

# Evertidings Patreon by Thomas Bell

## (01/January/2022 - 27/December/2023)

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[echoes. \[k de vries\]](#)

[Jan 1, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** a brief glimpse of a moment between k and the hunter in a romantic relationship.

There are nights where **K** is hit with memories.

It began when they stopped pushing everyone away. When **K** stopped suppressing all their feelings and opened up their heart again, things slowly began coming back to them. Sometimes they think they would be better off if it all came rushing at once, so they could deal with it and seal those chapters off from their life again, but that's not the point of what they've done.

You taught them better than that.

So instead, they wake up in the middle of the night with a short gasp, turning onto their back as the voice of their lost loved ones float away. Sometimes they linger, but they always leave eventually. Just like they did.

In these moments, **K** will stand up and leave the bed, careful not to wake you. They'll walk over to their balcony and push it open, letting the cool air brush over their face. They're always cold when they do this, but the chill grounds them.

You've found them like this sometimes. Standing there like a ghost, a silhouette in the moonlight.

"Who was it this time?" you'll ask, voice soft. **K** falls into it like a safety net, free-falling because they know you'll catch them.

And then **K** will answer you.

My parents. My siblings. My past lovers.

When it's the last one, they always worry that the mention of their other relationships will bother you, but **K** doesn't love them as they did before. **K** cares for them like someone would a childhood friend. Someone that was special at the moment but no longer needed to move forward. They haven't been in love romantically for decades.

Not until they met you.

You don't normally say anything after they respond. Sometimes you'll step up and wrap your arms around K's waist and the two of you will stand there in silence. Other times you'll come up beside them and stare out into the horizon, looking at the specks of dust that pass as stars nowadays.

But you always manage to bring **K** back to bed.

**K** will trail after you, mind still half on their fading dream and half on their future that is you in front of them. They'll burrow under their sheets again, already cold from the absence of their body and cuddle up to you.

"I love you," you'll remind them.

The sound of your voice usually lulls **K** right back to sleep, but they always make sure they whisper a reply before they doze off again.

"Not as much as I do."

[update 01.](#)

[Jan 1, 2022](#)

## **NOTE.**

hi!! welcome to the very first patreon exclusive update and thank you so much for being interested!! some housekeeping things to get started: patreon updates will always go live a couple of hours before the tumblr updates do. the content on here will repeat some of what i say publicly, except, of course, this will be much more spoilery and detailed. and lastly, these will be pretty informal so don't expect anything super organized and elaborate lol.

## **RAMBLE (WHEN TWILIGHT STRIKES).**

with that out of the way, here's everything i did this week:

right after i type this, i'm going to write the final couple scenes for the new branch of **chapter one**. i've mentioned it previously, but for those who aren't aware, i'm adding a new section of chapter one where you can talk to Rylan instead of fighting them. it's been suggested to me a couple of times and i love the idea, so here we are.

there's a lot of q&a in this section—i mean, duh, the branch literally says you "talk things out"—but even so, i think it really lets Rylan's personality shine. previously, they were the 'ruthless' bounty who attacked you even if you wanted to be peaceful but now, it becomes transparent that they only really want to attack you if they have to. that was always their line of thought, but this makes it so much clearer. aside from that, they make a lot of jokes (including ones about yoga, banjos, and even a reference to a coffin (finally snuck one in there!!)) so i think everyone will like it.

as for **chapter seven**: i started it. like always with a new chapter, i do have a bit of writer's block but i made an outline of what i want to happen and i think that's really helped. usually, i just wing it, but i've found mapping things out helps me keep track of my ideas. obviously, i don't have to stick to it and i doubt i will—chapter six has a lot of changes from its initial outline—but it's on my wall and there if i need it.

i'm at the very very beginning of the chapter but the first choice is already a romantic one (it also has non-romantic options as always!) and i truly think people are going to freak out when they read it... everyone's branches are so so good so far so whoever your ro of choice is, i think it'll be fun. on top of that, i plan on hitting a couple of tropes in this chapter (sue me, i think they're fun) and i'm so extremely excited to write them. it works perfectly with the context of the plot and serves as another fun way to spark some feelings between the ros and the mc—or not, depending on what you want.

