in the park. He was hurt so I took him home. He got better and I went back to work.” Adam explained, watching Harlan’s face intently for some sort of indication to what he was thinking. As per usual, it was in vain, so Adam made himself ask. “Did I do something wrong?”

“I took really good care of him. Nigel’s doing better. He can go to the bathroom on his own now.” Adam said quickly. Harlan had brought up a valid point, but Harlan hadn’t been there at the time. No one had been.

“Oh Lord, he’s still there? In your apartment?” Harlan sighed, knowing he would have to stop by now to check up on the place and on Adam.

“Yes. He’s my houseguest.” Adam said, his brow furrowing. He could tell that Harlan was upset
about Nigel, but he didn’t know why or what to do about it. He had explained what had happened to Harlan and in his opinion, he had done well. Nigel was proof enough of that, the man getting better everyday and talking to him more. There was even touching now.

“That doesn’t make him a good guy. What do you know about him?” Harlan tried to make Adam understand, hoped that he was getting through a little bit.

“I know that Nigel has brown eyes, a tattoo of a pretty woman on the left side of his neck, and is an inch taller than me. He has very warm skin and an aesthetically pleasing penis…” Adam began to launch into all that he knew of Nigel.

“No. Stop talking.” Harlan interrupted. He didn’t know what to do with that last bit of information. “I think I’m going to need to meet this Nigel.”

“Oh, ok.” Adam ate the rest of his sandwich and went back to people watched, inwardly pleased that his oldest friend would be meeting his newest friend.

OoOoO

“Hello, gorgeous.” Nigel purred at Adam upon his return, the man not reacting to the pet name or the flirtatious manner it was given in. New knowledge fresh in his mind, Nigel had been expecting that, but wanted to test it out for himself to see where Adam’s boundaries lay if they existed at all. Nigel knew woman and even a few men who would have blushed themselves stupid over such a greeting. The fact that the flirtation flew so high over Adam’s head it was practically in orbit was endearing.

“The Star Tracker’s sensor system has detected an error in analyzing space radiation.” Adam said by way of greeting, the man seeming quite excited by the prospect of it for some reason.

“Did it?” Nigel smiled for his spot on the bed, putting his book aside for now. He was getting stronger everyday but still got tired if he exerted himself too much. That and his side hurt like a bitch whenever he moved too much, the stitching tugging weird and tight in places. The vet had done a piss poor job of patching him up, but it was to be expected considering the guy had been working with his face kicked in and a gun pressed to his head. You get what you paid for, Nigel thought ruefully. Task completed, Nigel had murdered the vet so it wasn’t like he had anyone to complain to about it.

“Yes!” Adam said, attention torn between telling the man all about his news, and getting out of his work clothes as quickly as possible so that he could boot up his laptop to show Nigel. He was too wrapped up in his own head to remember that people usually didn’t do that sort of thing in front of others as he stripped down to his boxers and undershirt.

Not one to stop an impromptu show freely given or point out the wrongness of it, Nigel quietly admired the view as slender, well toned arms and legs were revealed. Adam was a lean, wiry thing, made so from nervous energy and all the walking he did everywhere. It was disappointing to see it all covered up again in way too many layers, Adam shoving his work clothes into the laundry bag that hung in his closet.

“Do you like stars, Nigel?” was the question that got the older man’s mind out of the gutter, who hadn’t bothered to hide his leering stare. He knew now Adam wouldn’t recognize it for what it was, and it was refreshing that he didn’t have to hide or play the usual games with Adam.

Adam seemed really excited about knowing his answer though, like his very existence balanced on it, and wasn’t that a small miracle in and of itself. Wondering what he was in for, Nigel decided to buy the ticket to that ride.
“Yes.” Nigel said. To his surprise, instead of launching into a lecture, Adam motioned at Nigel to follow him. That lacked appeal, but Nigel made himself get up anyway. He needed to get back into the habit of moving around again. Besides that, he liked to see Adam smile all on his own and was curious to what would put such a beatific expression there on that still face.

“I want to show you something.” Adam said, moving out into the living room. Nigel followed behind him slowly, loping over to the couch to rest his bones there as Adam went to the front door to click off the light. Earlier when Adam had come home, Nigel had heard him moving around in the living room. He realized now it was to properly darken the room and set up the space as a stage of sorts, every corner of the room now filled to its brim with stars. The Milky Way painted itself across the walls in shimmering points of light from some small strange looking projector that made stars dance and spin all around them.

“Because it looks like this, people think of space as still, even though we know it’s expanding.” Adam began talking, his voice growing stronger and more confident the longer he did so. Enthusiasm for what he was speaking about brought color and vitality to his normally dull tone as it rose and fell with new, rarely shown feeling. “All parts of the universe are moving away from one another, most of them faster than the speed of light, except for...”

Only half listening, Nigel could only stare about, watching as comets shot from one corner of the room to the other. Reaching some sort of pinnacle in his rambling, Adam flicked a series of switches on his device to make the space around them shift and change as star charts flowed in and out of one another in a stream of shimmering color and glittering light.

“Uh, these are all pictures of stars and galaxies that have been traveling away from us for hundreds of millions or billions of years.” Adam was proud of himself. His star projector was working perfectly to his specifications and even better, Nigel seemed to be really listening to what he was saying, not looking bored or wandering off like other people would. “But that’s still nearby compared to most of the universe that we’ll never see.”

“How did you do this?” Nigel interrupted. The light show wasn’t like anything he had ever seen before, and he didn’t recognize the machine producing it. “Where did you get that?”

“I’m an electrical engineer. I made it. It was a simply matter of...” Adam started to explain to be waved off by Nigel who gestured for him to come stand by him. Or at least, that was what Adam thought he wanted. Instead Adam found himself pulled into Nigel’s lap and tucked in-between the couch and the crook of the man’s arm and uninjured side, trapping him there.

“Skip the details. I get it. You’re a smart guy. Tell me about all this instead.” Nigel said, pointing up to the constellations and nebulas that faded in and out overhead. Playing with dark curls at the base of a pale neck, he loved how plaint Adam could be, confusion making it easy to move him to where Nigel wanted.

“Um, uh, do you know about Big Bang theory? Or I could tell you quickly about M-brane theory. It’s very speculative.” Adam offered, feeling happy that Nigel had called him smart. He knew he was intelligent, but it was surprisingly nice to hear someone say it, more used to people dismissing him than receiving compliments. He was experiencing so many new things with Nigel around, like sitting together in what he presumed was cuddling. No one had ever wanted to cuddle with him before. It was surprisingly comfortable and warm even if he didn’t know where to put his hands or where to look. What he supposed to look at Nigel or could he keep looking up at his stars?

“I don’t know a fucking thing about either.” Nigel admitted freely, knowing he was about to find out and he was surprisingly ok with that. Adam felt nice by his side, the younger man fitting in against Nigel like he was made for him.
Resting his head against Adam’s shoulder, Nigel stopped listening at some point to the information and just focused on the sound of Adam’s tone, the drum of his heartbeat, and the wind of his breathing. It was all like music to Nigel, the man fully attuned to Adam as he sat back and let it all wash over him.

“…b-but you’ve probably heard enough about stars.” Adam stammered at some point in time way later. Nigel had no idea if they had been there only a couple of minutes or for several hours. All he knew that his moment of zen was broken and he cared more about that than what time it was.

“No darling, I haven’t. I missed part of it.” Nigel murmured, turning his head to let his lips brush up against Adam’s throat.

“Oh, ok. I can go over it again for you.” Adam offered, expecting Nigel to get up now. No one ever took him up on his offers. He looked down to see Nigel smiling at him, his eyes half lidded and bright as anything up on Adam’s ceiling.

“Please do.”

OoOoOoO

Nigel was still lounging in the living room when he heard the scrape of keys in the front door’s lock. After Adam talked himself out, Nigel decided that they needed to move themselves back to the bedroom. Unfortunately it was just for sleep, Nigel unable to pursue that he really wanted to do with Adam. Feeling exhausted even now, he found that could only sit up for so long before his side started to really bother him. Fucking was out of the question, though Nigel was seriously considering jerking off, palming the front of his pants as he heard Adam move about in the background.

Knowing Adam’s father was dead and confirming that he lived alone, the sounds snapping Nigel out of his revelry, putting him on high alert as he made himself get up. He wasn’t in any condition to take out a threat and was too far away from his gun to deal with anything of an ominous nature in time, so Nigel reached for a nearby water glass, calmly and quietly breaking it under a throw pillow to palm one of the larger shards in his hand. He would just have to be quick and direct in his dealing with the person at the door.

The intruder turned out to be an older black man, dressed casually in jeans, heavy boots, and a work shirt, who was brought up short upon noticing Nigel. The very bad man from Bucharest knew he must have presented a very interesting sight indeed. Shoulders back, spine straight, and his head held high, he stood bare foot and half naked, only dressed in his dark slacks with a vicious wound in his side that was still so purple around the stitching it looked black from dried blood and bruising.

“Who the fuck are you?” Nigel broke the tense silence first, voicing the mutual question between them.

A life of experience and service in the military told Harlan that this man standing in Adam’s apartment was extremely dangerous. Brown eyes that looked like lit amber from their intensity were about as feral as they could get while still having a passing acquaintance with the concept of sanity. The wound in the man’s side was horrendous. Wondering how Nigel was even still alive, Harlan knew just from the look of lesion that it was going to scar twisted and ugly.

“I’m Harlan. I take it that you’re Nigel.” Harlan said, watching the man in front of him closely. Some instinct was stopping him at the door, and keeping him from entering while maintaining some distance from Nigel. Something about him was off, Harlan knew that much. Nigel stood too
still, watching him with too keen an eye.

“My apologies for the lack of proper introduction, but that still doesn’t answer my fucking question.” Nigel growled, holding his ground. He didn’t want to move unless he had to. It was obvious now that Adam had mentioned his existence to someone. This could be trouble, the kind he might have to fix permanently.

“I’m a family friend. Have been for a long time now.” Harlan countered, really wishing he had thought to bring to gun. “You though…You’re not supposed to be here.”

“But I am. Adam wants me here.” Nigel said slowly, internally debating on what to do about this man now that the issue was becoming complicated. A nosy neighbor could have been eliminated with little fuss. A concerned family friend was another matter entirely.

“Adam doesn’t know what he wants.” Harlan snapped, finally stepping into the apartment. He wasn’t about to have this conversation out in the hall, especially if Adam needed him.

“He’s hardly a child.” Nigel made himself relax, trying to come off as less of a threat as he covertly slid the piece of glass into his pocket.

“Yes, he’s a grown man, but Adam’s special….he’s…” Harlan wanted to find the right word without coming off as demeaning. He was always pushing Adam toward some sort of personal growth, taking responsibility for making adult decisions, and living with the consequences of his actions. Fact of the matter though, Adam was 29 years old and the apartment was his. If he really wanted Nigel here, Harlan couldn’t do a damn thing about it.

“Innocent?” Nigel supplied with a lazy sort of grin, knowing how to win this now. “You can’t have it both ways. Either he’s an adult who is capable of making his own decisions or he isn’t. So which is it?”

“You’re taking advantage of him.” Harlan snapped. He wasn’t going to play this game with some guy who was obviously a thug.

“You seem to think that you are well informed about something you don’t know a fucking thing about.” Nigel growled back as his voice rose, his temper starting to get the better of him.

“What’s going on? Are you two fighting?” Adam said as he padded into the room barefoot, his skin still damp from his shower with his sleepwear clinging to it. He knew he had heard voices but he hadn’t expect to find Harlan there.

“No, sweetheart.” Nigel smiled, purring out the words in such a manner it made Harlan’s stomach painfully twist. It was like watching a wolf lope toward a lamb, teeth bared and jaw agape, as Nigel turned to Adam to brush some stray locks of wet hair out of the man’s face.

“But I heard shouting.” Adam stammered. He had never like raised voices. Loud voices usually meant that something bad was happening and the odds of Adam knowing what that problem was in a timely manner were never in his favor. He was made to stop looking at the floor though by Nigel when the man left off his hair to cup his face with both his hands, gently tilting Adam’s up toward his own.

“Just a simple misunderstanding is all. See?” Nigel spoke quietly, keeping his tone even and calm as he smiled and softened his eyes. “Look at my face. Hear my voice. Nothing is wrong.”

“Oh….ok.” Adam nodded shakily as Nigel let his face go. He appreciated that Nigel took the time and effort to make him understand, telling him was he was feeling instead of making Adam ask. Mimicked back the smile, Adam remembered that he was the host and knew that came with
certain responsibilities. He had looked it up. “Nigel, this is Harlan. Harlan, this is Nigel. If you
would like a conversation starter, consider and discuss that the peanut is neither a pea or a nut. It’s
a legume. I can go get us all some water while you two do that.”

“That’s alright, Adam. I just came by to check in on Nigel here. I was getting worried, was all.”
Harlan glaring at the man in question who smiled smugly back at him.

“W-worried?” Adam stammered. Nigel looked one way but Harlan looked another way that was
completely different. He wasn’t stupid, knew that something was going on right in front of him.
He just couldn’t pinpoint it down, especially while in-between such a wide range of emotions.
Nigel looked and acted calm but Harlan appeared to be upset.

“About my health. A kind concern but unnecessary. He’s all done now though and leaving.”
Nigel said pointedly, gesturing to his side.

Adam nodded slowly, looking down at the wound to study it. He found that it was upsetting, and
could see why Harlan was troubled now. He didn’t like the collection of bad stitching in Nigel’s
side either.

“Why don’t you go pick out something to read. I’ll join you as soon as I see Harlan out.” Nigel
said, not bothering to make it sound like a suggestion. Adam would take it at face value while
Harlan, if he was smart, would take it as his cue to leave.

“Ok. Goodnight, Harlan.” Adam said in parting, already well on his way down the hall. The two
men watched him go, waiting until he was safely in the bedroom.

“I could still call the cops.” Harlan said dismally. With an injury like that, Nigel should have gone
to the hospital. The reasons why he didn’t or couldn’t were not good things in Harlan’s mind.

To Harlan’s dismay, his threat only made Nigel snort in open amusement. They both knew it was
an idle threat. Even if he did call the cops, what would he be able to tell them? That as far as he
knew, his friend’s son took a man home with him and that man had been invited to stay? And
what would happen if the cops did show up at Adam’s door? More than likely, they would be fed
some convincing bullshit by Nigel, and it would be backed up by Adam. They would leave and
nothing would change for the better.

“You could, but you and I both know that would be a very fucking stupid thing to do. It would
also make my darling Adam upset. Once I am better, I intend to take care of him, and considering
I don’t see you or anyone else for the matter lining up to do it, feel free to fuck off.” Nigel said,
liking how Harlan flinched when he said Adam’s name. He hadn’t intended to say that, caring for
Adam, but now that he had, the idea settled in his mind with a strange weight to it, warmly
appealing yet heavy. “Rest assured, old man. I have no intention of harming, Adam, now or ever.
I can’t guarantee the same sweet peace for others who threaten his happiness though.”

“If you hurt that boy….” Harlan gritted out, his hands clenching into fists helplessly at his side.
Even to him, it sounded weak, and Nigel was obviously not impressed by it if his smirk was any
indication.

“Be careful what you say…” Nigel hushed, placing a finger to his lips to claim silence from the
other man.

“….it could all turn to blood in an instant.”

OoOoO

TBC
Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading. Your comments try to count all the stars with Adam. Your kudos try to name them all with Nigel.
like the moons and the stars in the sky, I'll be there

Chapter Summary

Adam loses his job and Nigel comforts him.
Not Beta Read

Chapter Notes

Some dialogue taken from the movie Adam, and I'm kinda following the events of the movie as well.
The chapter's title is from 'I Swear' by All4One. How's that for ancient?
Not Beta Read

The Asperger's Syndrome Alert Card is a real thing. I'm pretty sure that Adam's fathers would make sure that Adam was in the habit of carrying it. In the movie, the police would have seen/found it if Beth hadn't been there to intervene and vouch for Adam.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“5,000 at a hundred dollars. Not five at a thousand. Adam, I've got to let you go.”

His boss Mr. Klieber was always saying that first part, but the latter was alarmingly new. The man was talking about candy stores and what a good job Adam was doing but he was being fired for it?

Working at Replay Inc. was point of stability and somewhat of a personal victory for Adam. It was true that Adam’s father had helped him get the job, sitting with his son through the interview and handling a lot of the social interaction of it. His father had explained his condition, but Adam had been hired because he was more than qualified, having the background for it. He could do the work and do it well. There was no doubt of that. Anyway who was in the industry and knew their tech was always impressed by what Adam had to offer.

Expect now Mr. Klieber was frowning at him, and it wasn’t the usual kind of frown.

“But I don’t want to go!” Adam cried out at a complete loss at what was going on as he tried to keep up. One moment Mr. Klieber was complimenting his work, and the next he was telling Adam that he was being let go for it and how sorry he was. “I-I haven’t finished.

If Mr. Klieber would just let him finish, Adam knew he would be impressed, and realized that he had made a mistake about letting Adam go.

“I have a bid, Adam. It’s done.” Mr. Klieber told him. For once, it was someone else who was trying to avoid his eyes as Adam desperately tried to read the man’s face.

“You found a better chip?” Adam asked, at a loss but trying to understand. If he knew what he had done wrong, he could fix the mistake. He just needed someone to tell him where the fault in
his work lie. Did they want the voice modulations enhanced or did they want the Kelli doll to hold longer conversations?

