

Bound;Ransy

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Bound;Ransy

by [starlingcaine](#)

Summary

Eighth year of Hogwarts

Pansy Parkinson had loved and lost during the war, lost more than anything. Now, forced to go back to Hogwarts by the Wizengamot, all eyes on her during her ten-year probation, she fully intends to have a quiet year with the friends she has left.

But that damned Weasley.

He won't leave her alone; his scent, his hair, his tattoos... He's everywhere.

Maybe she wants him to be.

cast + disclaimer!

Hey y'all! A few things real quick:

I do not claim to own these characters! all rights go to J.K. Rowling (pls choke)

This story is 15+ only.

Please, read the author's notes. Trigger warnings apply.

I am new to AO3, so please bare with me lol.

This story will be handling mature themes! these include:

Suicide/suicidal thoughts/self harm

Alcoholism/drug abuse

intense sexual content/descriptive sexual scenes/bad bdsm etiquette

toxic relationships/abuse

mental illness including: depression, anxiety, ptsd, trauma, self harming behaviors

etc. I will be putting warnings before each chapter with this!

This is a dark story so please read at your own discretion.

These are my fancasts for this story specifically! I have general fancasts posted, but this story is a little different.

Pansy Parkinson: Bella Hadid

Ron Weasley: Jake Hold

Daphne Greengrass: Lalisa Monoban

Hermione Granger: Sophia Bryant

Ginny Weasley: Abigail Cowen

Luna Lovegood: Madison Iseman

Astoria Greengrass: Bella Campen

Draco Malfoy: Lucky Blue Smith

Blaise Zabini: Louis Cordice

Theodore Nott: Lorenzo Zurzolo

Harry Potter: Hrthik Roshan

Adrian Pucey: Jared Padalecki

Miles Bletchley: Kwame Boateng

Tracey Davis: Noor Tagouri

Anthony Goldstein: Nick Jonas

prologue.

Chapter Notes

CW: death + suicidal thoughts

Bound

July 6th, 1998

Former Death Eater Trials

The wizengamot

"Why?"

Pansy stirred from the cage she was trapped in, suspended 20 feet in the air above the members of the Wizengamot. She was not built for Azkaban; She knew that much was true. But hope...

She had given up hope long ago. The moment Theo's body had hit the stone floor of the Malfoy's drawing room. She had stopped holding onto the thought of light at the end of the tunnel, and let herself sink into the Darkness. She let herself freefall through the pain.

All she wanted now was her cell. She didn't want to be in this bright room, with too many people and noises and loud banging. The clank of the Minister's gavel rang through her body, rattling her bones and lifting her organs. She wanted to disappear; wanted to jump back into the rabbit hole of her thoughts, and be lost in the wonderland that was Theo, Theo, Theo...

"Why, Miss Granger?" Kingsley Shacklebolt's voice shattered her core, exterminated the peaceful bliss she had wrapped herself in. She almost whimpered as the image of his green eyes floated away, the feel of his chestnut locks feathering through her fingers fading; she glared at the Minister in rage. She wanted to kill him.

"Pardon, Minister, I don't understand what you mean?" Hermione Granger stood on the small, circular floor beneath the wizengamot, beneath Pansy. Just a few feet into her line of sight.

"It is no secret that Miss Parkinson was not kind to you during your school years, Miss Granger. Yet you have chosen to testify on her behalf. I would like to know why."

Granger pursed her lips; she was a mess. Her hair, which had been slicked into a low ponytail behind her head, was slowly coming out of its bindings; her shoes and skirt didn't match, and there was a rip in her stockings. She carried a mountain of notes in her hands, scribbling into them and scrambling through them every time a member of the Wizengamot asked her a

question. Her lip gloss was smudged. Pansy wondered how she had ever managed to free Draco and Blaise before her.

"Oh, I- Well, erm, sir-"

"I know you well enough from our time working together during the war, yes Miss Granger?"

"Yes, of course sir."

"Well then we can agree that I am very familiar with your sense of right and wrong," Shacklebolt smiled. "You have a keen intuition for knowing the good and bad in things; you also have a very strong black-and-white perception of the world. Your sense of justice and authoritarianism is almost unmatched. I think many would agree that your honor and compassion know almost no bounds. A purely Gryffindor part of you, I would say. Has that changed, Miss Granger?"

The girl's brows drew together. She shifted her feet awkwardly, some papers falling from her stack. She scrambled to get to her knees, collecting them. I'm so fucked, Pansy thought. Just take me back to Azkaban now please. Granger gathered herself, standing straight. "Why exactly would you think that, Minister Shacklebolt?" She asked in a surprisingly clear voice.

"Because you are fighting for a Death Eater. None of your friends chose to testify. Miss Parkinson's role in the war was vital for Voldemort's side. Many would say she is the Anti-Golden Girl."

"Former, Death Eater, sir. And actually, I could not possibly care less about what "many" would say. I simply care about the facts. My sense of right and wrong has not changed, or shifted since the war. My black and white perception has not changed either, I assure you. I am here fighting today because these people deserve a second chance."

She paused a bit, setting her notes down on the table behind her and holding her arm up to motion to Pansy. "Pansy Parkinson was a child, during the war, as were many of us. She was forced to fight for something she never really believed in, to appease her mother and father's expectations. But more than that, more than anything, she chose to protect her friends. She fought for her friends. Wouldn't you agree that a teenage girl battling to protect the people she loves shouldn't be imprisoned for those actions?"

"Miss Parkinson did not protect her friends, in the end though. She tortured and killed Theodore Nott, whom she was in a relationship with. She also killed her father, during the battle of Hogwarts."

"She was forced to kill Theodore Nott by Voldemort-"

"But she still did it, Miss Granger. If Miss Parkinson were truly the martyr, the secret hero you are describing her to be, wouldn't she have instead chosen to die for her love? Wouldn't more people be here today, to believe in her the way you do?"

Just give up, Granger. You already showed them my memories. I told myself I would die before having to relive Theo's death in my head. It replays every. Single. Day. Because of

you. Just give up. Please.

Give up, Her heart chanted. Give up.

I already have.

"Dying for love is a thing easier said than done, Kingsley. Especially when you are 18 and fighting a war you never wanted a part in in the first place."

"You will do well to watch your tone, Miss Granger," Shacklebolt still had a smile on his face.

Granger cleared her throat, smoothing her skirt down. "You have let the other former Death Eaters go, Minister. Draco Malfoy was responsible for letting the Death Eaters into the school, and the murder of Albus Dumbledore. A pivotal point in the war, I may add. Blaise Zabini completed his own missions. Vincent Crabbe, Gregory Goyle, Daphne Greengrass, Marcus Flint, many others have been given a second chance at life. Not to mention many of those names were also participants in bullying and harassment of my friends and I during our years at Hogwarts, since that is such an important event to you. But what is the one thing they all have in common?"

Granger raised her voice on the last line, turning about the room as if she were asking the entire jury the question. "They were children. And they were forced. They each did it for a reason, and each of them will carry their decisions with them for the rest of their lives. They will feel the burn of that mark and the guilt and pain of their actions until the day they die. But where does real change come from?"

"We are ushering into a new era. I agree the older generation is beyond salvageable. I also agree that change will not come from locking the former Death Eaters into Azkaban and throwing away the key. We cannot push them to the edges of society and expect them to blend in perfectly. Real change will only come from love, and acceptance. Forgiveness."

Granger stood still. "I am fighting for what is right. I always have, and I always will. I am the token 'mudblood' the Death Eaters targeted. I have the scars to prove it. I have experienced endless bullying and been frozen out of wizarding society since my first day at Hogwarts. And that was not only at the hands of other students," She said with a pointed look at the Wizengamot. "My black and white view has not changed. My compassion has not changed. And the knowledge I have has not changed." She turned and looked at Pansy, brown eyes meeting blue. She nodded her head slightly, in understanding. Her voice softened. "I can look at Pansy Parkinson at this moment, and know that she is not a bad person. I know that she does not deserve life in Azkaban. And I would not fight for her if I didn't know that she is not past the point of forgiveness." Granger went silent, and mouthed the words "I forgive you" to Pansy. Then she turned around. Pansy felt tears stream down her face.

"I have laid out the facts in front of you," Granger said. "I have spent the past two days defending Miss Parkinson, the past two months defending the other Death Eaters. I will keep fighting, If I have to. But for now, I will leave you to decide."

She turned around, and sat down at the table, wringing her hands nervously. I don't deserve your forgiveness, Granger. Pansy watched her. From the jury, a tall figure stepped out, long, flaming red hair bobbing. The figure strode towards Hermione, sitting down with her and rubbing tattooed hands down her back. Pansy crawled to the edge of her cage, leaning towards the figure like a moth to a flame. She could smell... something. Something faint and alluring. She felt as if a string were drawing her forward, towards something, something... someone.

The figure looked up, eyes meeting hers.

Weasley.

He had... changed. His hair was longer now, falling to the nape of his neck. It was slicked back, drawn in a tight, small ponytail behind his head. Violet half-moons bruised under his piercing blue gaze. His skin was waxy. Black, small sort of circular earrings were embedded into his earlobes. A faint gold hoop was stuck in his left nostril.

And the tattoos.

They appeared to be... well, everywhere. From what Pansy could see. A giant sort of dragonfly encircling his neck; more on the back, and behind his ears. They covered his hands and fingers. The rest, if there were any, were covered by the all black wizarding robes he wore.

The line pulled taut.

You, you, you.

Her heart sang, her blood hummed. She felt alive. She felt electric. She felt buzzing, like she would burst. Her heart burst out of her chest. Energy crackled through the air, and a scent... a scent invaded her nostrils, swimming through her bloodstream, embedding itself in her core. Something like... black pepper, and sage. Sandalwood. She narrowed her eyes. Weasley's nostrils flared, cheeks turning red. He turned away.

And the scent faded.

No, no, no. Her heart cried, her soul sobbed, screaming for that scent. That perfect, perfect thing that encased her in its warmth, holding her home. She scrambled to the edge of her cage, away from him, breathing hard.

She vaguely heard the wizengamot chattering. She heard Shackbolt's gavel bang again, and the verdict was decided.

"Pansy Parkinson, for your crimes against the wizarding world, and choosing to ally yourself with Lord Voldemort during the war, you have been sentenced to 3,650 days..." Pansy held her breath, trying to focus on his words, not the scent. Not the scent. "Probation. You will return to Hogwarts and graduate your Eighth year with expected top marks, and work a Ministry service job for a minimum of five years. You will meet with your probation auror

once a week, and be fully expected to be subject to random drug tests and report the full details of your week and personal life to your assigned auror..."

Pansy hyperventilated, zoning out as Shacklebolt's voice trailed off. She was free.

She was free.

one.

Chapter Notes

CW: slight mentions of alcoholism, insomnia, ptsd

Songs for this chapter: If You Were There, Beware, Arctic Monkeys; The Beach, The Nbhds; Bitches Broken Hearts, Billie Eilish; Afraid, The Nbhds; Know My Rights, 6lack;

Monday

October 5th, 1998.

Pansy jolted awake, body humming. She was buzzing again. It was a bit rougher this time, almost painful, and she felt alive with nervous energy. Her magic crackled around her, the air filling with the scent.

That scent.

Ever since late July, every once in a while, once a month, actually, She would awaken just before the crack of dawn, magic humming, the air absolutely full with that scent. That intoxicating, terrible, tortuous smell.

Black pepper. Sage. Sandalwood.

It was like cocaine. Better.

The first time, she was worried she would fail the random drug tests the ministry induced on her. Then, a couple days later, she surprisingly hadn't; that only encouraged the mystery.

After the second time, Pansy noticed a recurrence. Every time the strange tingling feeling would start, that scent invading her senses, her magic getting stronger and flooding the air with electricity, it was the morning of a full moon; the next day, after the sun had risen, the feeling would be over. She looked into every possible theory: lycanthropy, a blood maledictus, remnants of Voldemort's dark magic, some sort of muggle disease? She thought it would've been her grief and trauma manifesting physically- but that wasn't it, either. No matter where she looked, there were no answers.

It only worsened when she came to Hogwarts. The first full moon of the year was on September sixth, a Sunday. She woke up that morning, practically suffocating. Her chest contracted, hurting, skin irritated and itching, bones aching. She thought for sure she would transform that night, but no, it seemed.

Her body was strung tight with energy, magic threatening to spring loose at any moment; that night, she had accidentally hit a third year with an indescribable blast of pure power, the air thick with that scent, always. She had no explanation for what was happening to her, and she refused to ask anyone for help, lest they say that she was practicing dark magic, or Voldemort was trying to live through her; she had tested her own theories enough already, and had no desire to become anybody's lab rat.

She tried not to think about it. These days, Pansy had compiled a list of things to decidedly not think about:

Theo.

Her parents.

Her childhood.

Azkaban.

And last, but certainly not least, her suite.

With the rebuilding of Hogwarts, the Eighth years had been given their own tower; to let them have their peace away from the younger students, and to "encourage" inter-house unity.

They all knew it was so that the students could keep their eyes on the younger Death Eaters.

Naturally, Pansy and Daphne had been placed in the same suite as Hermione Granger, Luna Lovegood, and Ginny Weasley.

She couldn't even get started on Granger.

Ever since her trial, the curly-haired girl had been making some sort of effort to be Pansy's... friend.

She had visited her in the ministry-issued apartment her, Daphne, and Astoria shared when they weren't in school. Of course, none of them had parents to go back to, except for Narcissa Malfoy and Camilla Zabini, the former of which was staying in a townhome in Paris, the latter traveling the world muggle-style, via a million-dollar yacht.

Granger had come to say 'hi' apparently, and ask how Pansy was doing. Ever since then, she had sent her letters once a month, and once Hogwarts had opened, she had made a point of 'running into' or conversing with Pansy every possible chance she had; she talked to her about school, or projects, and did strange things like invite her to Hogsmeade with herself and the Weasel, among their other friends.

And Weasel.

He was always being dragged about by Granger, who was always on the hunt for Pansy.

She would make a point of also adding that name to her list.

Because she really, really couldn't think about him. Never. She absolutely refused to think about the way he watched her; how his eyes followed her across every room, his hateful, icy gaze tracing her path. He stared at her in class. He met her eyes across tables in the Three Broomsticks. He watched her in the Great Hall, over Granger's shoulder. She would not think about those eyes, those electric blue eyes that never left her figure.

She wouldn't think about the way he never stayed in a room for longer than 10 seconds if she were in it, unless there were 20 feet of distance between them. She simply did not think about how every time he found her studying in the library, or chatting with Daphne in the Eighth year common room, he would get up and leave immediately, no matter whose company he was in.

She refused to think about his veiny, tattooed hands, or silver rings, or the way he towered over her despite her being a tall girl, or the way the blank ink of his tattoos looked against his pale skin, or his fiery hair that was long now and often fell over his cheekbones, shadowing his face, making his eyes glow.

It only made matters worse that out of everyone, out of every single person Pansy had ever met or been within a 50 foot radius of in the entire world, she couldn't feel him.

Her natural gift as an empath was abnormally strong. It was a Parkinson family trait, one that had been fading for generations, so the fact that hers were so powerful, and that she was a natural Legilimens, made her special.

Her 'gift' didn't rear its ugly head until she was about 15; late, for most women in the Parkinson line; her father had hated her for it. He thought she was no better than a squib. She had always been intuitive, and been able to feel others intentions and understand their emotions well enough, but she had never been able to feel it until her 15th birthday; the clock had struck midnight, and suddenly, she could feel emotions and experiences that didn't belong to her. A year later, she could hear their thoughts, too. It was... overwhelming.

It was the reason she had been an invaluable soldier in Voldemort's army. Knowing people's thoughts without even having to cast a spell, feeling their emotions without even having to look at them, being able to influence them...

It made torturing enemies that much more creative.

But Pansy had come to terms with it. Despite the Dark Lord using her gifts for something horrible, she loved that part of herself, and refused to let him take it.

She could feel everyone, all the time. Draco had taught her a bit of occlumency in Seventh year to help combat it, to ease her headaches and let her have peace of mind, away from the thoughts of others. She was shit at it, of course, but it helped. Her grandmother had given her private lessons on how to hone in her power, make it a lethal blade instead of an untameable wildfire. She taught her how to block out people's emotions. It was handy for intuitive magic, but painful most of the time.

She could still feel auras, and if she focused and let down some of her walls, she could feel specific people's emotions and hear their thoughts; if she let her walls fall completely, it

would be like it was before she had learned control, everyone's internal monologue and deepest emotions screaming at her, all day long, every day. Draco was a talented occlumens himself, but she could still feel his aura. She even felt Voldemort's.

Everyone. She could feel everyone. But not him.

Out of all people, out of all fucking people, weasel was the one exception to her gift.

No, she never thought about it.

In spite of the company Granger kept, and her incessant bothering, living in the Eighth year tower had its perks. Instead of being crammed into dorms, they were given suites; each had its own small common room, two shared bedrooms, and one single. Of course, Granger had taken the single room, as head girl. Daphne and Pansy shared the room on the far side of the suite; Lovegood and Weaslette shared the room nearer Granger's. According to Daphne some of the Seventh years had been moved to the Eighth year dorms to avoid Overflow.

She swung her feet over her bed, sliding her feet into silk slippers and tiptoeing past Daphne, who was snoring like a mammoth, her blonde hair a frizzy mess around her.

She walked into their small sitting room, using the coffee maker Granger had bought to make herself a cup. She had never much been a fan of coffee, but damn her if Granger's muggle machines didn't make the best cappuccino she had ever tasted.

"Can't sleep?" Pansy jolted, her magic shooting out and knocking over a plant on the small kitchenette counter. She turned to find Hermione sitting on one of the fur-covered bean bags, (Lovegood insisted they be fake fur), wild curls hidden under a black silk bonnet, surrounded by mounds of paper and books.

"Yea, sorry, I'm just making coffee," She said, cleaning the shattered plant off the floor. Hermione rushed over to help her.

"Oh, don't apologize, it's my fault for scaring you."

Pansy got up, wiping her hands on her bare legs. "Do you want a cup?" She asked.

Granger blinked at her in surprise, and then smiled brightly. "Yea, I would love one."

Pansy resisted the urge to roll her eyes at the girl's excitement, and restarted the machine. She peeped over at Granger, who had her nose buried in an unnaturally large book, and opened the cabinet above the small fridge, taking out a flask of strong french wine Blaise had bought her and pouring it into her coffee. She picked up Granger's mug and floated them both to the coffee table between the loveseat and two large bean bags opposing each other. She sat down on the loveseat across from Granger and slid her drink in front of her, giving her a tight smile.

She set her book down and picked up the steaming drink, wrapping her small hands around it and looking out the window. Pansy envied that, a bit, but she supposed having baby hands came with being short and delicate like Granger and Weaslette were. Pansy had always been a tall girl herself, and in her early teenage years, every time she thought she would stop

growing, she didn't, until she got to 5'9. She had learned to love it, over time. Love being taller than most girls, and learn to use her long limbs for elegance, and power. Besides, wizard men were unnaturally tall, so that had never been much of a problem, either.

"I can't sleep anymore, either." Pansy looked up at her, tearing her eyes off her hands. She did that a lot, these days; especially near a full moon. Became hyper-fixated with something and lost herself in her thoughts; she supposed it was a technique that had stuck with her from her time at Azkaban.

"What?"

"I think it's because my body is still set in war mode. I mean, when Ron Harry and I were hunting for the horcruxes, we had to constantly be on guard. My adrenaline was always so high, I barely ever needed sleep, and when I did, I taught myself to wake up at the drop of a pin. I used to be a deep sleeper. Now if I hear one noise, I'm up."

"Oh. Yes, I suppose, it's hard to shuck those habits." That was part of it, of course, but Pansy knew her reason for not sleeping; she never usually remembered her dreams, but it was the moment before she slept that she was afraid of; that small, lonesome purgatory she entered when she was alone with her thoughts and her mind wasn't occupied with something, and she had all the free time in the world to stare into the darkness and lose herself in her demons.

One in particular named Theo.

"I don't know if I'll ever be able to convince myself I'm really safe," She whispered. Pansy looked into her brown eyes, limned with silver. She had a sudden need to comfort the girl, but wasn't exactly if she would be comfortable with hugging a Death Eater. She settled for touching her hand instead, squeezing her fingers lightly.

"I don't think I will either." Granger smiled sadly, and then frowned a bit, quirked a thick brow.

"Is that why you're pouring wine into your coffee at 4:30 in the morning?" Pansy immediately snatched her hand back, and Hermione laughed a bit. "Don't worry, your secret's safe with me. There are worse ways to cope."

"Yes, there are." There most definitely are.

"You know, I don't think I could've gotten through the war without my friends, Pansy." She stared at her inquisitively. "Harry, Ron, Ginny, they're my family. Ginny's the sister I never had growing up. Even Harry's father had his friends. No matter how their story ended, they never stopped being brothers. Never stopped caring for each other. Voldemort may be gone, but we're still fighting every day. You need your people, Pansy."

Pansy flinched at the sound of his name, and folded her arms. "I have people," she said. Had. Theo is gone.

Hermione nodded, looking out the window again. "Yes, I suppose you do." She smiled at her, dimples poking out. "But there's never a harm in gaining more."

She wanted to change the subject. "What's the deal with Potter's father and his friends?"

"What do you mean?"

"I'm always hearing some sort of great story about James Potter and Sirius Black, or the legend of Madooders-"

"Marauders," She corrected, and Pansy smirked.

"I've seen carvings of their names, like, everywhere. In fourth year, Draco found the words 'Sirius Black fucked 'blank' on this table' carved under one of the tables in the Slytherin common room. Which is weird, because I am 100% sure Sirius Black was in Gryffindor."

Hermione smirked. "He was. And what do you mean, 'blank'?"

"The letters were crossed over a bunch of times. The most we could make out was 'moo', which doesn't make any kind of sense."

Hermione's brows raised, and she smiled widely. "Yes, it doesn't."

"So what's the deal with them? I thought one of them betrayed the other or something."

"No. The story was twisted a million different ways, but the short version is that it was really Peter Pettigrew that betrayed James and Lily, and he framed Sirius Black."

"No shit," Pansy said.

"No shit," She nodded. "Pettigrew let his fear overcome him," She said with a particular look of distaste. "So he betrayed the only real family he ever had."

"Why do you say 'family'? I mean, none of them were related, were they?"

Hermione seemed to think it over for a moment. "Probably not less in the sense that all Pureblood families are distantly related, somehow. But no. They were brothers. They would've changed the world for each other. In the same sense that Harry and all the Weasleys are my family, or you and Draco."

"What would you know about Draco and I?"

"Please. I watched the two of you fight over a salt shaker at lunch last week. I may not have any siblings, but I recognize a brother-sister relationship when I see one."

Pansy smiled. It was true, if anyone was her brother, it was definitely Draco. "I guess you're not wrong."

"I know I'm not wrong. Besides, they really did change the world for each other. They became animagi at 15. The marauders, I mean." Pansy's brows raised, and she swallowed a large gulp of her coffee. The bitter alcohol helped calm her sensitive nerves, reel in the buzzing magic.

"You bloody Gryffindors are a lot of relentless idiots." Granger smiled warmly, as if it were a compliment. "Nonetheless, I have to admit it's... impressive. Why?"

"You know Remus Lupin, our third year defense against the dark arts professor?" Pansy nodded. "He was one fourth of the Marauders. Sort of the mastermind behind all their pranks and shenanigans. Well you know he's a werewolf, of course, thank you Malfoy." She saluted her fingers to the air, and Pansy felt an urge to laugh. "They became animagi to help him during the full moon. All three of them went down to the Shrieking Shack where Lupin was kept every month, and helped him so that he wouldn't hurt himself."

"Hurt himself?"

"Yes, because Remus was bound and alone, he would typically attack himself when he was in werewolf form, as a way to release the restless energy. It was a... unique situation."

"Why the Shrieking Shack? Isn't it haunted?" Hermione gave Pansy a knowing look, raising her brows. "Oh. That was Lupin, the whole time. Right?"

She smiled brightly. "Wow, Parkinson, you could've been a Ravenclaw." Pansy rolled her eyes.

"And Dumbledore, the professors knew about this?"

"They knew Remus was a werewolf, but the rest of the Marauders were unregistered. It was illegal to become animagi, so they didn't tell anyone. Although, I suppose Lily knew once she married James."

"Leave it to Gryffindor to somehow break every rule in the book and still come out as heroes. It's a trait I admire, honestly," She whispered, and cleared her throat. "Wouldn't the wolf have hurt them, though? Their animagus forms?"

"No, actually, werewolves can interact perfectly fine with other animals. I suppose the connection just clicked into place."

Pansy stared at the other girl for a moment. She set down her coffee. "I have to go," She said. Hermione gave her a strange look as Pansy headed for the door. Her magic was buzzing again, the scent making her feel high.

"Pansy? Where are you going?"

"Erm, to the- to the Quidditch pitch."

"It's 5:30am, and you're going to the quidditch pitch in the freezing cold, in your pyjamas?" Pansy looked down at the silk shorts and tank top she was wearing, thin slippers and braid her hair was held in. Right.

"Right, yea, I'm just gonna go change, then." Hermione nodded.

"I'll come with you, since I've got nothing better to do-"

"No!" Hermione looked at her with wide eyes. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean it like that. I just- like to be alone sometimes, yea?" She nodded her head, eyes sad, her heart disappointment washing through her. Pansy cursed herself for being an empath. "But I'll meet you in the Great hall for breakfast?"

Hermione smiled. "Yea, okay." Pansy turned, going into her room and quickly grabbing clothes and heading into the shower. She turned the water as boiling hot as possible. That typically helped soothe her magic, burn down her tingling skin to smooth points.

She dressed quickly, a thick cropped black turtleneck sweater that covered her hands to the knuckles, high-waisted leather pants that hugged her body and flared a bit below the knee, silver chains and black platform boots. She took a small black mini-bag that was hanging off her bed frame, letting her long raven hair free, clouding herself in perfume. The perfume helped to mute the scent, clear her head. Letting her hair loose acted like a protective barrier around her.

Pansy quickly exited the living room and made her way down the stairs to the common room. Normally she was out of breath by the time she got down, since their room was at the top of the tower, but the energy boost the full moon gave her was extra this time; she felt relentless.

She exited the common room and made her way towards the library. She knew a story she had read once. Nothing research related, of course, it was one of the cheesy ones she had devoured during her obsession with Romance novels back in third year; thinking back on it, 14 year old her probably should not have been reading descriptive sex scenes, but the damage was already done.

She zoomed right past Madam Pince, bidding a quiet hello, and went for the Fiction section until she came upon the title. Yes.

Lord of the Moonlight by Moretta Kralickson. The story was ridiculously unrealistic, of course, and taught Pansy inexplicably high expectations for sex; She had thought for sure her first time would be a sort of mind-shattering, earth-quaking experience, and that her first orgasm would be given to her by the dashing Bulgarian she had lost her virginity to at the yule ball; of course, this wasn't the case.

Her first time was alright, but she felt shitty afterwards, and contracted an infection that lasted for two weeks; Pearl Selwyn, one of the sixth years that was dating Pansy's cousin at the time had to get her muggle medicine to combat the infection. Apparently STIs were extremely uncommon among wizards. Her first orgasm was given to her by herself.

She flipped through the book, searching for a specific page that she had marked when she read it for the third time; the book had a bit of plot to go along with all the sex; it was about a servant girl serving in a rich Lord's manor, who discovers her master's secret: he is a werewolf, and she is his 'mate'. Pansy found the page.

"Alas, dear diary, I cannot help my attraction. I feel... connected to him. He is my master, and I am his servant, but I know we must be something more, for I cannot seem to draw myself away... Being near him is like being home, and when we are apart I feel as if a chain has wrapped around my neck, pulling me tight and reeling me to him. Most days it feels as if his

pain is my own. I know I can find him if I look, and I know in his wolverine form he will not hurt me..."

"That's it," She whispered. "That's fucking it!"

There was a werewolf on the Hogwarts grounds, and she was being drawn to it. No doubt the book's shitty explanation of 'mating' or whatever the fuck was blasphemy, but she was a natural empath; her talents in Divination and intuitive magic were unmatched by almost anyone in the world. She guessed that it was a Legilimens, and reaching out towards her subconsciously. It was probably in great pain.

She just had to find it.

That would be easy, of course. She had learned to become an animagi during the war, to help transfer messages and secretly meet with Theo. She wasn't sure how well the wolf would respond to a black swan squawking at it, but she didn't care. If she met the wolf, and knew who it was, she could simply cut the connection, and block them out; She had done it before with all her roommates, and her friends. It was easier to focus, to not become lost in all the emotions, if she blocked out everyone else's.

She read the book from start to finish in only a few hours, doing more research on wolves and their interactions with other animals, and mating. She figured the information could be useful, if the wolf needed help.

She tried not to think too hard about the 'mating' aspect. Cleaving one's soul to another. She knew if there were anyone in the world who could've possibly been her soulmate, it was Theo.

But Theo is gone.

She shook her head, wringing out the thoughts.

Once the clock struck 8:00, she walked to the great hall, making a beeline for the Slytherin table before she remembered her promise to sit with Granger today. Shit.

She sat at the Gryffindor table, and saw Blaise and Draco across the room, making questioning motions at her. She rolled her eyes, shrugging and mouthed, "I'll explain later." She knew they wouldn't stop teasing her for this.

Eventually Granger came in with Lovegood and Weaslette, and the three of them smiled, chattering away over their breakfast.

"I'm so glad you could sit with us today, Pansy," Luna said in that dreamy voice of hers.

"Yes, of course, Luna. I don't mind at all." Dean Thomas and Seamus Finnegan eyed her wearily, but didn't seem inclined to put up a fight. Actually, there were many people from other houses sitting together, all talking and laughing like... normal. It was so normal. The only table that had only one house sitting at it was Slytherin, and there were only a couple

seventh years and most of the Eighth years sitting there; the few younger Slytherins were all sitting at different tables.

Pansy couldn't help how much it irked her. She had always wanted this; she had wanted to be friends with people from other houses, secretly. She wanted to have a normal school experience, to be normal. She didn't want to be the head bitch in charge, plowing down anyone who stood in her way.

Theo would've loved this. He would've paraded around pulling stupid pranks with Gryffindors, and teaching first year Hufflepuffs his grandmother's secret chocolate chip cookie recipe, and let Ravenclaws try whatever experiments or new drugs they had created on him. He would teach young Slytherins all about house pride, and unity.

That was the thing she had always loved about Theo; he had a quality her, Blaise, and Draco didn't; he had grown up in their dark world, but he had never given up on the light. He had dreamt of a world where things wouldn't be so hard, and they could live like normal kids, and be happy together. He had fought for it.

She could see his green eyes twinkling and those lethal dimples that could make her heart stutter, that crooked smile and messy chestnut-bronze hair. She knew he would've loved it, and she would've loved experiencing it with him.

But that had all been her decision, hadn't it? She had fought for Voldemort, and she had bullied Hermione, and killed Theo, and-

"Hey, Mione, I'm sorry I can't make your meeting tonight. I have a-" Her blue-green eyes snapped up and met Ron Weasley's, whose nostrils flared as he stared at her.

He froze in place, staring at her. He wore a black jumper and black skinny jeans today, with black combat boots; she realized with a jolt that the loose black jumper he wore covered his knuckles, and the material of it was the same as the one she was wearing; their outfits practically matched.

His neck length hair fell onto his sunken cheekbones. His freckles stood stark as if Merlin himself had sprinkled cinnamon onto the ashen skin when he was being made. Flaming embers on a gray sky. He looked sick and oddly jumpy, like he had just crawled out of the grave and inhaled a bag of cocaine, riding out the euphoric high and waiting until his collision with the Earth.

A fallen, burning star.

He blinked and wiped at his pierced nose, sniffing. The action caused his jumper sleeve to fall back, and she could see a tattoo of a bird on his hand, and chess pieces on his fingers. Several silver rings adorned them. He turned back to Hermione. "Erm, right yea, I have a, erm- a thing, I've got a thing tonight, sorry, love." He dragged his hand through his hair as he spoke, and then touched the back of her head affectionately and left quickly with a vacant expression. She shook her head, picking at her food, and turned to smirk at Hermione.

"Love?" I see the rumors are true, then?"

Hermione's brows drew together, and her eyes widened. "What? No! No, no- Ron?! No, absolutely not, Ron is like my brother-"

"Your brother that you've shagged?" She asked, and Hermione's brown skin flushed faint pink.

"Godric, no, he's just-" Her voice was raised an octave, and she was lying. Pansy knew she was- she had been able to snuff out when people told lies a long time ago. You didn't even need to be an empath to do it really. It was the little things- a fidgeting hand, a blinking eye, flushed cheeks, stuttering, too much eye contact, too cold of a voice.

She smiled. "I'm an empath, you know. I know when people are lying. I also know when people have shagged. No one is that in sync with each other." Hermione's cheeks grew even redder, and she looked around at the table, leaning closer and voice dropping to a whisper.

"Okay, yes, we shagged a few times in sixth year, but honestly we are just friends. There were never any feelings or meaning there, and there never will be. But you have to swear not to tell anyone. I've already spent so much time fighting Rita Skeeter's gossip and it's caused enough problems-"

"Problems? So you have someone new, then? Someone a bit jealous, perhaps?"

"I-" Pansy quirked a brow, giving her a look that said, I'll know if you're lying. Hermione let out a breath. "Yes," She hissed. "But you can't tell anyone."

Pansy laughed. "Alright, Granger, your secret is safe with me."

"I'm serious, Pansy," She pleaded. "Promise me." She held out her pinky, and Pansy gave her an incredulous look.

"You're joking, right?"

"Please." Pansy rolled her eyes and took Granger's pinky.

"I swear, alright? I won't tell." She meant it; she wouldn't. No matter how much she desperately wanted to push Hermione away, she had done too much for her to ever betray her trust, and she was right. She was running out of people.

"Thank you, Pansy. Really. And call me Hermione, I'm begging you." Pansy smiled.

"Alright, Hermione."

III

Later that day, when classes were over, Pansy prepared herself by firing hexes in the new DADA practice room, and shifting back and forth as fast as possible. In case this went south, she would need to be able to shift back and fly away, or if that failed her, hex the living hell out of this wolf.

She fired a stupefy at a simulated hawk, and then a petrificus totalus at a bear; the glowing animals could be made with a simple enough transfiguration spell, and animated to prance around and simulate attacks; it was typically used by animal hunters in old pureblood society, and eventually to help train aurors in the 70s.

She supposed Potter was probably doing something similar to this at the same moment, somewhere in the ministry, or maybe the auror training centers in Romania.

