

End of Winter

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by [ilien](#)

Summary

Jane, New York and some hope.

Notes

This is, oddly enough, written for Day 4 of Fandom Snowflake Challenge 2016. The odd part is that the request for a fic in this fandom, as part of Snowflake Challenge, was written in 2014. I'm sorry. Sometimes it takes me that long to come up with this little.

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

Jane hates New York. She'd move as far away from the toxic city as she could, in a heartbeat, but she cannot bear to be too far from Leo; even now, when the divorce has been years since finalized. So, she bought a small house in the suburbs; it takes almost two hours to get to Manhattan through the traffic, and it's just as far as she can bear.

They've been in each other's lives – been each other's lives, or very nearly so – for as long as she cares to remember: since high school. She doesn't really want to remember the time before she met him; there was nothing pleasant about her childhood. They met in high school, he was a couple of years older, and as soon as she turned eighteen, they were married. She still counts that day among the best days of her life, along with the day he introduced her to Alex – his brother, he said. It took her some time to realize that Alex wasn't really his brother – just like she wasn't really his woman. Leo had a way with words; at times it was easier to see things his way than to pause and try and come up with your own vision. It's too bad he's that often mistaken even about his own feelings.

Leo hates New York, too. He insists that he likes it, but he's always cold here, and frequently annoyed with the noise and cannot sleep well through the night – and isn't it strange, that most divorced women aren't that well informed on how their ex-husbands sleep at night. She's not sure why he's staying in the city, and she's beginning to suspect that's because it's where she is. They really need to work better on their communication; now that they're no longer man and wife, it's getting easier each day.

This Christmas, spent alone (they stopped spending Christmas together once they filed for divorce), somehow made her think back to the weeks – they were mere weeks, weren't they – she had spent with Alex. It made her think of the house she'd never seen: is it suited for three people, or is it barely big enough for one? Is he still hoping, or has he given up?.. It made her spend a whole morning looking for the book – of course it was a book of poetry – she'd kept the lock in.

When he cut his long black hair and gave her the lock, he believed he was cutting loose, breaking up with their past. In fact, she thought that morning after Christmas, it was the thing that could help get all of them back together. She took it to Leo next time she went to see him. She did not know what it was she was expecting him to do, but—

The next morning he gave her the letter he'd written to Alex, before sealing it in a plain white envelope. She read it, and knew that it was all she'd been hoping for. Leo still hadn't realized it was a love letter, but oh, was it. He still believed she was the sole object of his jealousy, but if she were to write a letter to Alex herself, asking him to come, telling him they miss him – she would not have done better. She kept her observations to herself and hoped, with a note of giddiness, that Alex was still as good as ever at reading between the lines.

She's thinking about the desert – it's probably much warmer down there in February than in Leo's tiny apartment. She's thinking about Alex – she's always thinking about Alex these days, and about how his black hair has gone almost entirely grey, and how that's not a bad thing, despite what both of her men believe. Alex is getting grey, and Leo thinks he's going bald, and she herself can see a few new wrinkles in the mirror, and she likes to believe it's a

good thing. They're not the hurt angry children they used to be. They're old enough, and wise enough, to do things right, this time.

It's early evening, and Leo isn't home yet. She got off early today, and, instead of going straight home, went to Leo's. She has a feeling that today – almost exactly two months since Leo sent that letter – everything is going to change. She wonders what it is she'll hear next: the key in the lock, or the doorbell.

End Notes

I know it's probably not exactly what Cadenzamuse wanted from this story - I'm sincerely sorry about that.

I had to give the “thin gypsy thief” a name, because I felt like if only two of the participants are named, the triangle isn't equal; the third party is either idealized or left out, and that's not what I like in my OT3s. As for the narrator's name, he did, in fact, sign it - which is what I used. This is in no way intended as a real person fiction.

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