“Not better. Cheaper.” Mr. Klieber told him with a frown again, the one he wore too frequently in Adam’s presence. It was an expression that Adam was used to, in place on people who didn’t seem to know how to act around him. They would talk louder and slower at him, wanting to be helpful while not realizing how insulting it was. “Go home. Talk to your father. I’m sure he’ll find you another job.”

“No, my dad…” Adam started to say to be spoken over as Mr. Klieber plowed through his dismissal. It left Adam in a fog as his mind turned inward on itself unable to really cope. His dad was dead, and now he had lost his job. Adam could feel the gaping holes inside himself, but didn’t know how to fill them to make himself feel less empty.

Everything that he was at Replay Inc. fit into a small cardboard box that Adam could hold in his arms as he stumbled out of the place he no longer worked. He used the weight and feel of it to ground himself as people kept talking to him, saying things, touching him…why were they touching him?! The receptionist Kelli put some papers in his box as he passed by her, Adam mutely nodding when she said something at him. The words were lost in translation, unable to penetrate his mental fog.

The numbness he felt ran through his entire being and yet he had no idea what emotion to equate to it, what to label this overwhelming feeling that made his legs and arms weak and shaky. All Adam knew was that he felt sick with his head starting to ache, his breathing strained. He was going to end up having an episode if this kept up. If that happened, Adam knew he wouldn’t be able to move or really talk so he focused on just getting back to the safety of his apartment.

Keeping his head down and shoulders hunched, Adam somehow managed not to run into other people on the street or get hit by a car. If he just got back home, he could be alone and take a moment to sort his head out, try to understand and label what he was experiencing.

Except Nigel…He wouldn’t be alone, Nigel would be there, and he would want to know why Adam was home so early. He would have to tell Nigel that he had gotten fired. He would have to see that frown Mr. Klieber and other people wore on Nigel’s face. Adam didn’t want to see that expression there, didn’t want Nigel to treat him differently, like he was something less.

Upset and not knowing what to do about it, Adam stopped walking, coming to a halt in front of the neighborhood school, Wildwood. Mentally adrift, Adam wandered over to rest his head against the cool iron bars of the fence, sightlessly watched the children play their recess games in the yard. Not for the first time, he wished he could look that happy and know why.

“Excuse me, sir. What are you doing there?” broke Adam out of his trance, looking over his shoulder to see a pair of police officers getting out of their squad car.

“I said, what you doin’?” The officer repeated when Adam didn’t answer him right away, his tone taking an edge when he noticed how Adam avoided his eyes.

“Watching the children.” Adam said flatly, not know why these men were talking to him. He really wasn’t up for conversation, and people in uniform tended to make him nervous.

“Uh-huh. Let me have some I.D., sir.” the police officer said instead of going away, even though Adam had told him why he was here.

“I-I-I was looking at the children.” Adam stammered, trying again to clearly convey what he had been doing. To his dismayed confusion, his explanation did nothing to improve the situation.
“Sir, turn around. Put your hands on the fence, please.” the police officer told him, gesturing to the fence.

“Why- why are you doing this?” Adam asked, his limbs feeling suddenly rigid and ungainly. He had told them what he was doing and yet all that seemed to do was make the police officers more upset with him.

“Lean forward, put your hands on the fence, please.” the police officer said, his tone forceful as he gestured to the fence again. When Adam just stared back at him, the officer moved with quick intent, taking hold of Adam. It made him drop his box as he was turned around and slammed up against the fence, the officer yelling at him now. “Hands on the fence!”

Shakily, Adam complied, his hand trembling as he gripped the cold metal, feeling the police officer begin to touch him, patting down his sides and behind.

“What - what are you doing?” Adam managed out, the words coming out as shaky as his voice.

“I’m taking your wallet out of your back pocket to check your identification, sir.” the police officer told him, handing over said wallet over to his partner who called it in.

“Hey, take a look at this.” the other officer said, pulling out another card from Adam’s wallet to show his partner. Shutting his eyes to press his head against the cool metal in an attempt to stay calm, Adam realized it must be his Asperger’s syndrome alert I.D. card that they were looking at. Before the officer could inquire about it though, a tall red haired woman walked up to them.

“Is this the man you reported?” the officer asked her.

“I wasn’t the one who saw him.” the woman told him as she studied Adam. “I’m the director of Wildwood. What’s going on with him?”

“Just running his I.D. but he had this on him too.” the officer said, handing her Adam’s alert ID. “Do you know what this is?”

Oh…oh dear. Please let him go. I think there’s been a misunderstanding.” the woman said as she studied the card. “Aspergers is a developmental disorder, a kind of high functioning autism.”

Returning the card, the red headed woman turned her attention back to Adam as he was released. Not knowing what to do, Adam stood there, staring blankly at her left shoulder.

“Your card says your name is Adam Raki. May I call you Adam?” the director asked, keeping her tone light as she smiled at Adam, his eyes flickering up from time to time now that there was a moment of calm.

“Y-yes. That’s my name. A-adam.” Adam stammered out softly. He was happy he wasn’t being touched anymore, but he needed his I.D.s back.

Do you live nearby, Adam.” the director asked, the woman keeping her tone soft and kind.

“Y-yes.” Adam nodded, the movements jerky and tense.

“You can go home. You’re not in any trouble.” the director told him, looking over at the officer whose com reported that Adam Raki had no hits and that his record was clean.

“Alright. Sorry about that. Can’t be too careful with kids, right?” The officer said as they finally backed away. Nodding because he was sure some reaction was expected of him, Adam found he was getting too far gone to keep all this up. Ducking his head to keep everyone out, Adam ran
home, leaving his box behind.

OoOoO

Nigel had been sleeping when he heard Adam enter the apartment, the killer waking easily at the out of place noises. His inner clock stated it was too early for Adam to be home, Nigel squinting over at the time to confirm the hour. The man who had never worked a 9-5 gig a day in his life wondered if offices had half days or something.

Debating on whether or not he should get up, Nigel stretched out lazy as a cat, wincing as he went a little too far, the movement bothering his side. Despite the ugly scarring, he was doing a hell of lot better, and was ready to pull out his stitches.

The decision was made for him though, the sharp and sudden sound of glass breaking coming from the living room. It was a noise that Nigel was well familiar with, of meat hitting a hard surface with force. Moving faster than he had in weeks, Nigel rushed out of the bedroom to find Adam standing in front of a now ruined mirror, the man staring impassively at his fractured reflection as blood ran down his forehead.

“Fuck!” Nigel swore, going over to Adam to grip the man by his shoulders, making them face each other. Usual fathomless expression in place, Adam’s face gave nothing away to why he had done such a thing. It didn’t take a rocket scientist to figure out what had happened, that it wasn’t an accident, that Adam had intentionally slammed his head into the mirror. It was the reasoning, or lack there of, behind it that was bugging Nigel. That and head wounds bled like a bitch.

“Why did you do that, darling? What are you upset about?” Nigel asked as he titled Adam’s head back to access the damage to it. There was a small laceration, but nothing that looked too deep or needed stitches as a small bump started to form. It was nothing life threatening though, much to Nigel’s relief. More so than he had felt in a long time for anyone.

“I lost my job. Mr. Klieber fired me.” Adam said flatly, his eye managing a tour of Nigel's face without really hitting any of the key points of interest. “I don’t know if I am upset. I wish I did.”

“You just broke a mirror with your face. I’d say you’re fucking pissed. It sounds like a fucking shitty day full with fucking shitty people.” Nigel chuckled, taking Adam’s hand to lead him back to the bedroom with a pit stop at the bathroom to pick up some medical supplies.

Pulling Adam down on the bed with him, Nigel began the task of cleaning up the blood off of Adam’s face as he kept pressure and a gauze pad over the wound with his other hand.

“Stay still. It will be over soon enough, darling.” Nigel said softly. This close he could smell the soft scents of Adam, the spilled iron of his blood, the sweet milky scents of his mild soaps, the salt and musk of his sweat. It was a heady mixture, enough so Nigel leaned in to clean off the remaining blood off of Adam’s skin with his tongue. Adam flinched when something wet was placed to the side of his face, but other than that didn’t respond as Nigel laved his tongue from corner of Adam’s jaw to his forehead.

Breathing out heat and still tasting Adam on his tongue, Nigel placed a band aid over the cut when he was sure it was clotted. A wound that shouldn’t be there at all. It’s existence made Nigel angry as he held Adam in place.

“Don’t ever fucking do that again? You’re not allowed to harm yourself for any reason. Do you understand what I am telling you?” Nigel whispered harshly into Adam’s ear, his lips brushing up against the velvet of the lobe.
“Yes.” Adam said, turning his head to study Nigel in sparing glances. He tried to pull away to find that Nigel only gripped him tighter in place. His muscular arms were locked around Adam so that he had to lean into Nigel, placing his head on the older man’s shoulder to sit comfortably with him.

“You can hug me back.” Nigel said after a moment. This didn’t feel awkward though. The fact he had to tell Adam to respond had the complete opposite effect. It made him feel powerful.

“Oh…” Adam breathed out softly, wrapping his arms around Nigel’s shoulders as he moved his head to rest on the man’s clavicle to keep from looking at him. The fog inside of him was dissipating while in Nigel’s presence, the man grounding Adam as he gave himself something to cling to. “I was fired.”

“Don’t worry about it.” Nigel sighed, running his hands up and down Adam’s back, enjoying the feel of it as his fingers counted and measured Adam’s vertebrae.

“I lost my job!” Adam pulled back enough to show Nigel just how upset he was about it, how lost. It wasn’t just about the income. It was something his father had done for him, and Adam had just screwed it all up because he hadn’t been able to understand what other people wanted from him. It was the story of his life, and he didn’t know how to tell it to another.

“Who gives a shit? You can get a job anywhere. Smart guy like you, they’ll be tripping over themselves to hire you, darling.” Nigel said, surprising Adam into looking straight at him. Leaning in to press their foreheads together, Nigel kept that gaze there, admiring the view of smoky blue eyes.

“Until I get to the interview. They’ll think I’m weird.” Adam muttered. It was hard to keep being upset though or even going through the motions of it, especially when Nigel kept running his hands along his sides and back, the motion of it soothing.

“You are weird…” Nigel told him with a grin to show Adam that he wasn’t trying to be mean about it. That was important to him now, protecting Adam even from himself. It shouldn’t have been, but it was. “…But everyone’s weird. Some of us just lie about it better.”

“I can’t lie.” Adam sighed, more out of contentment though than displeasure. Nigel’s hands were now in his hair, his fingers working over his scalp to send little thrills up and down Adam’s spine.

“I’ll teach you.” Nigel offered, though the thought of it didn’t sit well with him. If he had his way, Adam wouldn’t work another day in his life.

“I won’t lie. It’s wrong.” Adam said as his brow furrowing. He didn’t know why Nigel could suggest such a thing.

“Then I’ll teach you to fake being normal or be less fucked up about it.” Nigel said quickly, recovering nicely as he distracted Adam further by running his hands from the man’s scalp to nape of neck, making Adam shiver from the sensation.

“Is that why all these books are out? Are you learning about how weird I am?” Adam asked. He had noticed his father’s book at the bedside before, but had decided not to comment or ask about it. He hadn’t wanted to know what Nigel was thinking about it all.

“No. I’ll learning to think like you. Because I want to understand you, even when you don’t understand yourself. You’re in limbo, left there by other people. Don’t worry though. I won’t let you linger there anymore. I’m here now to hasten you along to a final destination, darling.” Nigel said as he watched Adam’s face. It was indeterminate, the other man obviously thinking about
something, but for all Nigel knew it could be about radiation coming off of star clusters in Jupiter’s orbit. “Does that bother you?”

Leaning in, Adam pressed a soft kiss to Nigel’s mouth in answer, sweet and chaste. It surprised him enough that Nigel just sat there and let him.

“Thank you.” Adam said softly before kissing a rather stunned Nigel again. Adam kissed with everything that he was. His full attention and focus was on Nigel who wanted to be that all, that everything to someone. Letting Nigel go and Nigel finally letting him go, Adam sat back to watch the other man lick his lips.

“You can thank me by doing that some more.” Nigel murmured, breathing out slow. He had gotten a taste of what he wanted and now he wanted more. He needed it all.

“Is kissing alright?” Adam asked hesitantly, wondering if he crossed or missed a boundary.

“Yes.” Nigel nodded, collecting Adam in his arms again.

“Is holding alright?” Adam ventured, his own arms still floating above Nigel’s own, waiting for permission.

“Yes.” Nigel chuckled, liking how Adam felt against him as the man settled his arms.

“Is sex alright?” Adam said bluntly, making Nigel bark out laughter into Adam’s neck as he nuzzled it. He grabbed hold of Adam’s belt to pull the man into his lap, wincing only a little as it put some strain on his side. Nigel decided they would just have to take this slow but he was definitely going to fuck Adam until both of them couldn’t move.

“Fuck yes.”

OoOoO
TBC

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading. Your comments cuddle Adam until he falls asleep. Your kudos stay up with Nigel and smoke.
**Said hey to an astronaut....**

Chapter Summary

Nigel gets some much needed exercise, Adam gets some bad news, and some windows get cleaned.

Not Beta Read.

Chapter Notes

**HEY! GO CHECK OUT THIS SUPER CUTE ART! DO IT!**

http://hallulawy.tumblr.com/post/75583725603/i-really-love-darkmoonsigels-a-necessary-life

Thanks to hallulawy who made this super cute fanart. It's adorable, fits this pairing so well, and I love it.

The chapter's title is from Louden Swain's 'Eskimo'.

I'll get around to writing some smut for this pairing when I'm feeling better. I can't think about doing the do while I have cramps.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Where the fuck have you been, Nigel?”

Darko sounded pissed off but completely unsurprised to hear Nigel alive and well. His second in command and comrade in arms had always claimed that he would have to see a body to believe that Nigel was dead.

“I am laying low for the time being. Those treacherous backstabbing cunts tried to kill me. What’s to be done about that?” Nigel laughed, the noise sounding more hostile than amused, full of a violence that meant lethal things for other people.

“What indeed.” Darko mused back though the answer was clear. A grave insult had been made. There was only one real response to such a thing. “If you’re still in New York, I may have a list of names that just might interest you, my friend.”

“You know me too well. As it so happens, I’m still in this hellhole of a city. I would love a chance to check in on our former associates and pay them a call.” Nigel mused with a cold grin of sharp teeth. “I owe them so much for their hospitality.”

The very bad man from Bucharest listened as Darko rattled off a list of ten dead men walking. Nigel recognized only a few of them, but he was sure he would be able to find the others with little difficulty. He had a talent and a rather unique skill set for making other people talk, being the friendly person he was with his gun and quick temper.
“Would you care for some help in this endeavor?” Darko offered. Nigel knew that he could have men he could relatively trust at his disposal as soon as tomorrow if he wanted them there.

“And ruin all my fun? Never. I think that this matter needs to be personally attended to, and besides, I need the exercise.” Nigel easily dismissed the proposal. He didn’t feel like waiting, and most people didn’t have the stomach for what he had in mind anyway.

Mostly healed up and in some desperate need of violence, Nigel was going out of his mind in the apartment with nothing to distract him from boredom, pacing like a jungle cat in a too small enclosure. To make matters worse, Harlan had picked Adam up this morning, both men needing to be present for the reading of the late Mr. Riki’s will.

Nigel decided that now was as good a time as any to begin at he left the apartment with very bad things in mind for other people.

OoOoO

The meeting with Mr. Wardlow had not gone especially well. The news of him having to move out of the only home he had ever known caused the onset of a major panic attack, one that left Adam unable to move. Understanding to an extent what was happening, Harlan had needed to lead him out by his hand, making Adam almost glad he couldn’t process emotions or recognize them. From what he understood, embarrassment was a common response to such occurrences, but he was too involved with panic and the overload of information to care what Mr. Wardlow thought about him.

Immense frightening change looming overhead, Adam felt he had bigger things to worry about than some stranger’s opinion though, the young man sullen and mostly argumentative as Harlan drove him home. Without his father’s income, the mortgage was too much for him to afford all on his own to keep staying there. Unless he found a job which was Harlan’s advice.

When Adam arrived at the apartment, he found the place empty for the first time in weeks. Nigel was gone from his normal places of the bed and the living room couch. Unsure of what to make of that but having something other than Nigel to obsess over now, Adam sat down at his desk, fired up his laptop, and got to work. Harlan said that he needed to find a job to keep his home so Adam was going to find a job. It was the simplest answer to his problem and one he could cope with. He really didn’t want to move.

Sitting at his desk for hours, Adam kept to his task with laser focus until the apartment grew dark and the laptop was the only source of illumination in the place. His back hurting him enough to make even Adam break his considerable concentration, he tried to look out his window to find he couldn’t. All his windows were not in ideal places for optimal stargazing. On top of that, their odd positioning and size made it difficult to clean any of them thoroughly.

It had always bothered him, but cleaning the windows had been his father’s chore. Expect his father was dead which meant it was his decision and his responsibility now. Adam realized some sacrifices had to be made on his part if he wanted to see some stars from the comfort of his home. The windows’ odd positioning and size made it difficult to clean any of them perfectly though.

At least from the inside…..

His mind whirling with a new task at hand and a plan beginning to take form, Adam went to his bedroom to suit up.

OoOoO
It had been a very productive day for Nigel. Try as he might, Nigel couldn’t seem wipe the smug grin off his face as easily as he had washed other people’s leaking life off of his hands. Not with his gun still warm, his palms itching from powder burn and abrasions to his knuckles, and the adrenalin singing in his blood, so Nigel continued to grin like he was high on life. It was just too bad for other people that his drug was their pain and suffering, their demise his version of an 8-ball. Nigel felt reborn in violence, having missed the feel of wearing wrath over his skin.