Pansy couldn't help thinking of Theo. Being here... it brought on memories. After all, the training room wasn't so different from her Theodore Sr.'s basement...

February 14th, 1998. Nott residence.

"Again," Blaise yelled. Theo's shirtless body was dripping sweat, turning his hair into stringy dark strands plastered to his forehead. He motioned his hands to come to him, readying into a fighting position, feet apart, fists up.

Pansy held her fists in a defensive position, cocking her head. Theo lunged forward, going for her center, but she sidestepped him, letting him round her. She smirked at him, and he smirked back.

His leg shot out, attempting to trip her, but she jumped over it, aparating behind him and shooting two fingers out at a pressure point in his neck, sending his knees buckling; she pulled his neck backwards, kicking the back of his knees. He fell to the floor and she intended to swing on top and pin him to the ground, but his strength overpowered her; he rolled her over, pinning her wrists above her head, smirking.

"Got you."

She breathed hard, refusing to give up, and managed to wiggle her wrists slightly downwards, touching her fingers to his pulse points.

Her magic stirred within her veins, and she sent a calming wave of relaxation through his bloodstream, into his brain.

Just before Theo's body collapsed, she flipped him over, straddling his waist and pinning his arms to the training mat. She drained the relaxation from his head, keeping it restricted to his body so he couldn't struggle against her. She smiled and kissed him triumphantly.

"Got you," She whispered over his lips. He smirked, and she let go of her control on his body so his hands could grab her waist, lips pressing to hers. He was sweaty and smelt gross, but she didn't care, because his lips tasted like salt and mint and citrus, and his kisses were sweet and for just a moment, she could forget that she was spending Valentine's day training for war, and not laying in bed with her boyfriend.

"Can we focus, please?" Blaise said irritably, pinching the bridge of his nose. Pansy opened her eyes and smiled at him, lips still on Theo's. She got up, pulling her wizard by the arm and heading for the giant cold water jug ahead of them. He pulled on her ponytail as she walked ahead of him, and when she stuck her tongue out at him he light smacked her arse.

"Don't be angry, Blaise darling," Daphne said from the benches. "We've all improved greatly. Pansy is really getting a hang of wandless magic, and combining her legilimency and empathic powers."

"Really good' isn't good enough. We have to be perfect, in case He ever tries to test us. What if we have to fight our parents? Or each other? Or fucking Potter, or someone? We've gotta be ready."

"Don't worry mate," Theo said, clapping him on the back. "Everything will be alright. I know it will."

Blaise looked up at Theo, who was chugging a bottle of water. "Your optimism is a rare gift that I have not been blessed with, Theodore. We can't just believe everything will be alright and 'so it is' or whatever the fuck. We've gotta push through this ourselves. Sadly the power of positivity won't bloody well get us anywhere."

Pansy felt inclined to agree with him, but she would never deny Theo his positive speeches; they were the only thing that kept her going, nowadays. The thought that they were doing all this, condemning themselves, with the idea that one day, everything would be alright. They would make it out alive and live their lives together, and be happy.

That was the one thing on her mind, always: that life with Theo.

"Alright, enough dilly-dallying," Blaise said. "Again!"

Present day.

Pansy got back to the dorm just before moonrise, telling Hermione she was sorry she couldn't make it to her study group after she invited her for the millionth time and Pansy said no for the millionth time. It wasn't necessarily that she minded; Blaise and Daphne usually went, and they got along surprisingly well for being ex lovers, so there was no drama there. Astoria usually dragged Draco along with her, and Pansy was 100% sure that the two were shagging; she didn't mind studying with her friends, not even with Hermione.

But she did mind Weasley staring daggers at her the whole time, and she equally minded a particular group of fifth year ravenclaws and hufflepuffs that never stopped whispering about her.

They didn't really come to study, either; they came to ogle at Blaise, Draco, and Weasley. She was used to the two boys having a fanclub, but it seemed that since Blaise had been crowned Head Boy (for some reason McGonagall thought that was a good idea), other houses, especially the younger years, had gotten more... comfortable following them around and running their mouths; Pansy did not have the energy to restrain herself, tonight.

She jumped into bed immediately, mumbling 'goodnight' to Daphne, and turned all the lights out. She hadn't lied when she told the blonde girl she had an intense migraine; When her magic was amplified every full moon, it became harder to block out everyone else's thoughts and emotions, and her head hurt from taking on so much feeling at once. It was hard enough to deal with her own, let alone a thousand other teenagers and 16 professors.

As soon as all her suitemates had left, she crawled out of bed, transfiguring pillows to look like her body curled under the heavy blankets, and a splatter of raven hair peeking out.

She changed into workout clothes, although she supposed it wasn't exactly necessary since she was going to be in bird form, but her mother had instilled values in her that she couldn't carve out if she wanted to; an outfit for every occasion.

She snuck out of the dorms, into the outer courtyard, by the black lake. Somewhere out there, she could hear howling. She looked up to the cloudy sky; The moon was slowly rising to it's crest.

She took a deep breath.

"Are you ready for this?" Theo had whispered to her. They were faced with the doors of the Malfoy drawing room; The Dark Lord had called upon them. They were being tested. She squeezed his hand in hers. Together. They would survive this, and live together.

"I'm ready."

Pansy transformed.

two.

Chapter Notes

CW: alcohol abuse + sexual content.

Songs for this chapter: Young and Beautiful, Lana del Rey; Cherry, Lana del Rey; Call Out My Name, The Weeknd; Waves, Normani; Gosha, \$not; Poison, Brent Faiyaz;

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Pansy flew over the Hogwarts grounds, past the Whomping Willow, to the Shrieking Shack. From her sharpened eyesight, she could see Professor McGonagall in cat form running from the great tree. Was that how she got in? That meant that she knew, of course. So the wolf had help. She wanted to believe it couldn't be possible, but it had happened before, with James Potter and his magraders.

She flew towards the decrepit building, landing on a fragile window sill of molded wood; she pecked at the boarded windows with her beak until they flew off the open square; there was no glass in it. She peeked into the room, settling on the high corner just in case the wolf decided it didn't like her presence too much. She looked around. Where was it?

Black Pepper. Sage. Sandalwood.

This is it.

The room was washed in that scent, coating every damp corner and blanketing every mite of dust. It shoved itself up her nostrils, fueling her organs like wildfire. Pure energy crackled in the air; she could taste it, almost see it. She ruffled her feathers, a breeze passing through the window and past her.

The wolf below her dragged itself out of a dark corner out of her line of sight.

It wasn't... normal.

The wolf was strangely humanoid, some strange sort of beast; The snout was long and wolf-like, ears pointed straight upwards; it's body was a sleek, dark russet sort of color, long and thinly muscled. Giant canine's couldn't be held in it's maw. It was at least seven or eight feet tall, with long limbs that ended in paw-like talons.

This wasn't right. It couldn't be, because Pansy had seen werewolves before. She had visited Fenrir Greyback's pack, and seen him transform in front of her; they looked for the most part like wolves, but larger and stronger. More vicious. Their eyes were typically yellow, or black. This one... it's eyes were blue. Piercing, bright aquamarine, that stared into her soul. They looked sentient. They were looking right at her, half snarling, half whimpering.

She flew down cautiously, and landed on a chair in front of the beast. It sort of... sat in front of her. With it's weird, sort-of-human sort-of-not body, it sat in a distinctly wolfish form. It watched her, letting out a long and low whimper, lowering its head.

She breathed in. That scent... her magic sang for it, a raging and melodious song that pounded through her blood, snapping through her body. She wanted to fly and dance for that song, to sing it and never stop. The wolf looked at her as if it understood. As if it heard the song, too.

She knew what to do. But she wasn't... she wasn't sure if she should; what it could mean. But her body wanted her to; her heart and mind and soul begged her to; so she did.

She pressed her forehead to the crest of the wolf's, and let her walls down. She wanted to feel what he was feeling, match her soul to his and curl them around each other, intertwining and dancing to a melody only they could hear.

A hurricane of emotions flooded her senses. She was almost knocked over. Anxiety, grief, fear, hatred, anger, sadness, regret, insecurity, more fear, more hate, love, happiness, humor, stress, desire, lust...

And one thing, over all else. Her.

She saw herself through the wolf's eyes; this person knew her; She saw her head turning at a calling of her name; she saw herself earlier today, sitting next to Hermione at the lunch table, staring with wide eyes. She saw herself walking down the halls, sitting in the common room, reading a book in the library, sleeping in front of the fireplace, chatting with Daphne, Blaise and Draco at Hogsmeade...

She saw herself at the Yule ball, twirling in the black dress she had worn that was, admittedly, a bit too low-cut for a 15 year old. She saw herself in the cage above the Wizengamot, eyes narrowed. She saw herself with pleading, desperate eyes, watching the memory of Theo's death, screaming until her throat was ravaged and raw.

Most of all, though, there was a moment; one moment, back in sixth year, during a class; it seemed to be potions. They were making something... Amortentia. Yes, the goldish-pink hue was familiar. The person inhaled. It smelled of...

Violets, and woodsmoke. Wine? Yes, she recognized the scent of that wine, the one Blaise had bought her from France.

Then, the scene changed, like it was happening right after what she had just seen. She was passing him in the halls; She bumped into him, and sneered, something unintelligible passing from her lips; but that was not the focus. No, the focus was the scent. Her hair had fanned about, and her scent was pulled over his senses.

Violets. Woodsmoke. Wine.

It was intoxicating. It followed him everywhere he went. How long had he been a werewolf?

Who was he? She knew... she knew, it was familiar, it was right there on the tip of her brain-

He shut her out, growling. Okay. I get the message. Not yet.

To bloody hell with that. She would find out who this man was if she had to sell her bloody organs to know.

He pressed himself to her again. They were still forehead to forehead; this time, it was different. A different part of himself, wrapped in that scent. Suddenly, it didn't feel painful anymore, it didn't feel like shooting heroin through her veins. It felt like a calmer drug, soft and relaxing, warm and hazy.

She knew what he was doing. He was pressing his magic to hers, wrapping his soul around her and holding her close. It felt like joy. It felt like freedom, like light she had never known. It felt like home.

It more addictive than any drink.

Her magic calmed, the buzzing soothing, crackling simmering down. She felt weightless. For so long, her magic had been a wildfire, dancing and burning, her nerves constantly scrubbed raw, wounded buds left out to be contaminated by the public. His magic laying over hers... it was a balm and a blessing, a safety blanket she would gladly wrap herself in.

It was like being given wings.

She hadn't felt this... unchained since before Theo's death. Before Hogwarts, before the war. Maybe before anything.

I will find you. I swear it on Salazar. I will.

They remained like that all night, magic to magic, flame to flame. Until the moon began to set, and she heard McGonagall's thoughts from below the Shack, heading up to check on him and watch his transformation back to human. She wanted to hide in a corner, to watch too and help him, but as she stood on the edge of the window sill, peeping her small head into the room, he made eye contact, and she heard one word:

Go.

It was pleading, rough and deep; desperate. And she knew she would recognize it when they were in school, and find him. So she nodded, and left.

She had managed to cast a confundus charm and sneak back into the dorm without waking anyone; Daphne hadn't even arrived yet.

She wouldn't bother sleeping; she survived on little more than coffee and wine these days, anyway. So she got up and prepared herself for the day, feeling a sudden need to look... good.

What?

No. This was not like that. Her boyfriend had just died. Her boyfriend had died, and she had killed him, and killed her piece of shit father which surprisingly didn't affect her as much as she thought it would, and she would never say it aloud but she could admit to herself that she was forming a dependence on alcohol, and she was on probation for the next ten years, and she was a mess.

Absolutely not. She didn't even know if she could be in anything like that ever again. Not after Theo.

He was her soulmate; plain and simple. She knew there would never be another man in the world she would love like him. She didn't want to. She wasn't willing to give anyone her heart like that, never again. She would never dishonor him that way.

She knew what he would say in this situation, of course.

Stop being a bloody pussy and put on your lip gloss, Parkinson. You're being dramatic.

She looked at her naked figure in the mirror, fresh from the shower. You're being dramatic.

She huffed, slipping on sheer black tights and a black pleated miniskirt, along with a tight, long sleeved cropped top with a square neckline and a color of forest green that flattered her eyes rather nicely and made them look darker and greener. She slipped her arms through a cropped black denim jacket that bunched around her shoulders if she let it, and put on her black platform heels, slicking her hair back in a low ponytail. She tugged small, chunky silver hoops in her ears, and Theo's ring on her finger, as always.

A thin, brandished white gold band; one surface of the ring was flatter, and a bit wider, and in it was a small obsidian crystal in the shape of a heart. The same crystal that was built into her wand; a family heirloom, for generations.

He was going to transfigure it into an engagement ring, when the war ended.

But she had killed him.

Her eyes filled with tears, and she quickly wiped at them. I need a drink. She reached under her bed and pulled out fire whiskey, pouring it into her enclosed coffee mug and holding it close to her like it was her life boat, gulping down a few shots and wiping her mouth. She didn't put lipgloss on.

Sorry, love. Can't bully me from beyond the grave.

Oh we'll see about that, Miss Parkinson, He would say.

She grabbed her bag and headed out the door. It was Tuesday, which meant she had Potions in the morning and then Transfiguration after lunch, and Astronomy at midnight. Wasn't Slughorn announcing a project, today? She had no idea.

Daphne was making her way up the stairs as Pansy made her way down. She was wearing the same clothes from last night, her hair a mess, love bites peppering her neck. She froze when she saw Pansy.

"Good morning, Pans, you're up awfully early!" She said cheerfully.

"It's 9:15, Daph. We have class in 10 minutes."

"Right! I'm just going to go get changed then! Wait for me, yea, I'll be just a minute!"

"Alright," She said suspiciously as Daphne rushed past her. "Daphne?"

Daphne turned around quickly, still smiling tightly and overly-bright, cheeks red. "Yes?"

"Better glamour those bruises while you're at it," Pansy said, motioning to her neck.

"Right," Daphne squeaked, and Pansy laughed, sitting down on the couch and zoning out until Daphne came barreling down the steps in a long and loose fuzzy light blue sweater, lacey white top, and blue high waisted jeans.

She was in the middle of tying her hair up in a messy bun with a strip of white silk that had blue daisies printed on them, and she motioned for Pansy to get up and go, running. Pansy smiled lazily and took a sip of her 'coffee.'

"I don't know why you're running like Frankie First year, Daph. What are they gonna do, give us detention?"

"Yes!" She yelled. "I can't spend another afternoon cleaning tables with Filch when I could be-"

"What? Shagging your boyfriend?"

"You could say that," She sing-songed, still walking fast. "Can you hurry the fuck up, Pansy, we don't have time to look cool, we've got five minutes left and the Potions classroom is all the way in the dungeons!"

"Relax, we'll just take the shortcut through the kitchens. Besides, I always look cool," She said with a cheeky grin, making an effort to relax her shoulders and sway her hips, strutting arrogantly. Daphne made a grunting noise and pulled her along, half running. "Daphne, quit it, I don't want to start sweating and then have to bloody shower half-way through the day!"

"I don't fucking care, wanker!" Pansy giggled and they finally burst through the doors of the Potions classroom noisily, Slughorn and the rest of the students sitting at their seats in the classroom. They all turned to the pair of Slytherins, and Daphne flushed slightly.

"Good morning Professor," She said with a bright smile.

"Good morning, Miss Greengrass, Miss Parkinson. You are late."

"Yea, sorry," Pansy mumbled. "This one was just getting back from a one-off-"

"So excited to absorb new knowledge this morning!" Daphne screeched tightly, shooting a deathly glare at Pansy. Pansy held in her laugh, and they made their way to their small table in the back.

"Yes, as I was saying," Slughorn started. "I, your Transfiguration professor, and your Defense Against the Dark Arts Professor, will be collaborating for the rest of the year. Instead of learning different units and areas of spells and potions in two week increments, you will have a partner from now until the end of the year that you will do several research projects with under one assigned topic, and make presentations of it. At the end of the year, there will be a sort of 'show' to test what you have learned, and celebrate your graduation from Hogwarts, despite all that has happened, erm... in the past."

At the mention of the word 'partner', Daphne and Pansy had already looked at each other and nodded, pinkies intertwined like they used to do when they were kids. Granger's hand, of course, was the first to shoot in the air. "Will we be choosing these partners, Professor?" She asked with a giddy smile on her face. Granger was excited; slightly guilty, a bit stressed and terrified, but mostly excited; she was planning something.

"That is the catch, my dear!" Slughorn boasted. "In light of recent events, we would like to encourage our students to interact with each other, and push forth with inter-house unity! So, with that said, we, your professors, will be deciding your partners together." There was a collective groan throughout the class. Daphne frowned at Pansy. Fuck. They're probably gonna pair me with some bloody Hufflepuff, or fucking Granger and she'll ruin my life for the next year and make me study with her every hour of the day. Why, Merlin, why? "Think of this as a year-long NEWTs extension. This is, of course, only for the Eighth and Seventh years. Any sixth year in my class, you are excluded from the change in curriculum, and I would like you to see me after the period has ended, please!"

Actually, she supposed she would be lucky to be paired with Hermione; she was a good student, and wasn't bad company. Besides, Pansy could probably convince the curly haired girl that she was completely incompetent, and not have to do any work for the rest of the year. Yes, being with Granger would be perfect, and from the crazed look in her eye, Pansy would bet that was truly the case.

"Now, on to the partner lists! Miss Granger, if you would please," Slughorn motioned for Hermione to take the floor, and she stood up from her small table in the front. Pansy noticed the seat next to her was empty. Where was Weaselbee?

"Right then," Hermione said, clearing her throat. "Blaise Zabini and Luna Lovegood." Luna smiled and got up, exchanging seats with Anthony Goldstein and sitting next to Blaise. He grinned at her good-naturedly. Bloody Blaise and his flirting. Pansy rolled her eyes. "Daphne Greengrass and Anthony Goldstein." Daphne perked up, eyes brightening. So that's our mystery man. Ravenclaw, not bad. "Padma Patil and Dean Thomas. Michael Corner and Romilda Vane. Pansy Parkinson and Ron Weasley. Ginny Weasley and Cassius Warrington. Hermione Granger and Draco Malfoy-" Pansy almost didn't hear her own name. Wait a minute. Wait a fucking minute. She sat up straight, and made a beeline for Hermione, at the front of the classroom. Everyone was already changing their seats. "Wait, that's not right," Hermoine mumbled to herself. "Patil-Thomas, Corner-Vane, Granger-Malfoy? I didn't even think he was taking this class-"

"Granger!" Pansy said, slamming her hand down on the table. Hermione jumped. "Sorry," She mumbled. "What the fuck!"

"What, what's wrong?"

"What's wrong?! You paired me with fucking Weaselbee! The ginger kitty over there can't mix two ingredients together if someone held a fucking wand to his throat! Look around, he's not even in class right now!"

Hermione breathed out slowly. "Pansy, I assure you, Ron is a very capable student when he tries, if you just work with him-"

"Yea, that was the complete opposite of my intentions! I thought you'd pair me with yourself, and I could let you do all the work or at least I do the thinking, you do the writing!"

"So you intended to use my efforts to make a friendship with you to get ahead in class? How very Slytherin of you."

Heat flooded Pansy's face. "No, Hermione, I didn't mean it like that, I swear-" She didn't know why she was panicking, but she didn't want Hermione to think badly of her.

"I'm joking, Pansy, honestly I would've done the same thing if I had the opportunity to graduate with top marks and I knew how to get it. But I think someone messed with the list, I don't even remember Malfoy enrolling-"

"I'm here, peasants!" Draco's voice boomed from the doorway, and Blaise whooped. Pansy rolled her eyes. "And look, I brought little red riding hood with me."

He motioned towards the doorway, and Ron Weasley walked in, towering above everyone else in the room, even the tallest boys, Draco and Blaise. Weasley scowled at him, and walked straight towards Hermione, not even looking at Pansy; in fact, it seemed that he was deliberately leaning away from her. But from what she could see, he looked worn; even more so than usual.

Weasley said something to Hermione, and she showed him the list, leaning towards him, but Pansy was distracted. There was something nearby, something throwing her off; familiar...

"I am not working with her," Weasley told Hermione in a hard voice, staring at her intently.

Hermione, in a typical swotty-Granger fashion, put her hands on her hips, tilting her chin almost all the way upwards to look Weasley in the eyes. She was quite small, and he was especially large; even with her platform heels on, Pansy only came up to his nose, and she was a tall girl.

"Ronald, you will accept the assignment like everyone else and work together. That's the whole point of this, remember?" Hermione swiveled her head to catch Weasley's eyes, and he squeezed them shut, pinching his nose bridge. "Inter-house unity, and whatnot? Real Change?"

"Can't we make real change working together? I don't see how I'm gonna make any progress with... her. Besides, we work better together, Mione." He leaned closer, voice softening

brushing his fingers against her arm, but Granger swatted them off, wagging a finger in his face.

As Pansy watched their exchange, she realized something: that thing that had been throwing her off; there was something new here...

Weasley.

She could feel his aura, she realized with a start. She could see it around him. It was dim, a deep blue sort of color, and it was strangely cold, but she could feel it. What had changed?

Oddly enough, it wasn't so unfamiliar; it felt as if it had been there for a long, long time.

Pansy made a decision, in that moment, to move him farther up on her list:

Theo,

Weasley,

Her parents

Her childhood,

The war,

Azkaban,

The suite.

Right.

But in that moment, she felt oddly... triumphant. As if she had conquered him.

"Are you kidding me, Ronald? Resorting to flirting to get what you want? The levels you will sink to!" Pansy had a newfound respect for Granger.

"I would say it shows how desperate I am that you switch the bloody partners."

Pansy decided this was her moment to chip in. She hated Weasley, and she would rather drag her bare snatch against concrete before partnering with him, but she was also spiteful, and really, really wanted to disagree with him, even if it wouldn't benefit her in the long run.

"Actually, I think we'll work wonderfully together, Weasel." She snatched a potions book from the desk. "I simply cannot wait to spend almost every waking hour with you for the next year." She gave him a saccharine smile, and looked at Hermione triumphantly, who looked as if she was just seen a ghost.

"C'mon Weaselbee ol' pal, what happened to being progressive? Peace, love and whatnot?" Draco came from out of nowhere behind them, wrapping his arm around Hermione and Ron's

shoulders, who both looked particularly uncomfortable. "I for one, am so very excited to work with Grangie here."

"Mione, please, you hate Malfoy, just switch the partners-"

Hermione made a show of looking around innocently, and wrapping her arm around Draco's shoulders. "Hate? Why, I don't hate anyone, Ronald. No, I assure you, Drakey and I are the very best of friends!" She squeezed his shoulder, and Pansy bit her lip to keep from laughing at Draco's face when the word 'Drakey' left her mouth. Pansy could feel his regret.

Weasley rolled his eyes, throwing his hands up in the air, and grabbed a stack of scrolls, and a Potions book. "Let's just go get the bloody project over with," He muttered. Hermione grinned triumphantly, and Weasley stalked out of the classroom. Draco peered after him.

"He's got a walk, that one."

"Yes, like fucking Gumby," Hermione muttered, and Pansy and Draco looked to her in surprise, and then at each other and burst out laughing. Hermione's cheeks turned red. "How-how do you two know what Gumby is?"

Draco wiped his eyes and sighed, looking down at Hermione. "Theo had an obsession with kids shows." Pansy went quiet at that. "C'mon, Hermy, let's get to this project."

"But-"

Pansy turned, heading for the door. "I'm gonna catch up to Weasel!"

She exited the classroom as quickly as possible with zero intention of finding Weasel. She knew who she was really looking for: him.

Most of the time, if Pansy had a strong enough emotional connection to a person, she could easily find them almost anywhere. It was like each person's aura was a sort of beacon, and if she focused on the connection between them, it would shine brighter than anyone else's and draw her to them like a moth to a flame.

Maybe she hadn't truly met the werewolf in question, but she had been feeling a certain echo of his transformations for months, and last night was...

Well, to put it simply, it was the most intimate thing she had ever experienced, and it was with someone whose face she had never seen.

She took a deep breath, exhaling roughly, and felt for her magic. It was different, from her wizarding magic; empaths were a rare, dying breed, and that kind of magic was not the wizarding kind. It was... indescribable.

She reached that core of warmth and wrapped her hands around it, sending it out until she felt the hearts of every being in Hogwarts, every mind pulsating with different thoughts and emotions; it was overwhelming. Tears slipped down her face and she thanked Merlin she hadn't worn makeup today.

There! Just there, a line between the two of them. She could almost hear that song again. It was strong; stronger than anything she had ever experienced, even... Even with Theo.

She walked forward with purpose, eyes closed, but had a feeling that she was headed for the Library, or the Black Lake, and-

She slammed into someone's back and opened her eyes, about to apologize when she came face-to-face with Weaselbee's sharp fucking chin. She rubbed her forehead and glared at him, opening her mouth to ask him to watch where he was going and stop fucking coordinating his outfits with hers, when he looked down at her, and she met his eyes.

His eyes.

It's eyes were blue. Piercing, bright aquamarine, that stared into her soul. They looked sentient.

No.

The line pulled taut.

Her nostrils flared as she inhaled, drawing her magic to her, but one thing remained clear as day; the string, the connection between the two of them, stood stark alone, blazing between their bodies and sparking with magic. It had never felt that way before, not with anyone. Ever.

And that scent. That scent.

Black pepper. Sage. Sandalwood.

Fuck.

She took a step backward, and stumbled, almost falling. His hand shot out, and he caught her at the elbows, pulling her to him. That was fucking embarrassing; Pansy Parkinson never stumbled. Ever.

His skin...

His hands burned brands onto her arms, even through the fabric. She was embedded in his scent. And when he touched her... her body screamed one thing:

Home, Home, Home.

You, You, You.

She stared at him with wide eyes. "You," She whispered.

His eyes were black now, fiery hair falling into his face. He gave her a feral grin. "Me."

The voice... it was the same. That same guttural, deep timbre that had only said one word: go.

No.

Say it out loud. Tell him no. End this now. He's getting closer. Why is he getting closer? Say no.

Do you want to say no?

Do you want to say yes?

Do you want to talk at all?

Her back pressed against the wall, one of his hands still a flaming mark on her elbow, the other dragging a single finger up her thigh, slowly, slowly...

This is all wrong, her head said.

But it's so fucking right, her soul sang a familiar melody.

Her hands were... what were her hands doing? They were on his hips, under his long-sleeved shirt. His skin felt like it was a thousand degrees. She was touching him. She was touching him, and it made her entire being hum with pleasure. Nothing had ever felt this good.

Nothing.

Weasley pressed his body closer to her; she could feel every angle and curve of him. He towered over her. Her breaths were coming in short, heavy increments. She could feel his desire, his guilt, his pleasure, his relief for touching her, and standing close to her, inhaling her scent.

"I can feel it too," He said quietly. What? She tried to make herself speak, but all that came out was a breathless moan. Fuck.

She could feel him against her thigh, long and hard. She knew she was aroused, too. She knew she was lost in the pleasure, and she never wanted to be found.

He dragged his hand farther up her thigh, squeezing the side of her hip, thumb swiping across the bone. She moaned, and wrapped her arms around his back, cradling his shoulder blades.

He pulled on her ponytail to tip her head back, exposing her neck. He brushed his nose against her skin, the cold metal of his piercing making her shiver. He inhaled deeply. "You have no idea how long I've wanted to do this." He spoke as if he were chanting a holy prayer, voice guttural.

They were in a hallway. They were in a hallway, and they weren't in a bedroom, and his hands weren't on her bare skin, and he wasn't fucking her raw, and that had to happen, she needed it to happen.

"Ron," She breathed. "Stop, Ron, anyone could see." He pressed his lips against her pulse point, breathing in deep and moaning. She pulled him tighter to her, and his tongue flicked out.

"Good. Let them come out and see how weak you are for me, Pansy."

She half-moaned, but the sound of her name slapped her awake. Her eyes flew open, and she pushed him off of her, chest heaving, cheeks flushed. Fuck. Fuck. She stood frozen against the wall, Weasley a good ten feet away from her. He seemed to return to his senses too, and Pansy could feel his immediate disgust, and regret, and horror. His eyes widened, and he wiped his mouth.

"Oh Merlin," He whispered. "Oh Merlin, I- I'm so sorry." He rushed away from her, down the hall and past the corner, away from her line of sight.

She still stood against the wall, cold and barren without his scent, his warmth.

But she could feel that line stretching tighter the farther he got away; it never faded. His scent stabbed poisonous knives up her nostrils, into her abdomen and neck; her magic was buzzing. it was painful again. She put up walls, she used her magic to no avail. The line remained.

What the fuck?

Chapter End Notes

I hope you're having a good day today! Please eat and drink water. Remember I love you and I am always here to talk about anything! <3

three.

Chapter Notes

CW: Alcoholism/use, minor drug use, sexual content, depressive episode, suicidal thoughts;

Songs for this chapter: Daddy issues, The Nbhds; Wicked Games, The Weeknd; Rehab, Brent Faiyaz; Right Here, Chase Atlantic; Smells Like Teen Spirit, Nirvana; (I would recommend syncing the last song when the party scene begins, towards the end of the chapter :)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

September 6th, 1993. Slytherin Common Room.

"I hate it," Pansy whined, tugging at the ends of her now jaw-length hair. "Salazar curse my fucking mother for wanting to live through me. Why couldn't she have just gotten a haircut herself?"

She held a mirror in front of her, eyes glued to her reflection as they had been since her mother had taken her to New York and had her hair, her beautiful, long hair, cut short; apparently it was "the trend" nowadays, and Merlin forbid Aster Parkinson miss out on a trend- or an opportunity to experiment on her daughter.

Daphne sat at her side, tugging the mirror out of her hands. "It's really not that bad, Pans. You've just gotta stop focusing on it. Embrace the change!" Pansy snatched the mirror back, scowling.

"Easy for you to say, Daphne. Your bloody mother lets you do whatever you want with your hair, and your life. I wish I could say the same."

Daphne frowned a bit. "At least she cares." Pansy turned to her with wide eyes, squeezing her hand. "Really, Pans, it's not that bad," Daphne smiled brightly. "Right, Boys? Tell her."

Draco held up a hand in front of Crabbe, who had opened his mouth. "Blaise isn't here, and I will not tell lies, Daphne. It looks horrid."

"Draco!" Daphne threw a pillow at him, and he threw his arms up.

"What! It's true, she looks like a goblin, she might as well be self aware!" Pansy's lip wobbled, and her eyes filled with tears.

"Draco shut up! And what do you mean, Blaise isn't here? Where did he go?"

"I dunno, probably to go snog that Ravenclaw 5th year again." Daphne pursed her lips.

"Oh," She turned to Pansy. "Oh, Pans, really, don't cry, it's alright!"

"It is not alright!" She threw the mirror down, stomping up towards the stairs. She knew it was vain and stupid, but it was her hair, her precious hair, and her mother was taking control of yet another part of her life, and she hated it, and herself, and-

She bumped into Theo, who had his reading glasses on, and was heading out of the boys dorms. She sniffled and wiped at her nose, mumbling a 'sorry,' and moved past him, but he grabbed at elbow, pulling her back.

"Pansy? What's wrong?" he asked, eyes wide with concern. Oh, no. Why did he have to ask that? She burst into tears, falling into his arms, and he hugged her awkwardly, patting her back. "Oh, it's alright..."

"I- I'm sorry, it's just-"

"What?" He looked her over, like he was checking for injuries. "What's wrong?"

"It's my hair!" She wailed, burying her face in his shoulder again. Oh, she would regret this later, but right now she didn't care.

"What?" He pulled back. "There's nothing wrong with it?"

"Ugh, don't lie to me, Theodore! It's short, and now I'm ugly and I look like a goblin, even Draco said so!"

He wrapped his arm around her shoulders, squeezing her again. "You could never be ugly. Not even if you tried."

She looked up at him; he was only a couple inches taller than her, but she liked that. "Really?" She sniffed.

"Y- Yea." He blushed scarlet. "You look beautiful, Pansy. Really. I- I kinda like the short hair on you.."

She smiled brightly, cheeks rosy, and felt a flutter in her stomach. She hugged him tightly around the neck. "Thanks, Theo."

Pansy skipped off towards the girls dorms, turning back to give him another sweet smile, finding the brown-haired boy standing dumbfounded, eyes her her, cheeks. She swayed her hips slightly as she walked up the stairs.

That night, Daphne cut her hair so that the ends were swooping upwards a bit, and some strands in the front were shorter, framing her face in long sort-of bangs. When she looked in the mirror, she rather liked her reflection. She knew one person did, at least.

When she arrived in the great hall for breakfast, Theo's eyes never left her, ears and cheeks blazing red.

Ever since then, Pansy kept her hair short; a few inches above her collarbones.

After Theo died, she grew her hair past her mid-back. Never again, she promised herself.

Never again.

Present day.

Tuesday, October 6th, 1998.

5:00pm.

"Pansy? Are you alright?" Hermione came into her room, knocking on the door. Pansy groaned under her blankets; Too loud. Light spilled in from the hall; too bright. "Pansy, you missed Lunch and Transfiguration. Are you ill?" She laid the back of her palm against her forehead, and Pansy swatted the girls' hand away.

"Geroff," She mumbled, turning over. Hermione sniffed, and picked up an empty bottle of firewhiskey from the foot of Pansy's bed.

"Have you been drinking?" She said in a stern voice.

"You're not my fucking mum. Now leave me alone."

"Pansy if this is about the partnership with Ron, I think you're really being-"

"I said get out!" She yelled. Pansy stayed under the covers, hiding.

She couldn't, today. Not today, not ever. She was done, with everything. She couldn't see the possible point in going to class, or getting good marks, or having a job, or living when she didn't have him. She didn't care if they dragged her to Azkaban. Everything was fucked up, and she was fucked up, and she couldn't even keep one simple fucking promise.

Never again.

She had sworn. Swore never again.

And fucking Weasley...

She should've known. Should not have been so absorbed in herself that she wouldn't have noticed, she should have noticed. How could she have been so blinded? How could it have taken her so long to figure out?

Nope. She refused to think about it. She swung her head over the edge of the bed, reaching underneath and grabbing a bottle of Blue Agave White Vodka, opening the cap and holding her nose close as she chugged it down; it tasted like rubbing alcohol, and felt like it too.

She collapsed back onto her bed.

Friday, October 9th, 1998.

8:30am.

Pansy could hear the curtains being drawn above her bed; thrown open, really. Light flooded in the room, and she groaned, pulling the blankets over her head; they were promptly ripped from her. She shivered in the cold; her bare legs were out.

"Get up." She opened her eyes, squinting up at Daphne's blonde head. The girl gave her a stern look. "You've been in bed for days, Pansy. I don't know what you're sulking about, but I don't care. Get. Up."