### **RAMBLE (SECRET PROJECT).**

in terms of my secret project, aka my side wip, it's going. kind of. i've mentioned before it's a lot heavier than *when twilight strikes*, so i've been slowly mapping out the different side characters (there's a *lot*) and plot. i'm not quite there yet with the story but i had a recent revelation that will hopefully help move things along. *when twilight strikes* is the priority, however, so this will stay on the backburner in the meantime.

### **STATS.**

- 223,743 (+ 2.2k)

\* includes word count from chapter seven only. additional content in chapter one is not counted but i'd estimate it to be around the same or a little more.

### **SNEAK PEEK.**

"I only know what the report says."

"So do I, except I have it memorized. Try me. Ask for a line and you'll receive a perfect recital. Just don't choose line sixty-three. I always stumble on the words." Rylan heaves a dramatic sigh. "If I ever get out of this, tell IAOS to use less complicated words, will you?"

— taken from chapter 01, talk branch.

# when TWILIGHT strikes.

... click anywhere to continue.

## STATS

profile

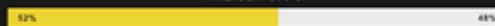
stats

laos

relationships

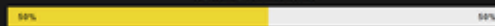
### personality stats.

#### FRIENDLY / STOIC.



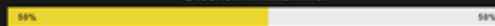
You currently lean towards being friendly over stoic. People perceive you as someone they can talk to.

#### GENUINE / SARCASTIC.



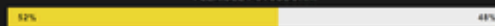
You currently lean neither towards being genuine nor sarcastic.

#### LAIDBACK / INTIMIDATING.



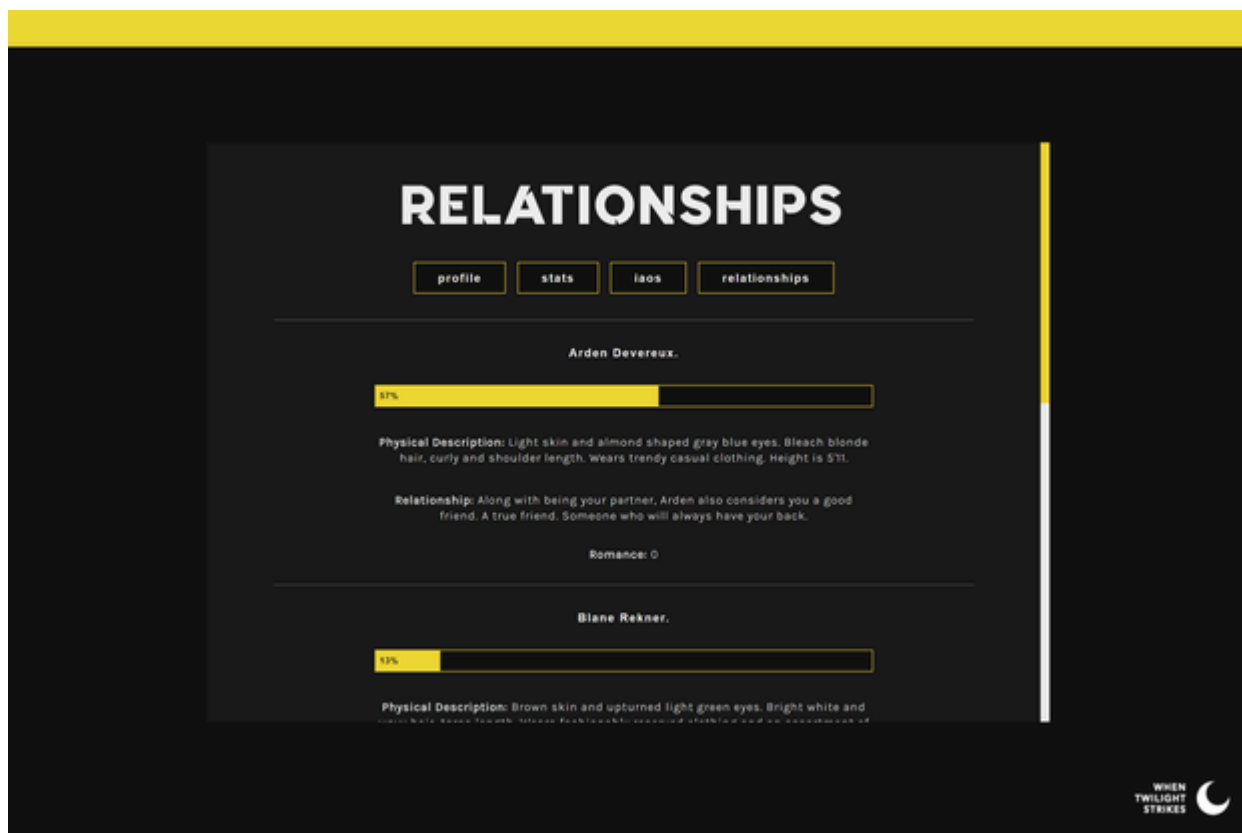
You currently lean neither towards being laidback nor intimidating.