Oh and how they had bled for him, how beautifully they had begged in harmony with the quick tempo he had set with his fists and bullets, all wet ruined flesh and whimpering mewls from mouths like worn out, ready cunts.

Five had already been struck from his list, and Nigel knew where the other five were now. He planned to let them piss themselves a bit before he got round to them. No one knew he was alive still. He had made sure of that, murdering any and all witnesses with extreme prejudice. There were no innocent bystanders in his sort of business though. No one would weep for the fresh dearly departed as they robbed their corpses. He had left no trace behind to hint at what devil had decided to come along and reap the wicked.

Upon entering though, Nigel was surprised to find the apartment empty, though Adam had obviously been home. His laptop was still powered up and out on his desk, surrounded by paperwork from a law office.

Nigel found himself wondering how it had gone for Adam and was a little surprised by the existence of such a thought. All his thoughts about Adam came with a little bit of wonder though. The man had a strange effect on him. Nigel wasn’t surprised that he felt love for Adam though. He was more shocked at himself that he could, that he was still capable of such soft emotions.

It was love of course, pure and simple. Nigel wasn’t the type of person to hide or deny any sort of pleasure from himself so he greedily accepted this unexpected development. Took hold of it, that precious love, and turned it into obsession. Adam was his now. It was just as simple as that for him. His habit of reading out loud to a dying man had saved Nigel’s life. It didn’t matter to Nigel that Adam was male, had some strange habits, was a little mentally off, or wouldn’t shut up about how solar flares could change the trajectory of space dust. Without a shadow of a doubt, Nigel would kill for Adam, would live and die for him. As far as Nigel was concerned, they were already good as married in his mind, ‘til death do them part.

Now if he only knew where his darling Adam had gotten himself to, everything in his world would be perfect for one bright moment. Nigel felt like celebrating.

A odd rapping on the window startled Nigel, the man’s nerves still strung out high on danger, death, and adrenalin. Feeling ridiculous considering they were on the second floor, Nigel went over to the window expecting to see a stunned pigeon or something else wearing confusion and wings. What he wasn’t expected to find was Adam hanging by a rope, dressed up in his astronaut suit with a squeegee in one hand and a bottle of Windex in the other. Nigel’s sudden appearance in the window scared Adam as well who lost his steadying grip upon the window pane. It caused him to fumble against the window, bodily smacking into it with another thump.

“What the fuck!?” Nigel yelled, throwing open the window. “What the fuck are you doing out here!!”

“Oh. Hello, Nigel.” Adam blinked as he began to spin in place like a piece of bait on a string. Before he could complete a full circle, the back of his suit was grabbed as the space man was hauled in through the window by an upset looking Nigel.

“Get your ass in here!” Nigel snapped, pulling Adam to him so that he could unhook the man
from whatever ridiculous rope and pulley system he had finagled to lower himself from the roof. Freed, Adam wandered back into the apartment a little out of breathe from his excretion, but none too worse for wear as far as Nigel could tell.

“What the fuck were you doing out there!” Nigel growled. He strode over to Adam, grabbing the man by his dark curls in a hurtful enough manner to make the would-be astronaut wince from more than just eye contact as Nigel made Adam look directly at him. “You could have fucking killed yourself! How the fuck were you going to get down?!”

A little startled by the aggressive amount of touching and Nigel’s tight hold on him, Adam considered the question posed to him. “Climb up.” he said, gesturing down to his space gear. “It’s rated for 3,000 pounds.”

“You’ve got to be fucking kidding me.” Nigel deflated, the entirety of his active day and his still healing wounds catching up to drain him of his anger. It left him feeling tired as Nigel rested his forehead against Adam’s own, relaxing his tight hold on soft locks of hair. Odds were that Adam didn’t even know he had done anything unusual, that normal people didn’t hang off of buildings in that manner to clean off windows.

“No.” Adam answered flatly, wondering if Nigel was trying to make a joke or if he thought Adam was making one. “I couldn’t see out of the window.”

“So that was your plan? To pretend to be some sort of space spider?” Nigel sighed, closing his eyes as he breathed in Adam’s scent. A little sweet, a little milky, always mild with trace salts, but utterly lovely in its simplicity.

“Yes. Why do you have a gun?” Adam asked. Nigel’s left hand was still anchored in his curls, but his other rested on Adam’s shoulder with gun in hand, the side of it pressed up coldly against the skin of his neck. Opening his eyes with a start, Nigel realized belated that, yes, he had his gun cocked and loaded out of old habit.

“Fucking hell, Adam. I heard a noise outside. I thought someone was trying to break in.” Nigel lied easily enough as he disarmed the weapon, tucking the firearm out of sight and back into his belt.

“It was me.” Adam said incredulously, like Nigel was being the absurd one here.

“I didn’t fucking know that!” Nigel yelled, finally releasing Adam to throw his hands up in aggravation. Seeing that Nigel was upset but unsure about the why or what he should do about it, Adam absorbed this, taking a moment to walk over to the window to peer out as if to play out Nigel’s reaction in his own head. The reality of the situation and implications of that reality clinked into place like the tumblers of a key and lock, the answer opening to him.

“Oh.” Adam startled, realizing his mistake, how odd that must have been for Nigel to see him like that.

“I guess not.” Adam muttered low, his tone coming out flatter than before as he sighed at himself. Normalcy was as far out of his reach as his beloved stars were, great bright concepts meant for him to view only from afar. Adam decided it was best if he called it a day and went to bed. Hopefully Nigel wouldn’t hold this mistake against him and eventually come join him.

Before he had even made it few steps though, Adam found himself stopped as Nigel gathered up the forlorn spaceman into his arms. Adam felt a kiss pressed to the crown of his curls, Nigel trailing little kindnesses down past his temple to his ears, making Adam laugh as he was tickled by soft lips lingering over his sensitive skin.
“Come here, my darling. I’m not mad about what you did. I’m angry about how you did it. It wasn’t safe and I would be very upset if you got hurt. Do you understand?” Nigel explained, letting his lips brush up against Adam’s ear. He liked hearing the man laugh even if it was just a physical reaction to being tickled. Nigel found himself moving Adam’s head again so that he could make the other man look into his eyes. That blue grey gaze flitted over his face like a mad butterfly until it settled on memorizing the scar that ran across the bridge of his nose, and yet Nigel discovered he didn’t mind that because Adam nodded in answer.

Leading Adam over to the couch, Nigel made him sit down, settling down beside him in what would be too close in his personal space for anyone else. He knew Adam would mind or care though. “Tell me how it went with the lawyer, sweetheart.” Nigel said, leaning in to press his lips to Adam’s neck. He licked some of the salt off of the soft skin he nosed there.

“Bad.” Adam answered, flinching at the wet contact but adjusting to give Nigel more access. He was happy that Nigel didn’t seem mad at him anymore. Adam also knew now Nigel could do some very interesting things with his tongue.

“How so? Don’t leave me in suspense.” Nigel sighed in contentment, pulling Adam into his lap when he felt the man wasn’t close enough to him. It was like manhandling a marshmallow while Adam was in the suit, but Nigel managed it, settling Adam’s legs on either side of his lap, his hands resting on Adam’s well padded hips. Nigel decided that this suit really needed to come off.

“I have to find a job.” Adam stated, more interested in what Nigel was doing than answering. “Harlan said I should send out the application letters and worry about the interviews later.”

“Why would you worry about that at all, sweetheart?” Nigel smiled lazily up at Adam, watching the man with interest when it was mimicked back.

“Interviews usually don’t go very well.” Adam let his smile rise and fall as panic started to nip at his mind again. His father had been there last time to help him through the interview process.

“So you put in some applications this afternoon?” Nigel asked, taking Adam’s smaller hands into his own to distract the man. He liked the feel of them against his palms, the texture of their skin so different. Adam’s were so smooth and soft Nigel couldn’t resist pressing their coolness up to his cheeks and mouth at their patterns.

“87.” Adam stated easily as he watched Nigel pause in his adoration to his life lines.

“I beg your pardon, but did you say 87?” Nigel repeated, looking up at Adam in surprise. He didn’t doubt the accuracy or honesty of Adam’s claim. If the man said 87, he meant 87. It was just a little hard to believe.

“Mh-hmmm. Applications and letters of inquiry.” Adam bobbed his head.

“You sent in 87 applications.” Nigel reiterated flatly, trying to wrap his head around the concept, considering he had never filled out an application in his life.

“Including the letter of inquiry.” Adam corrected. There was a difference after all.

“Today? As in today, after you returned from the lawyer?” Nigel tried and failed to make sense of it.

“Mh-hmmm. Yes.” Adam wondered if he was not being clear enough for Nigel.

“Holy shit.” Nigel snorted, impressed despite himself.
“Holy shit?” Adam’s brow furrowed in confusion, worried that he had made a mistake. Had he gone over a set limit? Was he allowed to only send in a certain amount?

“It is quite a number. Very impressive though I would expect nothing less from you. You are the total package, brains and beauty, my darling Adam.” Nigel smiled in reassurance, Adam’s eye beginning to dance about again in their distress. He kissed Adam’s palm to draw the man’s full focus back to him right where he wanted it.

“Well. I don’t want to move.” Adam told Nigel emphatically, making the older man nip at his wrists.

“That has occurred to me. Who said you would have to do such a thing?” Nigel asked, placing Adam’s hand on either side of his face so that the man was cupping it. He kept his hands over Adam’s to keep them there, liking the feel of Adam touching him and being unafraid to do so. Whores were not affectionate unless you paid them to be and even then it was forced. That or they knew who and what he was, fear tainting every action after that. Adam’s hesitancy came from inexperience, uninfluenced by terrible knowledge or terror that made his hands shake. It was pure and Nigel was hopelessly addicted to it.

“Mr. Wardlow. And Harlan, but only if I don’t get a job. I can’t afford the mortgage otherwise.” Adam said as Nigel turned his head a bit to nuzzle his fingers. His stumble scratched up against the pads of Adam’s fingers, making soft rasping sounds, but still felt nice.

“I don’t want you to worry yourself about something so trivial.” Nigel said softly, moving Adam’s hand up to his hair but letting go when he felt Adam begin to explore his silvering locks all on his own.

“But I..” Adam began to argue to have fingers pressed up softly to his lips, stilling his words before they could leave the platform of his tongue.

“Shhh…I’m going to take care of it for you, my sweet. I am going to take care of everything.” Nigel promised and meant every word in his own twisted way. There was an idea forming within Nigel, one he planned on carrying out once he was done with this trivial bit of business here in New York. Adam might not like it at first, but Nigel was sure he could persuade him to adapt. Nigel knew he was good at such things, persuading people to see his point of view. He was just going to have to use a different method with Adam, a softer approach to woo him.

“Why?” Adam asked even as he felt a sweet relief begin to fill him. Someone was going to help him. Someone was finally going to guide him and give his life a heading. He felt like a ship lost out at sea, one that was regaining its bearings after a storm.

“Because I would do anything to brighten your disposition, gorgeous. Anything at all. Whatever your heart desires. All you have to do is ask.” Nigel purred out the words, his accents making them smooth as silk and sweet as honey to the ear.

“Oh. Do you want to have sex?” Adam asked hopefully. He liked all this touching, Nigel feeling nice and solid beneath him.

“Yes. Do you?” Nigel couldn’t help but laughed. Adam’s bluntness held a charm to it. Nigel liked that he didn’t have to pussy foot around with him, Adam always giving him a refreshingly honest answer.

“Yes, I’m sexually excited.” Adam nodded quickly, his growing anticipation making the gesture jerky and uncoordinated. He left off petting Nigel’s soft hair to start unbuttoning the man’s shirt.
“Well we can’t let that go to waste, now can we? Come along then, darling.” Nigel said, making Adam pause long enough in stripping him to move the space man off of his lap. Taking Adam by the hand, Nigel led them to the bedroom. “Let me take care of you like you took care of me. Your reading saved my life and I am a man who repays his debts.

“I don’t understand how. You were unconscious.” Adam pointed out as he was divested of his many layers, Nigel making surprising quick work of the space suit and Adam’s more normal clothing underneath.

“I still heard you in dark places where even angels feared to tread, the entire host to frightened to move except for you. Your voice is beautiful, like a choir, like everything else about you.” Nigel murmured as he laid Adam out across the small bed, his lover’s naked back pressed to the mattress as he moved over him. Wetting his lips in anticipation, Nigel took in the bounty of pale bared skin laid out under him, Adam staring up at him with those beautiful blue grey eyes, wide and wondering.

“You’re far too good for the likes of me, but I am a greedy evil thing. A devil to your angel, my darling, and I am going to keep you though Heaven may resent me for it and Hell make me pay in blood for this sin.”

OoOoO

TBC

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading. Your comments help lower Adam down the side of the building cause those windows aren’t going to clean themselves. Your kudos go on a merry murdering spree with Nigel.
“Oh….”

Adam found that he was breathless already, and Nigel hadn’t even really done anything yet. In theory, Adam knew a lot about sex. His DVD collection about that particular topic of interest was well watched and memorized verbatim. He had just never had the chance to apply any of that knowledge to anyone else. He wondered how well Nigel knew how to sex.

“Do you…” Adam began to ask to have Nigel beat him to it.

“All the things I have done?” Nigel chose to be direct, knowing that Adam wouldn’t be offended or taken aback by his forwardness. Plus he really wanted to know, needed to know.

“No.” Adam said without hesitation. It made what was starting to simmer down and solidify within Nigel turn from base carbon to brilliant diamond. Any hesitations or reservations Nigel may have had about Adam were burned away like impurities in an instant. If there was a thin line between love and hate, there was an even thinner one between love and obsession.

“That is fantastic.” and it was. No one else had touched his Adam, and he needed a moment to find control over himself before he did something regrettable. Tilting his head back as he closed his eyes, Nigel could feel a sudden surge of heat move sharply downward to make him swell. The very bad man was aware that he was still clothed as his erection pressed up to the front of his dark slacks. His eyes flying open, Nigel jolted when curious fingers touched his front.

Staring down at Adam as the man unbuttoned his slacks and leaned up to start in on his shirt, Nigel hadn’t even realized he had closed his eyes at the thought of Adam’s virginity or his response to it. It was a gift, meant all for him, the object of his desire looking up at him with those big beautiful blue eyes. Nigel couldn’t understand how anyone could manage to look so innocent while touching cock and stripping another person, but Adam did. That shining look, Nigel wanted to keep it close and hoard that virtue, render and ruin it, make it his own and hide it away.

“Stay here.” Nigel ordered, placing a firm hand to Adam’s chest to ease him off and press him
back into the mattress. Jumping off the bed to run to the bathroom, Nigel stripped down as he went, feeling more excited than he ever had in a long time. He soon returned completely naked with a bottle of lotion in hand. There were condoms in his wallet, but they were going to stay there. He was a terrible person but he wasn’t stupid. He had never fucked anyone before without one……until now.

Throwing the lotion onto the bed, Nigel palmed himself with groan at the thought of marking Adam properly, inside and out. If he had his way, everyone would know who this man belonged to, and what would happen if anyone was stupid enough to try and change that.

It didn’t help that Adam was hard too, stroking himself with those slender fingers of his that stood out stark and pale against the rosy color of his cock. It was an easy thing to do, batting Adam’s hand off of himself and grabbing the man by his hips to drag him across the small bed to its center. Nigel didn’t waste any time in putting himself between those long slender legs, toned from walking city streets. He knelt to place Adam’s bottom on the tops of his thighs, the position giving Nigel full access and made Adam entirely expose himself to him.

All the while, Adam watched him with interest, his stormy eyes studying what Nigel did, memorizing and filing it away to decipher later. Adam liked it that all of Nigel’s movements were done with confidence. The man’s large hands gripped his hips to flatten out over his skin and glide up over to his belly, pressing down there firm enough to make Adam squirm at the tingly sensation it caused in his genitals. He could feel Nigel’s erection pressed up against him as well, the wet tip of it making his balls sticky, but the feeling wasn’t unpleasant.

His prep of Adam was slow, the bad man taking his time as he marveled at how well they fit together like this. How beautifully Adam accepted what was being done to him but with such intense interest. Nigel loved Adam all the more because he didn’t shy away, the usual embarrassment of exposure and uncertainty refreshingly missing. Nigel felt like every movement he made was being analyzed. Instead of making him feel uneasy, Adam’s laser like attention upon him made Nigel feel potent, every action gaining an even better reaction as he gradually introduced more fingers and found sweet spots that made Adam tremble and cry out.

When he could slip in a fourth finger, Nigel was confident that Adam was ready for him, the man quickly lotioning up his own cock. He would have Adam pick up proper lube later on, but for now, he was looking forward to making his lover feel him as Nigel claimed him.

“We need a condom.” could have been a question or a statement from Adam for all Nigel knew, the younger man was so breathless.

“No, we don’t.” Nigel said, leaning in to lick a wide stripe from Adam’s balls to the tip of his dick to make him arch off the bed.

“But that’s dirty.” Adam gasped weakly as Nigel fanned out his fingers one last time to barely graze his nerves. Adam desperately wanted to touch himself, he was so hard, his dick a solid line against his stomach to leave clear sticky pools there. Nigel kept stopping him though.

“What’s a little dick between friends?” Nigel chuckled, easing his fingers out to wipe them off on the sheets behind him well out of Adam’s view. He didn’t want them to stop because Adam lost his erection to do laundry.

“I don’t have a little dick and neither do you.” Adam stated flatly, making Nigel bark out laughter at the unabashedly voiced lack of modesty. “Will it hurt?