"Leave me alone," She whispered, pulling the hood of her jumper farther over her eyes.

"No! You've missed all your classes the past week, Pansy. If you're not careful, they're going to throw you back in Azkaban faster than you can say "fuck you." And you're not leaving me alone here, so get the fuck up."

"Just go away, Daphne. I don't fucking care."

She couldn't. Not when she had betrayed the only man she had ever loved. Not when she had broken the only promise she had ever made.

For fucking Weasley.

"Sucks to fucking suck, because I do! You're going to stop whinging, get the fuck out of bed, go to class."

"LEAVE ME ALONE, DAPHNE!" She waved her hand, forcing Daphne out of the room and slamming the door behind her with wandless magic. Pansy heard her friend pounding on the door, but she didn't care; she just wanted to be alone; she just wanted to disappear.

She pulled the blankets back over her head.

5:13pm.

Her body pulled tight. The scent... it was there, coming closer. She could feel the line, blurred by her drunken stupor, tugging towards her. A knock sounded on the door. Bloody hell, do these people not have boundaries? "Go away," She yelled. Hermione walked in anyways.

"Pans, you erm... you have a visitor."

"Get out."

"Right, I'll just... leave you to it, then." The door closed, and the scent danced around her, pointing tiny needles into her skin.

She didn't want him here. She hated him. She didn't want him close to her. She didn't want him in the same space as her, not when the only thing she could think about was how her body pleaded for his flaming hands to touch her again.

"Why are you here, Weasley?" He shifted on his feet.

"How did you know it was me?" Pansy turned around, sitting up swiftly, criss-crossing her legs.

She was vaguely aware that she was not wearing trousers, or a bra, only one of Theo's large hooded jumpers and a thin pair of black pants that she had been wearing since Tuesday; a voice in the back of her head vaguely panicked at the fact that she had not showered, or brushed her teeth, or gotten out of bed really, in days. She smelled disgusting, and her hair was a matted knot atop her head, not to mention that she was still half drunk...

She looked at the Weasel. "I can smell you from the common room. I can feel your presence. And your emotions." She made a show of sniffing towards him, although it was unnecessary. "You're... anxious. And tired. Jumpy. Your left knee is aching, and your back hurts. And you're... guilty." She chose not to comment on the emotions that stood out above all that: the overwhelming lust and desire for... her. And the blissful peace that came with being in her presence. It seemed almost against his will. Curious.

But the guilt; that was of his own volition. She wondered... "Why are you guilty?"

He cleared his throat, dragging his hand through his hair. She ignored the way her core tightened when she saw the veins in his tattoo covered arms and the way the light hit his neck.

"Just, uh... Well, I came here because I, erm, I wanted to-"

"Spit it out, Weasel, I haven't got all day."

He gave her a pointed look. "Actually, it seems that you do."

"Looks are deceiving. I have an extremely busy schedule. Nap at 5:30, drink into oblivion at 6:00, wallow in self pity at 6:15, write a poetic suicide note at 7:00, rinse, repeat... You're taking up the valuable 'make up scenarios that will only further my sadness and disconnection with reality,' portion of the day, so chop chop. You've got 15 minutes until nap time starts."

He gave her a hard look. "I wanted to say that I'm sorry. For what happened in the hallway. I should have asked for your consent to do what I did, and you obviously didn't want it. I was completely out of control. It won't happen again, I swear on Godric's grave."

His accent was curious; it was like most of English pureblood wizards, but had a slightly different lilt. West Country, most likely. It was most obvious in the way he pronounced his 'i's and 'r's, and the way he said words with 't' at the end or the middle.

She ignored how much she liked it.

"Who says I didn't want it?"

"What?" His blue eyes were wide, and she smirked.

"Joking, carrot top. I need to spend a good month and a half scrubbing the feeling of your hands off me."

"Good to know I have so much affect on you."

"I thought you were apologizing?" She raised a brow.

"I'm truly sorry, Parkinson. Really, whatever I can do to make it up to you, I swear I will." She knew that; she felt his sorrow and regret the moment he stepped through the door. And she knew from his stubborn willpower that he really would do whatever she wanted him to.

That could be useful.

She tried to shut out his thoughts and feelings; she really, really did. She had no desire to feel Weasel's attraction and desperation to even be in the same room as her, after all. But she couldn't, no matter how hard she tried. It felt strange, and different from everyone else's. His thoughts... were hazy; sometimes they jumped out at her, but in broken phrases and sounds. Was he an occlumens?

She realized she was staring at him, and he was waiting for her response. She gave him a savage grin. "It's good to know that you're indebted to me, Weasel. Watch out, I may have to call in that favor, one day."

He stared at her with wide eyes, licking his lips. Her eyes followed his pink tongue. His lashes fluttered. He gave her a stuttering look, and promptly turned and walked out the door.

She fell back into bed.

The next morning, Daphne dragged her out of bed, ensuring that she would get to Hogsmeade and meet with her probation auror. She forced Pansy, who was even drunker than she was the night before and most definitely screwed, into the shower, washing her hair and brushing it back from her forehead as she bent over the toilet, vomiting her guts up; This was bad. Her auror would know, and she was most definitely fucked.

Daphne laid out clean clothes for her, a simple light blue jumper and black leggings that flare out below the knee, complete with thick socks and even thicker white trainers. Pansy stared at her reflection tiredly in the vanity mirror as Daphne brushed her hair.

She looked like complete and utter shite. She felt like it, too. The bags under her eyes were swollen and almost purple, her skin ashen and puffy. She looked dead.

She wished she was.

"Stop it," Daphne said. Pansy looked up at her.

"Stop what?" She set down the serum in her hands.

"Stop wallowing. I don't know what happened with Weasley, or why he was visiting our room yesterday, but I certainly don't have to be an empath to see that you're upset, and you're punishing yourself. Stop it."

"You don't understand, Daph."

"I understand that you have been prone to having a complete meltdown and destroying your entire life in a matter of weeks since we were 9 years old, and I won't have it. Not when things are so fragile." Pansy looked down at her fidgeting hands, and Daphne pulled her chin up.

"I know it's hard," She whispered. "I know it's hard without him, and you're using alcohol to cope, and everything's a mess. I know, Pansy. I understand, and I am here for you. But we don't have time for this right now. We are so close to getting out of here, and living our lives. Before you know it probation will be over, and we won't have to do this anymore. But you have to stick with me, Pans. Please. Lean on me, alright?"

Pansy nodded, tears filling her eyes. She wanted to; she wanted to so badly, and she knew she was being selfish. She knew that Daphne needed her too, and that everyone else was having as hard a time dealing with their trauma as she was; but she couldn't help it. She clutched her friend to her, inhaling the faint scent of her perfume, that Daphne smell she loved more than anything.

"I love you, Daph," She whispered.

Daphne pulled back, smiling at her sadly. "I love you too." Her brown eyes searched Pansy's face. "Theo would want you to live, Pansy. More than anything."

Pansy nodded silently. "I know."

Daphne walked Pansy all the way down to Hogsmeade, towards the Three Broomsticks where she usually met with her auror; it was a pain, these ministry-induced check ins and sometimes even therapy sessions, but she was required to go to them every week, per the rules of her probation.

She spotted a bright pink head sitting at one of the outdoor tables outside the small pub; Nymphadora Tonks. Part-time Defense Against the Dark Arts professor, part-time teenage ex-blood supremacist therapist.

"Look at you, less than 15 minutes late for once," The woman said cheerfully. Pansy gave her a bland smile, and sat down. "I ordered you a butterbeer."

"Thank you," She mouthed, taking a sip.

"Well, I was going to ask what your excuse was for missing my class on Friday, but you look like absolute shite, so I'm guessing we had a bad week."

Pansy looked at her over her cup. "You could say that."

"So," She said, folding her hands in front of her and leaning towards Pansy. "Dish. It gets very boring here, without my husband, and Minerva is too busy to gossip these days. Tell me, what's the newest drama in the eventful life of Pansy Parkinson?"

I sort of maybe had a weird sexual experience with Weaselbee, and probably would've fucked him if he'd let me, but you know, other than that, not much.

"Nothing, really. You know, the usual."

"So you don't have a valid reason for missing class this entire week?" Pansy glared at her. Her voice softened. "I'm joking, love. It's alright, you've been in perfect attendance since the first day of school. You can skiv a couple days off."

Pansy smiled at her, and Tonks continued. "Right then, since we're obviously not going to talk about you, we're going to talk about me, because I am bored and I am using this free therapy session to my advantage. Word of advice, darling? Do not, under any circumstances, have a baby before the age of 30. My tits are already sagging and I've barely gotten to live my life," She said sorrowfully, and Pansy laughed.

After sitting through an uncomfortable hour in which Tonks had somehow managed to turn the conversation towards Pansy, (despite her promises), she eventually made her way back to Hogwarts, and collapsed right back onto her bed. There was a party happening tonight, she knew, someone's birthday, and as badly as she didn't want to go, she couldn't deny a chance for free alcohol.

She dressed herself in a short and skin tight, long sleeve black dress that had a high neck and cut out to show off cleavage, complete with thigh-high black heels. Her hair hung in sleek layers down her back.

Her and Daphne exited their room together, and walked into the common room to find the rest of their suitemates sitting in the living space. Hermione looked up when she saw them, dressed in a flattering pink dress and heels that almost made her as tall as Pansy. She smiled brightly.

"Oh, wonderful, we were waiting for you! You both look amazing!"

"Thanks, Mione," Daphne smiled. "Do you need any help with the witches' brew? I have a special recipe." The two walked towards the fridge arm in arm, chattering. Luna Lovegood sat on the loveseat with her legs criss-crossed, staring out into space and humming happily. Her eyes were lowered to slits.

"Don't mind her, she's stoned." Ginny Weasley walked out from her and Luna's room, holding a giant jug of some sort of purple liquid. "Mione, I got what you asked. But I would advise you to drink it sparingly, Luna did some experimenting, and the last time I let a Ravenclaw experiment on me I woke up in Russia and I was stuck sneezing lavenders for a week."

Pansy looked confusedly at her, and then mouthed at Daphne, What the fuck? Daphne giggled.

"Okay, let's take some shots!" Hermione clapped excitedly. Pansy smirked at her; she had never pegged the Golden Girl for much of a drinker, but then again she had never been to a Gryffindor Party. Luna got up and walked over to them, giggling to herself. They all toasted together, and downed the liquid.

Pansy almost choked. She had a high alcohol tolerance, and wasn't much phased by the taste anymore, but... "What the fuck, Lovegood? Is this poison or some shit?" Her body rolled

through with shivers, and she felt as if her brain were lifting out of her skull. Woah...

She couldn't be drunk off of one shot; no way.

Lovegood smiled happily. "A bit," She said. "If you separate certain properties of Belladonna plant, it can create a quite intoxicating effect. Of course, too much would kill you immediately."

"Are you serious?" Hermione scolded. "You put actual poison into this?"

"Yes," She nodded, grinning brightly. Daphne and Pansy looked at each other, and took another shot.

"Fuck it," Ginny shrugged. The girls all whooped together, downing a third, and headed down the stairs.

The party was already raging. As soon as they got to the bottom, Weaslette, ever the jock, jumped atop the table and screamed some sort of cheer that caused the crowd to go wild; The warm lights of the common room had been turned off, in turn for strobing LEDs. The music pulsed through her body, and she felt... euphoric.

Whatever Luna had put in that bloody drink, it was working.

She felt high and drunk in the best way, not two separate entities, but as if she had taken acid tabs and downed a bottle of fire whiskey, her body free of it's bounds, it's inhibitions, her mind wading through a sea of colors she wasn't even sure existed, and twisting figures she couldn't physically feel; all sense of control was lost, her limbs loosening and wings sprouting from her back as the drink continued it's relentless attack on her senses, pounding through her veins and behind her eyes.

Her eyes. When she opened them, swirls of color and sparkles danced in front of her. She threw her arms around Daphne's shoulder from where she stood behind her, pulling close. They moved among the sea of bodies, swaying their hips in time with the music and shaking out their heads; she was already sweating. Her senses felt dampened, her walls had already fallen, but she couldn't feel anything; or anyone. It was all just white noise. She was alone. Completely alone. It was blissful.

It was exhilarating.

All the teens in the common room screamed the words of the song along with each other.

Oh, no, I know,

A dirty word,

Hello, Hello, Hello, how low

She threw her arms in the air, half jumping. From across the room, Weaslette screeched as the portrait opened and Potter stepped in. She ran through the crowd and launched herself into his arms, wrapping her legs around his waist, an arm shooting in the air in triumph. He held

fast onto her, squeezing her waist to him and kissing her with equal vigor. The entire common room cheered; Pansy cheered with them.

When she turned back, Daphne had disappeared, but she didn't care. She felt free; she felt infinite. She was infinite.

She moved her hips and threw her head around, screaming along to the song playing. Some random man held onto her hips from behind her, and she let him, grinding on his lower waist, reaching behind her to wrap her arms around her neck.

She opened her eyes, the world a plethora of pulsing color that gave her head a sweet ache, and through the light, through the moving bodies, she caught a pair of aquamarine eyes leaning over a body that was pressed into one of the stone arches beneath the stairs. Piercing blue eyes that were boring into hers, and a scent pressing itself into her body.

She couldn't escape it; no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't escape it. No matter the amount of alcohol, the drugs shooting through her veins, the walls she put up. She could hide in her room, but she would never escape it.

So stop trying, said a voice that was most definitely not hers.

She was hallucinating, certainly.

Just give in, It whispered.

She did.

He was holding someone; someone was talking at him, but his eyes were on her. They glowed through the neon lights. He shushed the person.. He kissed them. His eyes were still open, pressing hard to Pansy's.

Desire.

He wanted her.

She continued rolling her hips to the blaring bass of the music, tilting her neck upwards. The dancer behind her leaned his head down, pressing his nose to her neck. She didn't want him there, but she couldn't move, not as Ron snogged the living hell out of that girl, and kept his eyes on her.

Pansy wrapped her hands together behind the man's neck as he pressed his cock into her behind.

She didn't care. The only thing she could hear, could feel, could taste was the scent.

Black pepper. Sage. Sandalwood.

Lust.

Weasley's lust barreled through her. He squeezed the girls' arse, the other hand coming up to her neck and choking her. That should be me.

Come to me, the voice crooned.

Pansy obeyed.

She pushed off her dancing partner, walking purposefully through the crowd; she grabbed Weasley's wrist, pulling him behind the archways, into a private alcove, thick velvet curtains drawn. She didn't even bother to look at the girl, who she was vaguely sure was a sixth year Hufflepuff. She pushed him against the wall roughly, and before he could say anything, before she got a chance to think, she wrapped her arms around his neck, and kissed him.

It was everything

Life, death, beginning, end, all of it started and circled back to here. All her pain, all her struggles, the alcohol, the music, her hair, her skin, her clothes, everything, everything she had ever felt and ever been faded into oblivion, and melted down to this point, to this moment.

Everything.

She kissed him with fervor, her leg drawing up the hook around his, hands sliding up his back, his neck, his chest. She plunged one hair into his hair, pulling at the roots, and he groaned. He gripped her waist tightly, palms burning through the thin material of her dress, and her body sang for the contact.

The music had faded into the background; it was nothing compared to the melody that was sung between the two of them, musical notes flowing from his magic to hers, creating a symphony of them, a beautiful, tragic opera.

"Wait." He pushed her back, hands still on her waist. She gazed at him hungrily, feeling feral. No. Come back. "Pansy are you sure?"

She stepped towards him, pushing her body against his, palming his cock through his denims. His eyes rolled back into his head a bit, a breathless exhale leaving his lips. She whispered against his lips, "Are you going to take what you bloody want, Weasley, or are you going to keep on asking me for it?"

She looked into his darkened eyes, something passing between them, and he slammed her body even closer to her, letting out a rough moan as he picked her up, wrapping her legs around his waist, and turned them around, pressing her back against the wall.

She moaned loudly, savoring the feeling of his hands on her thighs, smashing her lips against his. He ground his cock against her center, and she rolled her hips, tightening her legs, pulling him in even further than she thought possible. They continued their frenzy, lips moving in time with each other. Ron's mouth kissed down her jaw, over her pulse, just behind her ear. He suckled love bites onto her neck, moaning curses as he inhaled her scent.

She closed her eyes and let herself experience the rainbow behind her lids, hands pulling through Ron's hair, moaning. She held his face back up, wiping his hair back from his sweaty forehead, kissing him roughly. His tongue massaged hers, rolling and flipping in a way that told her precisely what would happen if he got between her legs. And she wanted, oh, she wanted him right there, could imagine watching his head move, could fantasize about it for the rest of her days-

He seemed to read her mind. His hand moved from where it was supporting them against the wall, and he pressed her up further, dragging his fingers across her thighs and reaching in at a tortuously slow pace. He slid his other hand up her chest and to her neck, squeezing with his fingertips, hard enough to bruise. She moaned loudly as his fingers tickled the sensitive inside of her thighs.

"Patience," he growled.

But he didn't seem to have any, either. His hands curved farther inward, almost landing just where she wanted him-

"Pansy?"

Her head snapped up, and she turned to see Daphne standing at the archway of the alcove, the thick curtain drawn. She pushed Weasley off her and tugged her dress down, ignoring the way her skin immediately returned to its pin pricking painfulness. She suddenly didn't feel so intoxicated.

She looked up at Weasley, who was breathing hard, hard standing up on it's ends, the corner of his cheek and his entire neck covered in animalistic bruises, his lips swollen and red. She quickly grabbed Daphne's hand and stumbled out of the alcove, weaving through the crowd and to the landing of the steps. She stumbled, and Daphne caught her. Okay, maybe not so sober, after all.

They helped each other up the stairs, finally landing on the bean bags inside their suite at the top of the tower. They both collapsed over, giggling.

"What the fuck was that, Pansy?" Pansy sat up to face Daphne, who was sprawled on the other bean bag.

"I... I don't know." She chewed on her lip.

"How long have you and Weasley been fucking?"

"We haven't! I swear, we haven't." Daphne narrowed her eyes, and Pansy shook her head. "I swear on my life, Daph."

"You're suicidal half the time, that doesn't mean anything." She waved a hand.

Pansy giggled. "Okay, I swear on your life. I wouldn't lie to you about something like that, Daphne, you know that."

Daphne bit her lip, and gave her a nervous look.

"Alright. So that was the first time anything has happened between the two of you?"

"Well... no. But can we just talk about it in the morning? I promise I'll tell you everything."

Daphne nodded, and fell back onto her back, staring at the ceiling. After a moment of silence, she spoke. "Pansy, I... I have to tell you something." Pansy could feel her nervousness sparking in the air.

"What?"

"Well, I- I haven't been entirely honest with you. You see, I'm... well, I'm er-"

"Shagging Anthony Goldstein?"

"What?!"

"That's what you were about to say, right? I saw how your face lit up when you were paired with him for the projects."

"Right. Right, er, yea, that's exactly what I was gonna say."

"You don't need to be so nervous, Daph. I think it's great that you have someone. Plus, he's fit."

Daphne laughed shakily. "Yea, I dunno what I was so worried about." Pansy mumbled her agreement, and fell asleep.

Chapter End Notes

Reminder I love you, and that you are loved. <33

four.

Chapter Notes

CW: alcoholic behaviors + ron and pans being the horniest mfs ever lol

Songs for this chapter: Xanny, Billie Eilish; East Atlanta Love Letter, 6lack; Session 32, Summer Walker; Salt Water, Maria Isabel;

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Sunday, October 11th, 1998.

Eighth Year Girl's dorm.

12:04pm.

The next morning, Pansy awoke with a hangover like never before; she was in pain, real and actual pain, and she cursed bloody Lovegood for that drink. Her skin felt as if it were on pins and needles, a burning ache tearing through her core from her chest to her abdomen; her entire being was on fire. The migraine she had pulsed daggers through her skull.

She had absolutely no recollection of how she had gotten into bed, or changed into pyjamas, but as soon as she made an effort to get up, but as soon as her body moved, she moaned in pain and fell back.

What the absolute fuck?

It hurt, all the way through to her magic; no alcohol had ever affected her like this. The blood pulsing through her veins boiled, her magic a stinging live wire whipping through her. It felt unnatural. She supposed it was because of ingesting too much of the poisonous witches' brew last night, but she had only had three shots...

Daphne opened the door and threw the curtains apart, pulling Pansy's covers off of her.

"Come on, we all slept in late, we're doing hangover breakfast with the boys in the sitting room. Potter is here, by the way." Pansy groaned, pressing herself further into her bed.

"Daph, I dunno, I don't feel right." Her voice was hoarse.

"Oh no, no, no, Pansy, you are not pulling this shite again. Get up. A cup of tea will make you feel better." She took Pansy's arms and pulled her up, but Pansy cried out in pain as what felt like a blade lanced through her head; her magic sparked, knocking over several plants on the windowsill and making the lights flicker. Daphne looked down at her in concern as tears

rolled down Pansy's face. "Pans? Are you alright?" She felt her forehead; "Salazar's beard, Pansy, you're burning up!"

"Mmm," Pansy groaned.

"I'll go get Hermione," She said, and rushed out, returning a moment later with the Head Girl. She listened to their whispers across the room. Their emotions were jumping out at her, thoughts clouding her head; Daphne's anxiety was tearing through her, her body racked with nerves; she was terrified. Hermione was equally worried, but not... not just about Pansy. What?

It only made her feel worse. The tears continued flowing down her hot skin.

"Do you think it was the witches brew?" Daphne breathed. Hermione wringed her fingers. Pansy could hear it. A small sound of skin brushing against skin. What the fuck?

"I'm not sure," Hermione said. "When I went to the boys dorm, Draco just made some snippy comments about Gryffindors not being able to take alcohol, but Ronald looked really ill." Weasel?

"Like her?"

Hermione nodded. "Yea. He was sweating a pool onto his bed, and his skin was burning like a fire. When I tried to make him get up, I think he unintentionally shot at me."

"Like a first year discovering their magic for the first time, right? The same thing happened with Pans!" Daphne whisper-screamed. "She made the plants fall over, and the lights flicker! Will Luna know how to find an antidote?"

"I'll ask her and Neville to do some research on potions and spells to cure Belladonna poisoning, but this doesn't look like it. Besides, Belladonna is lethal. If that were the case, they'd both be dead already." The two girls looked Pansy over worriedly. "Should we get Madam Pomfrey in the meantime?" Hermione asked.

"No! If we get Pomfrey, she'll be obligated to tell the Ministry that Pansy was ingesting illegal substances, going against her probation. They'll throw her in Azkaban faster than we can blink."

"But Poppy knows to keep secrets, I'm sure she'll-"

"No, Hermione. I'm not doing it. Pansy would never forgive me." From her bed, Pansy moaned in agreement, flipping over. The two girls rushed to her, sitting gingerly on her mattress.

"Pansy, darling, are you alright?" Daphne asked. Hermione felt her forehead and her hand shot back. She winced.

Pansy groaned. "Feels... like... death...." She said with a weak smile. "Don't," She smacked her lips together. "Worry... Daph... Still not... worse than... the crucio..." Her suitemates looked at each other. Pansy's words came in pants, her breath fading.

Okay, maybe it was a bit of a lie; it wasn't necessarily less painful than the crucio, it was just... in a different way. This felt as if her spirit and soul were being attacked relentlessly, her magic a blazing inferno blasting her body to ashes.

Maybe that hurt worse than all your bones breaking at the same time, over and over again.

The door opened, and Pansy turned her eyes upwards. Weaselbee, of fucking course.

That fucking line; it pulled taut.

His scent wrapped around her senses; she felt oddly... calm. Relieved. His eyes slid to hers from where he leaned against the doorway, like he felt it, too.

Her skin stopped pricking so much.

Hermione immediately got up and went to him. "Ronald what are you doing here! You should be in bed, you dolt." She held his face in her hands, brushing his hair back.

Pansy ignored the pang of jealousy that rang through her.

"I just... I had to..." He panted, and his eyes went to Pansy's again, pleading.

"Wow, you look like shite," Pansy said.

He laughed tiredly. "You're no better."

"Ron, enough socializing, back to bed, c'mon!" She slung an arm under his shoulders, but he shrugged her off and stumbled towards Pansy. Daphne quickly moved aside as he collapsed onto the bed.

Black Pepper. Sage. Sandalwood.

She almost moaned in pleasure; You, You, You.

Her entire body tingled; suddenly, it didn't feel so painful anymore.

He looked at her. His cheeks were sunken, sweat plastering red hair to his forehead.

It feels better, when I'm around you.

She almost jolted; had he just... used Legilimency on her? Wandless? When he was ill, and hungover?

How are you doing this? She asked in her head.

I don't know. I just found out I could last night.

"What?!" She yelled, sitting up. Daphne and Hermione looked to her sharply. Daphne's brows raised as she looked between Pansy and Ron. Pansy made a show of collapsing back onto the pillows, fanning her face.

Hermione rubbed her temples. "Right, I'll leave you two here and go get Neville and Luna. Don't move a muscle, I mean it!" The brown skinned girl waved a finger between the two of them. "Daphne, are you coming?"

She looked over Pansy, and then Ron worriedly. "Will you be alright, sweetheart?"

"Yea, Daph, go I'll be fine. I'll send a patronus if Weasel tries to poison me with his ginger-ness."

Daphne laughed and got up, the two girls closing the curtains of the room and shutting the door behind them. As soon as they were gone, Weasley looked to her.

"Poison you with my ginger-ness?" He asked, smirking. She threw a pillow at him.

"Shut up."

He laid flat on his stomach, nose buried in the sheet of her bed. He really did look like a piece of shite; A really fucking sexy piece of shite, but nonetheless.

He cracked an eye open, peering at her. She narrowed her eyes.

What?....

"Can you fucking hear me?" His brows drew together, and then he seemed to understand what she was saying. He nodded. "Oh my fucking Merlin. Tell me you're lying."

He shook his head.

"Weasel! Tell me you're fucking lying!"

He shook his head again. Pansy fell back onto the covers, groaning and covering her pounding head with the blankets. So. Fucking. Embarrassing. "How long?" She asked.

"Just since our erm... tryst in the hallway."

"Look at you using big words," She seethed. He propped his head on his hand, eyes narrowing.

"Look at you thinking I'm a sexy piece of shite."

She wanted to curse him. Oh, she really wanted to curse him.

"You can't, though," He said in a song-voice. "You're on probation."

"Yea, yea, Azkaban this, Azkaban that, I know. And stay out of my head."

"I can't help it if you're screaming things at me." She could feel his emotions; he didn't want to stay out of her head. Not now, not ever.

She scowled. "Well then put fucking walls up."

"I'm not an Occlumens."

"Yea, but you're a Legilimens. A pretty fucking good one, if you're doing it without even trying. You should be able to learn at least a little bit of Occlumency." His heart swelled at the compliment; he wanted to kiss her. He really wanted to kiss her.

She ignored that.

"I'm not a Legilimens," He said. She looked up at him.

"You're fucking dumber than I thought, Weaselbee. Obviously if you can hear my thoughts-"

"Only yours."

She had insulted him; something pulsed low in his core. Lust. He wanted to kiss her even more badly now.

She ignored that, too. "What?"

"I couldn't hear Daphne's and Hermione's when they were in here. I couldn't hear any of my suitemates, either. I know Draco is an Occlumens, but Blaise, Anthony, and Dean aren't."

She turned that thought over. "Maybe it's because you haven't had any sexual relations with them," She said bluntly. His cheeks flamed red.

"Yea, erm, right."

"Shit, I forgot about Hermione. Yea, that theory doesn't work." He looked up at her in surprise, and she grinned, savoring that look of utter shock and embarrassment on his face.

"How?..."

"Girls talk, Weasel."

He pursed his lips. I'm going to kill Hermione for that, He thought.

"You will do no such thing." He looked up at her in shock again; oh, she could relish in that look for the rest of eternity.

"You can hear me, too?"

"I actually am a natural Legilimens, Weaselbee. Yes, I can hear you."

"And everyone else?"

She made a point of looking anywhere but him; "I can... I can shut everyone else out." She looked into his eyes. "But not you."

He really wanted to kiss her. Blood was rushing downwards.

"Get your head out of the gutter. We have bigger things to worry about."

Just when she thought he couldn't possibly blush any harder; he looked away, adjusting his position and putting a pillow over his lap. He put his back on the wall her bed was pushed against. She smirked at him. "Stay out of my thoughts, Parkinson."

She ignored the way her entire body tightened and warmed at the sound of her name on his lips.

"I can't when you're screaming things at me," she mocked him in a nasally voice. He scowled.

She realized with a start that her headache was faded; still a pulse in the back of her head, but bearable. Her magic wasn't whipping through her, rather a low crackle. Her skin didn't feel as pin-prickly, anymore. She had stopped sweating, and felt less hot.

She wanted to test something, but was loath to even think about what it could mean if she were right. "That's a good idea," Ron said, looking up at her. "Hold on."

He got up and walked out into the hall; she heard the door of her suite slam. That string connecting them stretched farther, and sure enough, her headache began to return full-force. She whimpered.

Alright, come back. She begged in her head, hoping he would hear. A few moments later, he opened her bedroom door and stepped in, rushing to her side. She realized that tears were falling down her face again, her eyes stinging. Just when this couldn't get anymore fucking embarrassing.

You don't have to be embarrassed with me, Parkinson.

She scowled at him as she burrowed under the covers. He laid down at her side.

"We should probably talk about this," He whispered. She nodded tiredly.

"Yea, probably."

December 25th, 1994.

Yule Ball

Pansy sat in her dress on the hill above the black lake, staring at the letter in her hands. She had just lost her virginity in her dorm. Aleksandr Savov, one of the Bulgarians from Durmstrang; she had gotten dressed right after, wanting to rush down and tell Daphne all about it, when she had seen the lavender-colored envelope on her dresser. It stank of her mother's overwhelming perfume, the one she thought was good simply because it was expensive.

"Pansy?" She looked over to Theo, who was walking towards her. He looked handsome in his midnight blue robes, hair sleek and tame for once. Her heart stuttered a bit, and she sat straighter.

"Hi, Theo."

"What are you doing out here, it's freezing cold!" He took off his jacket and placed it around her shoulders, rubbing the sides of her arms and leaning close. He cast a warming charm. She didn't tell him that she had already done that, because she liked the feel of his warm hands on her shoulders, and his dress robes smelled like his cologne.

"Thanks," She smiled. Even in the darkness, she saw him turn red and put his hands down, fidgeting.

"What's that?" He pointed to the letter in her hands; She handed it to him, letting him read it; She didn't know why, but she wanted to. Pansy was generally a private person, but something about the brown haired boy made her want to tell him all her secrets.

He read it over, eyes hardening and brows drawing together. He set his jaw and looked to her, and then back at the letter, and tore it into pieces.

She laughed faintly. "None of that is true, Pansy. You have to know that it isn't."

Oh, but it is. "She didn't even send it as a Howler," Pansy said. "She sent it like a real letter, so it wouldn't burn up, and I could read it over and over again. Aster Parkinson is nothing if not creative."

Her mother was angry with her, naturally, because she didn't go to the ball with Draco Malfoy, as she had instructed Pansy to do. Of course, Pansy didn't want to go with Draco; he was like her brother, and she didn't want to dance with him awkwardly or hear him complain about missing his opportunity to ask out Astoria Greengrass.

So she went with the Bulgarian that had asked her instead; Tall, older, wealthy, pureblooded; And he barely spoke English, which meant she didn't have to converse with him. It was perfect, and she was so sure her mother would finally approve of a decision she had made herself.

But no, of course. Apparently Draco taking Astoria to the ball had all but sealed their fate, and now he was officially off the market; a marriage was in the future for them. Pansy didn't care of course. She had been listening to Draco pine after Daphne's younger sister since the midsummer party; If anything, she was happy for her friend.

To her mother, this meant that she had failed, utterly failed their entire family once again, and it was simply her moral obligation to tell Pansy all the ways that she was worthless, and a complete disappointment.

And she fucking wondered why she never went home for Christmas.

Theo turned her chin to him. "Look at me, Pansy." She met his eyes. They were a green so dark they appeared black, almost. "You are not worthless, and you are not a disappointment, alright?" Her lip wobbled. He always had a way of making her feel emotional, and vulnerable. She couldn't decide if she liked it or not.

"The woman who birthed me would beg to differ."

"I'm serious, Pans." For once, he had no laughing glint in his eye. He looked earnest. "Your mother has no bloody business dictating your life decisions. You could never be worthless." His voice dropped to a whisper. "You are worth everything in this world, Pansy Parkinson." Tears welled in her blue-green eyes.

She wanted to kiss him. She suddenly completely regretted losing her virginity to Aleksandr Savov, and wanted to erase the whole night and go to the ball with Theo, and have her first kiss with him.

He stood up, and offered her a hand. She looked at him inquisitively. "Dance with me," He said.

She laughed, eyes darting nervously. "Here?"

"Right here." He gave her a dazzling smile. Oh, those dimples could take out an army.

She took his hand.

And outside of the Hogwarts festivities, where the music could only faintly be heard and the moonlight danced across their skin like a melancholic spotlight, Pansy Parkinson and Theodore Nott danced.

And they fell in love.

Present day.

7:18pm.

Black pepper. Sage. Sandalwood.

It smelled like paradise. She inhaled, digging herself further into the warmth, and sighed contentedly. It felt like home, like she had been searching all her life and had finally, finally found where she was supposed to be. She never wanted to leave.

She realized with a start that the person she was cuddling was Ronald Weasley. In her sleep, she had rolled over and placed herself on top of him, hugging his body like a koala bear. Her legs were wrapped around his waist, head buried in his neck, just below his ear. Her hands were under him, holding his shoulders tightly. She felt almost perfectly healthy again.

And his arms... they held her waist, pressing her into him. His scent clouded her like a lovely, gilded cage. His face was turned into her hair.

She debated whether she should get up for a moment.

But that was... ridiculous. Ridiculous! Of course she had to get up. Why would she even think about it? Why would she ever want to stay in his arms?

Did she want to?

It's just a human reaction, She told herself. Yes, that had to be it; she was lonely, and starved for affection, accepting it wherever she could get it. Of course, Daphne was always up for cuddles, but it wasn't the same.

Then again, nothing was quite like her... experiences, with Weasley, was it?

But she had been in a relationship for so long; of course. She had been with Theo since fifth year; she wasn't used to not having affection or not being touched sexually for a long period of time.

Theo...

She couldn't think about him; not when she still had to get up and figure out what the fuck was happening to her. Not today, she told herself.

Salazar's tit, she wanted a drink.