#### FLEXIBLE / STUBBORN.



You currently lean towards being flexible over stubborn. You're lenient, but how much is too much?





[twine ui.](#)

[Jan 1, 2022](#)

the title screen and hunter profile pages are looking pretty hot if i do say so myself...

[drabble vote.](#)

[Jan 4, 2022](#)

who's drabble do you want to see next? if anyone has a certain prompt they want to see, comment it below and i'll see if i can come up with anything for it!!

a devereux

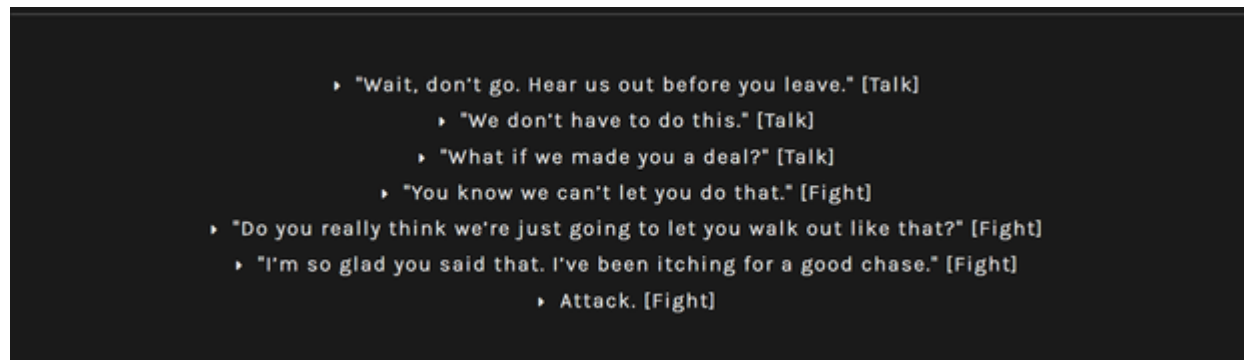
blane rekner

n alves

rylan villanueva

22 votes total

[new branches...](#)



[Jan 6, 2022](#)

[update 02.](#)

[Jan 8, 2022](#)

## RAMBLE (WHEN TWILIGHT STRIKES).

moral of the story: don't underestimate how busy you are. i went to work six out of seven days this week so i won't lie and say i accomplished a lot, but i did manage to finally complete the twine port for **chapter one**. as mentioned last week, i had to write a new branch for the bounty hunt with Rylan, so i focused on finishing the final few choices and edited them to my liking. i'll likely be uploading it to twine soon so i can send it to beta-testers for a quick brief overlook. as a finished product, i like chapter one a lot better. it gives more room for people to choose what they feel comfortable with and gives you more background on what's happening—if you choose to listen, that is.

i also started moving things from **chapter two**, but because the hunter isn't always injured or sore from the hunt anymore, i need to make some changes and add more flavour text to fit people's playthroughs. i don't mind of course, since it makes the story more engaging and realistic, but i am excited for chapter three/four and onward where i don't have to make as many changes. things like the infirmary will need a whole new reason for why the hunter goes there—other than because i want you to meet K—but something like weekly check-ups is reasonable. IAOS takes good care of their hunters anyway, and as people who put themselves in danger constantly, it makes sense.