“No, my darling. I will go slow. It will just feel different is all. I will take care of you.” Nigel promised and found to his surprise he acutally meant it as he breached Adam slowly with his
cockhead to watch it disappear in his new lover, causing the man beneath him to gasp. Nigel was about to ask Adam if he was alright when soft lips were placed to his own, an arm coming around his neck so Adam could stay in place against him. The movement forced more of Nigel’s erection into Adam than he would have paced at first, Adam whining into the kiss from it, but refusing to let go or stop.

Easing himself in fully to the hilt, Nigel responded back the best he could, getting lost with Adam’s mouth upon him and his heat around him. The focus, that intense attention, should have been off putting, but was a fount of life for Nigel who placed his lips to it, greedy and thirsty for more. He wanted to drown himself in that focus, lose his way entirely to have Adam guide him back like one of his beloved stars. He wanted Adam to see a nebula within what passed for his soul these dark days, and make himself the moon in his lover’s sky.

The love, the kissing, was new to Nigel who had fucked hundreds of women, but not loved one of them. They had certainly not wanted to kiss him, but hookers rarely did and it was extra anyway. Adam had no such qualms or hesitation, sealing their lips together over and over again, madly, desperately like he expected Nigel to tell him to stop or for him to disappear altogether.

“Lie back.” Nigel panted out. Adam did as he was told to be covered by bodily Nigel, his curly head cradled in a killer’s arms. Nigel kissed Adam slow and leisurely like that, thrusting into him at the same pace he set with his tongue. Like this, he could feel every movement Adam made beneath him as he arched and whined and gasped against him, his heels hooked behind Nigel to dig slightly into his lower back.

“I-I…I feel…hot.” Adam stammered out as Nigel licked his lips, his face slick from their combined spit.

“Do you feel good? Do you feel me?” Nigel breathed out, momentarily cooling Adam’s face.

Yes…” Adam gasped out, one of Nigel’s large hands going under Adam’s ass to lift him into each stroke as his other went to work Adam’s erection in time to the added movements.

“You’re so damn pretty beneath me. I’m making you mine. No one else is allowed to do this with you, to you. Do you understand?” Nigel told Adam fiercely, the man’s eyes going wide in response, trying to read him. Adam could tell Nigel was riled about something but the ‘what’ alluded him. “Ever. Till fucking death do us fucking part, my darling.”

Anyone else would have gotten scared at this point. Nigel knew he was being too intense, but he couldn’t stop himself. Much like violence did, the love brought the crazy out of him. Adam, though…..his perfect Adam just stared calmly back up at him, his face placid as he watched Nigel with what other people would have mistaken for polite interest.

“I adore you, you know. Love that about you, that face.” Nigel spoke his thoughts aloud as he slowed his pace to drive himself slow and deep into Adam who hissed in response. “Are you scared?”

“No, that hurt, and I don’t understand most of what you are saying.” Adam told him plaintively, hoping for guidance. He hadn’t been expecting to talk dirty. He could repeat some lines from the porn he had watched, but he didn’t want to screw up the context by calling Nigel a slut, and Nigel didn’t seem the type who wanted to be spanked.

“Oh the love, Adam…I must admit, it makes me a bit insane. I’m crazy about you, crazy for you. I would kill for you. All you have to do is point.” Nigel swore, mouthing the vow into Adam’s throat to leave bruises there in his wake.
“But that’s bad!” Adam gasped, arching his neck as it was bitten into again, over and over until Nigel was satisfied. He was starting to get overloaded from being jerked back and forth between pain and pleasure. Adam didn’t know how much more he could take or how he would break.

“Depends on who it is.” Nigel smirked swallowing Adam next words of argument down with a kiss.

“Say that you’re mine.” Nigel parted from him to roughly whisper in Adam’s ear. He wasn’t going to last much longer, not with Adam so hot and tight and perfect around him.

“Yours?” Adam answered hesitantly, his mind unsettled but his body committed to finishing what it had started.

“Mine.” Nigel growled low and gutteral, baring down on Adam to make him cry out as his ass was lifted up at the same time. It left Adam reeling, feeling too full, too everything.

“Yours” Adam repeated, desperate and confused and not liking either feeling. He could feel Nigel release within him, a pooling warmth that felt weird along with everthing else that was happening to him. Sex felt good, but it felt bizarre too. It wasn’t like masturbating at all, being far more intense and moist. It was starting to get to him, Adam’s eyes beginning to tear up as he gasped for air he couldn’t seem to keep well enough in his lungs. His gaze dashed about as Adam looked for something to center him, his body too much of a mess of sensations for him to handle.

Through his orgasmic haze, Nigel could tell Adam wasn’t doing well, his breathing too fast and his eyes darting madly about as tears began to stream down his face.

“Ssh, ssh, ssh….look at me, gorgeous. I’m here.” Nigel rasped, freeing his hand out from under Adam to cup the man’s face, making Adam look him in the eye. Nigel noticed immediately that Adam’s breathing began to even out now that he had something to focus on. “I want you to feel good too. I want you to come. Come for me, darling.”

He could feel himself softening, but Nigel could tell Adam was right on the cusp, that he wouldn’t last much longer either. Whatever had frightened him had hindered his pleasure, the man beneath him wide eyed and trembling as he pulled himself back from the brink with eye contact.

Keeping a soft look on his face to help ground Adam, Nigel knew it had been him in some way, hating himself for it. He had wanted to be gentle, to be kind. Neither were in his nature, but he wanted to try and keep trying with Adam. He wanted to kiss this man, soothe him further, without scaring him.

Starting at the corner of Adam’s mouth, Nigel continued to pepper his lover’s face with light kisses, touching his nose, forehead and eyelids with his lips. As he placed adorations to Adam’s skin, Nigel rippled his fingers up Adam’s shaft to the tip to swirl the pad of his calloused thumb against the sensitive head. Pressing up against the leaking slit, Nigel made that his focal point as he squeezed.

Arching his back in a taunt bow, Adam found a sort of balance within himself and came sighing with his eyes closed, striping Nigel’s fingers with a wet splash of white. He wiped that off on the sheets as well, eager to have his hands back in dark locks curling with sweat so that he could grip Adam’s head, keep it in place. They could bathe later, preferably together if he could convince Adam into it.

Right now, Nigel just wanted to bask in the afterglow, something he had never really bothered to do before or wanted to. Usually for him, the afterglow consisted of him passing out after shooting his load into some prostitute who would leave before he lost consciousness.
This wasn’t a casual fuck, some mindless act to fulfill a bodily need. This was the closest thing he had ever come to making love. Nigel was going to laze around in the sensation of it as long as he could, until he remembered that this was Adam first time as well but in a different sense.

“Are you all right, my darling?” Nigel asked softly, Adam’s eyelids already heavy and half lidded.

“I’m tired.” Adam yawned. Nigel still lay on top of him, heavy and very much there, surrounding him. Adam made a face when he felt Nigel’s flaccid cock slip out of him, making his lover laugh into his shoulder.

“Then go to sleep. We can be filthy heathens and clean up in the morning.” Nigel chuckled. He had fallen asleep in poorer states of undress and lewdness in far worse places before. As it was, he would hard-pressed to Adam. Nothing short of a gun to his head would be able to make him leave this bed right now.

“I don’t understand what religion has to do with it.” Adam’s brow couldn’t help but furrow even as his eyes closed fully. Exhaustion was his twilight, the night of mind and body rolling in quickly through his limbs to come and claim him.

“Go the fuck to sleep.” Nigel laughed, the sound of it low and strangely sweet sounding even to him. In answer, Adam flipped over onto his belly the best he could with Nigel’s arms still around him, burrowing his head into the pillow, and was instantly gone. He didn’t even stir when Nigel reached between his thighs to feel the wetness that leaked out of him, the very bad man rubbing his essence into Adam’s skin there.

Sitting up against the headboard with his lover curled into his side, Nigel watched Adam sleep.

OoOoO

TBC

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading. Your comments stay up and smoke with Nigel while your kudos snuggle with Adam.
“When are you going to stop fucking around and get your ass back to Bucharest? It would ease my mind to know you were back where you belong.” Darko snapped, his ire coming in clear and well from across as ocean. Nigel could hear house music playing faintly in the background, Darko more than likely at the club they owned that served as their home base of operations. It had been Nigel’s idea, but the titty bar and club was all Darko’s baby.

Nigel grinned into the phone. He loved making Darko annoyed with him. “Soon, my friend, soon. I’m finishing up here.” Nigel soothed, taking a long drag from his cigarette while he had the chance, not feeling up for a lecture. Adam was taking a shower so his time was short to feed into the addiction as he blew the grey blue smoke out the window. “They tried to gut me like a pig. I am going to have one hell of a scar to show you when I get back.”

“Are you getting slow and fat in your old age, or did you get distracted by some piece of ass?” Darko mused, “Fine. Whatever amuses you. Take your time with them and be the villain they piss themselves talking about so this shit doesn’t happen again. This was supposed to be a lucrative deal, not Disney Mickey Mouse vacation for you.”

“That’s in Florida, you ignorant fuck. Be a better parent and go there. Even I know that.” Nigel said. Darko knew his fearless leader all too well or at least he thought he did, Nigel biting back a grin as he heard his oldest business partner huff into the phone. A lot had happened to Nigel in the last few weeks, far more than what he expected or planned. He needed to figure out how to make Adam fit into his chaotic, dangerous life permanently and keep him protected. Nigel’s line of business wasn’t the safest profession, proof enough of that carved into his side now.

With this in mind, Nigel had not been idle in-between the spaces of his revenge. One did not survive long in his line of work by remaining ignorant or uninformed, a wise business man of his caliber having to keep one ear to the ground and a free hand on the pulse of the city to stay ahead of the police, out of jail, and breathing. Doing a little research, Nigel had been pleased to find out that Romania had a space program, their headquarters most conveniently located in Bucharest. To his surprise, Nigel learned the country he resided in even had a space week. He took it as a sign from Fate herself that this was meant to be.

Borrowing Adam’s laptop, it was a simple matter to send Adam’s resume to Rosa, Romania’s
space agency, the man far too trusting of Nigel in his opinion yet grateful for it. On his end, Darko would have to set little things into motion so that it was guaranteed Adam’s resume would be on the top of the pile. Nigel didn’t understand half of what Adam could do, all of which was neatly summarized in his resume, but Nigel was sure Adam would get hired on his own merits and soon. If not, Nigel was positive he could make others appreciate his point of view, that arms could be twisted and the right palms greased into ensuring that Adam had a job in Romania doing whatever he wanted. Failing all else, a position could suddenly open up after someone caught a serious case of dead.

“Don’t get your balls in a twist. You can take off as soon as I get back and go there to educate yourself. The little one would love it. I’ll run the club while you’re gone.” Nigel promised.

“I close it down before I do that again. We would lose less money. It’s a bar, not your own personal party, you fuckwit. You’re a terrible bartender, always over pouring and giving away shots.” Darko grumbled, which was why he was the ‘face’ of the business and Nigel was the ‘body’.

Of the two of them, Darko was calmer and more pragmatic, having a head for business with all its figures and social intricacies. While the ‘face’ smiled and played mostly within the rules as a distraction and smokescreen, the ‘body’ would do all the terrible things that needed to get done behind the scenes to make their real business flourish. Even in their line of work, not many knew about Nigel or what he looked like or what he was capable of, rumor and speculation working in Nigel’s favor in this as Romania’s Ripper.

The title amused the hell out of him only because Nigel knew it irked someone else to no end, Nigel making it a point to email news clips whenever the media used it. Darko liked to say that the few and far between who did always had a particular look etched into their face whenever they saw him. It was one of the reasons Darko kept several prominent pictures of Nigel in the club’s office. Darko knew to dispatch or keep a close eye on anyone who had that look upon seeing them.

“I want you to do something for me while I’m out sightseeing. I’ll need a new place to live when I get back.” Nigel said, finishing his cigarette as he heard the shower turn off. He knew Adam’s morning routine pretty much by heart, bless that kid for needing a set routine. Nigel had a good idea just how much time he had to himself, taking one last hit off his cigarette before flicking out the window.

“Good. It’s about damn time. Your place is shit hole.” Darko stated bluntly, Nigel nodding in answer. It was the truth after all, and they hadn’t managed to survive being friends and allies this long without some sort of honesty maintained between them.

“I need you to buy me a building, something high and well within our territory. I don’t want to be bothered by some little shithead with more balls than brains looking to make a name for himself, ruining my décor.” Nigel decided, trying to think of what would appeal to Adam. The international change in address would stressful enough as it was. Nigel knew he needed something to hook Adam’s interest to keep him there, figuring that he wouldn’t be in the good section of a ‘pros and cons’ list.

“High? What the fuck does that mean?” Darko sighed, but Nigel could hear his associate already scribbling something down on paper. “And when have you ever had ‘décor’? As far as I know, anything goes with peeling plaster and filthy bedsheets.”

“High, vertically. I want to see the sky, not the squalor.” Nigel explained, ignoring the correct assessment of his latest living situation. He had never been big on keeping up appearances in his places, most of them temporary his entire life. “There is that old church. You know the one I am
talking about. The one in the tourist section by the university and museums.”

“Yes, I know of what you want. So you are going from decadent squalor to spiritual decay? Are you sure that is wise? I don’t think God would appreciate a devil living in his house, even if it is abandoned and falling apart.” Darko mused, “So you met someone even while dying and looking uglier than you already are? I must admit I am intrigued. I will have to meet this person who has impressed upon you enough to move you out of your flat. She must be beauty or fantastic at sucking cock.”

“She is a he, and he is both, though I will be sure to tell your wife where you think her true talents lie.” Nigel said, switching to Romanian when Adam entered the room, freshly shaved and smelling deliciously clean.

“I like my balls where they are. If I lose them, I will take yours in return.” Darko threatened good naturedly, sounding completely unsurprised by this newest development. “When did you give up cunt? Prostitutes everywhere will weep long into the night upon learning that they have lost their best patron. Think of all their bastard children. Who will support them if not you?”

“Just buy the damn church and have it renovated. I want to move in as soon I return. I want the bottom floor garden left as is, the second floor made into the living area, and the top floor open to the sky but made secure. I want the stars to be able to look in, not perverts looking for a free show.” Nigel ignored Darko trying to get a rise out of him. The living arrangements were more important to him than continuing their banter now that Adam was back in his line of sight, wearing nothing but a towel. Nigel caught Adam around his waist as he passed by him to get to the closet, pressing a kiss to still damp hair, grinning as he watched Adam wrinkle his nose at him. Nigel knew he would he hearing about the evil of cigarettes again later on. By now, he could repeat it back verbatim, Adam unfailingly consistent.

Nature had taken over most of the church Nigel had in mind as he listened to Darko bitch about his choice in architecture, location, and the cost of renovating it on such short notice. Where pews had formally been, there was now a thriving garden of ivy and wildflowers in attendance, the pale alter and solemn effigy of a long suffering Christ now covered in bright green flora. Nigel wanted to keep it as was for Adam who had a love for nature, often dragging him to parks. Thankfully Nigel had always been able to go under the cover of night, Adam’s passion for the celestial making it possible for Nigel to leave the apartment. There were still one or two more people on his hit list who needed his considerable attention, Nigel saving the best for last. Till then, he still needed to keep his face off of the streets. One never knew who was looking for it after all.

Adam didn’t know why Nigel was keeping him from getting dressed, but liked the kisses Nigel slipped in between his rapid fire conversation over the phone. It wasn’t like he had to get ready for work, but Adam needed to keep to his weekday routine, even if Nigel was delaying him. He wanted to ask why Nigel was delaying him, obviously busy talking on the phone, but Nigel would keep hushing him by pressing nicotine stained fingers to his lips whenever Adam opened his mouth. Listening to the steady stream of Romanian was interesting though, Adam memorizing the words coming fluidly out of Nigel’s mouth to look up later. He was fascinated that Nigel knew how to speak so many different languages so well, even if most of it was swearing and unique insults.

Sighing, Adam watched as Nigel began to fondle him, trailing tattooed fingers down his chest to his stomach before dipping down to cup his genitals, gently squeezing them and making Adam go up on his toes from the sensation. He hoped that Nigel would wrap up his conversation soon and they would have sex again. That would be an acceptable reason for why Nigel was keeping him from getting dressed. Leaning back against a broad chest, Adam focused on watching Nigel so that he keep those fingers on his penis and not switch to his lips to keep him quiet. Adam didn’t
like how Nigel’s fingers smelled after smoking, all chemically and bitter, or how he tasted afterward either. Trying not to moan, Adam bit his bottom lip as Nigel began to slowing jerk him off with those large hands of his, rough with calluses.

“That is going to be expensive.” Darko warned, making Nigel laugh as he kept Adam easily in place. Money was not an issue for either of them, but Darko was ever the miser hence why he ran the club and not Nigel.

“Like I give a fuck. Just get it done, keeping in mind sooner better than later. Hire someone. Hire a lot of faggot someones to get it done right the first time. I want it ready by the time I get back and I want it beautiful.” Nigel ordered, leaving no room for further excuse or argument. He had no time for either, not when Adam was shuddering from being held in hand, his meat ripening in Nigel’s palm.

Tattooed fingers rippled up a rosy stiff shaft so that Nigel could swipe his thumb over a sticky slit, smearing precum over the mushroom tip of it. Adam was so responsive, it drove Nigel to distraction, wanting to push his lover’s limits. Nigel loved how Adam obviously didn’t know what to do with his hands, his touch fluttering behind him to touch Nigel’s sides lightly before returning his own, unsure if he should help or return the affection as his fingers clenched and unclenched.

“You are terrifying man when you are in love.” Darko grumbled, pausing when he heard a moan escape Adam when Nigel left off his shaft to play with his balls. “Seriously, Nigel? Are you fucking him as we speak? Is that why you switched languages, you cocksucker?”