She got up slowly, removing her arms from under Weasley's body so she could sit up straight; she felt heat rise to her cheeks. She was straddling him, and his hands had fallen back to his sides in his sleep. He breathed like a baby, soft, little mini snores. She didn't like that she liked it so much.

His face looked angelic. His lashes fluttered, but in his unconsciousness, he was without that typical hard-set to his jaw, and dark look in his electric eyes. His hair fell back from his heavenly cheekbones. She wanted to count his freckles. She wanted to trace his lips, and his brows, the way her Father used to do when she was young and he still loved her, and was putting her to sleep.

She got up.

Pansy opened her door quietly, walking to the hall of her sitting room; she heard voices ahead. Shit. Interacting with anyone right now was the last thing she wanted to do. She peeked over the corner, hidden by a large plant, to find Daphne and, oddly enough, Padma Patil. Daphne was standing, pacing, and Padma was sitting on the loveseat, eyes following her and arms crossed, looking properly brassed off. Pansy wondered why.

"I'm sorry!" Daphne said. "I just- I panicked!"

"You bloody panicked, so you told her you were shagging my cousin?!" What?

"In her defense, I don't think she knows you and Anthony are related." Pansy could hear the awkwardness in Daphne's voice. Was this...?

Padma scowled. "I don't fucking care, Daphne, you swore you would tell her!"

Daphne plopped down on the couch next to her, brushing the girl's blue-black hair from her forehead. No. Way. Padma turned her head away, sticking her nose in the air and sniffing.

"I know, love, I'm sorry, I really am, I just- I dunno, she just said Anthony's name, and I just sorta... went along with it. I'm so sorry. I really wanted to tell her, I swear."

She turned back to Daphne. Her eyes looked sad. "You told me that once Pansy knew, you wouldn't care about anyone else. You said, 'Wait, my darling, I swear I'll tell her, and then we can bloody shag on the tables in the Great Hall if you want.' You promised me you would tell her, Daphne!"

"I know," Daphne said. "I know, and I don't know why I didn't, I just-"

"You said she would be alright with it. Are you really sure? Is... are you not telling her because you're scared she'll look at you differently?"

Daphne scoffed at the same time Pansy did from across the room. Please, I've taken a cruciatus for her, you think I would care if she's in love with a girl? "Pansy has taken a crucio for me. Literally. She wouldn't care if we're in a relationship. She would probably be our biggest supporter, actually." Pansy smiled to herself. Right on, Daph!

"Then what is the bloody problem!" Padma yelled. Daphne cringed. Yea, what is the bloody problem?

"I just... I don't know! I just haven't found a good opportunity yet." She looked at Patil sadly, taking her hands. "Please don't be angry with me, my love."

Padma looked down. "I'm trying, I'm really trying not to, Daphne. You know I love you, and you know I would move heaven and Earth for you, but... I was hiding for so long. I never even got to tell my bloody sister. I waited, and waited, and waited, until she died. I could've just told her, "Parvati, I'm gay." But I didn't. And now she's gone, and I am tired of hiding, Daph. I want to snog my bloody girlfriend when I want to. I want to go on dates, and let our families know, and our friends, and I want to tell the whole world you're mine. Is that so bad?"

"No! Of course not! You know I want all those things too, Padma. I- it's just harder for me. I admire your boldness, and the way you don't care about what anyone thinks, it's one of the things I love the most about you. And I am so proud of you for coming out. I know Parvati would be, too. It's just... Pansy is like my sister. She is my sister. We've grown up together, her Astoria and I. We've been through everything together, and I just- I can't be out to the world until I'm out to her. Please, understand."

The girl touched one of her tan hands to Daphne's face. "I do understand, sweetheart, more than anyone. I just... Maybe, you know, we're at different stages in our lives. You have to take your time coming out, and wait until you're ready. I respect that, Daphne, I do. And because I do, I won't force you to do it." She chewed on her lip.

"What are you saying?"

"I'm saying... maybe, for now, we should- I dunno, part ways. I'm at a different place in my life, Daphne, and I have to be completely honest with myself and everyone else. I can't do that if I'm waiting seven months for you to tell the people you care about." Seven months? My best friend has been in a relationship for seven months, and I never noticed?

"You're... you're breaking up with me?" her voice broke, and Pansy's heart ached for her friend. Maybe I should go out there and say, ta-da, surprise, I know now, you can stay together. Would that fix things? No, probably not.

Pansy's skin was prickling again, head spinning. Merlin's balls.

Padma nodded, tears falling down her face. She got up to leave, but Daphne held onto her hands.

"Wait, Padma, please." She turned her brown eyes to Daphne. Yes, Daph! Fight! I didn't raise a bitch! "Please, just give me one more chance, alright? One more, and I swear I'll tell Pansy, and if I don't you can leave me, and I won't complain, I promise. Please?"

"I won't force you to make this decision, Daph. You... you do what is right for you. We can talk when you're ready."

"Padma-"

"Bye, Daphne." she sobbed a bit, wiping her eyes as she hurried out of the room, long skirt fluttering around her ankles.

Daphne's hands dropped to her sides, and she sighed, sitting back down on the couch. She wiped her eyes, took a deep breath, and got up. Pansy stood and walked back a few paces, and then walked into the sitting room.

"Hi!" She said a bit too brightly. Subtle, idiot.

"Pans!" Her voice was higher than normal. Oh, darling. "How long have you been standing there?"

"I just woke up," Pansy half-lied, moving to the kitchenette and taking a chug of wine from the fridge, biting a block of cheese. Daphne eyed her, chewing on her lip and rubbing her fingertips against her palms. Pansy leaned casually against the small counter. "What?"

Daphne hesitated. "I- erm, nothing. Nothing."

Pansy wanted badly to tell her she knew, and she supported her with all her heart and soul, and wanted her to run downstairs and snog the bloody hell out of that Patil girl; she would beat anyone who said anything against them. But she didn't want to steal Daphne's moment. She knew it was a big deal from when Draco had told her he liked boys and girls, and he still wasn't out to most people. Although, in his case, it is a bit obvious. All their friends knew before Draco himself did.

"You must be starving. Everyone's heading down to the Three Broomsticks for dinner, if you want. Granger has some big sort of announcement."

"Alright," Pansy pushed off the counter and began to walk to her room, but stopped, turning to face Daphne. "Did, erm.... Did anyone...?"

Daphne laughed. "Oh, don't worry, I made sure I was the only one to check in on the both of you. I told everyone else your magic was going haywire and causing a ruckus, and to leave you alone." Pansy let out a breath of relief.

"Thank you, Daph, really."

"Of course. And you know we're going to talk about that, at some point, yes?" She waved a hand towards the bedroom, and Pansy laughed.

"Yea, I know." She walked over to her friend, hugging her tightly. Daphne squeezed her back in surprise. "You know I love you, right? No matter what. You can always talk to me, Daphne."

"Daphne held fast. "Yea, of course."

"I know I've been self absorbed, lately, and I haven't been there for you, or anyone else the way I should be. I promise I'll try harder."

"You don't have to apologize, Pans, I get it." Pansy put her hands on her friend's shoulder and nodded.

"Pansy?" Daphne called as she walked away. Pansy turned to her. "You... you said that you just woke up? You're sure?"

Pansy drew her brows together in confusion. "Yea, why?"

"Er, just asking." Pansy smiled and turned, heading towards the room where she knew a particularly large red-head was awake and humming with energy, waiting on her bed.

She opened the door.

Chapter End Notes

How are you all doing? I hope you've had a good day today!

five.

Chapter Notes

CW: Alcoholism, mild mentions of torture, depression, sexual content

Songs for this chapter: Deep, Summer Walker; Moonlight, Chase Atlantic; Japanese Denim, Daniel Caesar; Sweater Weather, The Nbhds;

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

When Pansy opened the door, Weasel was sitting on her bed, head back against the wall, smoking a fag; one that most likely belonged to her. She scowled at him.

"My entire room is going to smell like smoke, asshole."

He smirked tiredly. "It helps the headache."

Right. The headache. The one that had come back because she wasn't in his presence.

Pansy resisted the urge to scream.

"I'm going to off myself," she mumbled, moving towards the loo.

"I don't think that would help our situation."

Oh, she really wanted to ask about that. More than anything, she wanted to find out what the fuck was happening to her, and why weasel was the only one who felt it too.

But she was terrified. In spite of her curiosity, she was terrified to know the answer. There was... well, she had a feeling it wasn't something simple; things like this rarely were.

Especially with her luck.

"So," He said. She poked her head out of the lavatory door, toothbrush in her mouth.

"So."

Weasel got up, walking towards her, and leaned against the doorway. Dear fuck, stop being sexy. It's not good for my mental state.

He smirked. "Well, I can't really do anything about that."

"Fuck off. We need to teach you Occlumency soon."

"Didn't you say that you couldn't stop yourself from hearing my thoughts? Even with Occlumency? What makes you think learning it will make me able to stop hearing yours?"

She scowled, spitting out the minty toothpaste and turning to him, a hand on the sink. He had a point, but she wasn't about to agree with him. At least not out loud. "I don't fucking know, Weasel bee, but we have to figure out something. This shit isn't working."

"What are you so pissy about? The fact that I can hear your thoughts, and feel what you feel, or the fact that you're attracted to me?" He folded his arms. The motion made his muscles flex. She ignored that.

"You never said you could feel me," She said darkly. Theories were swirling in her head, and she begged for them not to be true.

"Well, I assumed it would be obvious."

"How uncharacteristically perceptive of you."

He flexed his jaw muscles. Merlin's bloody pants. "Contrary to popular belief, I'm not actually an idiot. There have always been more important things than completing a transfiguration essay on time."

"Yes, there have been." They were both silent for a moment. She cleared her throat. "Speaking of Transfiguration, we're still partnered for the projects. We should get to work on that."

"Well we can't now. Mione's gathering everyone at the Broomsticks for some kind of grand announcement. That means you, too, Parkinson," he said with a pointed look. She smiled to herself. I would bet five galleons she's making everyone meet the new bloke she's shagging.

"Ten says he's a Slytherin," Weasley smirked. That damned smirk. She looked at him in surprise. He knew? "Of course I knew. She's my best friend."

She narrowed her eyes. "Twenty says that it's Blaise."

"Please. Head Girl and Head Boy? Hermione would never pull a cliché like that," he scoffed.

"You're on."

They stared at each other for a moment, the air between them crackling with energy. His scent enveloped her; always the same. Black pepper. Sage. Sandalwood. It was odd, she thought. People didn't have those kinds of smells; people smelled like linens, and soap, deodorant, sweat, some kind of cologne; they didn't have those otherworldly, oddly specific smells.

There was... something else. Something new. Huh?

It smelled familiar. Violets, wood smoke, wine. Ron's amortentia.

She raised a brow at him. He raised one back. "Oh, so I'm Ron now?"

"Yes, well, I've felt your cock between my legs, so I get to call you by your first name," She said boldly. "I'm a bit funny like that."

His voice dropped an octave. "And I've scented your wet cunt before, so I suppose that leaves me to certain liberties too, yeah?"

She realized with a start that they had gotten closer to each other; enough to share breaths. Enough for their noses to almost touch. She caught herself, exhaling, and leaned back nonchalantly. "You think you're so clever."

"You agree."

Fuck you, she thought.

Only in your dreams, Pansy. And behind curtains in the common room.

Pansy scowled, shutting the bathroom door and pushing him out so she could get ready.

She was in deep, deep shit.

III

Weasley had left their suite to get ready, and after dressing herself in rose printed tights, a pleated black mini skirt, and deep red corset-top, she rushed out of her dorm with Daphne, slipping her arms into a long leather jacket and her feet burgundy heels. Luna Lovegood was waiting for them in the common room, saying everyone had already gone ahead.

By the time they had gotten to Hogsmeade, Pansy was freezing. It was only early October, but winter was beginning its icy descent on Scotland, and she was absolutely not ready to sacrifice her fashion for the sake of warmth.

Theo had always loved winter; he was the type to never get cold, that annoying bloke in every first year's class that loved jumping in the snow in nothing but thin pants and a t-shirt, calling everyone else wimps for bundling up.

Winter made her think of Theo. She dreaded its arrival.

Pansy shook her head slightly, ignoring the pounding headache, and smiled at Daphne as she opened the door to the Three Broomsticks for her. Surely a butter beer would ease the pain. Or five. Or eight.

Hermione waved them over, smiling brightly, and the three girls squeezed in at the already crowded table the Gryffindor had chosen.

Ginny and Potter were snogging, of course, Ron was making gagging noises, smacking his friends shoulder. Draco and Blaise were watching Luna as she talked airily about nargles (as always). Draco looked confused and mildly disgusted, and Pansy resisted the urge to laugh at his expression; Blaise, however, stared at Lovegood with pure admiration in his eyes. Pansy could feel the butterflies in his stomach from here. Well shite.

She caught Ron's eye from across the table, only to find that he was already smiling at her smugly.

That takes Zabini out of the running, he thought.

She scowled at him. Shut up.

I'll be expecting my twenty galleons later.

She looked away and at Daphne, who was watching the two of them curiously. She nudged her ribs with her elbow, and Daphne raised a brow, turning back to her menu. Hermione stood up, rubbing her hands together nervously, a giddy smile on her face.

The Golden Girl was particularly dressed up today; slicked hair, new makeup, a dress.

Definitely meeting the boyfriend, she thought. Ron laughed from his seat, and she suppressed a smirk.

"Right!" Hermione said in a too-high voice. She cleared her throat. Pansy tried not to look to Ron and raise her brows at him; she could feel that he was trying not to do the same.

Deep, deep shit.

"Ahem." Hermione clinked the side of her butterbeer, and everyone looked to her. "You all have been my dear friends, old and new, of course." She looked to Pansy. "I know we've been through a lot, and we've fought on opposite sides before the war even began. But, I'd like to think we've moved past our differences now, and have forged new friendships."

"Hear, hear!" Blaise raised his glass of butter beer, and Hermione smiled at him.

"So, because you all are important to me- that includes our favorite Slytherins," she motioned to Blaise, Daphne, Draco, and Pansy. "I would like to make a toast. To new friendships!"

Everyone cheered and raised their glasses, and Hermione gulped down her butter beer quickly. Just bring the bloody bloke out, Granger.

Hermione looked nervously to Pansy as she set her glass down. She was especially jittery- but... why was she looking at her?

"Right then. With, erm, with that out of the way. There's- there's someone I would like you all to meet." She looked at Pansy again. Pansy didn't bother hiding it; she looked at Ron this time. "You, er- well, you may know him. I know you lot do, for sure." She motioned to the Slytherins, who raised their brows at each other.

Bring me my fucking money, Ron thought. Pansy rolled her eyes. The door to the pub opened, and Hermione looked over to it nervously. "He's- well, he's become very important to me. And he's actually here, right now." She frowned a bit. "Early."

Pansy looked to the door, turning around as everyone else did, but she only saw one familiar face. She immediately got up and ran to him, jumping into his arms.

"Adrian!" She yelled. She hadn't seen him since summer, and missed him terribly. "What the bloody hell are you doing here?!"

Adrian wrapped his arm around her waist, laughing a bit shakily. "Shite, Posy, I haven't seen you in ages. What are you doing here?"

She smiled at his childhood nickname for her, and laughed. "I'm just with some er- some friends, I suppose."

He raised a brow at her quizzically. "Since when do you have friends?"

She laughed and smacked his chest. "Shut up. Really, what are you here for?"

He looked behind her. "I'm meeting someone actually." He smiled brightly, and Pansy turned around.

"What-"

And then it dawned on her.

No. Fucking. Way.

Hermione was looking at them nervously. Adrian moved towards her, dark head bobbing, and wrapped his arms around her waist, kissing her on the cheek. "Sorry, love, I didn't mean to be late."

She smiled shyly. "No, you're early, actually." Hermione turned to the rest of the group as Pansy stood in place, dumbfounded. She was holding his hand.

"Everyone, this is Adrian Pucey. I mean, err, you know him, obviously, we went to school together, but this- this is who I wanted you to meet. Adrian. Pucey. Erm, yea. Adrian," she stuttered. Adrian looked down at her lovingly. Potter and Weasley looked shocked; Ginny smiled warmly, not surprised; Lovegood clapped her hands with glee. The other Slytherins... Pansy would've burst out laughing, if she wasn't so shocked herself. All of them had their mouths hanging open.

Draco held his hands up in the air. "Hold on. Just wait a minute now." He motioned between the two of them. "You?" He asked. "And you?"

Adrian rolled his eyes, and Hermione giggled nervously. "Yes, Draco, we're dating."

Draco sat back in his chair, rubbing his forehead. "Salazar's tit."

Hold the fuck up. Hold the fuck up.

Weasley looked at her sharply. Problem?

She glared at him. "You're dating my cousin?!"

Hermione wringed her fingers, and Potter looked at her shockingly. "You lot are related?"

"Our mothers are sisters," she waved him off, and walked to Hermione, gripping the arm of a chair with one hand and placing the other on her hip. "The mystery man you're shagging is my cousin?"

The girl watched her with anxious, wide eyes. "I'm sorry I didn't tell you sooner Pansy, I just- I wasn't sure how to break it to you."

Pansy turned to Adrian. "You're shagging my suite mate?"

He rolled his eyes, shoving his hands in his pockets. "Yes, Pansy, I am in a relationship with Hermione. That's kind of the whole point of this... announcement, you know?"

She blinked furiously, turning back to Hermione. "We're not even going to discuss you lowering your standards like this." Draco scoffed a laugh loudly, and she glared at him. He looked down at his hands. "My cousin? You couldn't have told me?"

"Pansy, I-"

"Honestly, Pans, shut the fuck up." Adrian slung an arm around her shoulder, and then another around Hermione's, smiling that mischievous smile of his. "I love you, you love me, I love Hermione, Hermione loves me, it's love all around!"

"I love Astoria," Draco sighed loudly, and everyone at the table turned to glare at him. Adrian simply laughed.

"Right! My point there! Love all around, cousin. So take your head out of your arse and celebrate!"

"I barely said anything!" He clapped her on the back and turned back to Hermione, kissing her full on the mouth. Ron and Potter groaned in disgust, but she grinned at Adrian as he pulled an extra chair, sitting down.

Hermione continued her watchful gaze on Pansy. "Please, tell me you're alright with this, Pans."

She scowled at her, folding her arms, but Adrian was right; she should be happy for them both. They were disgustingly good people, and she knew there wasn't better her cousin could do than Hermione fucking Granger.

During the war, Adrian's defecting to the side of good had caused... a rift, to say the least. They had always been close, but her taking the Dark Mark and choosing Voldemort had placed an insurmountable amount of tension between her and her favorite cousin; her only one, actually.

With a sigh, Pansy took Hermione's hands. "Of course, Hermione, I'm just... shocked, is all. I'm happy for you, really." She tried for a warm smile.

Hermione gave her a full grin, white teeth and dimples and all. She wrapped her arms around her. "Oh, thank you, Pansy! You have no idea how glad I am!" The girl rushed back to her seat beside Ron, Adrian standing to pull out her chair. She blushed kindly.

And Pansy was happy for her, truly; but... she couldn't help feeling as if the only reason Hermione had pursued a friendship with her was because she was with Adrian. As if she were trying to ease her way into the family.

Hermione's not like that.

She resisted the urge to scowl at him again; Stay out of my fucking head.

Stay out of mine. She could see his smirk out of the corner of her eye. Beside her, Daphne caught her gaze, brows drawing together slightly. She knew that look: What is it?

Pansy shook her head and smiled, taking another gulp of her butterbeer; it wasn't worth causing problems, she supposed.

They all continued through dinner, laughing and talking as if everything were happy, and...

There it was. There was that damned word again.

Normal.

This was all so blissfully, beautifully normal. And Pansy couldn't help but hate herself for still feeling empty inside.

She was here. She was here, and her friends were happy; Blaise was quite obviously falling completely in love with Luna more and more every time she opened her mouth. Ginny and Potter were attached at the hip, and Draco and Daphne threw chips at each other and turned red in the face from laughing; Adrian never once took his eyes off Hermione, no matter the conversation, and they were so utterly in sync- it was clear they were in love, even if she weren't an empath.

She was here, and Theo wasn't.

It wasn't fair, not bloody fair that she was here, that she had gotten to live, and Theodore bloody Nott, the one fucking person that deserved to live over everyone else, hadn't gotten to.

That was why, she knew. That was why she felt so utterly alone, so completely out of place- because she knew the universe had made an unfair trade, and it wasn't supposed to be like this. That's why she felt the absolute opposite of-

Normal.

She downed another butterbeer.

Then another.

And another.

One more, she told herself as she chugged her fifth drink. Butterbeers were low in alcohol, but the jugs were large; she could feel her head starting to swim, her skin warming.

Weasley was watching her as she ordered a fire whiskey, along with everyone else. She cocked a brow at him, turning her head in a feline motion. Looking for something?

His eyes narrowed, but he remained silent, pushing forth random images of quidditch and spiders until Pansy turned away from him, pulling her attention off. He felt... how did he feel? It was hazy; she was definitely getting pissed.

Everyone took shots together; Pansy stole Daphne's, laughing and leaning over her. She took another. And another.

Pansy left to the loo, mumbling "I've gotta take a piss," to no one in particular, and stumbled off towards the back room. Once she made it inside, she placed her hands on the sink, gazing at her reflection.

Black liner smudged her under eyes, flakes falling down to her cheeks like noir-toned ash. Other than that, her makeup was relatively okay, hair still bound in it's half-up style, but her eyes...

Her eyes were empty. Utterly, and completely empty.

As if there were no soul behind them.

And you know in your heart that there isn't.

April 24th, 1998.

Malfoy Manor.

12:19am.

"Do it, or I will."

Please. Please.

"I love you, Pansy." He was not afraid; her wizard was never afraid.

She mouthed to him, 'Forever and always.'

Pansy took a deep breath.

"Crucio."

Present day.

Black tears flowed, and Pansy clutched the cold sink. Please, Please, Please-

"Pansy?" The door opened, and Ron stepped in. She turned to him sharply.

He was there. He was always fucking there. That goddamn Weasley, always right fucking there.

She wanted to kill him, desperately.

She wanted to fuck him, desperately.

And in that moment, Pansy had never hated herself more.

She smiled lazily at the red-haired boy. "Come to my rescue, knight in shining armor?"

"You're drunk," He rolled his eyes. No shit.

"I'm always drunk. That's nothing new." She stumbled towards him, and he caught her as she fell.

Forever and always.

"Yes," He said with a hard voice. "I can see that now."

She flung her arms around his neck. "So, what, Weasel bee? Came for a quick shag on the sink? Another little tryst, as you call it, just to spice up your day?"

"My day has been eventful enough, thank you." He held her up by her waist with only one arm.

"Oh, I don't think so yet," She breathed as she leaned on her tip-toes, grazing her mouth against his ear. "You want to fuck me right here, Ron? Where anyone could come in?"

"Pansy," He spoke low, and pushed her back gently. "You're fucking sloshed."

"Yea, that's been stated already, catch up cherry-top."

"C'mon, let's get you to bed."

She laughed darkly. "Taking me to bed so soon? What, you don't want to fuck me? You wanna make love?"

His eyes flicked to hers, and he caught her hands by the wrists as she placed them on his chest. "That's enough." The deep timbre of his voice rumbling through her.

She pressed her breasts to him, wriggling her hips. "Not quite." She kissed him roughly, smashing her teeth against his and cutting her lip. He groaned, hands loosening on her wrists as she dragged hers through his hair, biting down hard on his lip, hard enough to make him bleed; she devoured the salt and rust from his mouth, moaning on the soft undertone of his taste, always the same.

Black pepper. Sage. Sandalwood.

Even his blood tasted like it.

He groaned again, in pain this time, and pushed her away, wiping the blood off his lip. Her hips banged against the sink. "We're not doing this right now. You're drunk. We're going home."

She smirked. "I have no home." He strode towards her, pupils dilated so far the piercing blue of his eyes had disappeared. He placed either hand on the sink counter, caging her in his body warmth and his scent.

Here is home, Her blood sang.

His eyes were murderous, expression dark. She should've been afraid, should've had alarms blaring in her head at this huge, hulking man gazing at her like he could chew her up and spit her out. But she only felt one thing:

Alive.

She felt alive. Hadn't ever felt really and truly alight like this in years. Ages.

One silver-adorned hand shot up; she was surprised she didn't flinch. He took her chin, and with surprisingly gentle fingers, wiped the already-drying blood off her bottom lip.

"We're going," he snarled, taking her wrist and pulling her forward; suddenly, Pansy didn't feel in such a cheeky mood.

Ron dragged her out of the loo, catching her by the waist when she tripped; He whispered to Daphne that he was taking her back to her dorm, and she nodded, immediately starting a lively conversation with the rest of the table, distracting them from the scene.

Ron Weasley, Gryffindor, War hero; Pansy Parkinson, Slytherin. Murderer.

Stumbling their way out of a pub together.

Chapter End Notes

reminder that i love you and you deserve to be happy! i hope you're doing well today, wherever you are <3

six.

Chapter Notes

CW: drunk behavior

Songs for this chapter: She, Harry styles; Okay, Harry Styles;

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Ron and Pansy continued their way up the cobblestone path, out of Hogsmeade, passing wizards and witches on the dark street. Pansy shivered violently, but she couldn't care less; if Weasley was going to force her back to her dorm, she was going to make it as hard for him as possible.

So she struggled out of his arms, twirling and dancing her way down the street, singing in the faces of strangers. Fuck Weaselbee's rules, and fuck his bloody concern. If she wanted to prance drunkenly on the streets of Hogsmeade, she could damn well do it.

She hooked her leg onto a lamppost, singing Weasley is Our King in an off-key voice.

"Weasley is our King! Weasley is our King! He always lets the Quaffle in-"

Ron grabbed her by the waist, pulling her body from the lamppost she had entwined herself around. "Stop it," He hissed.

She threw her arms around his neck, bending her body backwards. "WEEEAASSSLEEYYY-"

"Shut. Up." He covered her mouth with a large hand, and she licked the inside of his palm, tearing away from him and running out of the town's edge and towards the crossroads with the path to Hogwarts, giggling. He sighed, and jogged towards her.

Pansy threw her arms into the air. "Something wrong, Ronniekins?"

"Stop it, Pansy. You're causing a scene."

Her head swam as she spun in circles. "I was made for the stage," She yelled. He rolled his eyes, and pinned her arms to her side.

"You're freezing." Ron wrapped his black and red flannel around her shoulders, enclosing her in that marvelous scent.

She turned her nose into the inside of his jacket, inhaling deeply. "Mmm. This smells divine."

"C'mon, Pansy. Stop fucking around."

"I'll fuck you," She snickered.

He pressed his lips together, pulling her upright and dragging her up the path. She slung an arm around him, moving her feet side-to-side widely, laughing to herself. "My feet are aching," She said, frowning and staring down at her shoes.

"Maybe if you didn't wear those bloody heels all the time, they wouldn't."

She smiled brightly. "Correct you are, gingersnap!" She bent to unbuckle the thin straps around her ankles, but her fingers fumbled and hung limply. She turned her head up, frowning at him. "Shoes."

Ron stared at her incredulously for a moment, and then sighed, kneeling before her to take the platform heels off. She stood straight, watching him, and dragged a hand through his fiery hair, pulling the strands hard so his head turned up to her. So she could have a look at those eyes.

Electric, pure blue. A dark ring around them. He frowned at her, and she grinned sleepily. "You look the best like this," She slurred.

His brows drew together. "Like what?"

"This. On your knees before me."

Ron's cheeks flushed red, freckles flaming, and his pupils dilated. She giggled again, and he slipped both shoes off her feet, holding them by the straps. "C'mon."

She pouted up at him, the top of her head now just below his chin. "Can't walk. The ground is too cold."

"Godric, Pansy." He wiped his face in frustration, "Then put your shoes back on. I'm not doing it this time."

"Nooo," She whined, and reached up for him, like a child. "Carry me," She said with a sultry smile.

This witch is going to kill me, He thought as he picked her up, wrapping one arm under her knees, and the other under her back, bridle-style.

Pansy laughed, pressing her face into his neck and breathing him in, studying the freckles and still-purple love bites she had given him. She scrutinized his face, the hard set to his expression, his furrowed brow. He glanced down at her, finding her staring, and immediately looked away, ears red.

Manicured fingers splayed at the nape of his neck, tugging the soft hair there. She felt heat pool below his hips and smiled secretly, pulling harder. He tightened his hands on her, and stopped walking. His voice was hoarse as he muttered, "Pansy-"

Out of the corner of her eye, she spotted a figure walking towards them, and pressed a finger to his lips, shushing him. She looked around, and he stiffened.

"Good evening Mr. Weasley!" Both of their bodies relaxed as Professor Firenze came into view. "Erm... Miss Parkinson?"

Ron continued blushing. Pansy smiled brightly. "Professor Firenze, it's good to see you."

"I'm glad to see you well, Miss Parkinson. Your friend Daphne told me you were ill this past week."

She ignored the embarrassment and anxiety that settled in her gut. "Yes, I felt half in the grave. But I'm alright now, I assure you."

"That's good to know."

Ron stuttered, "Good- good evening, Professor."

"Hello Mr. Weasley," Firenze smiled slightly, eyes darting between the two students. Salazar's beard. He gave Ron a knowing look. Fucking centaurs.

"We'll erm- we'll just be on our way now," Ron said as he began moving forward. The centaur placed a hand on Ron's shoulder, hooves clopping as he opened his mouth to bid them goodbye, when suddenly, his mouth flew open, platinum-blond head thrown to the sky, the waning moon reflecting in his eyes. He clutched at Ron. "Professor?"

He gasped, and looked to Ron and Pansy with fear in his eyes, whispering a phrase.

"The bound."

Chapter End Notes

I hope you're having a good day! Please remember to be kind to yourself. Eat and drink water please, you deserve it. I love you <3

sorry for the short chapter!

seven.

Chapter Notes

Songs for this chapter: Rhiannon, Fleetwood Mac; Skin, Mac Miller; Too much to ask, Arctic Monkeys;

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Professor?" Ron asked. "Are you alright?"

Firenze let go of Ron's shoulder, hind legs backing up. He smiled shakily, but Pansy could feel his emotions tearing through him, aura glowing bright red. Fear. Anxiety. Shock. ...Curiosity? Urgency. But most of all: fear.

"Professor Firenze?" She tapped Ron's shoulder and he set her down, watching as she walked towards him. Pansy touched the Centaur's arm, intending to send a wave of calm through him, but he snatched it back, as if she had shocked him. "What is 'the bound'?"

"I- I must go, my brothers are waiting for me."

He galloped off into the forest, leaving Ron and Pansy staring in shock after him. She looked up to the man beside her. His brows drew together slowly. "What...?"

She shook her head. "I have no idea."

They continued the rest of the way to Hogwarts, Pansy riding on Ron's back, until they arrived at her suite. He dropped her at the door, already turning around to leave, when she wobbled, grabbing onto the handle to steady herself. Ron sighed and picked her up again, carrying her to bed.

He lay her down, pulling the covers over her, but she immediately got up, throwing them off. "I can't sleep in these clothes!" She gasped.

Ron dragged a hand through his hair once again, nodding. "Alright, I'll go so you can change."

"But don't you have to make sure I get to bed safely, Ronnie?" She pouted.

"Pansy, I'm sure you can make it from your closet to your bed without dropping dead. I'm leaving."

She tugged on his arm. "Nooo," She whined.

Ron fiddled with his nose ring. "Dear Merlin, save me," He said as he looked to the ceiling. She giggled.

"I don't think Merlin is in my room."

He narrowed his eyes on her. "Shut up and go change."

Pansy laughed again, and moved towards her closet, twirling behind the changing screen as she slipped off her tights and skirt, tossing them about the room. She heard Ron groan as he got smacked in the face with her stockings. Her limp fingers struggled with the zipper of her corset, and she left the screen's coverage, striding towards Ron, who was sitting on her bed, facing the wall. She tapped his shoulder.

"Yea?" he said, head turning to the side, eyes on the ceiling.

"I need you to unzip my corset."

"Are you decent?"

Pansy rolled her eyes. "Yes, Ronnie, I'm perfectly decent."

He turned around, face immediately turning beet-red, a hand flying to his eyes as he saw her standing with her hair loose, corset, of course, still on, and legs completely bare, only a thin black thong covering her. "Godric, Pansy, you said you were decent!"

She burst out laughing. "Wow, your face blends in with your hair!"

"Bloody hell," He groaned.

"Relax, Ronnie," She said as she turned around. "It wouldn't be any different from seeing me in a swimsuit at the beach. Now unzip me, I'm tired." He turned around slowly, a hand still on his eyes. She looked back at him. "You need to be able to see the zipper to pull it down, orange pop."

He scowled at her. "Orange pop?"

"Well, I can't just keep calling you 'big red bitch.' I have to have a variety."

"You're worse than Malfoy."

Pansy scoffed. "Please. I taught Draco everything he knows."

Ron's hands gingerly took her zipper, warm fingers brushing against her skin. She shivered. "You've got freckles on your back," he murmured absent mindedly.

She turned around, holding up the burgundy-velvet material to cover her breasts. "Yes, one of my many faults according to mummy dearest."

Ron's eyes met hers, firmly staying on her face and not her body. "Your mum is a fucking idiot," he said darkly.

She smirked at him. "You're certainly right about that." Then promptly dropped her corset, so she was standing in only a thong, no bra. His cheeks flamed even more, lust and nerves spiking, and Pansy turned around and walked back to the changing screen with a cheeky smile.

Pansy threw herself onto her bed, now in an oversized t-shirt and loose joggers. She still kept herself wrapped in Ron's flannel. He rose to leave, but she grabbed onto his wrist, looking up at him with wide eyes.

"Stay," she murmured. Ron gazed at her with weary eyes, anxiety and desire and something... something deeper, deeper than she could even fathom inflating his soul.

"Pansy..." he wanted to deny her, she knew. Wanted to, but couldn't; it seemed like he would give her the moon and stars, if she asked.

"Just until I fall asleep, please? It's easier when you're with me."

Ron nodded, and crawled back into bed with her, remaining on top of the sheets. "Just until you fall asleep." Pansy nodded happily, waving a hand to turn the lights out, snuggling close to him, placing her head on his chest. "Wandless? Impressive."

"I'm a woman of many talents, Ronnie," She hummed.

He sighed. "Yes, I can see that." There was a moment of comfortable silence, and Pansy's lids grew heavier, peace settling over her mottled senses; Safe. Here I'm safe. After a while, Ron exhaled again, stroking her hair soothingly.

Pansy wiped at her eyes, mascara crusting them. She groaned, and was about to reach for her makeup wipes on the night table, but Ron stopped her, murmuring "I've got it."