in terms of **chapter seven**, i honestly couldn't find time for it. if i can keep my eyes open tonight, i'll try to write a little more in my doc because god, do i miss it, but we'll see what i end up doing. once i get

deeper into the chapter i think i'll be able to move a lot quicker than i am right now. since i'm multitasking, i'm focusing on the twine port first just because my goal was (initially) to release it this month, but i'll likely be doing it in february now (also the month of my one year anniversary for the project!!).

whether or not i'm doing anything for my one year is unclear at the moment (i start school on monday and am seriously wondering how many things i can work on at once) but i'd love to write a collection of short stories/a small interactive project featuring the ros if possible. if it does end up happening, you (those subscribed to my patreon) will get it before the public does.

## **RAMBLE (SECRET PROJECT).**

not much to report here seeing as i barely had time to write anything for my main project. i'm still brushing up the details of the plot and will work on worldbuilding next, but i did mess around with the twine ui a little and changed the name of one of my ros—a super last-minute decision but also one that i like a lot better. i think i'll keep the names of the ros to myself for now, even old names, mostly because i'm *that* uncertain about this story, but i'll let it spill one day. promise.

## **STATS.**

- 224,043 (+ 0.3k)

\* includes word count from chapter seven only.

## **SNEAK PEEK.**

One more inch and the back of our hands will be brushing. One bold move and I could probably interlace my fingers with theirs, though I doubt Blane will be happy with that.

— taken from chapter 07.

[new. \[a devereux\]](#)

[Jan 11, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** from being strictly friends to being in a relationship, a needs time to readjust themselves to how things used to be.

**note:** a and blane tied in the drabble vote and since i already had this idea in my head for a, i chose them first. blane will be next and then i'll do a short poll for one between n and rylan <3

The first time you called **A** by a pet name, they were startled. It took them a second to register that you were calling them. **A**, who'd been your partner for the past four years. **A**, who'd been a friend, and nothing more than a friend, during a majority of the time they'd known you.

**A**, who you were dating now.

It's taken them a while to wrap their head around the idea. They'd spent so long pining over you that it never once occurred to them that it could become a reality.

They weren't even sure they were in love with you at first—the line between friends and romance has always been blurry for them. Did they want to spend all their time with you because they liked you? Or did they just enjoy your company platonically? Was that urge to want to step closer to you, to brush the stray eyelash off your face a friendly gesture? Or something else entirely? They went back and forth between the conflicting emotions for months—perhaps even years—but it was only when they realized they wanted to kiss you that it hit them.

Wanting to kiss your closest friend probably wouldn't be considered platonic. At least, it wasn't for **A**.

From then on, they tried not to let anything show. Don't ruin the friendship, don't ruin the good thing you have going for your own selfish desires.

But then you wanted it too, and everything fell into place.

Babe. Love. Darling.

All were names **A** heard fall from your lips in the month following the start of your romantic relationship. They think darling is their favourite, but then you'll say something else and it'll change entirely.

"Hey, darling," you'll say as you greet them in the hallway. Oftentimes, **A** will get a kiss pressed to their cheek, causing their cheeks to flush pink. They're not opposed to PDA, but god, did they look like a fool every time you did anything romantic in public. A lovesick fool.

Thoughts beginning to drift again, **A** glances at you. The two of you are in their apartment, a place you're at often now. Your legs are draped over theirs, your thighs touching as you lean against them and scroll through your phone.

"I feel like I don't call you by enough pet names," **A** blurts out.

That gets your attention. Immediately, you drop your phone and flick your gaze over. **A** can tell you're trying to figure out if this is some type of joke, but they're being serious—and soon, you realize that too.

"You don't need to call me by a pet name," you tell them.

"I want to though. I just, I'm so used to you being... *Name*."

You laugh. "And I'm not now?"

“You know what I mean.” **A** passes you a meaningful look, fingers tracing shapes on your skin. “We spent so long being friends that calling you anything but your name feels strange to me. Calling you something like babe is... foreign. I don't know, I'm not used to it.”

“Foreign, huh?” You're poking fun of them now, but **A** doesn't mind. They turn their tracing into tickling, only stopping when you begin to squirm away from them. They're comfortable where they are and they don't want you to leave. Not yet.