“No, but I’m about to.” Nigel smirked, ending the conversation to throw the phone over his shoulder so he could keep that promise. Leaving off to shove Adam toward the bed, Nigel was already stripping off his clothing as Adam hit the mattress with a soft sound. By the time, Adam managed to twist onto his back, Nigel was over him. The older man’s body weight bared down on Adam with Nigel’s forearms bracketing his head, a warm mouth pressing into his own to keep Adam in place and pliant.

As much as Adam liked being surrounded like this, grounding him like a weighted blanket, he wanted Nigel to go slower. Sex with Nigel was interesting but it was also overwhelming. He didn’t want Nigel to stop but he also didn’t want to say the wrong thing either and make Nigel quit him. The sudden rush of conflicting emotions was stressing Adam out, scaring him. The mess in his head translated into his body tensing up under Nigel.

“Darling, what is it?” Nigel whispering, noticing instantly when Adam became stiff and awkward beneath him. He pulled back enough to look down at Adam whose eyes were beginning to dart about and his hands shake.

“I-I don’t want you to be angry with me.” Adam stammered, his panic rising as Nigel leaned back further away from him, moving off him completely to a sitting position. That was not what Adam wanted, wishing Nigel to be back over him, his body pressing Adam’s own comfortingly into the mattress.

“Why would I be angry?” Nigel made himself ask in a low, calm tone while keeping his face friendly. If anyone else would have said something like that right now in this kind of moment, there would be violence, usually with that someone deserving Nigel’s anger.

This was Adam though, so that could mean he was upset or assuming Nigel was upset about literally anything. Fucking mind blindness, Nigel quietly cursing an aspect of Adam’s condition not for the first time in his head, hoping that this wasn’t about black matter and why it existed again. “Tell me and then let me decide if I should be.”
“Can you move back on top of me please? It helps me focus.” Adam asked, sighing in relief when Nigel complied.

“Talk to me. Tell me what is going on in that pretty head of yours.” Nigel said as he made himself comfortable again atop Adam. Their hardons were suffered from this distraction but Nigel was confident that he could fix that. He distracted himself by playing with Adam’s hair, wishing that he would grow it out. The way it kinked when Adam left it un-styled made Nigel think that it would curl.

“That is too broad. You’re going to have to narrow that down.” Adam said after a moment of thought, Nigel realizing his mistake belated. Wording was important when dealing with Adam. One had to be direct with the man as well as wanting an honest answer.

“Adam, tell me why I shouldn’t be angry with you and why I had to stop just now.” Nigel said, tugging on the captured locks.

“I need you to slow down. I get overloaded,” Adam stammered. His eyes darted over Nigel’s face, trying and failing to gauge the man’s reaction. Adam found the courage to continue, not recognizing any anger in it. “B-but I don’t want you to stop having sex with me.”

“You don’t ever have to worry about that, my darling.” Nigel smirked, leaving off visions of curls to frame Adam’s face with his palms. He loved the contrast of their skin, Adam looking as pale and fragile as porcelain comparatively next to his rugged, inked own. “Patience is not one of my stronger suits but I will try for you. You are so beautiful I can’t help myself. You drive me insane.”

“I don’t understand. How do I do that?” Adam asked, flinching when Nigel flicked out his tongue to lick the tip of Adam’s nose. He wished he knew why Nigel was smiling as he wiped the moisture off from it, but Adam knew he was still learning about ins and outs of foreplay. Maybe this was part of it.

“Never mind. I want you to get on your hand and knees.” Nigel grinned. “I want to try something new with you. Are you fine with that, my lovely?”

“Yes. I can do that. Just remember to go slow and allow me time to adjust.” Adam said, moving into position without hesitation. His enthusiasm and obedience made Nigel shiver in delight. Having a lover incapable of feeling shame in these kind of situations was arousing in its own right, Nigel palming his own renewed interest as he sat back against the headboard to watch. He only left off long enough to retrieve the lube, placing it within Adam’s reach.

“Lube up your hand and start fingering yourself open for me.” Nigel ordered, knowing that Adam would have no qualms about doing so. Watching Adam obey without question went straight to his dick, Nigel hissing through a throb of pure want as Adam started to give him a show, whether he meant to or not. Shiny fingers slick with lube prodded curiously between his butt cheeks before one finger slipped in his hole, Adam not shy in the slightest about what he was doing in front of Nigel.

“Talk dirty to me.” Nigel breathed out, sucking at his bottom lip in a vain attempt to distract himself. He needed to take this slow, not fuck Adam into the mattress again.

“About what?” Adam asked, more focused on the sensation of fingering himself than actually wanting to talk.

“Go for broke.” Nigel said before he could catch himself.
“Why would I do that? What does money have to do with foreplay?” Adam’s brow furrowed in thought as he added another finger, feeling comfortable enough to do so now that he had fanned and twisted his fingers around a few times. He had seen enough anal play out in some of his pornos to get the general idea, though he preferred Nigel’s fingers doing it. His fingers were longer than his own.

“Describe what you are doing. Make it sexy.” Nigel bit back a laugh, knowing Adam wouldn’t get the plethora of jokes that sprang to mind about negotiating with prostitutes. Nigel liked the idea that he knew sex with Adam was never going to be boring.

“Oh. Um, I am fingering myself.” Adam explained, his tone more suited for reading the back of a cereal box than intimacy.

“I can see that.” Nigel grumbled, chiding himself. Really, what had he been expected? “Good start but keep going.”

“I’m sliding more fingers into myself.” Adam said, wondering why Nigel needed the play by play when Adam was doing those actions right in front of him. Fingering himself was more difficult than he thought it was going to be, his balance a little wobbly as Adam tried to reach behind himself, first between his legs and then over his back. He settled on the later reach.

“Yeah? How does that make you feel?” Nigel urged, leaning forward to curl his fingers into the sheets to keep from taking over.

“I am comfortable doing so because I use an enema and wet wipes now on a regular basis as part of my morning routine since we have been having sex on a regular basis. Fecal matter…” Adam dead panned, more involved with finding his prostate and a comfortable position to do so than the art of dirty talk.

“I think we can work on this another day.” Nigel interrupted before Adam went into further detail. At least until he noticed that Adam was smiling mischievously, looking way too pleased with himself about something. Nigel knew Adam well enough now to know why and when he broke out that rare yet goofy expression.

“Was that a joke, you little shit?” Nigel huffed, laughing despite himself. Adam’s mistiming was amazing, but luckily for them both, Nigel was odd enough himself to appreciate it.

“I can joke. I can do that, and I’m hardly a little shit. I used an enema to flush out…” Adam said, wondering if he should try for four fingers. Nigel hadn’t told him to stop and his penis was quite large. Adam didn’t like how the lube felt, but he did like massaging his prostate.

“I heard you the first time. No more talk about that.” Nigel wondered how he had gotten to this point, stroking himself off to some guy talking about enemas and shit while he fingered himself open in a practically casual manner, like it was his job.

“This feels weird.” Adam volunteered, adding a fourth finger and panting as he did so, noting the tight stretch and burn of the intrusion.

“Does it now?” Nigel grinned, visions of butt plugs dancing in his head. He could get into that. In all fairness, the whole ass play thing was new to him too, not one to mix up pink eye for brown eye. He wondered if he could convince Adam to keep a plug in after he shot a load or several into him. Something about that thought appealed dangerously to Nigel, precum leaking freely from his dick at the idea of Adam keeping his spunk in him. Of popping the plug out just long enough to bend Adam over the kitchen counter or the sofa, Nigel fucking into him fast and hard, filling him up more and more a little at time to pop the plug back in before anything has a chance to spill out.
“Do you want me to keep talking?” Adam asked, breaking that line of thought. Nigel had to squeeze the base of his cock to keep from coming.

“No, darling. I’m dirty enough for the both of us.” Nigel grinned, amazing at how turned on he was, how Adam did this to him. “You have given me an idea though. Take your fingers out and hold still. And yes, we will wash the sheets and clean ourselves as soon as we are done.”

Questions answered before he had a chance to ask, Adam didn’t have long to wonder what Nigel had in mind, the man’s tongue replacing his fingers soon enough. The sensation made Adam’s arms buckle, making him lean down so he could arch his back into it as Nigel vigorously ate Adam’s ass out, his strong fingers pulling pale cheeks apart for better access. It was too much, the sensations of his hole being pushed open and probed by Nigel’s tongue making Adam come. He found his hips were held in place by a strong grip as he cried out, the sound only getting louder when Nigel left off laving his hole mid-orgasm to lap at the back of his tightening balls, flicking them with his tongue. Made useless and drained from the intensity of it all, Adam was allowed to fall forward into the warm pool of his cum as he shuddered to completion.

Getting lost in the sensation, Adam startled when his ass was slapped, turning over to find Nigel settling himself on his back against the headboard. “Don’t fall asleep, you greedy thing. You’re not done yet.” Nigel grinned, slapping his palms against the tops of his thighs, his cock aching from neglect. The lube that still coated his mouth tasted awful but it was worth it to see Adam looking so fucking debauched and exhausted. Nigel wasn’t about to let him take a nap now though, not when his cock felt hard enough to drill through steel and keep going.

“What do you want me to do? Finger myself again?” Adam asked, unsure of how to proceed and wondering vaguely if Nigel wanted oral sex with his mouth. He had never given anyone a blowjob before, the actual act of everything still very new to him. He also felt conflicted about kissing Nigel again before the man had a chance to brush his teeth. “You should go clean out your mouth.”

“A little shit never killed anyone. I’m living proof enough of that. You eat enough street food in Bucharest, you’re bound to run into some. Anyway, I was told you used an enema.” Nigel said, wiping his mouth clean with the back of his hand with a shrug and a grin.

“I thought we weren’t allowed to talk about that.” Adam pointed out as he was pounced on, Nigel losing his patience as he caught the other man easily.

“Shut up and get your ass over here.” Nigel said, reaching over to pull Adam on top off him. “Ride me.”

“Oh. Okay.” Adam said as he positioned himself over and above with Nigel’s cock beneath him, placing the tip of it to his hole before sinking down. Adam braced his hands on Nigel’s chest so he could do so slowly, the lube and his prepwork making it easier than previous times before. It was far more comfortable now, Adam was pleased to note. Still foreign and strange feeling but way more pleasant than it had been in the past, pain usually in the mix with his pleasure.

Keeping his hands lightly placed on Adam’s hip, Nigel let him work out the rise and fall, the pair establishing a slow rhythm. What an image they must make, Nigel thought, panting as he was sweetly tortured by keeping his promise. Adam looked like he was zoning out by watching paint dry as he rose and fell on the cock embedded deep within him, and here Nigel was, doing everything he could to keep from coming the instant his cock was enveloped. It was like he was a preteen again found out for the first time his dick was meant for so much more than just pissing.

It all ended too quickly and not quickly enough for Nigel, the man tightening his grip on Adam’s
hips to keep him in place as he fucked up in short, abrupt thrusts. As Adam yelped in surprise, his hands flying to Nigel’s shoulders to maintain his balance. Nigel hissed out his pleasure, it feeling like his balls were emptying out into his lover. Leaning up to mouth obscenities into Adam’s slighter chest, Nigel moved those hips in hand in time through the last few aftershocks of his orgasm.

“Look at what you do to me, Adam. Oh the love, the love…” Nigel breathed out, his hands leaving off to trail up Adam’s back as he rocked them, slow and gentle. He looked up, resting his chin on chest to feel Adam’s heart beat a rapid tempo through his jaw. Wide blue eyes stared down as hands left shoulders to cup Nigel’s face, Adam more interested in studying the chin digging into him than making amorous eye contact.

“Your stumble is scratchy.” Were the soft word of the afterglow, the words like doctrine from a small god’s lips to a heathen’s ears. Nigel smothered a laugh in Adam’s belly, ignoring the cum beginning to solidify there. They were both a hot mess now and in desperate need of a bath, Adam’s movements making the flaccid cock slip out of his slick opening while gravity did its job in Nigel’s lap.

“Is it now? What’s to be done about that?” Nigel said, not expecting any ‘I love you’s. That never seemed to be his lot in life. He’d reasoned out a long time ago that was the price he paid for what he did. Nigel thought talk was cheap anyway, actions being a more preferable form of discourse for him. Studying Adam’s beautiful yet vacant face, Nigel wondered if the man in his arms could even put the idea of love to words or if it was as foreign a concept to him as any other emotion.

Nuzzling Adam’s stomach when it became obvious Adam was more intent on playing with Nigel’s silvering hair to study the glitter of it in the light than whisper sweet nothings back, the bad man found that he didn’t care, happy to sit here holding on and be held. Nigel took comfort in the play of actions between them, Adam’s soft touches like a rush of drugs feeding into the veins of Nigel’s growing obsession. Fuck love. Love was too weak a word anyway. He didn’t need it, wanting only Adam, only this.

When Adam left off his hair to lean down and press a kiss to Nigel’s forehead, it felt like a benediction to the devil, cleansing in all the ways it shouldn’t. Nigel accepted it and all the ones had followed, mouthing a vow into those soft lips that met his own, something dark and twisted about how Darko had better have that fucking church inhabitable or some unlucky someone would be subjected to the type of discourse Nigel preferred.

All to familiar with the devil's cut and the angel's share, Nigel knew it could all turn to blood in the blink of an eye.

TBC

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading. Your kudos grumble as they tally up the renovation's cost and try to ignore the headache caused by the obnoxious house music. Your comments spin their new playlist at the club and take Romanian Viagra.
I Cut A Star Down With My Knife

Chapter Summary

Adam gets an interview, Nigel is an asshole, and things go awry.

Chapter Notes

The story's title is from the song 'Someone Else's Life' by Joshua Radin from the Adam soundtrack. I actually don't care for the song itself, but the lyrics are spot on.

Just a friendly reminder that Nigel is not a good person. He's never presented as a good person in the movie he's originally from, and as much as I like redemption stories about him with Adam, this isn't one of them. Strap in and hold on to your butts.

“I got an interview.”

Nigel looked up from his coffee, smiling at Adam despite feeling like shit. He was not a morning person or even human until he had his coffee, even if American’s version of the stuff was like dirty dish water comparatively to what he normally drank in Romania.

“Of course you did.” Nigel said, pleased that his plan with Rosa had worked out so well. The Romanian space agency must have snapped up the resume he had sent. “Where at?”

“With Halloran Industries, research and engineering for space communication and exploration.” Adam sighed, already pensive. The job was exactly what he needed, but getting it was another matter entirely. It didn’t matter if it was a perfect fit or not if he was unable to convince the people in charge to give him a chance.

Cursing in his head, Nigel made a mental note to light a fire under Darko’s ass about securing Adam a job by any means possible. Darko hadn’t been kidding when he stated that Nigel was not a patient man. There was only three names left out of ten on his hit list, and the New York criminal culture was reeling from the path of destruction that Nigel was single handedly carving out, leaving a high body count and no witnesses behind him. Once those three names were scratched off, Nigel wanted to leave the country as soon as possible, his people moving in to fill the void he had created and secure their place here. Leaving Adam behind was not an option anymore, but Nigel was hoping to make it as painless as possible for him.

“I also got a job offer from Rosa in Romania to work on the satellite data chips for their space program.” Adam said, his brow furrowing, “Which is odd because I didn’t send my resume or a letter of inquiry to them.”

“Smart guy like you, people talk. Things like this happen.” Nigel shrugged with a roll of his shoulders, the tension leaving them. He was relieved his plan was back on track and he didn’t have to waste time killing anyone else. “Which one are you going for?”
“No, it’s just an interview. I haven’t gotten anything yet.” Adam told his bran flakes. He liked to eat them in a certain amount of time or else they got too soggy. This conversation was throwing off the milk to bran flake saturation but the job situation was weighing heavily on his mind. Adam ate his cereal faster in an attempt to catch up.

“Would you be good at these jobs?” Nigel asked. He still didn’t know all the ins and outs of what Adam could do but it all looked pretty damn impressive. Nigel had flipped through Adam’s notebooks on more than one occasion to find the pages neatly filled from top to bottom with math equations and sketches of satellites and what looked like computer parts. “Of course you would be. All you gotta do is let them know, gorgeous.”

“That’s all?” Adam said, leaving off his cereal. He had lost his appetite, and he was stressed out enough that not finishing his breakfast wouldn’t matter. “That’s impossible.”

“When is it?” Nigel asked, needing to how long he had to wrap up his business in New York.

“February 3. Seventeen days from now for Halloran.” Adam said much to Nigel’s relief. That was more than enough time. “Rosa I can set up anytime over Skype, taking into account the time difference.”

“So what is bothering you? Go take what is yours.” Nigel shrugged, giving advice on something he knew very little about. Truth be told, he had never worked an actual run-of-the-mill job a day in his life. Tending bar at their club didn’t count according to Darko, who always looked murderous when Nigel sometimes showed up in a strange mood and insisted on helping out.

“They’ll think I’m a freak. The last time I had an interview, I had my father with me and he explained everything about me to them.” Adam explained, glancing hopefully over at Nigel. To his dismay, the man laughed and shook his head.

“Adam, my darling, as much as I would love to go along and sing your praises, I can’t. You definitely won’t get hired if I accompany you.” Nigel sighed with a tired smile, well aware of what he looked like and how he presented to ‘normal’ people, the living epitome of a bad man. Nigel knew he could be entertaining, as well as a delightful conversationalist, and even come off as roguishly charming, but once one got all past that, he wasn’t meant to be likable. “Just wing it.”