She sat up, but her head swam, nausea waving through her, and she immediately fell back down. He pulled the towelettes from the package, gently dragging one over her face, scrubbing at her eyes.

"Ow."

He smirked. "Sorry."

They stared at each other in silence as he pulled another from the plastic, swiping it over her cheeks again. He threw it in the bin, and looked back to her, tenderly rubbing a calloused thumb over her cheekbone before he laid back down, pulling her to him again.

There was another moment of quiet. "I... I can feel you, you know."

"Hmm?"

"You. I can feel... everything. I mean, sometimes it's murky, but your strongest emotions, I can feel them."

"Mmm." She was half-asleep already.

"I feel your regret. I feel how much you hate yourself, and how dishonest and horrible you think you are. I- I know you feel like you've... betrayed something. Someone. By doing... whatever this is, with me."

Her eyes flicked up momentarily to his. The blue glowed in the dark. "I always hate myself," she said, nestling down again. "But not when I'm with you."

Ron remained silent, after that.

III

Monday, October 12th, 1998.

9:00am.

When Pansy awoke that morning, Daphne wasn't in her bed, but Ron was still there, a hand supporting the back of her head, the other holding her atop his chest. Guilt tore through her.

Traitor.

The Gryffindor's eyes flew open, immediately finding hers. The sun lit them up, turning them icy. Beautiful, she thought.

Traitor.

"Stop it," He said.

Pansy scowled. "Shut up." She pushed herself off of him, walking to her lavatory. There was still eyeliner crusting her waterline, but strangely enough, her head didn't pound. No hangover?

Side effect of sleeping with Weasel. Fucking hell.

"Back to your old self, I presume?" he called from her bed.

She strode out of the loo, toothbrush in her mouth, picking her clothes off the floor. "What are you on about, Weasel?"

"Snarky comments, the like, you know; That Pansy Parkinson charm?" He smirked haughtily.

"I can't possibly imagine what 'new self' I could've turned into. Making snarky comments is my singular personality trait."

His smirk turned to a scowl. "We have to talk about this, Pansy."

"I have class, Ronnie," She sang. "So I'll let you know when my schedule frees up." She waved a hand, shooing him, as he stared at her. He looked impossibly tired. "Off you go!"

"You can't avoid this forever."

"Oh, but how I love trying. Now out." Ron rolled his eyes, standing, and walked out the door without another word. Pansy sighed, plopping onto her bed. Her bed, that still smelled of him. Or maybe that was the flannel she was still encased in.

Traitor.

She... she didn't want to take it off. Pansy never wanted to take it off.

Salazar's beard, she thought. I'm fucked.

Saturday, November 4th, 1994.

Fifth year.

Hogwarts Library.

Pansy's head pounded. Constantly.

Fucking. Constantly.

She didn't know what was wrong with her; considered writing a letter to her grandmother, asking for help. But no, of course, that would mean her father would find out, and make her come home, again.

No way in hell was that happening.

But she was losing control. Had been, for months now. And nothing made it better. Draco's occlumency lessons had been futile; her birthday had only made things worse.

The moment she blew her candles out in the Slytherin common room, her walls dropped.

Fucking. All of them.

And she couldn't get them back up; so it was just like fourth year again, after her fifteenth birthday. She could feel fucking everyone, and she couldn't shut them out.

On the verge of a breakdown, surely.

But alcohol made it better; alcohol lessened the ache. She hated the burn, and the taste made her want to clean out her insides, but anything to take away the feel of everyone's thoughts and feelings, all the time.

That was new, of course. Their thoughts. Before, it was just auras, emotions, sometimes physical. But never their thoughts. Now she knew what all of them were thinking.

It was fucking exhausting.

So she hid in the library, cradling her favorite cheesy romance novel and a bottle of firewhiskey she had glamourised to look like water, nestled into a corner. No one would be here on a Saturday.

Or so she thought.

Pansy groaned as someone walked into the library, mind racing too fast for her to grasp anything; bloody fucking hell, she thought.

Please don't come over here.

A face appeared around the corner of her nook. Her mood immediately brightened.

Theo.

He had changed, this year. Gotten taller, much taller than her, broader, more chiseled. His summer tan was fading slowly, beautiful bronze freckles disappearing, the golden highlights in his hair becoming more muted.

Like the sun, he was. Golden and bright and always shining.

He was beautiful.

He smiled at her, that gorgeous, wonderful smile that lit up her insides and lifted her through the clouds. Those dimples that pierced her heart and made her die inside a little, every time she saw them.

His hair was messy. So, beautifully messy. He was perfect.

"Pansy," He breathlessly. "I was- whew." Theo leaned on his knees, catching his breath. "Wow, you walk fast."

She giggled. Everyone else's presence sucked the life out of her these days; even Daphne. But not him. Never Theodore. "Looking for me?" She asked as she slid the firewhiskey bottle behind her, hiding it. She didn't know why she felt the need to.

He flushed deeply. "I- erm, yea, actually."

She felt her own cheeks flame, and sat up, trying to keep her composure and not look too flustered, or drunk. "What can I do for you?"

He sat down next to her. "Well, it's a Hogsmeade weekend. This weekend, I mean. Tonight. Saturday, you know-"

"Yes, I know." She smiled.

"Well, I-" He fiddled with his fingers, rubbing the back of his neck. "Erm, I, I wanted to ask you. If you wanted to go, tonight." He stood nervously, still fidgeting. Never stopped moving, that one. "With me. To Hogsmeade."

"Wasn't the plan for all of us to go?" She grinned coyly.

He stuttered. "Right, erm, yea, I mean, obviously you're busy- I shouldn't have interrupted you, I'll just er-" He turned to leave, but Pansy held out a hand.

"Theo, wait!"

"Yes?"

"What were you saying?" She knew, of course, and wanted to save him from embarrassment, but even more badly wanted to hear him say it.

He took a deep breath. "I wanted to ask if you want to go to Hogsmeade with me tonight. On a date."

"Just the two of us?"

"Well, I believe that is what a date would entail," He smiled shakily.

She beamed at him. "Of course Theo. Yes, I would love to go on a date with you."

He flushed even harder, and beamed right back. "Right then. Erm, right that's- that's great, Pans. I'll just- yea." He turned quickly and strode out of the Library, until he was far enough for her not to feel him anymore. Pansy leaned back against the cushion she sat on, smiling to herself.

Theodore Nott had just asked her out on a date. While she was drunk. And had no control of her magic.

And she had said yes.

Pansy's smile faded. "I'm so fucked," She whispered.

Present day.

Pansy stepped out of the shower, inspecting her body in the mirror. She had lost weight; too much weight. Product of living off nothing but alcohol and coffee, she supposed. Her mother would've been proud.

Boys don't like girls with too much meat on their bones, Pansy.

She traced the tattoo on her sternum. Angel wings, with a halo over them, and the letters 't.n.' written in thin cursive between them. Gotten right after her release from Azkaban, on a trip with her friends. They had all gotten matching ones, on the backs of their necks. Hers was between her breasts, over her heart.

Her heart. Where Theo belongs.

She thought of Ron's tattoos; the ones she had seen, at least. A dragonfly on his neck, bird on his left hand; muggle chess pieces on each finger. A melting clock on his right hand, that flowed into flames down his wrist. A golden snitch on his hip.

Traitor.

She sighed to herself, drying her wet hair with a t-shirt, and got dressed.

A Parkinson must always look presentable, Pansy.

She took off the dress she had planned to wear and went back to her closet, picking one of Theo's hooded jumpers off the floor. She breathed in deeply; still, it smelled like him. Citrus, and that cologne she had bought him in fourth year. And that wonderful Theo smell that was divine and indescribable. It was baggy on her, but that was just the way she liked it.

Theo.

Traitor.

Pansy put on black-and-white plaid pyjama pants, looking herself over in the mirror.

She looked like an utter shite.

You're a mess, Pansy.

Fuck you, Mum.

She walked out of her room, hood up, head already aching. Bloody Weaselbee. Daphne was still nowhere to be found, of course. Probably stumbled into Padma's bed in her drunken state. Pansy smiled to herself; she hoped her friend would be able to fix things with the dark-haired Ravenclaw. If there was anyone that deserved happiness, it was Daph.

"Oh, erm, hi." Pansy startled, and turned around. Harry bloody Potter was sitting on her couch, smoke blowing out of his mouth.

"Salazar, Potter, you scared me."

He gave her a crooked smile. "Sorry."

"You're still here? Don't you have to go prancing with the aurors, or something?"

"Or something," He said. "I'm here till Wednesday."

"That's nice for Ginny."

His eyes turned dreamy, affection swelling in his chest. Bleh. "Yea, it is."

"Right, I'll just go to class then."

"Yea, see you later, Parkinson."

"...Yea." She opened the door quickly, rushing out of the common room and away from the awkward exchange. 9:45. She had 15 minutes till Divination started.

Divination. With Professor Firenze. Bloody hell.

The Bound, He had said. Now what the fuck was that?

Pansy wasn't even sure if she wanted to know. Too complicated. Her head pounded, skin prickling. Merlin's beard.

"Accio wine," She whispered, holding onto her wand in her pocket. She still marveled at it, sometimes. The fact that the ministry had given her wand back. The wand that had killed Theo.

It was beautiful, and elegant. White Cedar wood, twirling silver vines laid into it; Obsidian Crystal core, that rounded out the bottom.

That obsidian core. Family heirloom; meant to amplify her empathic abilities. As if she fucking needed that.

The wine bottle flew into her hands, and she ducked into a corner to pour it into her coffee cup. No way in hell was she getting through this day sober, especially if she were going to have a 'talk' with Weaselbee.

Fucking Weaselbee.

Don't think about it, she told herself.

Traitor.

She finally made her way outside of the castle, into the sort-of greenhouse that had been transformed for Firenze's class. Inside, heavy cloths swathed over the ceiling, blocking out the light; each student sat on pillows around small circular tables, the room set up like an auditorium, much like Trelawney's class; vines adorned with flowers hung down from the ceiling, stars dancing across the thick cloths. It was beautiful. Her favorite class, really. Divination was easy.

And just her luck. Her partner was Padma Patil.

This will be interesting.

Firenze barreled in, booming his hellos to the class. His face momentarily blanched when he saw Pansy, but he quickly turned away from her. "Right, Class! Today, we will be studying tarot cards. You will find a deck on each of your tables. I expect your partners to read each other's results and give in-depth predictions. I will be checking on you throughout the period. Go on now!"

Pansy sat down next to Padma, smiling at her. "Hello, Patil." The girl's eyes met hers, and she cleared her throat, shuffling the cards. She took a sip of her drink, focusing on her aura. Muted, dusty rose; her core glowed there. She felt... anger; a bit of anger, at Pansy, and annoyance. Exasperation. Sadness. Grief buried under there.

"Let's get to it, then," The Ravenclaw said.

Pansy gave her a feline grin. "Let's."

i love you <3

eight.

Chapter Notes

Songs for this chapter: Slow down, Chase Atlantic; My Blood, Ellie Goulding; 505, Arctic Monkeys; idontwannabeyouanymore, Billie Eilish;

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Padma continued shuffling the cards, putting aside the few that fell out until there were three on the table. She cleared her throat again. "Right. So, this one says you will be finding yourself in a new... Romantic situation, soon. Most likely with a water sign. The- the three of swords indicate that you have experienced extreme heartbreak, and loss..." Pansy scoffed. "Fucking tell me about it. The girl continued, "But the three of swords reversed shows that you will begin healing soon. Most likely with this water sign, I believe... a pisces? You know your astrological chart, yes?"

"Yes, I took fourth year astronomy," she rolled her eyes. Pansy didn't know why she was being rude, but then again this girl had broken her best friend's heart. She didn't care the reason; Pansy had every right, in her mind. "I'm a Scorpio sun, Taurus moon, and Cancer ascendent."

"Right. This person's chart is very compatible with yours. Maybe even... Maybe even a soulmate connection." Her heart froze. No. "And this... well, I've never seen this one before, actually." Her groomed brows drew together. "Professor Firenze?" Padma raised her hand.

"Let me see the bloody card," Pansy said, snatching it from Padma's fingers.

The Bound.

"What the fuck?" She whispered.

The card was unlike any she had ever seen. Two figures, slightly... slightly wolverine on opposite sides, foreheads pressed together. A full moon rose behind them, constellations clear in the night sky. Magic glowed around their heads, and their hands were wrapped around each other, bound between them, over a blazing fire. The words "THE BOUND" were written below them in rough, archaic text.

Firenze stepped behind them. "Yes, my dears, what is-" He stopped dead in his tracks, face going blank and ashen as he saw the card Pansy was holding in her hand. She heard his hooves clapping as he backed away, but quickly grabbed his wrist, looking up at him darkly.

"Professor," She said. "Tell me what this is. Now." Her magic crackled in the air, filling with Ron's scent.

Come to me.

The centaur shook his head slightly, blinking. She tightened her grip on his wrist. "Professor. Now."

She meant to send a wave of calm through him, relax his mind, but her emotions were churning too fast. Wrath.

Wrath burned her, overcoming her anxiety and fear, tearing out of her body, black as the night sky. She didn't know why she was angry; she just knew she was, and whatever the fucking Professor was hiding, he needed to tell her, now.

She stared deep into his eyes. "Tell them to go," She murmured.

Find me, Ron.

"C-class!" He stuttered, never taking his eyes off Pansy. "You're free to go. I'll see you all on Thursday!" Everyone quickly got up, gathering their things and rushing out of the room before he changed his mind. Just as everyone was leaving, Ron burst through the doors, looking around fearfully; he strode towards Pansy the moment his eyes found her, like he was on a mission.

"Pansy," He breathed in her ear, a hand holding her lower back. "What is it?" She glanced up at him, headache already gone. Calm washed over her; Safe.

"He knows. Firenze. Whatever is going on with us, he fucking knows, Ron."

"What?" He looked to Firenze. "What, what is it? Please, Professor?" The professor glanced around nervously, stuttering. Ron took Pansy's hand gently. "You can unhand him, love, it's alright."

She took a deep breath. It's okay, He said in her mind. I'm here.

Pansy relaxed. Ron's here.

"Professor, please," The Gryffindor beside her said. "What does this mean? What is 'the bound'?"

"I-" Pansy took hold of his hand again, sending calm through him. I'm calming him down, she silently said to Ron. He nodded. "I don't know."

Pansy let go of his hand. He snatched it back in terror, looking at her questioningly. "What the bloody hell do you mean you don't know?!" She yelled. "You have to know!"

"I don't, I don't, I swear!"

"Then why did you say it last night? Why did you freak out?"

"I- I know very little of the bound! My brothers and I, we thought that race was... extinct! I'm sure I'm mistaken. It can't be possible, it shouldn't be."

"So you know something, then," Ron said. "Please, Professor. Whatever little you know, please, tell us."

His eyes darted between the two students. "You should do your own research first, before coming to conclusions. Please. I don't know enough to tell you. Just- look in the library, and find your own information. I'm begging you."

Pansy's magic snapped in the air. She was going to fully lose it. Her hair rose on it's ends, electricity crackling through her, arms rising at her sides, palms up. Her eyes were dark, she knew. "I can make you," She said in a low, unrecognizable voice. "I can make you tell us."

Ron grabbed Pansy's arm, stepping in front of her, hands cradling her face. "Pansy. Look at me." She kept her eyes on Firenze. "Pansy. Look at me." Her eyes met his. She instantly calmed, magic reeling in. "It's alright. We'll figure this out on our own." He turned his fiery head back to the Divination Professor. "But then you're going to tell us."

He nodded quickly, galloping out of the greenhouse, leaving Ron and Pansy alone. Pansy collapsed into her chair.

She ran her hands through her hair, pulling at her fingers in her lap. Panic. Panic roiled through her, churning her insides, dropping her stomach; her hands shook. Ron leaned down on his knees, trying to catch her eyes.

"Pansy?"

She gasped, "I- I can't, I don't, I-" He pulled her to him, holding her in his arms, rubbing her back.

"Shhh," He mumbled. "It's alright."

"I don't know how-"

"I know, sweetheart. I know." She fully left the chair, and he gathered her body in his lap, head buried in his neck; Pansy realized that she was crying. Her body racked with sobs, tears soaking Ron's neck. He didn't seem to care; he only held her close, soothing her.

I don't even know where to start, She said in his mind. I don't know how to deal with this, I- I can't deal with this on top of everything else.

She felt him nod in understanding, kissing her forehead. I know. We'll get through it, together. That's where we'll start.

Together?

Together.

III

After wiping her tears and leaving the greenhouse, Pansy and Ron walked back to the Hogwarts grounds together, heading straight for the library. He had her bag slung over his

shoulder, not saying a word, walking with purpose. She could feel the anxiety coursing through his body. Pansy took a gulp of her wine.

Ron's nostrils flared, eyes snapping down to hers. "Are you fucking drinking right now?"

She glanced at him over the top of her cup. "So?" She asked after swallowing. He snatched the cup away from her, pouring out the contents onto the grass. "What the fuck, Weasel!"

He scowled. "It's barely 11:00. Have some self control."

"I do have self control," She grumbled, kicking at pebbles on the ground. "You try getting through my day sober."

"Get your head out of your arse. You're not the only one suffering, Parkinson." Pansy glanced up at him; he's truly angry, She thought. Well, he had no bloody right; she could damn well get drunk at 11:00 in the morning if she wanted to. "No, you can't, actually."

"Stay the fuck out of my head," She said, glaring at him.

"We've been over this. And no, you can't get drunk at 11 in the morning if you want to, not when we have research to do. We have an hour till lunch, and then DADA, so stay focused."

"Oh, aye-aye captain!" She said seriously, saluting him. He rolled his eyes, opening the door to the library.

"Shut up."

"Make me."

He smirked down at her. "Don't start something you can't finish," he whispered in her ear as she walked past him. Her core warmed, and his smug expression deepened as he greeted Madam Pince brightly.

They headed straight for the Lycanthropy section, wasting no time, of course; there weren't many books on the subject, and most of the information was completely wrong, but Pansy supposed they were taking anything they could get.

"So..." Ron said as Pansy laid yet another large tome on the pile in his arms.

She glanced at him inquisitively. She already knew what he was going to ask, and desperately didn't want to discuss it. "So?" they moved into the fiction section, and Pansy picked up a book titled Magical Lunar Mythology, placing it on the pile that was now reaching Ron's nose.

They headed for a nook, Pansy settling herself into a beanbag on the floor, Ron stretching his long legs onto a cushioned chair. She opened the Mythology book, making a show of looking interested. "We said we were going to talk about this." her eyes flicked up to the red haired man gazing at her.

"Alright. So talk."

He scowled. "Nevermind. Merlin knows I'll never get anywhere with you."

"Aw," She giggled, placing a hand on her chest. "You know me so well."

"Pansy," He said in an exasperated tone. "We should... I don't know, figure this out. Like, when did it start for you?"

She momentarily felt herself freeze up, although she wasn't sure why. "What do you mean?"

"You know, like, smelling my scent, not being able to shut me out, etc..."

"Oh, erm..." She thought about it for a moment; the trial was hazy, in general; her memory of that day wasn't much more than blaring sounds and too-bright lights. But one thing, as always, stood out; his scent. "The day of my trial, back in July. I think... We met eyes. Made eye contact, I mean. And I smelled your scent. I don't remember much about that day other than that, really."

"Okay... and what else, since then?"

"Err-"

"Pansy. We have to be completely honest if we want to get any answers. No beating around the bush."

"Right. Right, okay. Well, after that, the full moon was a couple days later, and I couldn't sleep. It... It felt as if my entire body were on fire. Like I couldn't control myself, or my magic. And- I smelled your scent. The whole night, it surrounded me." Black pepper. Sage. Sandalwood. She laughed to herself. "I made Daphne go with me to this men's cologne shop so I could figure out exactly what it smelled like."

Ron smirked. "In typical Pansy Parkinson dramatic fashion, as always."

"I'm nothing if not consistent." Ron nodded, rolling his eyes, unable to hide his smile; she glanced away. "Err, anyway, it was like that every full moon after. Got worse when I came to Hogwarts; I looked into every possibility, but of course, no answers."

"Yea, that's becoming a common theme."

"Until the last full moon. It was worse than ever. But, I was talking with Hermione, and-"

"Hermione? What?"

"Does she not... does she not know? About your lycanthropy?"

"I- I think she does. There's no way she wouldn't, we just... haven't explicitly talked about it."

Pansy nodded. "Right. If you could stop interrupting me, Weaselbee."

"Yea, sorry," He said, cheeks turning red. She resisted the urge to smile.

"As I was saying, Hermione gave me an idea- she was talking about Potter's father and his little boy band; you know, how they all transformed to animagi for Lupin." He nodded, lips closed. "Well, I came to the library and looked through a romance novel I had read in third year- the main character had a connection to her master, who was a werewolf, blah blah, it's not that interesting-" He quirked an auburn brow, and Pansy moved on quickly, wanting to get away from the topic of her... detailed hobbies. "So, I thought that must've been the case- and transformed to find you."

"You're saying you were already an animagus? Unregistered?"

"Yes," She waved him off. "As I was saying, afterwards, when I saw you in Potions the next day, it was strange. I could... I could feel you."

"Can't you feel everyone?" he asked. She glanced at him shyly.

"Not you. Never you."

He shifted in his seat. "So after the full moon, that changed?"

"Yea. All of a sudden, I could see your aura, and feel your energy- thoughts and emotions were murky, but nonetheless, it was a new discovery. And then I went looking for "the wolf" in the hall, and it was you. I can't believe I didn't connect the dots sooner," She laughed coldly.

"Well, we can't all be as perceptive as I am," he teased.

"If you're done inflating your own ego," She simpered, "Time for your side, gingeey." Pansy savored the blush and infuriation at the nickname, but he continued.

"Yea, erm, right. So."

"Well, we know Sixth year was the first time you scented me. In your amortentia," She said with a cheeky smile. A blush crept up his neck and ears.

"You remember that?" He asked, voice tight.

"Oh, Weasley. I remember everything."

He flushed even harder, and Pansy burst out laughing; she couldn't resist. It was almost too easy messing with him, and she wasn't even trying. He scowled at her, dragging a hand through his hair. "Are you done?"

She held a finger up, clutching her stomach, and wiped her eyes. "Now I am."

"Anyways," He rolled his eyes. "Yes, sixth year amortentia, I smelled you, get over it."

She muffled her snickers with a hand. "Right," She said, sitting straight. "When were you bitten, then?"

He shifted his position, adjusting himself uncomfortably. "The battle. I- I saw Fenrir Greyback, attacking Lavender. She was already dead, I dunno what I was thinking, I just- I saw her, my friend, a person who had been nothing but good to me when I was horrible to her, and I attacked him." He laughed mirthlessly. "I really went for it, tried to duel with a werewolf. And he bit me. I don't even remember it being a full moon." Pansy made a mental note of that.

"Okay. So, the trial then?"

"The trial, I- I smelled your scent, too. As soon as I walked into the room, I could feel your presence, and your scent was everywhere. It was almost-"

"Painful?"

He looked up at her, giving her a half-hearted, shaky grin. "Yea. Painful. Anyway, after that, I felt weird during every full moon. Like there was something out there that I had to get to, had to find." His eyes met hers. "And your scent. I could smell your scent, all the time." Violets. Wood smoke. Wine. "It got worse when I came to Hogwarts- being even in the same room as you, it was- horrible, to say the least. It felt like I was dying. And then you found me in the Shrieking Shack, and it was- different." He cleared his throat. "From the first time we got, err- closer- it was different, after. It felt like every time I was away from you, I was knocking at hell's door." He rubbed at the blush on his neck. "Well, you know the story from there."

"Yes, I do," She muttered. "You said you weren't sure if it were a full moon when you were bitten? How could that be possible?"

"I don't know."

Pansy sighed. "We'll look into it. There has to be something we're missing..."

"Like what?" His eyes were open, trusting. Pansy slammed her hands on the table.

"Well I don't know, Weaselbee, that's why we're bloody here." He grumbled and leaned back into his chair, but Pansy continued. "On Sunday, when we were ill, why did you find me?"

His brows drew together. "What do you mean?"

"You came to find me, in my room. We were both ill, but you got out of bed and came all the way up the tower to my room. I could barely even sit up that day. Why?"

He was obviously flustered; embarrassed. Pansy resisted the urge to smile. "I just told you. I- I just, I dunno, I had to," He mumbled.

She pushed on. "What do you mean, 'had to'?"

"I-" he exhaled roughly, flushing a bit.

"Remember, complete honesty, Ronnie," She smirked.

He glanced at her, and took another deep breath. "It just felt like I had to. Like if I didn't go to you and find you immediately, I would die or the whole world would end, or something. Like I said, I don't know what came over me. I just had to get to you."

He met her eyes, and they stared at each other for a moment, in silence. Pansy cleared her throat. "Right. Okay then. So, we know this... connection, started after we met on the full moon. Only, it really started the day of my trial. Or, in your terms, Sixth year Potions." He raised a brow at her, and she continued on. "Okay, in conclusion the beginning is murky, whatever." Ron snickered.

"So from what we can tell, the farther we travel from each other, the worse we feel. And, on top of that, we can hear each other's thoughts, and emotions, and we can't stop or control it."

"Maybe you're siphoning off of me? Maybe... Maybe our spending the full moon together, and being so... close gave you a sort of 'in' to my magic?"

"But how would that explain you not being able to block me out? Or never feel me in the first place?" Pansy chewed on her lip.

"Maybe it's the wolf gene- some sort of defense mechanism against intuitive magic."

"I didn't become a werewolf until this year, Pansy. That wouldn't explain anything," He pointed out.

Pansy threw her arms in the air. "Bloody hell, then! I don't know!"

Ron snickered, and flipped through the pages of his book, skimming. "Maybe... maybe we could ask Lupin? Maybe he's been through something like this before?"

"Did you see anything in there?" She asked, leaning over him. He drew the book towards himself, pushing backwards.

"No, nothing."

Pansy narrowed her eyes. "Then why are you hiding it?"

"I'm not hiding anything."

She leaned all the way over his lap, wrestling the book from his hands. "Give it here, Weaselbee."

He stood up, holding his arm above her. "Stop being nosy and do your own research."

Pansy glanced up at his arm in the air, holding the book. She scowled further, glaring at him hatefully. "I will not fucking jump for that book," She said, holding out her hand, "Now give it to me."

He waved it in the air. "You've gotta catch it first," He smirked.

She stepped all the way up to him, on his toes, up in his face, noses touching. "I will climb you like a tree, cherry top. Don't think I won't."

He cocked his head, grinning wolf-ishly. "I dare you," He whispered.

"You asked for it." She stood on the chair, zig zagging in front of him so he turned around, and jumped onto his back, inching her way further up his body.

He burst into laughter. "Pansy, what the bloody hell is wrong with you?!"

"Don't act like you couldn't have seen this coming!" She yelled back, still reaching for the book. He wriggled around, trying to get her off of him. Eventually, Ron fell back onto the beanbag Pansy had been resting on, trapping her beneath him. He threw the book behind him, turning around to face her, faces inches apart. He tickled her, digging his fingers into her neck and stomach until she was a mess of giggles, and eventually pinned her arms above her head, nose brushing against hers. He breathed her in, still grinning wildly.

"Got you," He whispered.

Her smile faded slowly, still breathing hard. No, please-

He rolled her over, pinning her wrists above her head, smirking.

"Got you."

She breathed hard, refusing to give up, and managed to wriggle her wrists-

"What the bloody fuck?" Ron shot upwards, and, just my fucking luck, Draco stood at the entrance to the nook, eyes wide, books fallen to the floor.

"Shit shit shit," Pansy mumbled, righting her clothes as she stood. She smiled brightly at her friend, trying to look casual. "Hey, Draco."

"Hey Draco?" He repeated incredulously, as if she had committed a crime. "Hey Draco?! Oh my Merlin. Tell me you're not shagging Weaselbee."

She stepped forward, arms out in an effort to calm him down. "Don't touch me!" He shrieked, glaring at Ron. "You're contaminated."

Pansy rolled her eyes. "Draco, you're being dramatic, if you just let me-"

"Ginger, Pansy?! Fucking ginger, are you insane? Ginger, the Weaselbee. Weaselbee, the bloody king of gingers! How could you do this to me?"

"To you?! I'm not doing anything, you wanker-"

"Pansy Blair Lucille Parkinson, do not lie to me! You are absolutely shagging the Ginger!" His hand flew to his mouth, blond head shaking. "I am so disappointed in you."

She smacked the back of his head, folding her arms. "Draco! We're not bloody shagging! Stop it, before someone hears you!"

"Not bloody shagging my arse! I heard you with your giggling and- and playing and-" he took on a high, nasally voice. "Oh, Weaselbee stawp it, no you're so big and strong you beautiful orange mutant!"

"Oh dear God," Pansy sighed, motioning to Ron to pick up their bags, and pushed Draco out the Library, walking towards the Great Hall. She shoved him against a wall, wagging her finger in his face. "We are not shagging!" She hissed. "Stop your dramatics! Salazar, Draco, you're so theatrical sometimes-"

"Theatrical? Me?" He scoffed. "I would never." Both Ron and Pansy fixed him with a look. He shielded his face from Ron. "Don't lay your eyes on me, demon!"

Ron covered his smile with his hand, turning. Pansy scrubbed at her face. "Draco, please. Just stop. And first of all, we're not even going to talk about your questionable decisions, so even if we were shagging, which we're not, you of all people would have no right to judge!"

"Pray tell, Pansy, who exactly have I made questionable decisions with? I have been in love with Astoria Greengrass since 1993, and I have remained loyal, thank you. And Rory is not a ginger giant, or a Weasel so I really would like to know what your issue is."

She put her hands on her hips. "You seem to forget the Ravenclaw from Sixth year? You know, after Astoria rejected you for the 40 millionth time?"

Draco's cheeks turned red. "That was a moment of weakness, and we didn't do anything more than snog! At least she was a Ravenclaw, that's remotely acceptable. But a Gryffindor? How your standards have changed!"

"Salazar's beard, Draco, for the last time we are not shagging. Stop being a tosser." They continued their walk to the Great Hall, striding through the doors. Pansy grabbed onto his shoulder. "You will not tell the others about this, alright?"

He raised his hands in the air, zipping his lips, and continued on to the Slytherin table.

Pansy exhaled deeply, looking up at Ron. He was smirking. "Got a thing against gingers, does he?"

Pansy made a face. "I happen to also," she said, folding her arms.

He leaned close, whispering in her ear, hot breath tickling her skin. "That's not what you said the other night."

Pansy's mouth hung open, watching him in shock as he sauntered off, sitting down with his usual gaggle, who were giving him questioning looks. Pansy harrumphed. Bloody Weaselbee.

When she returned to the Slytherin table, all her friends were staring at her. Pansy sighed, putting her hands on her hips, and looked straight to Draco. "What the bloody hell did you tell them?" She asked.

He held his hands up in defense. "I didn't have to tell him anything! We all saw your little display over there."

Fucking hell. Astoria giggled from her place around Draco's arm. "Didn't know you had a thing for red-heads, Pansy."

Pansy sat down, scrubbing her face with her hands. "I don't," She snapped.

Blaise laughed, still not tearing his eyes off the Gryffindor table. "Touchy, touchy."

"Shut up. And what are you looking at?"

Blaise immediately averted his gaze, picking through his food. "I'm not looking at anything," he said.

"Oh, he was totally staring at Lovegood," Miles Bletchley said as he sat down with Tracey. "What were we talking about?"

"Pansy's disgusting taste in men," Draco sneered. Pansy hit him on the chest.

"For the last bloody time! We're not shagging! Just drop it already, Salazar's balls," She grumbled.

Tracey bit on a carrot. "Who are we talking about?"

"Weaselbee," Blaise chuckled.

"No way!" She gasped. "We totally shagged in fifth year, and let me tell you Pansy-" Tracey held her hands apart, about the size of a large water bottle, and emphasized them in the air, making eyes at her. Miles glared at her in shock, Draco and Blaise clutching their stomachs in laughter, and Pansy rolled her eyes, throwing her fork at Tracey.

"Shut up," She hissed. "We're not shagging, and I will not have you lot spreading rumors around. That means you Draco."

"I barely said anything! It's not like you're subtle about it." Blaise nodded his head in agreement, and Pansy was getting ready to smack him silly, but Astoria, ever the sweetheart, rubbed her arm, calming her.

"It's alright, love, they're just being idiots. Besides, none of us would really mind, you know, if you were shagging Weasley?" Pansy batted her arm off as Astoria burst into giggles along with the rest of the table.

"Not you too, Rory! He's corrupting you," She wagged a finger at Draco, who sighed dramatically, laying his head in Astoria's lap.

"It's always me. Why does everyone get to take the piss on me?" She brushed her hands through his hair, murmuring comfortingly. Pansy glanced away quickly, clearing her throat.

"Where's Daph, by the way?"

"I dunno, no one's seen her." Pansy frowned. Strange.

All good over there? She looked up to find Ron trying to catch her eye from across the hall, raising a brow.

Great. Just bloody perfect. All my friends think we're shagging.

He blushed deeply. And what did you tell them?

Pansy rolled her eyes. That we're not, obviously.

Right. Yea, of course.

Blaise dumped his lunch in the bin behind them, standing, not looking to any of their friends. "Er, I'm gonna go, I have to- I have to do a project." He quickly left the Great Hall, and all the Slytherins watched as barely five seconds later, Luna Lovegood skipped out after him, looking happy as can be.

"They're totally shagging," Miles said. Their friends all nodded in agreement.

Chapter End Notes

how are you today? I am always here to talk about anything!! know you are loved.

sorry for the weird chapter cut off haha

nine.

Chapter Notes

CW: sexual content, depression, alcoholism, suicide attempt

(if you are easily triggered by mentions/depictions of suicide/suicidal thoughts, please skip over the flashback for this chapter. Take care of yourself, and know that you are loved!)

Songs for this chapter: Earned it, The Weeknd; Hostage, Billie Eilish; Halloween, Phoebe Bridgers;

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

After lunch, Pansy made her way straight to Defense Against the Dark Arts, debating the whole time whether or not she should just say fuck it and skiv off; surely Tonks wouldn't report her?

"I wouldn't, if I were you." She jumped out of her skin, a hand pressed to her heart, and turned to who she knew was behind her.

"Don't you have places to be? Other than, you know, stalking me?"

He scoffed. "I'm in this class too, you know. You're blocking the door, actually." He moved around her, unnecessarily close, to open the door, sauntering away. Pansy stared at her lost opportunity. Well, Tonks had already seen her now; no going back.

Behind her, Draco and Blaise coughed loudly, gagging. "Get a room, common whores!" Draco yelled. She pushed back at them, and then went to find her seat, which, of course, was taken by Anthony Goldstein. Pansy made eyes at Daphne, who appeared very tired, but she motioned her off.

"Ah, young Pansy," Tonks said, rubbing her hands together. "I see you've decided to bless us all with your presence today."

Pansy smiled demurely. "Yes, it seemed correct for the mood."

"Just go take your bloody seat, Parkinson." Pansy snickered, and moved to the back of the class, sitting next to Ron's hulking figure.

He whispered in her ear, "You know, the professor might actually like you if you showed up for class once in a while."

She nudged his ribs. "Shut up." They listened to Tonks drone on, Hermione, ever the swot, raising her hand every four seconds to ask questions. At some point, her husband came in, carrying a small baby with blue hair in his hands, smiling at his wife.

Ron tightened up at the sight of Lupin; Pansy turned to him, raising a brow questioningly, but he kept his eyes trained the front of the room.

What's going on?

He showed no sign of change, only flexing his jaw.

Ron. What is it? What was in that book? His eyes flicked to hers momentarily.

I just- I saw something in the book that might lead somewhere- I'm not sure. I'll ask Lupin about it after class.

Pansy huffed, folding her arms and leaning back in her chair; she didn't like being kept in the dark, and was half ready to try pushing through his mind and finding what he had seen, but that felt like it was crossing a line.

Warmth crept over her; Pansy looked down. His hand...

His hand was on her thigh. His tattooed, ring-adorned hand was clutching her mid thigh. She looked to him briefly.

What are you doing?

My head hurts. She could see him smiling smugly out of the corner of her eye.

So this is your solution?

Would you rather me put my arm over your chair for the whole world to see?

Pansy huffed. No.

Are you not comfortable with this?

She almost wanted to say Abso-fucking-lutely not for moment, but the thought of his hand leaving her body, being without his warmth and touch...

No. It's fine.

She tried to concentrate; Bloody hell, Pansy really, really tried. She knew this project was important; massively, actually. She knew her entire life was riding on how well she did this final year, but all she could bloody focus on was that hand.

Curse you, fucking Weaselbee.

She saw the corners of his lips upturn. Those pink, full lips. Say the word and I'll let go.

Shut up.

Pansy risked a glance down; Large, decorated with silver rings; a roman numeral branded on each of his digits. Clean, long fingers. But that wasn't what she was focused on.

No, the most interesting aspect was his tattoo.

Covering the entire front of his hand, a clock was painted in dark ink, shaded through and melting down artistically; melting into flames that went down his wrist, to his forearms. Exposed forearms, from his pushed up sleeves.

She realized that she had lifted her hand; was now tracing the hands of the clock, the bulging veins in his hand and wrist. Ron was holding his breath; his heart beat at a million miles a minute.

Pansy watched as her hand, seemingly with a mind of its own, outlined the flames on his wrist, circling around.

What are you doing? He asked silently, shifting in his seat, eyes on the front of the room, where Hermione and Draco were demonstrating a hex.

She gave no answer. She had none; She had no idea.

In that moment, Pansy knew absolutely nothing other than the ludacris idea that she was sitting in the back of her Defense Against the Dark Arts class, with Ronald bloody Weasley, and he was touching her, and she was touching him, and she never wanted it to stop.

Her sixth year self would most likely vomit at the sight.

His hand tightened on her thigh as she fiddled with one of his rings, turning it round and round. She inhaled sharply. It moved higher.

She wanted it higher than that; cursed herself for wearing bloody pants.

Get your head together, Pansy.

He continued his ascent, curving in just a bit, squeezing tighter. She savored the contact. Laid her hand over his, clutching it to her.

Ron turned to hers, electric eyes finding hers. She gazed back at him.

So many colors, He thought as he looked into her eyes. Green and gray and yellow and blue. Beautiful. So, so fucking beautiful. Pansy was hit with the full force of his lust and desire and utter need, the unwanted glimpse into his thoughts barreling into her.

She wanted to kiss him.

More than fucking anything, she wanted to kiss him. And she was sober; maybe not completely, but they weren't at a party or caught in the heat of a drunken moment. They were in class, and simply existing in the same room as each other, and she so badly wanted to kiss him, to crawl into his very soul and chain herself there, wrap her being around his like a lovely cage for the both of them and never leave.

The need was so powerful it frightened her.

He tightened his hand again, ears flaming, eyes dark, still searching hers.

It's alright. I understand.

But how could he possibly understand? How could anyone understand this overwhelming, all-consuming need for- for him?

He looked deeper. I do.

Merlin's beard, she had to get out of here. She had to be fucking anywhere but here. Had to remind herself they were in class, they were in class and there was no fucking way-

"Right then, everyone! You're all free to do your research and begin working on your projects, here or in other parts of the castle, I don't really care, honestly. Just remember to stay on top of this and do a good job, it will be determining your marks for the year. Not to mention having to do what I specifically hope will be an embarrassing display at the end of the year. I've got nothing for you. Off you go! " Pansy's head snapped up to the Professor, who was now playing with her baby, cooing and making eyes at her husband. Ginny was already fussing over it, Hermione awkwardly offering it her hand. She turned back to Ron, who hadn't moved an inch. She gulped.

"We, erm- we have to go," She whispered, mouth dry.

Ron cleared his throat, now released from his trance. He picked up both of their bags, standing. "Right, yea. Library then?"

"Yea." She shifted on her feet, watching him move unsteadily.

"Okay, I just have to take care of something really quickly-" Pansy grabbed his arm, forcing him to look at her as he descended the tops of the stairs. His hair flew out of his face, looking up through his lashes.

"Ron. Whatever it is you're planning, don't leave me out of it."

He gave her a smooth smile, like nothing could ever be amiss. "I wouldn't dream of it."

Pansy followed him down the stairs to the front of the classroom, then watched as he looked back to her a final time, and turned to Lupin, talking in a low voice; The former professor glanced back at Pansy, then nodded, turning to his wife's desk. Pansy folded her arms, and left the room.

Bloody hell.

What the fuck was she thinking?

She had... she had wanted him. In the middle of a fucking classroom, Pansy had wanted him. Had broken her promise for the seemingly millionth time this bloody week, had betrayed everything she had sworn she would stand for... for what, exactly?

Some comfort? Curiosity? Just for fun?

Traitor.

She deserved the cell in Azkaban. Wanted it, in that moment. Knew with all of her heart and soul that she deserved every punishment, every fucking suffering in the world.

Traitor.

Pansy stared at the Library door, then turned around, making her way back to the dorms; she needed to be drunk. She needed to be absolutely, tear all her clothes off and swim in the black lake, forget her fucking name drunk.

She added a word to the list. The one that was piling up; the profile of Pansy bloody Parkinson.

Coward.

January 8th, 1997.

Sixth year.

Astronomy Tower.

"Pansy? What are you doing here?"

The cold wind whipped her hair, making her teeth chatter and bones brittle. She felt it in her soul; felt the pain of her frozen fingers like she was waking from a thousand-year coma.

She smiled at him drunkenly. Her wizard. Her beautiful, sun-shining wizard. She didn't deserve him. Not now, not ever. "Oh, I'm just having fun," She said. He remained silent as she hummed to herself, keeping her eyes trained on the sky. "He's coming, you know."

"What?"

"He. Him," She flourished with her hands. "They wouldn't have made us all come home for Christmas anyway. Not unless something big was happening."

Theo sighed. "Yea... yea, I know."

"Our lives will be at stake. Pretty soon, we'll be at war, and absolutely nothing will ever be the same again. We'll have to fight for our lives. And watch our friends die."

Forest-green eyes met hers, wide and worried. He clutched his arms to himself. "I know, Pansy. But it'll be okay. We'll get through it."

She pursed her lips, walking away from him, farther down. "I don't want to be here to see that, Theo."

He stepped up cautiously, palms up. "Pansy... what do you mean." She fake-teetered on the edge, giggling. "Pansy, be careful, you could fall!"

"Oh, but that's the fun of it," She laughed.

He wrapped one arm around his middle, reaching the other up to her. He gave her a disarming smile. Oh, that smile. "C'mon, love, it's freezing out here. Let's go get some hot chocolate, yea?"

She looked down at him sadly. "I don't want to."

"Yea, you do, Pans. C'mon, get off that ledge. It's warm inside. You'll feel better, I promise."

His gaze told her what he wasn't saying; that he knew they weren't just joking around.

Pansy turned away from her wizard, arms out to the open sky, gazing at the bright stars and the dark moon. It was nowhere to be found, tonight. She let the wind blow through her like a ghost, breathing in.

"If I could pick a last sight to see, this would be it," She breathed.

She could feel his anxiety swelling, nerves spiking. Don't you see? I can never make this feeling go away. I will only make it worse.

"Pansy," He said, voice soft. "Please, come down." He slowly inched toward her. She spun on the ledge, teetering a bit, laughing like a maniac. He shot forward. "Pansy!" She giggled once more, and he huffed a breath, panic rising. "Please, Pansy. Stop messing around. It's late, let's go."

"I wish I could be messing around, Theodore."

"Pansy..."

She sighed, looking in his eyes one last time, tears flowing down her face. "A beautiful sight, indeed," She whispered, looking back to the stars. "I'm sorry." She wondered what would happen if she jumped; wanted to feel the cold wind beating at her figure, wondered how it would feel to hit the stone floor of the Hogwarts courtyard and have her soul punched out of her body.

"Pansy, what are you...?" Pansy whispered her apology over and over again, wishing she could do better, be better for him, live for him, do all of this for him. But the truth was, she wasn't making anything better. She only made it worse. She couldn't stay and watch him die. She swore to herself, no matter what, she would never watch him die.

She looked to the sky. And stepped backwards, into thin air.

"Pansy!" Theo lunged forward, bending his middle over the ledge, and grabbed for her arm, slamming her body against the cold stone. Pansy gasped as her ribs rattled, looking back up to Theo, who was struggling with one arm, pulling her back. "Hold on, hold on, I've got you," He chanted over and over again, more to himself than her.

She looked to him with wild eyes, glancing back at the ground below her. He pulled his wand from his pocket, whispering a spell and levitated her from the ledge, pushing the both of them to the wall, Pansy cradled in his arms. She sobbed harder than ever, gasping her breaths as he soothed her, tears flowing down her face.

"I- I'm sorry, Theo, I'm so sorry, I'm so- so sorry," She hiccupped, clutching his shirt. He rubbed her back, silently crying as he held her, shushing her cries.

"I know. I know."

Present day.

Ron found Pansy sitting on the edge of the Astronomy tower, downing a bottle of Firewhiskey with vigor. He walked to her silently, sitting on the ledge beside her, one leg on each side.

"You have to stop," He said. She slid her heavy-lidded eyes to him, mouth still on the bottle. She gulped.

"Stop what, Weasel?"

He scowled, taking the bottle from the hands. She opened her mouth to protest, but he simply took a drink and handed it back to her. "This. Stop hating yourself for whatever reason." She smirked. How dare he try to comfort her. Make her feel better. As if there were any possible way to erase this pain, short of bringing Theo back. He sighed; "Well, I can't bring back the dead. But you should still stop."

"Oh, you very well know my reasons, Weaselbee. You don't get to tell me to stop."

"I do, actually." Her mouth fell open, eyes rolling. The fucking audacity. "Whatever is happening to us, we have to figure it out. And we can't do that if you're drunk and wallowing all the time."

She snatched the bottle back from him. "I don't wallow."

He raised a brow. "Really? Then what, exactly, are you doing now?"

"Fucking... contemplating the meaning of life," She slurred, gesturing with the bottle. He gave a dry laugh, sighing.

"So, what, Pansy? Every time we snog, or have a fucking 'moment' or whatever, you're going to drink into oblivion and mope? For what, Pansy? Who is that benefitting?"

"You say that as if it's going to happen again."

"You say that as if you're not the one initiating in the first place," He replied with a pointed look. She scowled further.

"You're the one putting your hands on me in classrooms."

Ron leaned closer. "You had every opportunity to say no. I asked you if you were comfortable." He cocked his head to the side. "Did you want to say no? Did you... did you feel like I forced you?"

Pansy rolled her eyes even harder. "Bloody hell, Weaselbee, no, you didn't force me into anything, it's just..." She felt his relief at the words, and growing curiosity.

"Just what, Pansy?"

She swung her legs off the ledge, standing to pace. "Salazar, I don't know! This! It's this!"

His brows drew together as he hopped down, watching her with folded arms. "What do you mean?"

You know bloody well what I mean, bastard.

I'll never know until you tell me, princess. He smirked.

Pansy ignored her core tightening. Fucking hell. "This!" She motioned between the two of them. "It... it doesn't even feel like me, most of the time. Like when I'm with you, I'm this whole other person, and suddenly I have no control of anything and I'm free falling. Like I couldn't say no if I wanted to, because everything is just so..." She plunged her hands into her hair with frustration, huffing.

"So why don't you let go?"

She turned back to him, seeing him stride towards her with his long legs, eyes set on her. "What?" She asked, bewildered.

"Why don't you let go, Pansy? You say you're free falling, you say you feel like you have no control. So stop trying. Let go. Let go, and see what happens."

She scoffed a laugh, stepping back as he came closer. "You're fucking insane, Weasley."

Her back hit the wall. He continued, not stopping until their faces were barely a hands-width apart. "But you want to know," He said darkly. "You want to know what it would be like." He dragged a finger down her cheek, face inching slowly, so slowly, towards hers. "Maybe I do too," He whispered in her ear.

Pansy's breaths were coming in short bursts, her cheek touching his, their bodies lined up together so, so perfectly. Like two pieces of a missing puzzle.

Traitor.

He stepped back quickly, already six feet away from her, gasping hard. "I'm sorry, I- I don't know what came over me, I-"

"Settle down," She scoffed, brushing off her clothes, folding her arms. "Okay. We'll figure out what's going on between us, whatever the fucking bound is, but this--" She motioned between their bodies. "Will never happen again. Never. Got it?" She asked with raised brows.

She felt the disappointment and guilt swell in his chest, sadness and aching and something.. . no. No fucking more of that. She was going to eliminate this issue one way or another. He nodded. "Yes, of course. Never again."

Pansy nodded once, then made her way down the Astronomy tower, clutching her body, swearing one thing, one thing, one promise she wouldn't break.

Once they found out what this.... Connection between the two of them was... she would break it. She didn't care if she had to travel to hell and back and kiss the devil's hand, but she would do it. No matter how badly it hurt her.

For Theo.

Traitor.

Chapter End Notes

Suicide hotline: 800-273-8255

I hope you're having a good day! that was a dark chapter and depicted an extremely low point. please know that there is always always always a way out, and i am here to talk. I understand how it is, and anyone who needs it i am 100% here for you. I love you, please remember to drink water and eat today!

disclaimer: I am not in any way trying to glamourize or romanticize suicide/suicide attempts. I am a person who has struggled with mental illness for a long time, and that scene was important to understand Pansy's trauma, the abuse she receives from her parents (which will be delved further into throughout the story) and her relationship with Theo. Please remember that depression/mental illness is not pretty, and not everyone has someone there to save them.

ten.

Chapter Notes

CW: anxiety, slight sexual content

Songs for this chapter: chile i wish i had song recs for y'all but i was listening to drake and aboogie the whole time it rly does not fit the vibe im sorry skjdsklhdl

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Friday, October 16th, 1998.

5:30pm.

Slytherin common room.

Pansy spent the rest of her week doing her best to act... no, she detested that word. It was currently purged from her vocabulary.

Well, to say the least, she was going about her day as usual; she went to her classes, completed her assignments for the next three months, spent extra time with her friends, watched the quidditch practices... in short, she did absolutely everything to avoid Ron.

She wouldn't say avoiding per say, she was simply... steering clear of his presence. Yes, that was it.

Fuck the headaches. Fuck the constant pain that came with not being in his presence. That got worse with every second that went by and he wasn't touching her.

And it was pain, alright; had far progressed past headaches and tingling skin. No, now her muscles and bones felt constantly stiff and sore, as if she were petrifying; every step she took hurt, like knives puncturing her skin. Constant needles drawn down her arms and her legs, vision half blurred from the pain and force of her headaches. It felt like dying; like her soul was being ripped in half.

She shook her head. She wouldn't think about it. No, she wouldn't.

And he... he tried. The Gryffindor was relentless, she would give him that. He tried to catch her eye in class, or discuss projects, or invoke their strange mind-speak... he really tried. So she hid in the one place he wouldn't follow; the Slytherin common room.

It was comforting, the plush carpets and expensive leather couches, the large window beneath the black lake, watching mermaids swim past, first years study and play.

Pansy had drawn a line; she handed him her notes for their joint project in silence, they studied their... condition, on opposite ends of the library; This is how it is. This is how it

should be, and she was all the more happier for it; she was keeping her promise for once.

So why did she feel so empty?

Not just emotionally, either. No, emptiness was feeling Pansy was far too familiar with. This.. it felt like she was decaying. It looked like she was decaying; she had avoided glancing in the mirror today, lest she darken her mood even further. The last she had seen of her appearance was violet bruises under her eyes, sunken cheeks and ashen skin, oily, frizzed out hair- like a corpse.

Weasley didn't look any better.

"I knew I could find you here!" Pansy looked up from the sofa she was nestled into, and found Daphne striding into the common room, hair and skin set aglow from the fireplace. She plopped down next to Pansy, her long skirt fluttering near her ankles. Pansy pulled down the hood of her jumper even farther, as if it could conceal how she looked. "Everyone's looking for you. We wanted to go to Hogsmeade for drinks."

"Everyone' everyone, or our new everyone?" She asked cautiously. Daphne rolled her eyes.

"Everyone, everyone, Pans. Don't worry, Weaselbee won't be there."

Pansy did her best to look away nonchalantly, like she couldn't possibly care less. "I never asked about Ron," She said.

Daphne smirked; "Oh, yes, of course. Ron."

"Shut up," She scowled. Daphne laughed, leaning back on the couch. A sudden burst of nerves drew through her, her aura pulsing dimly. Pansy narrowed her eyes. "Alright, Daph?"

"Mhm," She smiled thinly, not looking at Pansy. She touched the other girl's arm, trying to catch her eye.

"Daph? What is it?"

Tears filled Daphne's eyes, and she shook her head slightly, wiping at them. "Salazar, what's wrong with me," She laughed.

"Are you okay? You know you can tell me, Daphne."

She sniffled. "I know. Oh, believe me, I know." Daphne exhaled roughly, fiddling with her fingers; her anxiety swelled. "Pansy?"

"Yea?" She replied, growing more and more concerned for her friend.

"I... I'm not shagging Anthony Goldstein. I was never, actually," She laughed nervously again, even as tears fell down her face.

"Okay..."

"I lied. I- I fell in love with someone else," She smiled to herself sadly, tears still flowing. Pansy felt almost giddy with excitement.

"Yea?"

"Yea," She wiped at the tears on her face. "And she's... she's amazing. She's beautiful, and smart, and kind, and she's so... abstract in every sense of the word." Daphne's brown eyes lit up as she spoke, darting everywhere but Pansy's face. "She's... she's got this hair, ugh, this hair Pans, you wouldn't believe- it's the kind so dark it doesn't turn brown in the sunlight, it turns blue. And her eyes are another form of magic themselves- I swear it on Merlin's grave. She's always experimenting and doing everything but her school work, and questioning everything on this Earth, and I- I really, really love her." Her voice broke, and she looked into Pansy's wide eyes, her cheeks puffy and red.

"And she's a she," Daphne whispered. "A girl, I mean, she- she's a girl. And I love her, and I spent my whole life wondering if something was wrong with me, if maybe I was put together wrong, because everyone was interested in boys and I was told I should be interested in boys, and I really believed it." Daphne laughed again, throwing her hands up. "I mean, I really believed it- for Merlin's sakes, I dated Blaise, for like, six months. I sort of chose him- to prove to myself there wasn't anything wrong with me, and that I could love, I could be human."

Pansy watched her best friend, keeping her lips shut, waiting for her to go on.

"But then I saw her," She breathed. "And my whole world came crashing down. I saw her, and it was like the stars aligned and came crashing into me, because suddenly she was everywhere I looked and everywhere I was and I never wanted to stop seeing her. And I realized, I'm gay." She giggled again, plopping down on the couch, head in her hands. "I am really, really gay. Like, totally, 100%, I will never be attracted to a man unless he's a fucking god or something, lesbian." She looked to Pansy, taking her hands. "And I should've told you, Pans, I wanted so badly, I just- I wasn't ready. For that to be something that isn't just mine anymore. During the war, I protected my secret with my life, because it meant protecting her- and myself, from my parents. I know how we're raised- purebloods don't do well with children that don't fit their mold," She scoffed. "I think I've been stuck in battle mode. But now I'm afraid I'll lose her. And that trumps every other fear I've ever had." Pansy paused, wanting to speak, but unsure if Daphne were finished yet- she didn't want to steal her big moment. "Please, say something, Pans."

Pansy let out a breath happily, taking Daphne in her arms and squeezing her tight. She ignored the pain of moving so fast, and the way her vision swam. "I am so, so proud of you, Daph," She whispered. "I love you so much, and I am so fucking happy that you're happy. You deserve it."

Daphne laughed through her sobs, clutching Pansy. "Really?" She asked, voice muffled in Pansy's jumper.

"Bloody hell yes!" She exclaimed, pulling back to push the hair from Daphne's face, looking at her.

"I'm so sorry you had to hide, Daphne. I'm sorry we made you feel like you had to hide- you

know I would never want that. You're my sister," She whispered. "I would take a thousand crucios if it meant you got to feel joy."

"I know, Pansy. I would for you, too." Pansy opened her arms again, pulling Daphne tight, breathing in her scent- that Daphne scent that always comforted her.

"I love you," She said. "To the moon and back. And I want you to get up, get out of here, and go get your bloody girl back. Yea?"

Daphne nodded, wiping her tears, and stood, making her way out. She turned back to Pansy, wringing her fingers nervously. "Pans, what do I- what do I tell her?"

Pansy smiled. "Everything you just told me. The stars aligned and her blue hair and magical eyes," She teased, and Daphne's cheeks went red as she covered her face in embarrassment. "Everything," Pansy said, voice soft.

Daphne grinned, shaking out her hands nervously, and turned to find her girlfriend, giddy and nervous and full of those warm, utterly terrifying and horribly beautiful feelings that only happen when you're in love.

Pansy was happy for her, truly. There was no one in this possible world that deserved happiness more than Daphne. But deep down, in her heart, she was... jealous.

Pansy was jealous.

She wanted that. She wanted it back.. More than anything, she wanted to go back in time and fall in love with Theo all over again, and hold him close and never let him go.

Maybe she deserved this. Maybe this was her punishment, for not protecting him, for not sacrificing herself in his place.

And she couldn't deny that to herself. She couldn't deny her selfishness and evil. The worst evil of all; she had been gifted an angel on this Earth, and like a good little soldier in Lucifer's army, had taken him down.

You deserve this.

Traitor.

Saturday, November 26th, 1994.
Hogsmeade.
9:30pm.

Pansy wrapped Theo's jacket tighter around her, inhaling his scent, giddy and nervous. He had asked her to meet him out here, just outside of the Three Broomsticks, where all of their friends sat laughing and drinking butterbeers together. She was happy; she was so, completely, disgustingly happy.

Dating Theo was like... Salazar, it was like everything she had ever dreamed of. It had only

been three weeks, but it was the best three weeks of her life. Finally, finally, after so long, she could be with him, and spend all her time with him, and not hide it. She didn't know why she ever felt the need to.

Everything was so easy with him. Pansy thought it would be hard; she thought it would be like giving up every piece of herself and letting her walls down, and she was utterly terrified of that; still, utterly terrified, but it was a different sort of fear.

The giddy fear. The kind you only feel when you're in love.

Love.

That was a strong word. A very, very strong word, she told herself, and it was far too early to even feel it, let alone say it.

But she wanted to; oh, how badly she wanted to tell him she loved him. That she was permanently, horribly in love with him, and had been for so long. In love with his floppy brown hair, and the way it was streaked with gold. With his deep green eyes, and his tan skin. Those beautiful dimples.

The way he was always moving, always thinking, never stopping his fidgeting hands or bouncing leg, constantly full of new ideas and jokes that made her roll with laughter and words that made her forget every horrible thing that had ever been said to her because he was here, her dream boy was here and he was like the sun, encompassing her in his shining light and pushing out all the darkness.

Bright and warm and beautiful. His light healed all her rough edges, and she had never felt so weightless.

But when she looked into his eyes... when he brought her flowers in the mornings, or lifted her up on his back and carried her to classes, snuggled with her in front of the fire or gave her his jumpers and smiled that Theo smile and gave her the last piece of dessert during dinner and brushed her hair back from her face and told her how beautiful she was... Merlin, she loved him, and it was in those moments the words threatened to slip from her tongue, and make everything come crashing down.

Get a grip, Pansy, she thought to herself. You aren't even official yet. What is wrong with you?

She just had to control herself. Keep control, and don't ruin everything, and it would be okay.

Theo suddenly appeared in front of her, drawing her out of her trance, hands held behind his back. His nose and cheeks were red, skin pale, and even now, he looked like a beautiful, shining star. Her star.

"Pans?" She smiled brightly at him, rubbing her hands together. His brows drew together slightly, "Are you cold?"

“No, no, I cast a warming charm, but I left my wand inside and I think it’s fading,” She said. “C’mon then, why did you make me wait out here?”

He looked down at her, smiling nervously, shifting on his feet a bit. His cheeks flushed a deeper pink. “Well, I- I wanted to ask you something.”

“Yes?” She smiled, tilting her head in a way she knew made him extra nervous. His aura glowed bright gold around him, jumping slightly as his heart pulsed.

“I- well, I, erm-”

“C’mon, love, we haven’t got all day.” Pansy felt warmth flush her face. Had she just called him love? Stupid, stupid, stupid.

Theo drew his hands from behind his back, and in them he held a single rose, deep red petals tipped in black, the whole flower and deep green stem encased in some sort of glass-crystal that had an opalescent shine. It was beautiful. Pansy gaped a bit, her heart stuttering. Theo smiled. “For you, my lady,” He said with a small bow.

She giggled, taking the rose and tracing the petals with her fingers. “Theo, it’s beautiful. Thank you. Truly.”

“Anything for you, Pansy.” She blushed deeply, holding the rose to her chest, sighing. “And one more thing,” He said.

She looked up at him, raising a brow in question. “Yes?”

Theo motioned to the rose, and he took one of her hands, holding it just above the glazed petals. “Whisper, ‘reserare rosa,’” He said, nerves spiking. Pansy raised her brows at him and looked back down, focusing her magic on the petals; her wandless magic ability had been easier with the help of her empathic magic, but it was difficult nonetheless. She whispered the spell, and the glass melted down the petals. Theo bounced on his leg a bit.

“Theo, that’s- that’s amazing,” Pansy said. He wiggled his brows a bit, grinning, still giddy with nervous energy.

“Just something I’ve been working on,” He smiled. “Okay, now reach into the petals.”

“Are you sure?”

“Just follow instructions, Parkinson,” he grinned jokingly, and she rolled her eyes, smirking, and reached into the flower. Within the petals, a silver chain was laced, and she picked it up gingerly, laying it in the palm of her hand.

Thin, sterling silver, with a slight opal sheen to it, and at the bottom, a small, heart shaped pendant, made of pure obsidian. Familiar, actually. I. Was that...? She glanced up at the boy watching her anxiously. “Theo?”

“Now say, ‘signum rosa’.” Pansy muttered the spell, watching in amazement as the glass crept back over the rose petals seamlessly.

“Incredible,” She whispered.

He took a deep breath. “I have a question to ask you,” He breathed.

“Yes?” Anxiety bloomed in her chest, and she did her best to calm herself. It’s alright, it’s Theo, it’s alright.

“Pansy,” He said in a low voice. She looked up at him, studying his forest green eyes. “I- I know we’ve just started dating, and it’s only been a few weeks, but... you’re very... important to me.”

She smiled warmly. “You’re important to me too, Theo.”

He gave her a lopsided-grin back, those dimples peeking out. “Well, I... I like you, Pansy. More than anyone or anything, I like you. And I think about you all the time, everyday. I think about your hair and your eyes, and the way you laugh, and your kindness and loyalty and determination. I think about how smart you are and how beautiful your mind is. All I can think about is how I’m going to make you laugh, and how I’ll work as hard as I can to make you happy. And I want to be the only one doing that, for the rest of my life.” Pansy’s heart was beating out of her chest, and for some reason, she wanted to cry. She was standing here, looking at this man with a glass rose in her hands, and he was telling her everything she had ever been so desperate to hear, like a prince out of a storybook. Theo took a deep breath, and held up the silver chain. “I... I got you this.”

“It’s the same crystal as your wand core,” He breathed nervously. Her heart swelled; oh, he was killing her. Truly, really, killing her. How? The obsidian used in the Parkinson wands, for her abilities, it was different, and rare. How had he done it?

How was it possible that he had done so much to find something close to her heart, that represented her and the few things she loved about herself, that were so personal to her. How was it that he could possibly care that much? That anyone could care this much, about her, when she had never done anything to deserve it? “And... and I hope you’ll take it, and I hope you’ll be my girlfriend, Pansy.” Pansy met eyes with him, and she squealed brightly, jumping into him, wrapping her arms around his neck and legs around his waist, taking care not to let go of the rose. He stumbled a bit, and wrapped his arms around her waist, burying his face in her neck. “Is that a yes?” He stuttered.

Pansy giggled, leaning back a bit to lace her fingers through his soft hair, eyes roaming all over his face. “Yes! Of course that’s a bloody yes,” She laughed. “I would want nothing more than to be yours, Theodore Nott,” She whispered.

“And I you,” He breathed back. Pansy’s gaze fell on his lips, and she wasn’t sure if he leaned in first or she did, but their lips came together like two stars colliding, and it was everything.

This was what a kiss was supposed to be like, she thought to herself. Not an awkward muggle game in third year with Blaise, or any of the experiences with the men she had been with. None of them had been like this, not even the Italian aristocrat from the Summer. None of them had made her body feel aglow, like she was floating twenty feet in the air and would

never come down. Like Theo's beautiful light had been breathed into her, and their souls twined together, lifting and creating a mythical supernova.

It was soft and loving and tender, and he pressed a bit harder as her tongue slipped into his mouth and Theo bit her lip with surprising expertise, sucking slightly on her tongue, gently massaging her, causing heat to pool low in her core and excitement burn through her, eager for more. He squeezed her waist as she tightened his legs around him, their mouths and bodies moving in perfect sync, as if they were made for this, for each other.

Theo broke from her, breathing hard, and Pansy frowned a bit, wanting to lean in for more, more of him, but he glanced to the side a bit. "We have an audience," he whispered coyly.

Pansy turned her head quickly, and saw their friends sitting at one of the tables inside, whooping and cheering, wolf-whistles echoing from the pub. They laughed together, Theo's face burning as he gave them all a smile so bright and without bounds Pansy thought she would pass out, and he kissed her again passionately, for all the world to see. Pansy answered his affections with vigor, grinning like an idiot when he pulled away as he set her down, their eyes never leaving each other.

Theo turned her, drawing her hair aside as he took the chain and clasped it around her neck. She shivered when his warm fingers brushed her skin. She turned around, still grinning, and he pulled her to him by the waist, kissing her forehead. "Ready?" He asked.

Pansy dragged a hand through the side of his hair affectionately. "With you, always." Theo blushed brightly as she laughed, taking her hand and kissing her knuckles over and over again as he opened the door to the Broomsticks for her.

"By the way," He whispered in her ear before they sat down, "I never want to be called Theo by you ever again. Only love from now on." He gave her a coy grin and Pansy flushed, raising a brow. He lifted his hands in surrender, eyes wide and innocent. "My one rule!"

She giggled, and they squeezed into the giant booth their friends sat in, throwing themselves into the lively chatter and laughter of carefree, happy children, not a thought in their mind of the darkness racing towards them.

The present.

Saturday, October 17th, 1998.

10:40am.

After a particularly tiring 'check in' with Tonks that morning, Pansy trudged her way back up the hill from Hogsmeade, doing her best not to remember her drunken shenanigans from the week before with Ron. She shuddered in embarrassment, scrubbing at her face as she remembered herself wrapping around poles and screaming the Weasley is Our King song, and actually telling Ron she liked him 'on his knees before her'. Pansy seriously contemplated offing herself after that particular memory surfaced.

'The bound.' Now what the fuck did that mean?

It seemed her life was in a constant downward spiral. All these new things being thrown at her, this situation with bloody Weasley... why? Why her? Of all fucking people, why him?

Some questions would never be answered, she supposed, lost in thought as she walked through the halls of Hogwarts, making her way back to bed so she could sleep.

Lost in thought, so she didn't notice someone near her, a specific someone she was avoiding, until he pulled her by the wrist and she was suddenly shrouded in darkness, behind some sort of statue.

Pansy's reflexes shot to the surface and her wand was in hand instantly, fighting stance already in place. She wordlessly cast Lumos, and the dark sort of cave she was in was set aglow, revealing the figure in front of her. She rolled her eyes, standing straight. "Seriously, Weaselbee?"

"Well, if you weren't avoiding me all week, I wouldn't have had to resort to desperate measures," he snorted.

Pansy folded her arms stubbornly, lifting her chin. "I wasn't avoiding you," She mumbled.

"Yeah, sure." Pansy glared at him, rolling her eyes.

"I don't have time to argue with you. What do you want?" He glared right back, stepping closer to her, arms folded.

"We have things to do, Pansy. Neither of us have time for your childish antics."

"Childish?" She gasped. "Fucking childish-"

He held up a hand, silencing her. "Be quiet," He commanded. "You've been playing games for the past week, and it ends now. We have to figure out whatever the fuck is happening between us so we can sever the connection and move on with our lives, like you said."

Pansy blanched at his boldness, surprised by his pure nerve to tell her to be quiet, and the fact that she had listened.

He cocked his head wolfishly, still getting closer to her. She hadn't backed away. She wanted to, oh she did, but it had been so long, and his scent was all around her filling that emptiness, soothing her skin, and she craved it, but it wasn't enough-

"That is what you want, yes?"

Pansy snapped her head up, jerked out of her trance. "What?"

"That's what you said you wanted. To figure this out and sever the connection. Right?"

"R- right, I-"

"What do you want, Pansy?" He was so close now, and she stuttered, mouth gaping as he scoffed, stepping back from her. "I'm human, too, sweetheart. I understand you're going through grief, I get it and I know you're punishing yourself and you think you deserve it, but you don't. You don't fucking deserve to go through pain like this, to put yourself through this pain."