“Wing it?” Adam said, getting up out of his seat to start pacing. Improvising was not a gift of many he possessed.

“Yes. Fake it until you make it. You don’t need me or anyone else to sell you. Just tell them that you can do it. Like I said, you’re a smart guy. People like me cater to smart guys like you.” Nigel told Adam who looked back at him doubtfully, his hand fidgeting at his sides.

“But they’ll think I’m weird.” Adam fretted.

“So what? You are weird. “Nigel grinned. “But I’m weird too. Everyone is weird. It’s okay to be weird. You have got to learn how to dress it up as normal. That’s what little white lies are for.”

“I don’t lie. I won’t. Lying is bad.” Adam said softly, rubbing his arms with his hands as words made him feel uncomfortable.

“Truth is relative and whatever you make of it.” Nigel snorted, making light of it until he saw Adam withdrawing mentally and physically from him. “Fine, no lying. You’ll just have to charm them with your pretty face.”

“That’s never worked before.” Adam frowned, wondering where Nigel was going with this. It
didn’t sound very practical. He let Nigel pull him into his lap though, the older man pressing soft
kisses to his cheeks, chin, and then mouth. Adam changed position so he could more comfortable
sit on Nigel, his legs bracketing the older man and the chair so that the two could face each other.
Nigel seemed pleased by it, his hands dipping down to squeeze Adam’s ass as he grumbled
foreign words into his neck.

“So you have an interview with this Halloran, but what about Rosa? You should set up an
interview with them as soon as possible.” Nigel asked, gently steering Adam where he needed
him to go in more ways than one. Adam was more interesting in kissing now though than
responding, his hands still tentative but much braver now as they explored Nigel’s angular face,
his sharp cheekbones and curvature of his brow.

“I do, but I have to set it up with them through Skype.” Adam said, bothering by the whole thing.
Despite Nigel’s reasoning in the matter, it just didn’t make sense. If that were true, Adam reasoned
he would be getting job offers from space programs all over the world, not just Romania.

“Wouldn’t that be so much better for you? All you would have to do is stare at the camera and
remember to smile.” Nigel practically purred out the idea as light fingertips traced his thin lips.

“Yes, it would be, but I don’t speak Romanian.” Adam said sighed as large callused hands left off
his ass to trail up his back under his shirt, kneading his angel bones of his shoulders blades and the
ladder of his vertebrae.

“Luckily for you, I do. I could actually sit in on the interview with you, though out of sight from
the camera. We’ll get you a nice suit because clothes make the man, and practice some bullshit
small talk to float you through the lighter parts of conversation.” Nigel said, sweetening the deal.
“How does that sound to you, gorgeous?”

“I can do that.” Adam smiled fragiley, feeling too much and thinking not enough. Nigel smiled
back for so many worse reasons, watching Adam start to lose himself to his touch and attention.
“But what happens if I get the job? I don’t want to move to Romania.”

“Arrange the interview, Adam, and you’ll have all the help you need. You never know. You just
might end up changing your mind. Variety is the spice of life after all.”

Plush lips were placed to his own, Adam tasting sweet and clean from breakfast, far too pure for
the likes of him, but that had never stopped Nigel before

OoOoO

Nigel had been gone too long. Rubbing his palms nervously together, Adam paced from his
bedroom to the living room to avoid staring at the clock any longer. Adam knew exactly almost
down to the minute how long it took him to get groceries but Nigel had offered to go for him
instead this time, promising to get all the right brands. That was over three almost going on four
hours ago. An hour would have be acceptable, two hours unprecedented, but three going to four
hours boggled Adam’s mind.

Scenarios spun through Adam’s complex thinking patterns, trying to rationalize the length of
Nigel’s absence. He couldn’t have gotten lost, Adam giving Nigel a very detailed map of the area
pulled from satellite images as well as written instructions. He couldn’t even call Nigel to check in
on him, the man’s cellphone sitting on the table, left behind which was unusual because Nigel
liked to keep it on him at all times or well within arm’s reach.

Even now it sprang to life, the vibrations against the table’s wood making Adam’s head hurt. It
was Nigel’s phone but Adam had never been told not to answer it. That and Nigel might have
realized he left his phone and could be trying to call him, Adam reasoned out as he reached for it.

“Nigel, where are you?” Adam answered the phone. There was a pause on the other end, much to Adam’s distress.

“It’s nice to know I’m not the only one who asks that fucking question.” Said a strange man, his accent similar to Nigel’s but heavier, his English obviously not as good and spoken much slower. “Would it be safe to assume I am speaking to Adam?”

“Y-yes, it would be safe to assume that.” Adam stammered.

“I see Nigel is being as useless and absent as ever. I will need you to relay to message to him for me. Can you do that?” said the mysterious man.

“Yes, I can.” Adam said, grateful that this conversation was happening over the phone. He did so much better when he didn’t have to try and read facial expressions. The only thing he really flubbed with phone calls was knowing when to say goodbye and hang up, the other person having to end the conversation for him. Nigel was working on that with him though in preparation for his Skype interview.

“Tell him that Darko says he can move in whenever he is ready to return to Bucharest. The renovations are done.” Darko said, pleased with what he had managed to accomplish in so short a time period.

“R-renovations? Move in? What do you mean?” Adam barely got the words out, his throat tightening too quickly and painfully to form anymore.

“He hasn’t told you?” Darko mused, really hoping he hadn’t ruined a surprise, but that would be just like Nigel to not share important information in a timely manner. “What do you know?”

“I know Nigel was supposed to be back by now with the groceries but it’s been almost four hours.” Adam said thinly, confused as his mind started to make connections and piece things together.

“I think you and Nigel need to have a very long talk, but please leave my name out of it as much as possible. I would love to sit here and explain it all to you, but I get bored so fast and I have things to do.” Darko said ending the phone call, hoping the next one would be from Nigel in a good mood. He doubted it though. Cursing Nigel, Darko was grateful for once that the violent man was an ocean away.

OoOoO

All things considered, it had gone rather well. Nigel’s errand had taken longer than he would have liked, but now the two Russians were dead, leaving only the Italian left. Nigel always liked to save the best for last. Groceries in hand, Nigel let himself into the apartment to find Adam standing in the middle of the living room with Nigel’s cell phone in hand and his laptop powered up on the table. Not pleased by this, Nigel shrugged worry away for now. Anyone who called him would be speaking Romanian or some other language.

The expression on Adam’s face was something Nigel had never seen before though. It was like a different shade of beige in blank vagueness, but something intense was underlying there. Nigel couldn’t quite put his finger on it.

“Adam, what’s wrong?” Nigel asked watching as Adam’s gaze flicked between the laptop’s monitor and the phone in hand in rapid succession. Drawing closer, Nigel could see that Google translate was up on the screen as well as part of his conversation to Darko, the one he’d had in
front of Adam a while back. As always, the translation was a mess but one line of dialogue had been perfectly translated.

…I want it ready by the time I get back…

“I see it was a mistake to leave my phone out and to underestimate you. You are ever the total package, brains and beauty, my darling Adam.” Nigel sighed, setting the groceries down in a chair by the table.

“Darko called and said you could move in whenever you return to Bucharest. That the renovations were done. You’re going back to Romania.” Adam said flatly, his mind still trying to make sense of it all. It was too much information to process all at once. He was feeling dangerous overwhelmed and trapped by that feeling.

“Yes I am, but I am taking you with me.” Nigel said quietly. He could tell that it didn’t matter what he said at this point. Adam was too far gone.

“The interview at Rosa was you. You sent my resume to them.” Adam said, his words usually sharp. There was heat growing there, temperatures rising through his tone.

“I did.”

“You lied.” Said the calm before the storm.

“A little. The ends justified the means.” Nigel said, his heart breaking. Adam was beautiful even in his anger, and Nigel was a dangerous man in love.

There was a moment of perfect stillness from Adam before it shattered, the reaction even surprising a man like Nigel as Adam threw the phone to implode upon impact with the hardwood, and started to make a mess out of the apartment.

“Ha-ha-ha! Fooled you! Dumb Adam! Dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb,” Adam chanted in his anger, crippling embarrassment making everything in his head hurt all sharp and jagged from too many thoughts. Rage made him blind, his hands seeking out whatever to throw to keep those feelings away from him. Nigel was just like everyone else, and all his words and promises meant nothing. He was leaving and eventually one way or another, everyone left Adam. First his mom, then his dad, then his job, and now Nigel. Throwing his back against a wall and at a complete loss, Adam’s palms started to hit his temples in time to his words. “Dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb Adam.”

Adam’s hands were caught though, Nigel making the slighter man cross his arms over his chest before pulling him close in a tight embrace. “I need you to calm down, darling. You are not allowed to harm yourself.” Nigel said softly to the man struggling in the cage of his arms. He had read about these sort of outbursts in the books, and how to respond to them.

“No, I hate you.” Adam yelled, the sound of it muffled into Nigel’s chest. Nigel knew the words were being said in anger, but they hurt more than they should have. He’d rather Adam just punch him or something and get it over with, but he couldn’t risk letting Adam go.

“I know you do. It was inevitable.” Nigel sighed, pressing a kiss to the top of Adam’s head while the man raged against him. Adam couldn’t hurt him like this, perfectly contained by a man who lived and breathed violence, made durable from it.

“I hate you! I hate you! You’re a liar!” Adam sobbed, struggling less and less the more he grew tired. “I’m not going to Romania with you! I’m staying here!”
Adam continued to fight him like a moth caught in a spider web until all he could do was sob into Nigel’s shirt who finally let Adam go, the younger man going limp in his arms. He guided Adam to the ground so that he could sit there, hiding his face behind shaking palms.

“It occurs to me that you might not be in the best state of mind to discuss this. I have some things to finish up here though before we depart. Let’s say I give you ‘til the day after tomorrow to pack, say 48 hours from now, but that’s the best I can do. Agreed?” Nigel said, wanting to wipe away the tears that stained that beautiful face be loved so much even if Adam’s eyes were as hard and unyielding as sapphires at the moment. Anger brought out all the blue in them.

“Liar.” Adam whispered back, crossing his arms back over his chest to start rocking. He looked tapped out though, so Nigel wasn’t too worried about him starting to himself again or find another mirror.

Reaching over to hold Adam still long enough to do so, Nigel pressed a kiss to a heated forehead in farewell, leaving with one goal in mind. To finish what he started, only one name left on his list. After that, his only concern would be Adam.

OoOoO

Nigel didn’t return that night and for the first time in months, Adam went to bed by himself. He didn’t get to sleep though, turning Nigel’s words, all of them, over and over in his mind. The whole situation was terrifying and confusing. It was made even worse without Nigel there to clarify.

Upon learning that he had Asberger’s, the most frequent question that Adam would get from strangers was ‘what was it like?’. Adam was never quite sure how to answer that question because it wasn’t like anything. The closest comparative he had ever read in reference to Asberger’s was that it was like constantly entering a room mid-conversation. The conversation spoken in a language you only partially understood with everyone in the room expecting you to make sense of it and be part of the exchange. Adam could appreciate the metaphor now, understanding it better now because for a time, Nigel had been his translator and guide for any room he chose to enter, helping him follow the conversation. Now that Nigel was gone, the prospect of entering the rooms alone was frightening. Life without Nigel was frightening.

Adam had put the Nigel’s phone back together and repaired it, but it remained silent. A thorough search of the apartment had turned up nothing but a scrap of paper with an address scrawled out in Nigel’s handwriting. Googling the address had produced a bar in the Bronxs named Rizzo’s. Adam fell asleep staring at it, wondering what he should do.

OoOoO

“Now, I read that planets are lined up across the sky...” Harlan said, glancing over at Adam who had plopped himself down to lean against the windowsill. He hadn’t said a word since he’d show up out of the blue. Since he was here, Harlan thought it was a good time to look over the papers Mr. Wardlow needed signed by Adam. He hadn’t said a word since he’d show up out of the blue. Since he was here, Harlan thought it was a good time to look over the papers Mr. Wardlow needed signed by Adam. It passed the time and filled the silence, but it was starting to get on Harlan’s last nerve. “Like they haven’t been in 30,000 years.”

“Uh-huh.” Adam responded, unenthused. That set off an alarm in Harlan’s head. When Adam wasn’t going a mile a minute about space when given an opening like that, something was definitely wrong.

“You didn’t get the job you were going for?” Harlan asked, fishing for answers.

“No.” Adam said, referring to Halloran. Having nothing else better to do, he had skyped Rosa and done his interview in a vain attempt to stop thinking about Nigel. It had been less complicated than
he had feared, the scientists there in Romania ecstatic to have Adam come work with them. They
told him his resume turning up when it did was like a miracle.Apparently, Nigel had accidently
sent some of his notes about the Viking program along with his resume, and now Rosa wanted to
make him a lead on their interstellar satellite navigation program. It hadn’t translated well but from
what Adam understood, they wanted him so bad for the project they didn’t care if he had
Asperger’s, four arms, or wore a duck on his head for fun. His work spoke volumes, the language
of math universal.

“That why you so down?” Harlan offered, trying to make sense of Adam’s weirder than usual
mood. “Hell, I’ve lost more jobs than…”

“No.” Adam interrupted, shaking his head. “I think Nigel and I broke up? He’s going back to
Romania”

“Oh.” Harlan said, mouthing a silent ‘thank you’ to a higher power before mentally catching up.
“Wait, what? How are you not sure?”

“I don’t know. It’s confusing. He lied. He lied, and I found out about it. I can't trust him
anymore.” Adam said, staring down at his hands. A lot of what Nigel had said didn’t make sense
anymore now that he was a liar.

“Ah. These all seem fine.” Harlan said, handing Adam back the legal documents he had brought
along to look over. “I’m probably going to regret asking this, but what did Nigel lie about? Did he
lie about going back to Romania?”

“No. He sent my resume to Rosa. It’s Romania’s space program. I got a job with them earlier
today if I want it.”

“So let me get this straight, the guy helped you get a job dealing with space and all that stuff you
won’t shut up about?” Harlan acted, feeling a little stunned. He knew Adam was smart but had
never thought to steer him toward something like that. Nigel had though, which said something
about him.

“Yes. Darko said all the renovations were done” Adam said, not making a whole lot of sense to
his company who let it go to press on.

“I probably going to regret saying this, but it sounds like he really wants you to come with him to
Romania.” Harlan sighed, not really wanting to defend Nigel of all people. He had done a hell of
a lot more good for Adam than most people though, “Seems to me that the guy has gone through a
whole lot of effort and trouble to make a place for you there. Not only that, but make sure you’re
happy there too.”

“I don’t want to lose my home.” Adam pouted, still stuck on the idea. Overthinking it was making him tired and
feeling foolish though.

“Before I went into the service…” Harlan sighed, not wanting to tell this story. “I met a girl who
made me a promise. When I came back, she was right there waiting for me, but I found out she
hadn’t quite kept her promise…So I put some things in a bag and I left. Never spoke to her again.
“Though sometimes the wanting to was…was like a live animal, clawing at my chest from the inside.” Harlan. “Thirty-five years. She’s the only picture in my head that can still stop me in broad daylight…and make me curse myself for a stubborn old fool.”

“It’s not rocket science.” Harlan said when it was obvious Adam wasn’t getting what he needed from that private piece of personal history. “I’m saying you need to talk to Nigel one more time, that’s all.”

“No.” Adam said, but then relented. “I don’t know.”

“Liars is all you’re gonna run across in this world.” Harlan sighed, “A man has got to learn the difference between just plain liars and liars worth lovin.”

“Harlan? If you called that girl couldn’t you stop cursing yourself for a stubborn old fool even if you still had to be old?” Adam asked, Harlan resisting the urge to smack his oldest friend’s son upside his damn head.

Whether he meant to or not, Harlan thought old Raki’s kid was a hell of a lot smarter than he let on, Adam asking for the other paperwork the lawyer had left with Harlan before leaving. The ones that went into detail about placing the apartment on the market.

Long after Adam left, Harlan stared long and hard at his front door, wondering what was to become of Adam and who in the hell Nigel really was, and what kind of man was he. Harlan still couldn’t get a last name from either of them, Adam not knowing and Nigel flat out refusing to tell him. Nigel claimed he never used it for ‘reasons’, whatever the hell that meant.

Sighing, Harlan shook himself, taking his own advice and Adam’s question to heart as he began to look through address books and shift through letters.

“Follow through, young man. Follow through.”

TBC

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading. Your kudos eat all the bran flakes. Your comments drink coffee and watch the spacedogs screw, cause it’s what’s for breakfast.
I Have Loved The Stars Too Fondly To Be Fearful Of The Night

Chapter Summary

Adam finds Nigel. The boys have a long talk. Someone dies.

CALM YOUR TITS. It's Fat Tony who dies. NO MAJOR CHARACTER DEATH

Chapter Notes

The story's title is from a poem by Sarah Williams, It's called 'The Old Astronomer'. How fitting is that for Adam in love with Nigel?

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Earlier, the news had warned that there would be six inches of snow by Sunday morning before the storm moved it way through the state of New York. It was a major storm.

That was what Adam recalled as he trudged through the mounting snow, finding it hard to move in his cumbersome jacket, a couple pairs of pants, and multiple layers of everything else. He couldn’t drive, didn’t have a license for it and no one have ever bothered to teach him since he had such an aversion to it. The subways were too confining and noisy and full of strangers. The same went for the busses. In desperation, Adam had worked up the courage to call a taxi company, but only drivers willing to brave the snow storm were few and far between, and they couldn’t give Adam a definite time for pickup. He was already starting to panic by the time he got off the phone with them.

Due to his lack of options and a burning need to talk to Nigel, Adam dug out his father’s old coat, the one he had worn for the worst winter days when he still worked for Juilliard and had to commute. Googling the address Nigel as left behind, Adam followed the walking directions like he had found religion in them and began the long hike from the nicer parts of Manhattan to the Bronxs.

OoOoO

Rizzo’s turned out to be a hole-in-the-wall Italian restaurant and bar, sublevel and practically hidden from the street in what Harlan would have called a ‘dicey neighborhood’. One of the few good things about the storm was no one else seemed to be out and about in the freezing weather to bother or detour Adam, something he was grateful for.

Adam didn’t like this place or being here, his toes and fingers beginning to hurt from the bitter cold despite all his careful layering. The building that loomed in front of Adam was dirty and falling apart, its windows like poorly cared for black eyes glaring down at him. Wondering why Nigel would want to come to this sort of place, Adam crept to the front door, trying the handle to find it locked. The window shades were drawn, but Adam could see some light and movement from somewhere deep inside the restaurant, meaning someone was there. That someone might know where Nigel was.
Walking to the back of the building, Adam found another door, its lock broken and the handle of it hanging at a funny angle. Pushing the door open caused several empty bottles of wine to fall over and shatter, the sound echoing off the empty kitchen’s stained walls. Adam looked down at the mess in dismay, wondered why someone would put glass so close to a door and if he would have to pay for breaking the bottles. He would have to take off his coats to clean it up, unable to really move well or even bend at the waist.

Any thoughts of cleaning were wiped clear from Adam’s head, someone bodily picking him up by his front to slam his back up against the wall, knocking the air from his lungs. Something hard and metallic was shoved under his chin, Adam focusing on the feel and smell of that unique sensation to realize it was a gun, and it was being held by Nigel.

“N-n-n…” was all Adam could manage out, but it was enough, Adam dropped as suddenly as he was lifted, falling as his backside. He was glad he hadn’t had the time to take off his dual pair of gloves, Adam landing at Nigel’s feet near all the broken glass.

The jacket’s hood was ripped back from Adam’s head, the man looking up in response to it, wide eyed and rendered speechless. Nigel stood over him, wearing gloves and clothing Adam had never seen before, all of it covered in random spays of blood.

“Darling, what are you doing here?” Nigel crouched down to confirm once again that it was Adam, his precious Adam, here and now in this shithole. For the first time in what felt like forever, Nigel felt sick to his stomach, realizing what he had almost done. It was by pure whim that he had wanted to see face to face who had been stupid or unlucky enough to interrupt him during this crucial moment. He hadn’t shot that someone in the back of their head solely because Nigel had wanted to make that someone else into another example of why it was a really bad idea to piss him off.

Fat Tony, the dipshit mobster who had gutted Nigel and caused all this death, was gagged and duct taped spread eagle to one of his own unclean tables. Time was of the essence, and the only reason Nigel had that much was because of the storm. The mob boss would keep for now, but Adam being here was another matter entirely. Putting away the gun, Nigel stripped off the latex gloves so he could use clean hands to stroke Adam’s pale face, in an attempt to calm him down. It broke his heart when Adam flinched from him, his body noticeably shaking even under all the crap he was wearing.

“Adam, I need you to look at me.” Nigel said softly, pulling hands clad in too many pairs of mittens away from the scared man’s face.

“W-w-hy…” was as far as Adam got before his voice got trapped in his throat again. Nigel had been scary before with his eyes all hard and fathomless, but now they were all soft again. The bloody gloves were gone now too, Nigel’s warm callused fingertips stroking his face in gentle passes.

“I didn’t know it was you. This place is very dangerous. The door was broken so I stacked the bottles by it to warn me if anyone came in. You of all people are not supposed to be here. Why would I think it was you coming through that door and not someone else?” Nigel trying and failing to keep his voice and face calm for Adam. If Adam had died, if he had shot Adam…Nigel thanked whatever angel was watching over Adam and whatever devil wanted his soul that badly to be owed this favor. No one would have survived this night if Adam had died by his hand.

Gathering Adam in his arms though it was like holding a warm marshmallow, Nigel held what he had almost lost close to him, his chest feeling like it was tearing itself apart as he gulped for air. He couldn’t afford to lose it right now. This was not a safe place for people like Adam. He needed to remain sharp and focused if they were to get through this together.
“Why are you fucking here?!” Nigel growled out, his words muffled by the coat.

“I needed you to know today that I’ll wait for you always.” Adam whispered, Nigel only hearing it because he was so close. It made the bad man look up and into his impossible lover’s eyes.

“How are you even real?” Nigel’s voice came out rough and uneven, his lips finding Adam’s own to bury what threatened to overtake him with Adam’s warmth and taste. Nigel kept having to remind himself that now was not the time, drawing back to stare at Adam. “Why would you do that?”

“Uh, we-we have to talk again.” Adam said, running both too hot and cold now. His toes and fingers were burning from the returning rush of blood to their tips. Fear, cool and icy as the weather outside, still clung to the sides of Adam’s thoughts, but Nigel was so there and now for him, even if he smelled of blood and gunpowder. Blood? “Why are you covered in blood? Are you hurt again?”

Nigel laughed weakly, resting his forehead against Adam’s sweaty own. He would have to get him out of at least one of those coats or else he would cook. “No, for once none of it is my own. Adam, I am going to ask you a question and this is very important so I need you to focus. Did you take a cab or a bus or subway here?” Nigel asked, his fingers finding Adam’s chin to make blue eyes meet amber.

“I walked.” Adam said simply, reminded of how much he liked the color of Nigel’s eyes, similar in shade and luminescence to the brown dwarf stars found in the Great Nebula of Orion.

“Excuse me, but did you just say you walked?” Nigel tried again, somewhat at a loss from not expecting that answer. “You walked here, to this restaurant, from your place in Manhattan?”

“Yes.” Adam answered without hesitation. If that sort of answer had come from anyone else, Nigel would have not believed it for the world, but this was Adam, who was honest to a fault, even to his own.

“Adam, it’s snowing.” Nigel said, letting go of Adam’s chin to gesture futilely at the weather that lay just outside those thin walls.

“I layered.” Adam waving his barely mobile arms, reminding Nigel of a penguin. “It’s rated for -30 below.”

“Which is why you’re sweating your balls into soup now that you’re inside. At least unzip so you don’t get sick when we have to go back out.” Nigel said, getting up off the floor to help Adam stand up since he was a little top heavy from the parka he had managed to find somewhere.

“How far is it from here? No, don’t tell me. It will just piss me off.” Nigel shook his head even as Adam opened his mouth to answer in full, unnecessary detail. By pure dumb luck and thanks to Adam’s sort of crazy, there was no paper trail for him to worry about or deal with later. No witnesses in the form of fellow passengers or drivers to hunt down. It was a blizzard out there, and only madmen and Adam were desperate enough to walk for miles in it.

“I want you to wait for me here while I finish up.” Nigel said, not wanting to but lacking options and time. Someone was bound to notice that Fat Tony was missing, and would eventually try to call him on his cell.

“Why?” Adam asked as he took off his many mittens to shove them in his pockets, unzipping his coat to airdry up some of the sweat beginning to pool in his nooks and crannies.
“Because you shouldn’t see this. No one like you should.” Nigel said, wishing he had it in him to knock Adam out or put him in a sleeper hold. Of course being who he was, Adam pressed forward past him, Nigel letting him go. He couldn’t keep hiding this part of himself from Adam. Ignorance was not always bliss. It had almost gotten Adam killed.

Eventually, Nigel followed after him, not hearing any sounds of distress from Adam or the other normal sounds one made upon finding a naked man strapped down to a tacky Italian themed table. The sight of Fat Tony bleeding out or trying to beg through his gag didn’t seem to bother Adam, other than make the man tilt his head in wonder. “What did he do?” Adam asked in a tone of voice most other people used to inquire about the weather. “Did you do that do him?”

Breathing in, Nigel promised to whoever or whatever the fuck was listening, that if he had to spend the rest of his life making this up to Adam and winning him back over, he would dedicate his every last second left on this earth to this goal. Right now though, he had to be who truly he was, the Romanian Ripper.

“Darling, as much as I would love to sit you down here, have a glass a wine, and reminisce about why Fat Tony here has to have all his fingers and toes chopped off one by one before I split his backside apart just wide enough to make room for his head when it parts from his neck so that I can shove it up his ass where it belongs, I simply don’t have the time. We have a plane to catch tomorrow evening.” Nigel said, booping Adam’s nose to make him blink. “And I am willing to bet you haven’t packed yet. Just believe me when I say that he deserves it and no one will miss him for all the evil he has done in this world.”

Nigel watched as Adam blinked a few more times while he rubbed his nose, processing that surplus of information. He looked back at Tony who was trying to beg with his eyes, but unfortunately for the mobster, there stood before him the one person who couldn’t read a room, much less one person to save his life. It was all too much for Adam to take in right now, his mind memorizing every detail to the slide of sweat and tears down Fat Tony’s red face to the way droplets of blood clung to Nigel’s skin in place. He would have to react later.

“No, I didn’t pack.” Adam answered, focusing on what he could. His words make Nigel want laugh and kiss him all at the same time, mistaking the coping mechanism for acceptance. “I didn’t know if you were coming back.”

“Not even death could keep me away from you.” Nigel grinned, leaning in to press light kisses to Adam’s face even as he was given a look in return.

“That is extremely unrealistic and improbable.” Adam sighed. He hated it when Nigel didn’t make sense but at least he knew that Nigel wasn’t making fun of him for not understanding. “You’re still a liar.”

“Yes, I am, but I never lied to you about being a bad man. I just didn’t go into detail about it. Are you going to be fine with that?” Nigel asked warily as he slipped on some new gloves, ignoring Tony’s renewed struggling. Duct tape was a beautiful thing.

“Yes. I talked to Harlan earlier today. He said that a man has got to learn the difference between just plain liars and liars worth loving.” Adam said, looking around the restaurant. He didn’t like how dirty it looked, making a mental note never to eat here.

“And am I a liar you going to live with? Am I worth loving?” Nigel asked, not knowing if he wanted an answer.

“Yes, I need you. You are necessary.” Adam said, turning back to tell this to some point between Nigel’s chin and shoulder.
“I think that’s even better than I love you.” Nigel said softly, his body shuddering out the tension that had been held within it since Adam had shown up.

“I can say that too if you want me to.” Adam shrugged.

“Don’t. You’ll make me cry in front of Fat Tony. I have a reputation to maintain.” Nigel laughed, the sound of it coming out hoarser than he would have liked. He ignored Fat Tony who was trying to cuss something in Italian at him.

“What difference does that make if you’re going to kill him?” Adam asked, genuinely curious.

“And you have no issues with this?” Nigel snorted. Morality needed empathy though to be fully effective.

“You said he was a bad man and deserved it. That and your mind is made up, so nothing I say or do will change that. I don’t want to fight you. You have a distinct physical advantage as well experience with firearms and other weapons from the looks of it. Is that a machete? Where did you get a machete?” Adam asked, noticing said machete leaned up against a chair and well within Nigel’s reach.

“Oh Adam, the love, the love….how I adore you. I would kill for you, do you know that? I would die for you.” Nigel drawing near again to start kissing Adam, slow and sweet. He had been resisting the temptation but Adam kept saying the most perfect things to him.

“Don’t do that.” Adam would have said more when they parted, but they were interrupted by Fat Tony trying to break the table by throwing his weight around.

“What is this now? Suddenly found the clever man within yourself, Tony, haven’t we? I don’t appreciate you ruining our moment, you shrieking cunt. The clock’s ticking on my benevolence.” Nigel growled, smacking Tony hard enough so that his forehead bounced off the table. The noise of it made Adam jump, reminding Nigel that he didn’t need an audience for this next part.

“I don’t want you to hit him again. Hitting is bad.” Adam said, starting to look upset now. He truly was an amazing creature, Nigel falling more in love than he ever believed possible.

“I won’t. I can promise you that much. Go wait for me in the bathroom, my darling. I’ll be along soon enough.” Nigel hushed, shooing Adam to the men’s room to lock him in by wedging a chair under the door handle. He turned his attention back to his victim, machete now in hand.

“Oh you lucky fat fuck, you get to keep all your fingers and toes.” Nigel grinned like a shark, the machete the only tool he really needed. Fat Tony screamed the best he could through his gag as Nigel approached.

OoOoO

Staring at the graffiti that was scribbled everywhere and in some places, carved into the walls, Adam wondered just how mad you would have to be while using the toilet to commit the time to doing that. Most of the messages were not in English either so Adam couldn’t even distract himself by reading them. Nigel had locked him in here, here being a very gross bathroom that smelled horrible. A set of clothing sat by the sink on top of a trash can, Adam inspecting the pile having nothing better to do. A red travel can of gasoline and a gallon of bleach sat under the sink, looking very out of place. Upon inspection, all the clothing looked to be in Nigel’s size and sense of style, the man liking patterns and woven textures Adam usually avoided in favor of blues and easily matching solids. Adam thought the little dogs that were part of the pattern were cute though.
Startled out of staring at the written upon wall, Nigel opened the door, going straight to the sink to strip off the gloves and start washing his hands. Adam watched as the soapy water turned pink and coated the rim of the sink.

“What does this say?” Adam asked, pointing to a particularly long phrase that looked fancy.

“Mmmm….Something about prostitutes and politicians. Fucking Italians.” Nigel rolled his eyes, that particular language not really his forte, much to the scorn of another who thought Dante was best read in Italian.

“Why do you hurt people?” Adam asked, watching with interest as Nigel stripped down and wiped every inch of his skin with bleach wipes before changing into the clothes.

“It’s my job and I like it. Luckily most of the people I have to hurt deserve it.” Nigel sighed, not really wanted to go into too much detail about what he did. Adam knew enough. He didn’t need to know all of it. It was just safer that way.

“Are you going to hurt me again?” Adam asked wide eyed to find himself in Nigel’s arms again, his face held in place by strong hands.

“Hush, shh, shh, shh. Don’t say such things. Look at me, listen to what I am saying. I could never hurt you intentionally. I would cut off the hand that dared that sin.” Nigel spoke low and intense.

“That would impede your ability in your chosen profession.” Adam said, wondering why Nigel was now laughing. “If you left me, that would be hurting me.”

“That’s why I’m taking you with me. Leaving you behind was never an option for me.” Nigel said, “We’ll find you a job…”

“I have a job, ” Adam said, making Nigel stare in disbelief at him for a moment. “With Rosa.”

“You called them?” Nigel asked.

“Obviously, since I have the job. I didn’t want to think about you when you were not there. It was distracting.” Adam shrugged, Nigel laughing again but that was fine. It never felt like Nigel was ever laughing at him.

“Well fuck me, you’re going to be an astronaut.” Nigel shook his head in wonderment.

“No, nothing like that. I’m just going to be designing code so that the satellites here can communicate with a new type of interstellar probe that will be the first to travel outside the boundaries of our known galaxy.” Adam corrected.

“Oh, is that all?” Nigel chuckled, picking up the gasoline to dump it on the ruined clothing before tossing a good portion out the bathroom door to meet up with the rest he had poured around Fat Tony’s corpse and interior of the restaurant. Walking and talking and dumping fuel, Nigel was careful to keep blocking Adam’s view and keeping his busy by telling him to gear up for going back outside.

“What are you doing with that accelerant?” Adam asked, doing his best to get all his gloves back on in the correct order as Nigel led him toward the back of the restaurant. Nigel paused long enough to grab something from out of a booth, the expensive coat perfect for New York winter though a little too big for the slimmer man, but Nigel knew that Tony wouldn’t be needing it where he was going.

“I’m going to burn down the restaurant.” Nigel said, shaking the last few drops out of the can
before chucking it back where they came from.

“Why?”

“Health code.” Nigel shrugged, lighting a cigarette with a pack of matches before throwing the flame over his shoulder.

“Oh. There are a lot of cockroaches and this kitchen doesn’t look like a sterile enough environment to prepare food.” Adam nodded, watching as Nigel threw cans of cleaning materials into the microwaves and turned them on. He flipped the gas stoves on as well in passing as he and Adam exited the building, closing the broken door behind them.

“That’s me, a giver. A generous man looking out for his fellow human beings.” Nigel said, turning up the collar of his stolen coat. Vicious wind whipping up more snow, Nigel confiscated some ear muffs, a pair of gloves, and two scarves from Adam who had more than enough to share between them. Linked arm and arm with Adam to direct him where to go at a pace that was not suspicious, Nigel kept them pressed to the shadows of the sidewalks and building, avoiding lamplight when possible. Between the blizzard and the night working in tandem, any video images of them leaving the restaurant would be useless.

Making a mental note to burn everything they were wearing as soon as they got home, Nigel cursed and blessed the terrible weather in the same stream of profanity. They were a few blocks away by the time Rizzo’s decided to burst into flames, noisily proclaiming its demise by setting off car alarms with its explosion.

“How long a walk is it?” Nigel asked, keeping Adam from turning around and kept them moving.

“A little over two hours in this weather.”

“Fuck.”

Linked arm and arm with Adam though, Nigel found he could ignore the cold for now. The snow that drifted out of the void looked like falling stars in the streetlight. Crystalline flakes clung to Adam’s lashes, cheeks, and lips, making him glitter in the city’s lowlights like he was made of stardust. It made Nigel smile, Adam’s answering own only a mirrored reaction, and though Nigel knew that, it was perfect in his eyes. All in one night, he had raised hell and pulled down Heaven long enough to steal an angel and tear its wings off. It made Nigel believe just a little in the magic of shooting stars and the wishes made upon them in passing by dying men and stargazers alike.