“You don’t know what I bloody deserve. You don’t know shit, Weaselbee, so don’t act like you do.”

“I know you think what you’re doing is bringing Theo justice.”

Rage barreled through her, and she shoved at his shoulders roughly. He barely moved. “Don’t fucking talk about Theo to me!” She snarled.

He folded his arms, taking a breath, still staring at her darkly. “Alright, I’m sorry.” Pansy turned about the passageway.

How dare he bring up Theo to her? Like he had a right? Like he was close enough to her to even mention his name? “Why are you so set on this?” She asked, turning and storming closer to him. “Why are you being so…”

“So what?”

“Well, kind isn’t exactly the right word,” She smirked sarcastically. “Curious, is more like it.”

“Because I’m drawn to you,” he said with such stark honesty Pansy was baffled, the smile wiped from her face. “And I need to know why. Except, I don’t really care why.” He continued his strides closer to her, until they were as close as could be, her head tilted far back to meet his eyes. “I just know that ever since that day at the wizengamot my entire world has revolved around you, and I’ve let it. You’ve burned me, princess, and I don’t even care.” His voice was low and rumbled through her.

“You should,” She seethed even as her head tilted farther upwards, leaning into him, her heartbeat slamming through her body, electricity pulsing down her veins. He grabbed her hand, holding it to his heart, letting her feel the beat like a pulsing drum. “I don’t,” he said roughly. “Burn me, Pansy. Burn me until I’m nothing but ash and dust at your feet. I don’t care. I don’t care if when all this is over, I’m destroyed. As long as it’s by your hand.”

She didn’t know what to say to that. All she knew was that she was breathing hard and they were far too close and she was toeing a dangerous line, that voice in her head screaming and singing, Traitor, Traitor, Traitor-

But he held her chin up with a calloused hand, forcing her to keep her blazing eyes on his, that electric blue lighting up her veins and crackling through her body, the air full of their scents. His touch raged through her, spreading like a godly blessing to her body. She felt like she was going to pass out.

“What do you want, Pansy?” He murmured again darkly, sending shivers through her body.

She set her jaw, keeping her eyes on him determinedly, refusing to back down. “What I want,” She said in a surprisingly clear voice, “Is to get this under control. So, road trip, Weaselbee,” She grinned evilly.

“What?” He blanched slightly, like he wasn’t expecting that answer. Good.

“We’re going to see Grandma Parkinson.”

Chapter End Notes

reminder i love you and i hope you had a good day today! please be kind to yourself and others, you deserve it.

eleven.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"What?" Ron's face skewed a bit.

"You wanted to learn Occlumency, yes? And 'control'. Get answers, as you said, dear Weaselbee." Pansy's mouth twisted in a cruel smirk. "Well, we're not getting any answers from Firenze, obviously. So there's no one who would know anything better than Mamie."

"Mamie?"

"Grandma in French, Weasel," Pansy called as she pushed forward, walking towards the strong scent of chocolate that she hoped was the exit of this... whatever they were in. "C'mon. We've got to talk to McGonagall."

"You're going the wrong way, Parkinson." Pansy blushed, curling her hands into fists at her sides, but kept her chin up as she turned and walked past the red head, keeping her cool demeanor. "Aren't you forbidden from leaving Hogwarts until graduation? I'm pretty sure you can't get around the rules of your probation, princess."

She ignored the way her body heated and core throbbed when the nickname sounded from his lips. Annoying, she told herself. It's annoying.

You can lie to yourself, princess, but you can't lie to me.

Pansy scowled up at him, ignoring his comments in her mind. "I'm sure if we talk to McGonagall and get permission from Tonks it will be fine. Besides, if I have everyone's favorite ginger hero with me there's no way they'll say no."

He rolled his eyes, shoving his hands into the pockets of his dark jeans as they continued walking. Pansy made herself known in front of the Headmistress's office, and the doors opened on their own, leading her and Ron up the stairwell.

Minerva McGonagall had not changed at all; not one bit. Same dark hair, streaked with grey. A face that might've been beautiful in her youth, but now marred by wrinkles and a strict demeanor. Emerald robes, tight expression, folded hands in front of her.

Pansy had never been in the Headmaster's office before. She pointedly ignored Albus Dumbledore's portrait standing proudly among the others.

"Miss Parkinson," The older woman remarked. "And... Ron. What may I ask, is the reasoning for this visit?"

"Hello Miner- Erm, I mean, Headmistress McGonagall." Ron smiled kindly, and the Headmistress's eyes twinkled, her head nodding a bit towards him. Pansy raised a brow questioningly at him, shocked at his casual use of their former professor's first name.

"Headmistress," Pansy said. "I..." In truth, Pansy hadn't planned this at all. Any of this. She had only said they were visiting Mamie as a retort, a way to win the battle her and Weasley constantly found themselves engaging each other in. What exactly was her plan?

She resisted the urge to turn to Ron. From the corner of her eye, she could view his smug smirk, his casual air, and knew he would be no help. He was watching her flail, and he was enjoying it.

Arseshole.

Center yourself, Pansy. You are a Parkinson. Parkinsons don't stutter. Her mother's high voice sounded in her ears, and she straightened her back, lifting her chin. "Well, to be perfectly honest with you, Headmistress, it seems Weasley and I have encountered a common issue."

Mcgonagall raised a brow. "Oh?"

Pansy smiled, relishing in the slight worriedness Ron felt, in the way his eyes darted towards her. "Well, you are perfectly aware of my abilities as an empath. My family's ability. As it seems, good old Weaselbee here," Pansy reached up a hand, clapping Ron on the shoulder roughly, tugging him towards her. "Has somehow been reaching out in his wolfy-form and calling to me. Somehow, he has bound the two of us together, and I seek to undo it."

Ron's face drained of color, Mcgonagall's doing the same. She cleared her throat. "Wolfy-form?" She hissed, glaring at Weaselbee.

"Oh, yes. Did I not mention I know about that?" Pansy looked innocently between the two of them, towards Ron's flaming cheeks. "Well, it's not news to you of course."

"What exactly," The headmistress tutted coolly, "Is your point, Ms. Parkinson?"

"Well, there is only one person who can help us break this connection, since it seems to be tied to my empathic abilities. My grandmother, Estelle Parkinson, who is currently living in the south of France, is the last living empath in the world, besides myself. So I think this warrants a visit to her. My point is to ask for permission."

Mcgonagall glanced between the two of them, rubbing her forehead tiredly. Ron stepped forward a bit, adding, "We wouldn't ask if it weren't truly urgent, Minerva. It's more than just reaching out, it's... it's painful, and it is constant. We don't know the full extent of this connection, but we do need help."

His voice was gentle and strong at the same time, nervous but unyielding, and Pansy held her breath, waiting for that "no." No, Pansy. You killed one of the only good students in your year, your house, and aided the Dark Lord in almost killing us all. You are a horrible person, and whatever bit of pain you are experiencing is deserved. You should perish. It would only slightly repay your debts to humanity.

It was what she deserved. For her crimes, she deserved much more than she had gotten. She deserved the pain-

"Alright. I will speak to Nymphadora, she will contact the Ministry and sign off your permission. You should be able to leave next week, but for two days and two nights, no more and no less."

"Thank you, Headmistress." Pansy shook herself out of her trance, nodding her head and mumbling her thanks, and stumbled out the door with Ron, standing awkwardly in the hallway together.

"So..." He said. "Next weekend."

"Yea," Pansy whispered. "Better shape up, Weaselbee. Mamie has very high standards." Ron opened his mouth to respond, but she had already turned on her heels, making her way back to the Eighth year dorms, away from him.

III

Thursday, October 22nd, 1998.

Great Hall.

12:45pm.

"But you can't just leave, Pansy!" Daphne whined. "Bloody hell, it's your birthday!"

"She's right, Pans," Blaise said over a mouthful of banana bread, courtesy of Padma Patil, who had been sitting at the Slytherin table with them everyday for a week now, perched upon Daphne's lap. Pansy's heart clenched at the sight of their casual affection.

Pansy scoffed nonchalantly. "My birthday isn't till Saturday, and you're all being dramatic. I'll be back Sunday morning, so we can celebrate then."

"Why is Weasley going with you, again?" Miles asked. Pansy shifted in her seat, trying to keep herself from flushing. Calm and collected. Annoyed. Portrait of casualness.

Normal.

She simply rolled her eyes. "Ministry decided I could absolutely not be free to celebrate with my grandmother alone, so I needed a chaperone. And he's my partner for the projects we've been assigned. I suppose my auror decided it would be... convenient, or something." Pansy waved a hand through the air, taking a bite of banana bread. She wanted a drink.

"But we've never celebrated a birthday without each other! It's tradition!"

"Salazar, not you too, Draco." Pansy looked around the table to her friends, who were all watching her with wide, sad eyes, and her heart wrenched. She didn't want to lie to them, and Draco was right. It was tradition, after all, for them to spend all their birthdays together. When was the last time she had celebrated without her friends? The closest people she had ever had to a family?

And this year... this year would be the first time since she was four years old that she would spend a birthday without Theo. She had already had to endure what would've been his 19th back in September; Daphne and Astoria, Draco, Blaise, Tracey and Miles, had all held her as she cried over his grave that day. They sang happy birthday to him together.

Astoria smiled brightly, wrapping an arm around Pansy, squeezing her. "Pansy's right. We have all the time in the world, yea?"

Everyone nodded in agreement, and Pansy let out a breath, glancing to Astoria gratefully.

Right, She thought. All the time in the world.

III

Friday, October 23rd, 1998.

9:00am.

Pansy looked to Ron, who was currently struggling to lug her trunk behind them. He glanced up at Pansy.

"What the fuck, Parkinson?" He grunted. "We're only leaving for a couple days. This is unnecessary."

Pansy glanced back at him, smirking. "Well, if it occurred to you to use a levitating charm, you could make things much easier for yourself."

Ron looked away quickly, cheeks flushing. Dumbass, He thought to himself. Pansy giggled. She turned back around, checking her reflection in the mirror once more.

Mamie was the only person in her family who had ever treated her like... well, like Pansy expected people in real families to treat each other. She had never known what motherly love was like, until she had met her grandmother.

But regardless, she was a Parkinson. The Parkinsons valued appearances, over all else.

Part of the reason Pansy had to be stone-cold sober this weekend. Much to her horror.

And... some small part of her, deep down, didn't want her grandmother to see her stumble. Or know that she was anything less than perfect.

Although of all people, Estelle Parkinson understood imperfections. And she accepted them a hell of a lot better than her mother ever had.

So she looked over the clothes she had chosen: a short black dress made of ribbed cloth that clung to her body, with long sleeves and a warm turtleneck. Large leather jacket that fell just under the hem of her dress, above her mid thigh. Sheer black tights, and black leather boots that came below her knee, with pointed toes and thin heels. She had smoothed her hair and clipped it behind her head with a claw-clip, keeping her makeup minimal.

Pansy took a shaky breath. She hadn't seen her grandmother since... since before the war. She knew the date, actually.

She chose not to think about it.

She turned around, preparing to make a snide comment to the Gryffindor behind her, but found him staring at her from across the room, arms folded. Pansy turned her palms up at her sides, glancing to the side nervously.

Nervous. She almost scoffed. Pansy Parkinson, nervous. It was bullshit. She was Voldemort's bloody prize, for Merlin's sake. Even He hadn't made her nervous. Or at least, she hadn't shown it. No, a Parkinson never showed their hand. They didn't shift on their feet or fidget or ask tactless questions. They didn't stutter.

Yet here she was. Making gestures and shifting around and acting jumpy, all because of a bloody Weasley.

Pathetic.

"What?" Pansy blurted. She almost cringed at her lack of... smoothness.

"You're acting strange," He remarked.

"Nice observation, red." Ron rolled his eyes at the nickname, pushing off McGonagall's desk and striding towards her.

"You're nervous. Why?" He tilted his head in a lupine motion.

Pansy swallowed. "I'm not nervous."

Ron gave her a savage grin, jabbing a finger at her chest. "You seem to forget the reasoning for this little trip, Princess. I can feel everything you can. And you're nervous."

"So what?" She met his eyes boldly, refusing to stand down. "I haven't seen my grandmother in a long time. She's the last living member of my family, besides Adrian and my aunt. I have every right to be nervous."

"I know," he smiled.

Pansy wanted to throttle him. "Then what was the bloody point of asking me a question, Weasel?"

"I just wanted to make you squirm." She glared at him hatefully, but Ron simply leaned in a bit, eyes darkening as he whispered in her ear, "Although there are plenty of other ways to do that."

Pansy met his challenge, muttering back, "You're not nearly as smooth as you think you are."

"No," He grinned. "But you seem to think very highly of me." He gave her a pointed look downwards as he said that, to the tightness and warmth of her body, and she narrowed her

eyes, but he simply pulled back, leaving her cold and bothered.

A moment later, McGonagall and Tonks swept through the door, instructing them on the use of the portkey and making both Pansy and Ron sign agreement forms, including Tonks herself.

As Pansy was signing a paper, leaning after the headmistress's desk and painfully aware of what the view of her backside was doing to Ron behind her, suddenly an extremely large cat jumped onto the table, scattering the ink and smudging the paper.

It sat in front of Pansy, mewling and licking its paw. It had a scrunched face and wild ginger hair, and strongly resembled a rather small, deranged tiger. Pansy squealed, picking up the little monster and brushing aside its hair, cradling him like a baby in her arms.

"Oh, he's beautiful!" Pansy looked up to find the witches and wizard in the room staring at her in shock. "Isn't this Hermione's pet? What is he doing here?"

"Erm- I dunno, Crooks likes to run around the castle sometimes," Ron muttered. McGonagall turned sharply to him.

"That's against the rules, Mr. Weasley!"

He cleared his throat, shrugging. "Yea, Crookshanks kinda does what he wants."

Pansy cooed at the cat again, pressing a kiss to the top of his head as she let him go. He curled around her feet, doing a figure eight between her legs, meowing loudly. Pansy laughed.

"Right then. Let's get on with it." They all exited the headmistress office, walking down and outside the grounds of Hogwarts. Pansy momentarily felt the magic of Hogwarts renewed wards pulling at her, as if to clamp down on the shackles the ministry had placed since her trial.

Pansy took a deep breath. She expected it to be... different, somehow. As if her first time stepping outside of Hogwarts in two months would make the air smell different, feel changed.

But nothing.

She knew she was being dramatic; everyone else spent their two months here; most eighth years didn't even leave Hogwarts on the weekends, although all were allowed. Except her and her friends. Pansy shook her thoughts out, stepping onto the small rock that was slightly elevated above the ground.

Ron looked down to her, offering his hand. "Ready?"

Pansy slipped her fingers through his. "Never," She said, as they touched the portkey at the same time and were transported through the swirling air.

Her and Ron looked at each other at the same time, and he said in her mind, let go.

She did.

They landed across the street from her Grandmother's townhouse, a pretty, crème colored building located in one of the richer areas of Marseille. Where her grandmother had been born and raised, until she went to Hogwarts. Where she had returned after her grandfather had died.

The two of them stood in the middle of a pristine, bright courtyard, littered with fallen leaves in late October morning. It was much warmer here, and the sun shone brightly, weaving in and out of grey clouds. The air smelled of spice and chill and home.

She had wanted to live here; that had been the plan. To graduate Hogwarts, and be done with the war; run from Voldemort and his duties, and live a quiet life in Marseille with Theo. In the flat he had bought them.

Tears sprang to her eyes, but she quickly blinked them away, stepping away from Ron's arm, which had been wrapped tightly around her waist.

Muggles milled about, not seeming to notice that Ron and Pansy had simply appeared in the middle of the street. No, life kept moving, a couple sitting together and chatting over coffee cups on a twining bench, cars and other muggle forms of transportation whizzing by.

"Well?" She turned to the Gryffindor beside her, and pointed ahead of them.

"That's my grandmother's house." Pansy took a step forward, trying to steady her erratic heart, but was pulled back. Ron had grabbed her wrist. "What?" She asked. "Let's go, Weasel."

"We have all day, Pansy. It's early. Let's just... get breakfast, yea?"

Pansy watched him. Was he serious?

Of course I'm serious.

Why? She spoke silently.

Well have you eaten?

Pansy huffed a breath, out loud this time.No.

Alright then. Let's go. "Haven't you been here before?" he asked aloud.

"Yes," She cleared her throat. "But... not for a while."

"When was the last time you came?"

"It was..." Pansy met his eyes. "Sixth year. Valentine's day, with... with Theo."

She braced herself for the pity and guilt to wash over him. But he simply nodded his head, pushing a hand through his hair, motioning for her to walk in front of him.

"Alright. Lead the way, then."

They made their way to a small café across the street, and Pansy took one look at Ron's clueless face as he read the menu and ordered for both of them in French.

Ron glanced around them, taking in the sights of the quiet street, the faint smell of cigarettes. He muttered a horribly pronounced merci to the waitress that placed their croque monsieur's in front of them, along with the two cafés au lait Pansy had ordered.

He roughly took a bite with his hands, and groaned. "This is... so good," He mumbled.

Pansy let out a laugh, sipping her coffee. "If you think French breakfast is all that, you'll be on your knees for lunch and dinner."

He glanced up at her coyly, then focused back on his food. "So... is your grandmother originally from here?" Pansy nodded.

"The Macmillan's are French. And the Parkinson's. My grandmother met my grandfather while she was visiting family here, sometime in the 1940s, I believe."

"Wait, you're related to Ernie?" He laughed. Pansy scrunched her eyebrows for a moment, and then remembered who he was talking about.

"Oh. Distantly, yes, I suppose. But it's different bloodlines." Ron nodded, brushing off his fingers as he finished the last of his sandwich.

"How is your grandmother an empath if she was born a Macmillan? I thought the ability only went through Parkinson women?"

"It does. She has some... distant connection to the Parkinson's, through her mother's line. She didn't even know until after she married my grandfather. Our general consensus is that the power only passes to women born in the Parkinson line by blood and name."

"Interesting." Pansy nodded, laughing shakily, fidgeting with her fingers atop the table. She turned her ring over and over again, trying her best not to let the memories overflow, overcome her, to keep control-

"Hey." She looked up, and Ron was grasping her hand, squeezing her fingers. "It's okay. We'll be in and out."

"Yea," She nodded. "Yea."

They paid their bill quickly, remaining hand in hand as they walked towards her grandmother's house. She wanted to let go. Pansy told herself, over and over again, she should just let go. But she couldn't.

Maybe, just for tonight- just for this time, here, she could use his strength. Leech off his warmth and kindness, if only for a few days. Pansy knew she needed it.

She whispered her apologies to Theo over and over again, hoping somewhere, wherever he was, he heard her and knew.

They arrived at her grandmother's door, and Pansy took a deep breath. Ron squeezed her hand once, not even fidgeting or turning slightly to knock on the door.

Your move, He said to her silently. She turned to smirk at him for a moment, and raised her hand to knock on the door, but it swung open before her fingers touched the teal-colored wood, and her grandmother faced her.

Estelle Parkinson was a tall, elegant woman, face still beautiful despite the wrinkles and spots of age. No, even at seventy-nine years, her once coppery-blond hair turned white, blazing amber eyes now glassed over with blindness, Estelle was still a knockout. She still remained timeless in her beauty, with that twinkle in her milky eyes and sweet, knowing smirk.

The older woman pulled Pansy into a tight hug immediately, smiling brightly, showing off those gorgeous dimples of hers. Pansy inhaled her grandmother's scent. Burnt sugar and Chanel No. 5 perfume, the same as it had always been.

"Pansy, ma Cherie," She gasped in her half-French, half-British accent. "I've missed you." She smacked the back of Pansy's neck roughly, and she yelped. "Where have you been? Why haven't you visited me?"

Pansy rubbed her neck sorely, grinning. "I'm sorry, Mamie, I've been so busy, and I'm not permitted to leave Hogwarts now, not after the war." Her smile faded, and she glanced at Ron. "I'm here because of... special circumstances."

Her brows scrunched as her eyes searched the air around Pansy, concern and curiosity flooding her features. "You have... changed, Pansy," She said, in a voice of wonder. Pansy stiffened. Was it possible?

Was it possible that she was so far gone, so irreparably damaged that even her grandmother could sense it, through her aura and energy? Was she truly that broken?

Estelle finally noticed Ron standing awkwardly beside them, and gasped, a hand flying to her chest. "Septimus?"

Chapter End Notes

So sorry for the delay everyone! I'm honestly still not happy with these chapters, I might end up taking them down/reediting and changing them, but I didn't want to keep y'all waiting.

I imagined Estelle as Rachel McAdams in 'The Notebook', just taller and with gold-brown eyes. I really love her backstory, and I'm thinking of writing a short version of it when I finish bound :) it's been really hard to find motivation to write these days lol.

I love you all, I'm so grateful that you are alive today <3

twelve.

Ron's brows drew together, but he smiled kindly, the lines in his cheeks poking out in a beautiful way. "I'm Ron Weasley, madame," he said, extending a hand. "It's nice to meet you."

Her grandmother let out a breath, taking Ron's hand and staring up at him dreamily as she shook it. "You look so like Septimus."

Pansy fought the urge to laugh at Ron's utter confusion. How the fuck? He was thinking to himself. She ignored that.

"Septimus Weasley was my grandfather, but he passed before I was born. Did you know him, Mrs. Parkinson?"

She smiled demurely. "Please, call me Estelle, child. And yes, I knew Septimus, some time ago." Her voice trailed off a bit as she sighed, but she quickly turned, motioning for them to come inside. "Come, come in. I'm sorry I wasn't expecting visitors, otherwise I would have cleaned up a bit."

The house was pristine, of course. A pretty hall with dark blue-ish purple walls that opened into a wide living room, bay window set into the front, plush, overstuffed velvet sofas and rugs decorating the space. A twining staircase was nestled into the opposite corner. Potted plants and paintings of all kinds hung off the walls, a vintage, multi-colored stain glass lamp lighting the areas that weren't doused in the sunlight from the windows. Farther down the townhouse opened into a small, cozy kitchen, with light-green colored cabinets and dark marble countertops, copper pots and pans hanging from the ceiling above the large island in the center. It smelled as if cookies were baking, or some sort of bread. A wide dining space flowed out of the kitchen, large french doors that covered almost the entire wall opening onto a deck, complete with a fire pit and comfy outdoor sofas.

Pansy had always loved her grandmother's house- it was her safe place. Here, she had spent summers and weekend-getaways learning to control her abilities, learning meditation and peace, falling in love with the beautiful city and having secret summer flings with her grandmother's muggle neighbors. Here was the first time she had ever snuck out of the house, going to cause mischief in the streets until the wee hours of the morning with Jean-Luc Boyd and his gaggle of friends.

Here she had learned her love of fashion and riding on mopeds, the way she felt alive standing on the back of her friends' motorcycle and zooming through the streets of Marseille at 3 in the morning. She had smoked her first cigarette and liked the way it hazed her mind, but not the way it made her feel too slow and lazy. She had detested the smell, but quickly grown to love it. She learned that she loved the color black and the feel of leather more than anything else, and driving a muggle car was, indeed, harder than it looked.

Here Pansy had brought Theo to introduce to her grandmother, so that the two most important people in her world would know each other. Here, the love of her life had gotten the idea to

live in this city together, and less than a year later had bought her a flat not five miles from this house.

Here, Pansy grieved and healed. Before Theo had ever passed. Here was the only place she had ever felt safe enough to do so.

Tea floated into the sitting room, and she and Ron sat on the light green sofa in front of the coffee table. Pansy smiled, picking up a violet throw pillow she had chosen when she was thirteen. "I can't believe you've kept everything the same," She said.

"Of course I would," Estelle scoffed. "Your sense of style has always been impeccable, *ma crevette*."

"I've missed you so much, Mamie," Pansy smiled. The older woman took a sip of her tea, glancing at Ron.

"I have missed you more. And as delighted as I am to see you, I must ask, why are you here?"

She looked at Ron nervously, and glanced back at her grandmother. But the woman wasn't watching her; she was watching Ron, yet again, with her glassy, aimless eyes. He shifted uncomfortably in his seat, cheeks flushing deep crimson. Estelle smiled, setting down her tea cup.

"My apologies, darling. It's just... your resemblance to Septimus is truly uncanny. Your auras... they're the same."

Pansy raised a brow. "Really? I've never seen two of the same auras before."

"Yes. It reminds me of when I was young," She remarked, looking between the two of them. "Not much older than you two, actually."

"Were you close with Septimus, Mamie?" Pansy asked.

Estelle smiled wistfully, turning towards the window, blinking. "For a time, yes. I was the maid of honor at his and Cedrella's wedding."

Ron perked up at that. "You were? I thought they eloped?"

"They did. Cedrella and I were very close, being in Slytherin together and sharing a dorm, during our years at Hogwarts of course. She was like a sister to me. We had drifted apart after graduation, but I ran into her one day and she asked me to witness their wedding."

Pansy watched her grandmother closely. Something... something was strange about her copper-gold aura, the way it gleamed and rippled tightly around her, the emotions whirling through her body. She opened her senses.

Regret, and fear. Love. Anguish. Pain. Sadness. All of it was jumbled there, in a great knot at the center of her grandmother's being, and it pulsed weakly when she spoke of Septimus. When she glanced at Ron.

Perhaps there was more to the story? Pansy pocketed that bit of information, for later.

"Mamie, have you ever... have you ever connected to someone? With your empathic abilities?"

"What?" Her head snapped upwards, eyes searching the air around Pansy.

"Like, if someone were in pain, or anguish. Have you ever formed a connection to them? Something you couldn't cut off, or stop? Maybe even... maybe even transferred your abilities to theirs?"

"No, love, I can't say I have. That's.... Very unusual." Pansy pursed her lips, looking up to Ron. He placed a hand on her lower back, rubbing up and down her spine soothingly as she leaned into his touch.

Breathe, he said silently.

"Is that the reason for this visit, darling? Have you... connected with Ronald?"

"I think so, Mamie. That is the only explanation we have for all of this."

"All of this?"

"The mind-reading," Ron said. "My sudden ability to feel what Pansy feels, and hear her thoughts. The... the pain we feel, if we're apart for too long. And I mean real, physical pain, not that sappy shite." Pansy nudged Ron's ribs with his elbows, and he blushed. "Stuff, sorry."

Estelle let out a breathy laugh, but her brows drew together, hands fidgeting in worry as she searched the air around Pansy and Ron's figures. "Hmm," She hummed. "That explains your aura, possibly."

"My aura?" Pansy asked.

Her grandmother waved her off with a hand. "Nevermind that. Tell me, when did this begin?"

"Well, it depends on your point of view really," She laughed, glancing at Ron, whose ears were beet-red. "But generally, we would both say July 6th of this year."

"Tell me everything," Estelle said.

So they did. Pansy did most of the talking, but together they explained everything, from her trial, to the scents, to the mind-plowing pain and the tingly-feelings Pansy experienced during the full moon. Telling her grandmother about Ron's lycanthropy was essential to the story, they imagined, but Estelle held no judgements. They spoke of the way they felt connected, constantly, and couldn't turn it off. Ever. Ron of course became suddenly shy during the more... sexual, pieces, but Pansy remained unashamed. She had been telling her grandmother everything since she was a child. And that meant everything.

When they were finished, Estelle was glancing curiously between Ron and Pansy, gears turning in her head.

What is she doing? Ron asked silently as she searched the air around them, and excused herself for a moment, disappearing up the stairs.

The looking around? He nodded. She's studying our auras. Something must be off about them, for her to be this curious. And she was probably heading upstairs to get crystals.

Oh. You can't see your own aura?

No. But I know it's sage green, from what Mamie has told me.

No it's not.

Pansy snapped her head up to him. "What?"

"It's not green," He said, swallowing. "It's more of a... burnt gold. Slightly pink."

"Since when can you see auras, Weaselbee?"

He shrugged. "I dunno. It just got brighter and more noticeable the more time I spent around you. Besides, it's only yours."

"Only mine?"

"Yea. I can't really see anyone else's." Pansy gaped at him.

"And you're deciding to tell me this now?" Ron simply shrugged again, and Pansy harrumphed, crossing her arms and turning away from him as her grandmother returned, holding obsidian crystals wrapped individually in a cloth. She set them in a circle around the coffee table, and motioned for them to lay their hands outwards, palms up. Or rather, motioned to Pansy, and by extension, Ron understood. She held their hands over the crystals, shutting her eyes and concentrating. Ron glanced at Pansy questioningly, but she shushed him with a violent look.

Concentrate, She said silently.

Estelle groaned lightly, and Pansy's eyes flew open, searching her grandmother's face. She looked... in pain?

When it seemed like hours had passed, her grandmother gasped, and snatched her hands back to her, eyes bouncing between Ron and Pansy. "That... that is powerful magic," she said.

"What do you mean, Mamie? What did you see?"

Her glassy eyes stared into space. "Well, you were right, Pansy. There is some kind of connection between the two of you."

"What?" Ron asked.

"Yes," she replied. "Your auras are intertwined. That is what I saw differently earlier, Pansy." She glanced at her granddaughter with a sympathetic look. "There is strong magic between

the two of you, connecting you, somehow."

Pansy didn't dare look at Ron as she asked, "Can you break it?"

"No," Estelle said sharply. "I wouldn't dare. A connection that strong could risk killing the both of you."

Pansy loosed a breath, heart stuttering. No. How could this be? Was she really tied to Ron... forever? For who knows how long?

How? Why? Why her? Why, after all of this? Was this God's punishment to her? She had never been very religious, although her father was, but she supposed her actions warranted heavenly judgement. Was this the universe's way of laughing in her face?

You can't have the one you love, The world screamed at her. No, you took care of that on your own. Now, here. Shackled to another. You'll never have peace.

"Well, if my magic is reaching out to him, then surely I can be the one to take it back, right?"

"You will not even try, Pansy," She glared at her with milky eyes. "That connection does not come from your empathic abilities. I... I don't know what it is. But I have never seen something like that. Something that has bound your very souls together."

There it is. That word again. 'The Bound', Firenze had said.

She looked at Ron, searching for his strength when she was on the verge of panic. But he was staring at her grandmother, expression hard and emotionless.

Pansy didn't think about what her grandmother had said after. Bound their souls? What did that mean?

"You should talk to that Professor you mentioned, my dear. It seems he would have more answers than I."

Pansy nodded. "Alright. Until then, do you think you could teach Ron Occlumency? So that we both have some semblance of control?"

"Yes, of course."

For the hours after, they spent time sitting in her grandmother's living room, practicing Occlumency and teaching Ron how to put up shields and block others out. Specifically, Pansy. He did not look at her once the entire time, not even when they sat at Estelle's dining room and ate dinner with french bread and cheese before and after. When they bid her grandmother goodnight, Pansy volunteered herself to show Ron his room as she led him up the small staircase, to the room on the farthest end of the hall, just past hers. Estelle's room was in the basement, where she could easily access her small garden outside.

"Well, this is it," She said awkwardly as Ron glanced around the small room. It was simple, and elegant, as her grandmother always was: a queen bed with a plush creme comforter and matching pillows laid atop, dark gold accents throughout the entire room. It had a large

headboard behind that dipped and curved, and a small settee pushed against the foot of the bed, Ron's bag laying on top. A cream painted dresser and mirror lined with the same gold as the rest of the room opposed the bed, shuttered closet doors laid into the wall closest to the door, a bay window with gold-and-cream throw pillows and plush seats on the other wall. Two nightstands with old-fashioned lamps stood on either side of the bed.

But Ron was staring at something else, and Pansy resisted the urge to die of embarrassment. He was staring at a portrait that her grandmother had painted of her when she was 14, wearing a frilly blue dress and her short hair half up, half down. A fluffy gray cat, much like Crookshanks but smaller, with the same grumpy expression and wild fur, sat on a small stool next to her. Ron reached his fingers out absently, still not saying a word.

"I had no idea she still had those paintings up," Pansy said nervously. Why the fuck wasn't he talking, for bloody sakes! "She had it painted the summer before fourth year."

She saw the back of Ron's head bob. Not a word from him. She laughed nervously. "His name was Cinder." She walked up to his side carefully, making sure to keep her eyes on the portrait. Why was he acting so... distant?

But wasn't that what she wanted? Distance? Was she only feeling like this because he was no longer giving her attention?

Make your fucking mind up, She thought to herself.

She cleared her throat awkwardly. "Most of the women in the Parkinson line start showing the signs of their empathic abilities from ages nine to twelve. I was a late bloomer. I didn't show until 15. My father would try to... train me." Ron's brows drew together, ever so slightly. A reaction. "It was an important family heirloom, and to him it was as if I had lost it. Nevermind it was already dwindling throughout the generations, but it just made his useless daughter even more useless. He would try to evoke strong emotions out of me. He thought that would activate my powers, or something."

Salazar, stop fucking talking. But she couldn't. The words just kept pouring out. "One day, I suppose he was particularly frustrated, and felt that the best way to get me to feel something... extreme was to snap Cinder's neck in front of me."

She tried her best to say it casually, like it didn't still hurt. Like the memory of Cinder's keening meow and the sound of his cracking bones didn't ring in her ears. The cold look in her father's eyes.

Why had she told him that? Dear Merlin, Pansy just kept embarrassing herself. Why was he still silent?

She looked away from the painting, blinking away tears, and glanced at Ron. He was gaping at her.

"You... you were fourteen."

She smirked nonchalantly. "My father was a different sort of man," She said.

"I'm so sorry, Pansy," He said. "That's horrible."

"Oh, don't worry about me Ronnie," She laughed shakily. "Right then, I'm off to bed. I'll erm... see you tomorrow."

He nodded, and mumbled, "Yea, tomorrow."

Pansy shut the door behind her bedroom, coming face to face with her grandmother. She startled, her hand flying to her chest as she loosed a breath. "Salazar, Mamie, you scared me."

Estelle only smiled, eyes flicking to the door. "You know, it's strange... I've never seen two people with the same aura before. Even in families."

Pansy knew she should mind her business, but she couldn't help it. "Mamie were you... in a relationship with Septimus Weasley?"

"No, ma cherie," She smiled sadly. "We were... close, to some degree. But no. And I wasn't talking about Septimus."

"Oh." Pansy nodded, her brows drawing together. She exhaled quickly. "Well, I'm going to bed then. Bonne nuit, Mamie."

"Bonne nuit," She replied, before turning around and catching her wrist. "Pansy?"

"Yes?" She asked, turning.

"A word of advice, dear." She brought her milky eyes almost to Pansy's, just a bit above her brows. "Love is rare. Real, devoted and unconditional love is more precious than a diamond. Most people only experience it once in a lifetime."

Theo's sunlit eyes flashed in Pansy's mind, and she nodded sadly. "Yes, I know."

Her grandmother's grip tightened on her wrist. "I know you miss Theodore, darling," she said, eyes lined with silver. "But do not mistake honoring his memory for punishing yourself for the rest of your life."

Her brows drew together. "What...?" she mumbled, but her grandmother simply patted her on the cheek and kissed her forehead, making her way down the stairs.

Pansy shook herself off as she spun and opened her bedroom door. Now, this place...

Pansy had designed and redesigned it herself multiple times since she was seven, but the final product had been from when she was 15. She had been obsessed with royalty back then, and had wanted a bedroom fit for a princess.

And so she had.

The room had been expanded with magic to fit her king sized bed, made with a comforter of the deepest violet, matching pillowcases, and black silk sheets. There were millions of pillows on the bed, as Pansy liked it, and sheer black curtains hanging from the black-tinged

bronze canopy that twirled like vines upwards, connecting into a gorgeous flower design in the middle. Pansy had enchanted glowing butterflies to hang from it, twirling around like their own nest.

The ceiling was made of a purple so deep it seemed black, lined with the same dark bronze as the rest of the room. In the center, a black-bronze chandelier. A small, elegant settee with curling arms pushed against the end of the bed, a large dresser off to the side. The doors of her elaborate walk-in closet mostly blended in with the dark walls, covered by a mural of sparkling butterflies, enchanted to look as if they were moving. On the wall opposite her bed, an elegant vanity of dark wood lined with bronze and a matching chair with a plush seat stood. It's three paneled mirrors matched the theme of the room, and the dark wood held perfume bottles and romance novels and old spell books atop it. Another large, vintage mirror on the other side of the room lay, with curving bronze designs around it, just beside her nightstand. Opposite it, closer to the vanity, was a large portrait of Cinder. Pansy smiled sadly and touched her cat's painted paws, the feline in the portrait curving it's tail and meowing.

Then, she turned to the thick, dark violet curtains that covered the entire wall, with large swoops of fabric at the tops that bled into straight swaths that pooled on the floor. She flung them open, pushing the small french doors open onto her iron-wrought balcony. She smiled fondly at memories of climbing this balcony and holding onto dear life on the vines that grew up the outer wall, jumping onto Jean-Luc Boyd's motorcycle and riding throughout the city at all hours of the night.

She had been 15 then; that summer was one of the best of her life. Even better when Daphne had arrived, and they had made mischief together and got to experience the muggle world. Then a few months later, Theo had finally asked her to be his girlfriend. She hadn't been back to her parents house once that year. The Slytherins were finally being favored by a Headmaster, although nobody really liked Professor Um-bitch.

All had been right in the world. So how had it gone so wrong?

She shucked off her clothes and donned an oversized t-shirt, no bra, no shorts, and lit a fag as she walked back onto her balcony, smoking away her pounding headache.

What did her grandmother mean?

No, she thought to herself. You know exactly what she meant.

There was some truth in her words. Pansy was punishing herself. But for once, Estelle had gotten one thing wrong.

She deserved it. Through and through, Pansy deserved it. Hell, she deserved that cell in Azkaban.

Eventually, after stomping out her cigarette, Pansy tossed and turned in bed for hours, her head swimming through the migraine, skin feeling raw and inflamed. She knew Ron was feeling the same.

This is ridiculous.

No. She wouldn't go to his room. Absolutely not, that would be absurd.

But... just for this weekend, right? She had said she would lean on his strength, just for these few days. Wouldn't that be okay?

Pansy laid in her bed, debating with herself, and eventually gave up. Who was she kidding?

"Fuck it," She mumbled into the darkness, and threw back her covers, padding onto the soft floor and opening her door-

But Ron was already standing in the hall, closing his own door behind him. He turned, ears and cheeks flaming red as he saw her, mouth popped open.

She came face to face with him, shirtless and wearing plaid pyjama pants, hair mussed and eyes tired. With no shoes on, she barely came up to his shoulder. She shot her eyes upwards, realizing she was staring at the very prominent imprint below his waist, and the v-line of muscles that led to it.

But it seemed he had other priorities, as well. His eyes were roaming over her body, specifically her long, bare legs, dragging upwards towards where the shirt just-barely covered the thin, sheer underwear she was wearing.

Pansy cleared her throat awkwardly, feeling her cheeks flaming as she leaned against the doorway. His eyes darted back to hers. She smiled a bit. "I, erm- I couldn't sleep."

"Yea," He said breathlessly. "Me neither."

She tucked a loose strand of hair behind her ear, going for a nonchalant tone, and turned around, ignoring the feel of his eyes on her backside. She tucked herself back into bed. "You gonna come in, or what, Weasel?"

He looked up at her. "Yea. Yea, right," He said as he stepped into her room, eyes dark on hers.

He shut the door behind him.

thirteen.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Ron stood awkwardly in the middle of her room, glancing around, electric eyes studying the ceiling and furniture. He smirked at the twirling, animated butterflies above her bed, and turned his gaze toward her vanity, picking up a picture taken of her and Daphne at age 16, spinning together on a rope swing above a pristine lake, tinged green. He smiled faintly. His hands passed over the walls of the room like a ghost reminiscing a tragic past, over the portrait of Cinder, the curtains, her balcony.

She simply sat in bed, her knees drawn to her chest, watching him with wide, nervous eyes. Pansy laughed shakily. "You comin' in or what, Weasley?"

"Right, yea," He smiled, snapping his head up to hers.

"Close the curtains," She said. He smirked at her.

"Bossy, bossy," Ron murmured. Pansy simply rolled her eyes, burrowing herself beneath the thick covers of her bed, cradling in her own warmth. The room was now completely dark, save for the faint blue glow of the butterflies above their heads. They flapped down and caressed Ron's neck, fluttering his hair as he nestled on the opposite side of the bed. He chuckled, watching them in wonder. "Brilliant."

"Mum never let me decorate at home. All pastel pinks and ugly yellows and frills I didn't like. I had ideas pouring out of me when Mamie told me I could choose whatever I wished here."

"Can you turn them off?" He asked with a glance at the butterflies.

"Like a light switch?" She inquired, to which he nodded his head. "Of sorts. I made a spell for it when I first enchanted them, but I've completely forgotten it now. I don't think I've ever turned them off. They seem to get darker or brighter as I wish."

Ron nodded his head, hair shifting against the silken pillows. Pansy blew out a breath, and turned away from him. "Well, erm, goodnight," She said.

"Goodnight."

Pansy lay in her bed, still as the minutes ticked on, staring into the darkness. What am I doing? She thought. How could she have found herself here, of all places. With Ron Weasley in her bed. With a man in her bed, that wasn't Theo.

I mean, really. What am I doing?

What had she been planning to do when she opened her door? Crawl into his bed, as he was now? Talk to him? Why?

Why was she letting herself dig this hole deeper and deeper everyday?

It seemed for every promise and vow Pansy swore, there were millions more to break.

She had wanted calm. She wanted... him. There it was, plain and simple: she had desired his presence, his steady heat and electric eyes, his black pepper and sage scent. She had needed him, and there he was.

Yet now, she couldn't settle her nerves. Now, her mind ran rampant as his scent coiled around her body, enveloping her senses and burrowing itself permanently into her silken sheets. That intoxicating scent, plying her with sweet nothings and capturing her in its snares.

What do you want, Pansy?

The question he had asked her just a few days ago sprang into her mind, clear as day, rumbling through her in the deep rasp of his voice, and she had no answer. No answer, except this:

Nothing. Everything. You.

You, You, You.

She shivered as the terrible need for him ripped through her, even though he was right there, right next to her, and yet so, so far-

She steeled herself. Stop it. She could feel him shifting his positions, and almost panicked. Had he felt her sudden desire, and thought-?

Blowing out an exasperated breath, Pansy turned around and said nervously, "This isn't- I'm not, erm-"

"What?" Ron mumbled. He was lying on his stomach, strong arms flexed upwards, cradling the pillow his face was smushed into. Pansy's eyes focused on a tattoo on his shoulder, depicted in great detail and shading. It was an angel, although not the sweet-faced cherubs Pansy usually faced. No, this was a man, aiming a bow and arrow with a look of blazing vengeance on his face, wings spread taut behind him.

The tattoo was huge- it covered his entire shoulder and upper arm, blending into the fire down his forearms that the clock on his hand melted into. And there, if she squinted hard enough, Pansy could make out the outline of three deep, purple gashes etched into his skin.

Long scars that ran down the length of his arm, curving inwards, covered by the tattoo. They looked healed, most likely a few months old. But Pansy cringed inwardly to think of what he had been through to receive them- was it his Lycanthropy, or a product of war? Something he received while fighting the Death Eaters- her friends and father, her uncles and people she had grown up around.

A fire ignited in Pansy's soul, to think of them hurting him. Bringing him close to death.

She wanted to touch his scars. She wanted to heal his wounds, and made sure nobody ever touched him again. That no one ever dared come near what was hers ever again.

She wanted to hold him, and kiss all the pain away.

Pansy turned her eyes up at the ceiling. "This isn't me... inviting you to do anything. I mean, you know- like that. I just, I mean-" She knew it was unnecessary, but all the same- Pansy felt that she had to say it. Based off her track record, it wouldn't be surprising.

"It's alright, Pansy. I know."

She raised her brows. "You do?" she asked timidly.

He sighed, turning his head to face her. His eyes practically glowed in the dark, the butterflies brightening above just a bit to illuminate the contours of his beautiful face.

Like a wraith, She thought. One of fire and shadows and moonlight.

"Yea, Pansy. You forget I can hear your entire internal monologue," he replied, and was that... bitterness, in his voice?

"Are you angry with me?" she asked bluntly. He sighed.

"Just go to sleep, Pansy." He made to turn back to his side, but Pansy grabbed for him in the dark, sitting up and making him face towards her.

"You're mad at me," she stated. He had barely looked at her, barely spoken to her since they had sat with her grandmother. Why? What had she done?

"Are we truly doing this now?"

Pansy scowled. Yes, now. She replied silently.

"Oh, for merlin's sake," Ron mumbled, sitting up with her. "I told you, I'm not angry with you Pansy. Now bugger off, or I'll go back to my room."

"What could you possibly be angry about, Ronald?" she asked incredulously. "Please, enlighten me?"

"Enlighten you?" he scoffed. "Spare me, Pansy."

"Tell me." She watched him stubbornly, clearly not changing her mind.

He set his jaw. "If you wanna know so bad, see for yourself."

"No," she grumbled. "Tell me." Pansy knew she could- knew if she just reached out the slightest bit, stopped working so hard to block him out, she could easily step through the meager shields he had learned today and see for herself. But she didn't- because for whatever reason, she wanted to hear him say it.

"Has it still not registered, Pansy?" He asked. "I hear everything. And I feel it, too. So I can hear that little mind of yours working so hard to figure out how to distance yourself from me, and I can feel your disgust and your guilt. You want so badly not to be tethered to me. And I understand your reasonings, I really do. But I'm sorry if I don't want to have to listen about how horrible I am all day, every day."

Pansy blinked. Once. Twice. Her mouth was open.

Why hadn't she thought of that? A part of her wanted to be angry with him, to explode and yell and defend her bloody reasonings to the death- it wasn't about him, it was about Theo, and he could never understand that everything was about Theo, Theo, Theo-

But the other part could feel it. Could feel just how deeply it had hurt him, how much her feelings towards him had stung those insecurities that ran so deep.

"I don't know what you want me to say, Ron," she said, looking down at her hands. "I- I won't apologize for doing everything in my power to keep my promises. The fact of the matter is, you don't fit in my life, and I don't fit in yours. Would you really fault me for wanting to solve that?"

He rolled his eyes. "You don't get it," he said.

"Yes, I do. I do get it," she seethed, "And I get that you're misinterpreting things."

"You are disgusted by me, Pansy!" he said, fully turned to her now, looking her in the eyes, seeing her through the darkness. "Your heart dropped when your grandmother told you that whatever has bonded us is most likely permanent. I feel your absolute terror and fear and guilt, every single day, because of me. I understand why, and I respect your feelings. But that doesn't change how it makes me feel."

"I..."

"Godric, Pansy, you don't even want to be near me. You hate yourself just for even wanting to look in my direction."

You're wrong, she thought, but she wasn't quite sure what about.

She raised her brows, processing. "How does it make you feel?"

He blew out a breath, and she knew he was blushing, but he didn't hesitate. "That night, in the Shrieking Shack," he said. "The full moon we spent together, you remember?"

Pansy blanched. They hadn't talked about it- had entirely ignored the subject, actually. Pansy had half convinced herself it was a figment of her imagination. But she nodded. "Yes."

"That was... I've spent a lot of full moons alone, Pansy. I've got the scars to prove it. And there has not been a single moment, not fucking one since I was bitten, when everything was silent." Pansy thought of the angel tattoo, but simply watched him as he went on, her lips parted. "It is constant, now- the scents and sounds and feelings, and everything is too bright, and too loud, and there is always some form of pain, somewhere. But that night, on the full

moon with you, and whatever it was that you did- that was the first time I had felt peace in months. Years."

Pansy watched him, wishing she could say something; anything. But she had no words.

His eyes were wide. "That night with you was the first time I felt whole in- I don't even know how long. I knew who you were, but when I sat on the floor with you in the Shrieking Shack, all I felt was completely at home." Home. She wanted to tell him she understood. She wanted to tell him, yes, I know, I felt it too, but she couldn't .

"And then I had to listen, over and over again and feel you despise yourself for being with me." He gave her a pointed look as she opened her mouth to protest. "And I understand your past. I get there are things you've promised yourself, and I have no right to want you to feel what I do. I'm not trying to convince you otherwise. I just... I have enough problems on my own. Constantly listening to how much you hate me is really the cherry on top," Ron remarked, rolling his eyes.

Feel what I do. How was she supposed to respond to that?

Pansy wanted to be angry with him. She was, actually, furious. But she couldn't bring herself to make that fury real. She wanted to yell at him, and tell him he had no bloody right to intrude on her thoughts, and he couldn't possibly understand- but her empathy got the best of her.

How would she have reacted, in the same situation? Hearing someone and feeling someone despise and desire you, warring with themselves over your very existence? Especially given their... connection.

She understood. Pansy hated it, but she understood, and she could not be angry with him for being human.

"It's not the best thing in the world, princess." She cringed inwardly at the nickname, normally arrogant and teasing, now spoken with malice. "I'm sorry if I've reached my limit. There's only so much I can take these days." With that, he turned, huffing a breath as he pulled the covers over him and went back to sleep.

Pansy drew herself back under the sheets, laying awake as she stared at the ceiling. She could feel his turmoil, and she knew how it hurt- and once again she was reminded of her selfishness- her tendency to get so lost in her moods she forgot about the rest of the world.

He was suffering too, wasn't he? There was so much- this was all so much, and Pansy suddenly remembered she wasn't the only one going through it.

She hated herself more and more as the days went on.

So many faults, whispered that little voice in her head, high and keening, smooth like chocolate. Such a long list we have. Selfish. Coward. Traitor. You never deserved Theo's love. You don't deserve Ron's comfort, or Daphne's loyalty.

You deserve nothing.

After a few more long moments of silence, the embrace of self-loathing and guilt settling over her like an old friend, Pansy quickly turned on her side and sidled up close to Ron, placing her hands up by his shoulders as she hugged his scarred back. She pressed her cheek against a freckled shoulder blade.

"I-" She began, swallowing. "I don't know how to be a person anymore." She had no idea how to apologize to him, but knew she had to start somewhere. Right? "After Theo's- after Theo, I don't know how to live anymore. It's like everywhere I look, there's this gaping hole where Theo should be, and nothing feels right."

Ron turned around to face her, and she remained as she was, body curled in on itself, legs straightened out, knees and thighs touching his. Her head was fitted perfectly to his neck. She focused her eyes on a long scar that ran from his Adam's apple to just under his collarbone, hidden by the large dragonfly tattoo on his neck.

"When I'm sitting with my friends in the Great Hall, there's an empty space beside me, and it belongs to him. When I study my Charms work, he's right there next to me, complaining about textbooks. When I'm reading in the library, he's sitting on the chair across me, feet up on the table, twiddling his wand with his fingers." She sniffled, tears pouring out of her eyes. "He's everywhere," she said. "When the sun is shining, I see his grin, and when I watch the pine trees in the forbidden forest, it's like I'm gazing into his eyes again. He's every smile I see, every deep pair of dimples and loud laughter and nothing's the same anymore."

Ron stroked her hair lightly, and she nestled into the touch. "And it's my fault," she whispered. "I can't blame anyone but myself."

"It's not your fault, Pansy," Ron said fiercely, pulling her body tighter into his.

But it is, She thought.

She could feel him sigh in resignation, swallowing. "I understand," he breathed.

She let out a breath at that. How could he possibly understand?

But he did. Ron could feel her feelings, could hear her thoughts and be closer to her than anyone ever would; somehow, he was the only person who could understand.

He squeezed her a bit tighter. I'm in your head, Princess, he said, his tone playful in her mind, and then stern and serious. I bloody understand.

Pansy let out a breath.

You're not alone, Pansy.

Her heart stuttered, and gently, so slowly, it felt as if grief's cold hands loosened its grip on her shoulders, just a fraction, only a bit.

It was the greatest relief in the world. For a moment, Pansy could breathe.

She tipped her head back, facing him, scooting up a bit till her eyes were level with his nose when she looked straight ahead.

"I don't know how to be alive after Theo," she mumbled. "And then I look at you, and everything's..." She trailed off, eyes searching his face, freckles reduced to simmering embers in the dimness. Pansy cleared her throat. "That night, on the full moon... that was the most intimate thing i've ever experienced," she said, not looking at him. "For the first time in a long time, I felt... at peace." With a shuddering breath, Pansy closed her eyes and whispered against his skin, "You feel like home, too."

Ron's entire body went taut, but he continued stroking her hair, even as his breath caught. He didn't say a word, waiting for her to finish. "And it scares the shit out of me. It horrified me, because Theo was supposed to be my home, and I feel like I'm leaving everything- leaving him behind if I even let myself think..." Pansy inhaled deeply again. "I swore, after Theo, never again. And then I see you, and suddenly everything I am, everything I've ever been, completely unravels. Nothing else, none of my promises even matter because I'm home." Her voice broke on the last word, and she could feel her heart, along with Ron's, stuttering out of her chest, her insides feeling as if they'd been scooped out. "And I hate myself for breaking my promise. I've tried- Merlin I'm trying-"

Pansy's voice broke into sobs, and she buried herself in Ron's chest as he shushed her quietly, rubbing soothing lines down her back. Pansy cried and cried until there was nothing left, until the well of her tears had dried and all she could do was stare at the silvery-white marking of a long, deep scar that ran from the center of Ron's pectoral to the back of his shoulder blade, mildly covered by tattoos.

Surprisingly, they did not cover his entire body- only up his hands and forearms, over his neck, shoulders, and pectorals, the larger pictures reaching towards his back.

"I'm sorry," Pansy whispered. "I wish I knew- I wish I could just be normal again-"

"Shhh, Pansy," he said. "Listen to me, yea?" She nodded her head against his chest. "You have no obligation to heal or be "normal" for anyone, any time soon. That is completely up to you, and it's not something you should do for anyone else, especially me."

Pansy simply sniffled, muttering incoherent protests.

Ron sat up a bit, getting a better look at her face. "Maybe... maybe this doesn't have to be what we think it is," he said.

She wiped her nose with her t-shirt, searching his face as she said, "What do you mean?"

"I mean," he replied, "We've been looking at this like it has to be one specific thing, or mean one specific thing. But why? Why can't we just... be?"

Pansy laughed through her tears shakily. "Okay, I think you've lost me."

"No," he laughed airily. "I just mean... you know that I am drawn to you." Ron seemed to be choosing his words carefully, but Pansy nodded. "And... and you are drawn to me," he

whispered in an almost irreverent prayer. Pansy nodded. "We don't know what will happen, or how long it will be like this. But for now, why don't we just accept that, and be... friends?"

Pansy blinked; of all things, she was not expecting that. "Friends?"

"Yea. I mean, this back and forth is no use. Why can't we just choose to trust each other, and learn as we go, and support each other?" When Pansy simply watched him without responding, he continued. "We both have too much shit to deal with to act like this is anything else. So we take it one step at a time. Together."

"And if... if things happen, like... like before?"

"Pansy," he said darkly. "Look at me." He tipped her chin up with a finger, their faces close. "I will not touch you until you ask me to. Do you understand?"

She watched him with wide eyes, nodding. "I need an answer," he growled.

"Yes," she breathed.

Ron released her chin, nestling back into the pillows and Pansy's side, cocooning her in his arms. Her face was buried in the crook between his neck and shoulder, their bodies pressed firmly against each other, legs tangled together. "Okay then."

"Right," Pansy murmured.

Pansy tried to roll away, but he tightened his arms around her, refusing to let go. Good. After long moments of silence, Ron nearly on the verge of sleep and Pansy as well, he muttered to her in the dark, "Oh and Pansy?"

"Mmm."

"Happy birthday."

Monday

July 15th, 1996

11:30am

Parkinson Manor

"Alright," Pansy said, short hair fanning out as she spun around, facing Daphne and Astoria, who were currently sitting on her large bed, reading muggle magazines Pansy had managed to smuggle from her grandmother's house. "How do I look?"

"Gorgeous," Daphne said, without turning her head up.

Astoria, meanwhile, glanced up from the blue polish she was painting on her nails, and then looked back down. "Stunning, Pans," she remarked.

Pansy frowned, stomping her foot. "C'mon!" she exclaimed. "I know I'm being dramatic, but I haven't seen Theo in three weeks! I want to look good." She turned back to the mirror, frowning at her reflection.

She was dressed in what her grandmother had called 'mom shorts'- apparently the height of muggle fashion, at the moment. Pansy didn't mind them- especially the way they made her arse look jaw-dropping, and the small slits on the side made her long legs look even longer. The light blue top she had on was just a bit sheer, with bell sleeves. The two halves of the top tied loosely in the front, over the mint-green bikini she had bought in Paris. Her hair, which was normally midnight black, but now had been highlighted and lightened with the sun, was tied in a knot behind her head, the shorter bangs and pieces coming to frame her face.

Pansy hoped that Theo would appreciate her summer tan, and the freckles that had made their appearance, along with the rosy sunburn across her cheeks. She hoped he missed her as much as she had missed him. No amount of Jean-Luc's flirting or the French girls' teasing could have deterred her from Theo- as much as Pansy loved her grandmother, and loved staying with her, the ache in her heart had grown each day she had been apart from him.

"Pansy, you know Theo would be drooling over you if you were wearing a plastic bag," Daphne laughed.

"I know," she smiled, rolling her eyes. "I just... I dunno, I want to stun him. I want him to see me and be properly stunned."

"Well there are hexes for that," Daphne replied airily. Astoria, from her position on the floor, sighed, stretching in the sun like a cat as she fanned her face against the heat, rolling to face Pansy.

"Pans, you're gorgeous, and Theo loves you. I'm sure he'll be properly stunned no matter what. And from those letters? I know he misses you."

Pansy blushed as she thought of the letters he had sent her while at her grandmother's house in Marseille. He had practically written her sonnets- waxing lyrical about her hair and eyes, her bright laughter and snarky comments that he was dying for.

They were dramatic and frilly and incredibly cringe-worthy, and Pansy felt butterflies in her stomach every time she thought of them.

Daphne snorted. "Oh, please. You should've seen him these past few weeks. He would not shut up about you."

Pansy giggled again, inspecting her backside in the mirror for a moment, before plopping back down on her bed. Daphne had her eyes glued to a photo of Letitia Casta wearing a rather revealing bikini. Pansy glanced over and snatched the magazine from her friend. "Ugh," she groaned. "I wish I had her tits."

Daphne blushed a bit, flipping on her back next to Pansy, her light pink hair fanning out. "Yea, me too," she laughed.

Astoria, from where she was laying in starfish position on one of Pansy's plush rugs, popped her head up, grinning mischievously. "So Daph," the girl sing-songed. "You excited to see Blaise?"

Pansy shot upwards. "Blaise?!" she exclaimed. "What the bloody hell have I missed?"

Daphne groaned, looking at Pansy. "Nothing, Pans," she turned her glare to her little sister. "So Rory," she said with malice, "Excited to see Draco?"

"Please," Astoria scoffed. "I'm worried if Draco sees me in my swimming costume he'll pass out."

"Oh, worried, are we?" Pansy wiggled her brows, and Astoria picked up a stray pillow from the floor, throwing it in her face. The girls all laughed as Pansy and Astoria battled, until they collapsed back onto Pansy's bed, breathless.

"What is this new development with Blaise, I hear?" Pansy said.

"I swear, Rory, I will get you back for that," Daphne muttered as her sister giggled. "It's nothing. Astoria has gotten it into her head that he fancies me, or something."

"I knew it!" Pansy gasped. "That's not nothing, Daph! C'mon, what are we going to do about this?"

Daphne sat up, glaring between her best friends. "Nothing! Nothing will be done, because there is nothing to be done! He doesn't fancy me, and even if he did, I'm not bloody interested."

"Well I don't see why not," Astoria said, propping her head up on her palms. "Blaise, is like, so fit. I mean seriously, if I had that chance I would definitely take it."

Pansy burst out laughing, and Daphne hit her sister with a pillow. "Astoria Calliope Greengrass!"

Astoria laughed, blocking Daphne's attacks. "What! I have a bloody point."

"She does have a point," Pansy gasped through her laughter.

Daphne glared at her. "Not you too," she groaned.

"I'm just saying!" Pansy exclaimed, holding her hands up in surrender. "But seriously, I mean he's gorgeous, and smart and kind when he's not being a prat with Draco," she scowled. "What's the problem?"

Daphne shifted. "There is no bloody problem. I just... I dunno, I'm not interested. Besides, I wouldn't want to date someone in our social circle. It would feel too strange."

Pansy, sensing Daphne's discomfort, changed the topic quickly, getting up and slipping on flat white trainers. "Well then, Ladies. Let's get a move on. I suspect the boys will be waiting for us at Malfoy manor, so we shouldn't waste time."

The girls all made their way down the stairs, Pansy yelling to her mother that they were leaving, and quickly rushed to the fireplace; Pansy had no desire to endure Aster's presence more than necessary. As they each yelled out 'Malfoy Manor', the Malfoys' house elf greeted them, directing the three girls past the gardens and down a winding path through the forest they all knew well. They trudged up and up, until they came to a clearing, in the middle of which sat a tree stump with a single galleon sitting on top.

The girls all touched the galleon at once, and were immediately transported to an even larger clearing, with orchard trees and weeping willows decorating the banks of what seemed to be a cross between a lake and a pond- or, rather, a very small lake.

The water was crystalline blue, sparkling under the sunlight. Here, the air was clean and pure, and the boys had already set up a fire on the small beach by the lake. The grass was bright and abundant, the sand on the edges of the lake pure white.

They all pointed and laughed as they looked upwards and saw Theo, standing on the edge of a small, black and grey cliff across from them, whooping as Draco and Blaise yelled for him to jump down. The girls all cheered, setting their bags down on the sand, and Pansy's heart stuttered as she watched the way the sun gleamed on his bronzed skin, and she wanted nothing more than to jump in his arms.

She whooped loudly, yelling "Theo!" But he turned his head, and saw Pansy standing on the bank of the lake, waving frantically and cheering for him. Theo beamed at her, but in his distraction fell from the edge, toppling down and half belly flopping into the lake. He surfaced quickly, and Pansy laughed as she hurried to untie her top and unbutton her denims, slipping off her shoes as she dashed into the water, where Theo was swimming as fast as possible towards her.

They ran towards each other through the water, both giggling messes by the time they collided, Pansy jumping into her wizard's arms and wrapping her legs around his waist, kissing him soundly on the mouth and winding her fingers through his soaking wet hair. He spun her around, holding her waist tightly and they both collapsed into the water, still kissing, and resurfaced, smiling at each other and laughing.

Theo tugged her towards him again, as if he could not bear to not touch her. He pressed her body against his, dragging the tie that was holding her hair up out, wiping her sopping mess of hair from her face. "Salazar, I missed you," he whispered, grinning so his pearly white teeth and gorgeous dimples were on full display.

Pansy herself felt as if she couldn't stop smiling. "You have no idea how much I-" But she was stopped as he kissed her again, slipping his tongue into her mouth and bending them backwards as he gripped her waist with one hand, and squeezed her arse with the other.

Pansy almost yelped in surprise, but melted into him, answering his teasing nips and sweet kisses in perfect sync, pressing her hips to him as she tugged on the roots of his hair, her hands roaming over his chest, his neck, his face. He kissed and kissed and kissed her, and she was vaguely aware of shouts of disgust and protest coming from Draco and Blaise, but she didn't care, not as Theo swooped her into his arms bridal-style, never once breaking his lips

from hers. He flipped off their friends and she giggled against him as he carried them out of the water, past their campsite.

They walked just a bit further until he slammed her up against a tree and Pansy gasped, automatically wrapping her legs around his waist as he gripped onto her, hands roaming over her sides and stomach, her thighs, breasts, and neck. He kneaded her breast with one hand, sucking and licking on her throat with the other as she moaned, grinding her hips against his for more friction, more, more, more. She could feel his desire and love for her, and it only fueled Pansy more, pushing her to take more, to kiss him harder, to bite his lip and suckle his neck, to press her hands down and search for that length beneath his swimming trousers.

But Theo had beaten her to it. His fingers were already slipping gently over the inside of her thigh, brushing against the skin as she shivered. Pansy let out a breathy moan, back arching as he put the slightest bit of pressure over her center, over her clit, shifting the nerves in between two fingers. She gasped, eyes flying open, and grabbed for his back, raking her nails down his shoulder blades.

Theo paused, breathless, heaving against the crook of her neck as he placed a gentle kiss there. "Merlin I fucking missed you." He pulled back, studying her. "Have I mentioned how much I missed you?"

"I can tell," Pansy smirked, and kissed him sweetly, whispering against his lips. "I missed you more, my love."

He smiled, pressing his forehead to hers. "Impossible."

Now she pulled back, taking the opportunity to study her wizard. He had tanned beautifully, freckles stark against his skin. His hair was longer, shaggier, streaks of bronze shot through. Even his eyes seemed a lighter green, his lips a deeper, cherry red, swollen from kissing.

So beautiful; her angel, her Theo.

Pansy brought a hand to his face, and he leaned into the touch, eyes fluttering close as her fingers brushed back the hair from his forehead. "My Theo," she murmured.

Theo fixed those green eyes on her, the love in his heart and the soul bared there almost unbearable to witness. "Yours," he whispered back.

He set her down, with a pained look on his face, and took her hand. "I have a surprise for you," he said.

Pansy raised a brow. "Oh?" Theo laughed and motioned for her to go ahead. The forest seemed to have formed some sort of wooden steps made of twigs, and they trudged upwards. Theo was oddly silent, and Pansy glanced back at him, smiling. "Everything alright back there?"

"Perfectly fine," he grunted, adjusting his trousers.

"You don't look so good," Pansy laughed, although she knew exactly what he was feeling. He scowled at her.

"Shut up, Parkinson. I'm trying to concentrate on... on my walking."

"You need to concentrate?" she asked.

"Yes, well it's a little hard with your arse right in front of me like that." Pansy giggled, swishing her hips more as she made her way up the steps, and heard her wizard groan behind her.

Eventually, they had arrived at what she assumed was the base of the cliff, a gathering of willow trees and white blossoms encircled, the grass taller here. The sun and sky were bright and clear, miles and miles of endless blue, a hot breeze weaving its way through the landscape. Pansy breathed the fresh air in deeply, and turned back to her boyfriend.

"So?" she asked. "What was the surprise?"

Theo slipped an arm around her waist from behind, kissing her temple once. "Go forth, my witch," he whispered in her ear. They walked forward together, and Theo jogged in front of her to part the thick curtains of the willows; the trees and blossoms, the tall grasses had made a sort of small clearing, and Pansy gasped when she saw what was inside.

Someone (Theo, of course), had placed thick rugs and picnic blankets around the floor of the clearing, and in the center a mattress covered in blankets and pillows and rose petals. The space had been decorated with flowers and tapestries, and some sort of strings were hanging from the branches. Pansy had to squint to see that they were fairy lights that hadn't been turned on. She turned back to Theo, throwing her arms around his neck.

"You did all of this for me?" She exclaimed. He grinned down at her.

"Just wait till nightfall," he laughed. "That's when it'll really be pretty."

"Oh, Theo." Pansy leaned up and kissed her wizard, pressing into him, but he broke away quickly.

"Ah ah ah," he tutted. "You'll have to wait until tonight."

Pansy blanched. "But-"

"No buts, darling," he flicked her nose, and Pansy scowled. "You've waited three weeks. You can wait until tonight."

She blushed a bit, but scowled- although they had been dating since November, and Theo was well aware of Pansy's sexual history, they hadn't done much more than snogging. Amazing, life changing snogging that made her heart stutter and toes curl to even think about, but that had been it.

Theo, of course, was a perfect gentleman- he never pushed her too far, or questioned her boundaries. He never made her feel uncomfortable. If anything, Pansy had been the one to

assume he would want to take that step farther- but no, her wizard wanted to take his sweet time with her.

They had talked it over before leaving Hogwarts, and decided- tonight would be the night. Pansy had thought that missing each other would make the sex that much better, although she had no doubt in Theo's abilities. She didn't expect it to hurt as much as it did to be away from him, though.

She was nervous, and jittery, but most of all eager- finally, finally she would be close to him in a way no other girl had before, would have every part of him as he would have her.

Bloody bastard making me wait, she thought.

Pansy rolled her eyes. "So what, you brought me all the way up here for nothing?"

Theo grinned. "Not nothing," he said as he dragged her out of the secluded clearing and up the hill, down a steep path to the ledge where he had jumped off.

"Theo, absolutely not!" she yelled, peering down at the water below. Their friends were currently playing chicken, but Draco noticed them on the ledge. "You know I have a fear of heights!"

"I'll be right here with you," he said, squeezing her hand, giving her a mischievous grin. "But if you don't jump, I have to warn you, you'll be missing out on certain... activities."

Pansy's mouth fell open, but she closed it quickly. "Fine," she said, and then matched his grin with an evil smirk. "But you first!" and promptly pushed him off the ledge, laughing as he flailed and resurfaced, flipping her off.

"I'll get you for that, Parkinson!" He yelled. Pansy laughed harder.

"I'm sure you will, Nott!" And Pansy screamed as she jumped off the cliff, flying down to the arms of her love.

She knew he would be there to hold her hand when she crashed.

Chapter End Notes

note that this story is not complete! i'm not sure how to change that setting, if someone could let me know that would be great :)

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