OoOoO

“I have loved the stars too fondly to be fearful of the night…”

OoOoO

Almost The End- only the epilogue left

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading. Your kudos watch the snow fall from the night sky. Your comments think you are all fucking weird and to get your asses back inside where it is warm.
When it is dark enough, you can see the stars

Chapter Summary

This is the end, last chapter of this story arch. The day after and beyond that.

Chapter Notes

"When it is dark enough, you can see the stars."
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Last chapter of this story arch, but don't despair. It's not over just yet. I got another
planned with some Hannigram in the works.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The fallout happened when it was almost too late to be considered morning anymore, Nigel
awoken by soft, wet noises. Reaching for Adam, Nigel found only an empty spot beside him, the
sheets there cold to his touch. Sitting up, Nigel saw Adam sitting on the floor in the closest corner
by the bed, hunched over his knees and crying into his shaking palms.

Getting up, Nigel shuffled over, still exhausted from their long trek from the Bronx. The blizzard
hadn’t helped matters either, the two men arriving back to Adam’s brownstone half frozen. They
had taken a long hot shower together to warm up, afterward piling into bed with every comforter
that Adam owned layered on top of them. Too tired and emotionally tapped to do much of
anything else, both had fallen asleep with barely a word exchanged between them.

“Shhh, shhh…” Nigel began to soothe, reaching for Adam to have the man recoil. Already
cornered, Adam had no place to go, only managing to knock the air out of his lungs to avoid
having Nigel’s hands on him.

“Don’t touch me!” Adam wailed, wincing as his elbows’ funny bones connected with the wall,
realizing belated he had nowhere else to go. He had just wanted the contact the corner provided so
that he could try to focus. Hiding his eyes behind his hands didn’t help either, Adam seeing other
people’s blood still covering Nigel as he let himself think about last night. He had been doing so
since he woke up in a cold sweat an hour before Nigel.

Nigel’s heart lurched in his chest, unsure of what to do. Sighing, he sat down on the floor next to
Adam, making shaking shoulders touch a steady body. Putting his arms around Adam despite his
protests, Nigel gently pulled the younger man into him until Adam was basically sitting in his lap,
sobbing into his greying chest hair. Nigel let him, having much worse than some tears and snot on
him before. As far as he was concerned, he was the source of it so he might as well man up and
deal with it. Eventually, Adam tired himself out into making dull noises, Nigel gently rocking him
and running his fingers through his curls.

“Did you kill that man last night?” Adam whispered, the words muffled into Nigel’s chest, his
fingers curling into the hair there tight enough to make Nigel wince.
“Yes. Yes, I did.” Nigel admitted tonelessly, not wanting to have this conversation. He didn’t give a flying fuck about anyone he had ended breathing with extreme prejudice while in New York, but this…This felt like sin, like he was forever ruining something pure.

“But why? Hurting people is bad.” Adam said looking up at Nigel with those big beautiful eyes, made all the more so by his tears. In his mind’s eyes, to Nigel it was like pairing diamonds with sapphires.

“Well, my darling, he was a bad man who got what was coming to him, believe you me. Besides proving there really is no honor among thieves and Italians, he also broke many promises and some very important truces. He stabbed me and would have killed many more of my people if I hadn’t stopped him. If you hadn’t found me that night, I would have died. I may hurt people because I like it, but most of the people I hurt deserve it. There are no innocents in my business.” Nigel said softly, stroking locks of hair out of Adam’s face.

“What is your business? What do you do for a living? You never told me.” Adam asked, getting a strange feeling that he was not going to like the answer.

“You never really asked, my darling.” Nigel shook his head. Ignorance was truly bliss to some extent. He didn’t want to risk Adam any more than he was planning on doing so. If his enemies ever got a hold of Adam, Nigel already knew he would burn the world or sell of pieces of it to get him back. Adam would be safer here in New York with an ocean between them, but Nigel would not be parted from him. “The less you know about it, the better. The safer you will be. Just know that is not a normal 9-to-5 job. Lucrative but it has its downsides as well.”

“One of them being that you kill people.” Adam said, wiping his face off with the backs of his hands. Now that he had cried his eyes out, his head was clearing up enough so he was about ready to have this conversation with Nigel. He knew it was often believed by neurotypicals that people with Asperger’s syndrome could not feel emotions, the combination of social ineptness and inability to express emotions in an understandable way to them enforcing this opinion.

Like most other Aspies, Adam felt everything that anyone else felt such as sadness, happiness, anger, and so forth. It was just that he processed and communicated those emotions far differently than the people around him. Meaning Adam could deal with certain emotions and stressful situations faster, like the one at hand, more so than a neurotypical who would still be dwelling on and panicking about the events involving Fat Tony’s death. As much as Adam didn’t like violence or what he was currently learning about Nigel, his emerging calm came from the fact that Adam hadn’t known Fat Tony. He couldn’t bring himself to care about a person he’d never met before and whose death had no bearing on his life.

“When I have to, yes.” Nigel said, watching as Adam’s face became its normal placid mask of calm. He had no idea what was going on in his beloved’s pretty head, but he hoped it worked out in his favor. Adam seemed to be settling down in his arms. He still held himself stiffly but he was no longer looking pale or crying.

“Are you going to kill me?” Adam asked point blank in a voice calm and neutral enough to make Nigel cringe.

“What?! Fuck! No, Adam” Nigel snapped, huffing out his anger as he gave Adam a little shake to make the man look him in the eyes. He touched their foreheads together so he could covers Adam’s mouth with his own, speaking the next words directly into it. “I would die without you.”

“I don’t see how.” Adam said, the movements of his lips upon Nigel’s own like teasing kisses.

“Adam, what I’m trying to say is that if anything ever happened to you, I would kill myself.”
Nigel promised, kissing Adam hard between his words so his answer was sloppy and rough. “After I killed anyone involved with your death.”

“That’s horrible. Why would you do that?” Adam asked, pulling back so he could catch some air. Nigel was being too rough, his teeth catching on his lips enough to make them bleed. He wasn’t allowed to go far, Nigel leaving off of his mouth so that he could wrap his arms tight around Adam, hiding his face in Adam’s neck so that the younger man’s chin rested on the back of Nigel’s head.

“Because this life isn’t necessary if you aren’t here with me to spend it with.” Nigel admitted, listening to Adam breathe in his scent and turn his head to nose his silvering hair.

“But you do have a necessary life. Here with me. I want you alive.” Adam told him in return, letting himself run his hands over a broad back and down to his sides. Feeling the play of muscles there, Adam found the scar of the wound that started this all. “I don’t like what you do, but I still need you.”

“So you’ll still wait for me always? You still want me?” Nigel withdrew far enough so he could look again at Adam and studied that expressionless face that spoke volumes to him, only him.

“Yes. Always.” Adam promised so simply, like it was the most obvious thing in the world to do, like him promising to inhale and exhale.

Letting Adam go to settle him back in the corner, Nigel knew that they needed to start getting moving if they were to make their evening flight, having already slept the morning away. Pausing long enough to drop a comforter over Adam to keep him warm and give him some space and time to decompress, Nigel began to pack, emptying out Adam’s closets. He had already found Adam’s passport so when he got dressed, Nigel pocketed it along with Adam’s Asperger’s Alert Card in case there was complications at the airport. He knew security didn’t like twitchy people.

“You need to eat. We leave soon.” Nigel told the lump in the corner, setting a bowl of bran flakes and milk within reach after a quick trip to the kitchen for provisions. He sighed in relief when the bowl disappeared under the comforter. Adam’s head popped out a moment later, frowning down at the cereal.

“I can’t eat cereal. It’s almost lunch time.” Adam said, handing Nigel back his far too late to be eaten now breakfast. He disappeared back under the comforter, muffling his next words. “Harlan will have to be informed about us leaving. He won’t be happy about it. I don’t think he likes you very much.”

“And here I thought you missed social cues.” Nigel snorted, eating the damn All-Bran. He was looking forward to not dining on cardboard ever again. “We give him a call, or you will to be exact. What do you want to take? We can have it all shipped and sort through it later if you can’t decide.”

“Are you going to keep hurting people?” Adam asked, peeking out of the comforter again.

Sighing, Nigel crouched back down beside Adam, careful to not touch him. “Yes.” He said, refusing to lie to those too blue eyes anymore as he was considered and his answer weighed.

“Can you not do it in front of me?” Adam asked, choosing his words with care. He wasn’t happy about any of it, but it would mean giving up Nigel if they couldn’t reach a compromise.

“Yes. Yes, I can do that.” Nigel said. “May I ask you a question?”

“You already did.” Adam pointed out to watch Nigel roll his eyes at his sense of mistimed humor.
“Will you come with me? I don’t want to force you.” Nigel said. Adam didn’t really had a choice, but Nigel would hate himself less for it if Adam came with him on his own. “I need you to come with me. I love you, my darling, more than I can put into words. Will you go back to Romania with me and live there? Can you do that for me?”

“No…Yes…Maybe.” Adam’s answered jumped as quickly as his mind processed possibilities. “I can try.”

“Don’t hate me.” Nigel tried not to beg. He leaned in, this time Adam not avoiding his touch so Nigel kissed him slow and sweet. He ended up pulling Adam into his arm and lap again, needing to feel the man’s close to him.

“I don’t hate you, Nigel.” Adam murmured. “I’m scared.”

“That’s so much worse.” Nigel said, aching in ways he never knew he could. “I could never hurt you.”

“I know that. I’m not scared of you.” Adam corrected. “I’m scared for you. If I hadn’t found you, you would have died.”

“Then you’ll just have to be my lucky star then, and guide me back home when I am lost.”

OoOoO

“Adam, are you sure about this?” Harlan sighed, still not believing he was going to let his oldest friend’s son leave with a tattooed hooligan to a foreign country.

“Yes. I have to go.” Adam said as he put his suitcases in the back of Harlan’s work van. The man had offered the couple a ride to the airport. Nigel was less than thrilled about it when Adam accepted the offer on their behalf. “I’ll be engineering microchips for satellite guidance systems. You see…”

“I’m can’t believe I’m saying this, but I’m gonna miss all that space stuff. New York is going to feel a whole lot smaller without those stars.” Harlan said, glaring at Nigel who gave him his own hard look in return.

“That is a strange perception. Just look up if you want to see the stars.” Adam advised, fussing over his suitcases. The back of Harlan’s van was messy, Adam trying to make sense of it before he went back to get the rest of his stuff.

“God help you if anything happens to that boy.” Harlan said quietly, leaning in so Adam couldn’t hear over the ruckus he was making reorganizing his tools. To his surprise, Nigel simply nodded before turning back to return to the apartment.

“Uh, I want you to know, I made that call.” Harlan told the back of Adam’s head now that he had a chance, the kid messing up his layer system of chaos with all his neatness. “It, uh, took me a while to find her, but we’re–we're gonna meet up. The woman's even more stubborn than I am.”

“Oh, yeah?” Adam said, obviously not paying attention and wondering why Harlan needed five hammers all in the same size for.

“I'm just trying to say ‘thank you’, damn it.” Harlan said. He was going to miss this too, these awkward, stilted conversations with Adam. Old age was really making him a sentimental old fool.
“Oh. Oh!” Adam paused what he was doing to register all the information. “You're welcome, Harlan.”

“Adam, listen to me. Are you sure about all this? About leaving with Nigel? Romania is a long ways away.” Harlan tried one last time to bring Adam to his senses.

“This is the last of it.” Nigel interrupted, three suitcases and a carry-on in hand, the later the only thing he packed for himself. Not risking any evidence being found if by some small miracle or other act of god, Nigel had burned most of the clothing he had worn during his stay in New York, the only survivor his dachshund shirt. The guns had already been dissembled and scattered, metal pieces finding their way through various sewer gates all over Manhattan.

Setting the suitcases in the van, Nigel looked up, feeling Adam’s hands upon him framing his face. Closing his eyes, he leaned up as Adam leaned in, the kiss between them soft and sweet enough to make Harlan roll his eyes, the old man shaking his head.

“Yes, Harlan. He’s a liar I can love.” Adam said softly, missing Harlan’s look of dismay. Nigel heard his sigh of defeat though, reveling in it.

“Well, let’s get you gone then.”

OoOoO

Romania was hot, loud, and full of movement. His fingernails biting into Nigel’s palm, Adam relied on the man to guide him safely through the chaos, a stranger in a strange land. Finally back in his element, Nigel seemed completely at ease here though, making people move out of his way like he owned everything, shouting and cussing and laughing as he went. He seemed to be looking for something, smiling when he saw it. Adam found himself being led through the airport’s chaotic fray to a dark, fancy looking car that seemed to be waiting just for them right outside the airport. The men that came with the car looked quite unfriendly, Adam wanting very much not to meet them. He wasn’t left much of a choice though, finding himself loaded into the car with them along with all his luggage in the trunk.

“It’s about fucking time, Nigel. How was your vacation? Kill anyone interesting?” Darko grumped at his fearless leader and business partner.

“I stayed pretty busy. We can move our people in now. Send them in before the Italians find some bravery in their balls again.” Nigel said, maneuvering Adam so that he was sandwiched between the door and himself. Even though they had flown first class with all its bells and whistles, the experience had been draining for Adam who looked in desperate need of some peace and quiet.

“And who it this? The infamous Adam I’ve been hearing so much about? What’s a matter? Cat got your tongue?” Darko leaned in for a better look at the person who had managed to catch the attention of the Romanian Ripper. He backed up instantly upon noticing Nigel’s face, putting his hands up in the arm to signal no malicious intent or threat on his part.

“Yes, this is my darling, Adam. He’s feeling unwell so you are going to leave him alone.” Nigel said pointedly, Adam turning into his side to hide his face with his hands over his ears. He was desperately trying not to have a panic attack, everything too much and too new, and there were too many strangers in the car with him.

“Very well. Where do you wish to go now that you’re back? The club…” Darko began to be waved off.
“I want to see my new place. Take me home.” Nigel said, rubbing circles into Adam’s back as he felt the man begin to shake. “We’ll talk shop later.”

Darko kept his mouth shut after that but nothing could keep the smirk off of his face.

OoOoO

Nigel was pleased that the former church that was to be his and Adam’s new home had a brand new, state-of-the-art security gate around it, complemented with a plethora of video cameras. He stayed in the car with Adam while his men unloaded their suitcases from the trunk, bringing the luggage in for them. Kicking Darko out of the car, Nigel spoke to Adam in a low soothing voice until the man stopping shaking, his breathing returning mostly to normal.

Carrying Adam bridal style into their new place when he quietly refused to leave the car, Nigel’s face promised pain and blood to anyone who dared to react to that, though Darko looked like he was having the time of his life. He gave Nigel the passcodes for the house and a jaunty wave before heading out, the gates closing behind the car. A quick look around the neighborhood informed Nigel that Darko had hired more than just a few guards, most of them discretely tucked out of sight as to not alarm Adam or raise any suspicion.

Nigel had to set Adam down to set the security system, but he looked like he was doing better already now that everyone was gone. He curiously peeked around Nigel to look at the garden illuminated by fully restored cathedral windows, inlaid with cut crystal panels instead of stained glass. Rainbows danced over everything as the late afternoon sunlight filtered in, making the garden glow with vitality. Even Nigel, who was not one for nature, had to admit it was pretty damn impressive looking with its fountain made from the Virgin Mary statue turned Aphrodite. The water from the fountain fed into a stream, little pieces of the garden connected together by carved stepping stones and little bridges.

A sweeping staircase that was once meant for the clergy to ascend took them up to the second level, the space within only decorated with the bare necessities so that Adam could pick out whatever style of furniture he wanted. Nigel was going to kill Darko, or at the very least maim him, when he saw their bed though.

“Why is the bed shaped like a heart? I can’t sleep in that. My sheets won’t fit it.” Adam said, studying what could have only come from some tacky ass honeymoon suite from god knows where motel with illusions of grandeur.

“Darling, we are going to have to invest in something larger than a twin.” Nigel growled, lighting a cigarette as he considered burning the bed with it. He texted Darko instead. “You are correct though. We are not sleeping in that monstrosity.”

N-**I should make you into pork rinds and feed you to your damn dogs, you prick**
D-**I thought you’d feel right at home, my friend. Don’t faggots sleep on hearts and rainbows?**
N-**I’m going to feed you your own balls**
D-**Tsk, tsk. Has Adam taught you nothing about foreplay?**
N-**the clock is ticking on my benevolence**
D-**tell adam to take his cock out of your ass and relax. the real bed is already on its way.**

“The new bed will be here soon…” Nigel said to an empty room, Adam no longer by his side studying the bed. A quick look around found Nigel another door, this one leading up to the third floor and final story. Bulletproof glass made to look like spires and parts of the church created a surrounding of protection from potential snipers and looky-loos alike while keeping to its theme. The middle of roof had been stripped away to be left open, revealing an open expanse of sky already saturated in the colors of the receding sun. Little stars crept out from under the folds of
dusk, winking and blinking themselves awake to look down on them. The look on Adam’s face was worth everything and more to Nigel as he watched his beloved stare up at the sky.

“So what do you think?” Nigel finally asked. He knew Adam could be out here all night if he didn’t.

“I think that Orion is emerging and that if we stay out here long enough we’ll see Aldebaran and Pleiades as well.” Adam said, making Nigel smile as he gathered Adam up on his arms to hold him close. “When it is dark enough, you can see the stars.”

“I love you.”

“I know.”

OoOoO

The End

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading, and thank you so much for your patience. I know this one took a while. Your kudos drink all the booze while in first class and your comments are detained by airport security.

End Notes

Thank you for reading. Your comments look up at the stars and wonder. Your kudos smoke a cigarette and look pretty bad ass about it.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!