“Stop teasing me. This is a serious topic,” **A** jokes. They hesitate for a second before adding, “Babe.”

Your eyes brighten, both with amusement and joy. “You're so cute—” You lean over and press into them, hands on their cheeks. “—but you don't have to use a word you're not comfortable with. I like the way you say my name.”

A flush of heat runs through **A's** body at the words, but they need to ask you one last thing. “Wouldn't you rather me call you things like babe though? Your name is what I called you when we weren't dating.”

“**A**,” you whisper, voice soft. “It doesn't matter what you call me. I'm happy with you and that all that matters. We shouldn't try to erase the history we had before all of this.”

“You're right,” **A** breathes out. With your reassurance, they lean into your touch, eyes fluttering shut as you press a light kiss to their lips. You begin to pull away when **A** goes for a second kiss, and then a third, and then—

Nothing. There's nothing that **A** wants more in the world. The two of you continue kissing on their couch until you're out of breath, laughing and smiling but happy.

[update 03.](#)

[Jan 15, 2022](#)

## **RAMBLE (WHEN TWILIGHT STRIKES).**

i think it'll come as no surprise to you that i've spent most of this week working on the twine upload for **chapter two**. as my mental health hasn't been great so far, i've been focusing on twine because it's mostly just copying and pasting which, for whatever reason, i find relaxing. as boring as it sounds, however, it's actually not so bad. i've been adding in new choices here and there and fixing up small pieces of dialogue, mostly between Blane and N. my vision for the two has changed somewhat since i

first wrote them and as i've developed more of their characters, i realized that some of their banter isn't accurate to their dynamic. not to say that they're out of character, just... slightly off, i guess. in terms of where i'm at, i'm nearly at the infirmary scene and will probably finish it early this week. afterward, it'll be onto chapter three!

as for **chapter seven**, as you may be able to guess, there hasn't been much progress on that front. i mentioned last week how i miss it and i do, but lately, i just haven't had the energy to sit down and write new content. because there's not much to say here, i'll give a bit of insight as to what the chapter entails.

i like to think that there are four big sections: meeting mirai, the [redacted] and the two fallouts of [redacted], both of which are different branches of which you can only take one per playthrough. originally, the chapter was going to end with the second section, [redacted], but i decided to extend it to include the last two parts because that way, i'm not making you spend three chapters in crimson rouge. as excited as i am for everyone to meet mirai, i think most people will enjoy the second two sections most, especially those who want to romance one of the ros as they have some... popular tropes. i'm obviously biased but i think they're super fun and harmless so i guess i'll see what you all think when i get to it.

### **RAMBLE (SECRET PROJECT).**

again, not much on this front either except i have slowly been filling out my little codex document in my free time. unlike when twilight strikes, this story has a lot more side characters—nearly all of which are important to the story i'm trying to tell. i haven't hammered out the exact details of all of them yet, but i've been slowly giving them names and descriptions as to who they are and what they do in the locations they're based in. it's a weird way of putting it but i don't know how to say it without spoiling too much.

on another note, i messed around with the twine ui again. it's not close to done and i'll have to go through the process of figuring out code (not fun), but it's coming along nicely. i'm at the stage where i could probably write in it if i wanted to (the outline of the plot is figured out too, the details are unimportant right now) but i don't think i'd be able to handle writing three different things. i've been itching to get in the characters' heads though, so maybe i'll write some short stories and save them to post later on after the project is publicly announced.

### **STATS.**

- 224,843 (+ 0.8k)

\* includes word count from chapter seven only.

### **SNEAK PEEK.**

"And I bet Caine's on his hands and knees making excuses for why his golden pair failed,"  
Blane mutters.

"As if he hasn't been lenient with us before," N responds. They're arching a dark eyebrow at their partner, sending them a silent message only Blane can read.

Still, Blane doesn't take the cue. "Lenient is stretching it."

"He's not unfair."

"You say that as if *surname* isn't standing right there. Living proof of his bias."

— taken from chapter 02.

## CHAPTER 07.

If dangerous was a person, it'd be Mirai.

If her black bralette top—her ribs covered with laces and strings—leather miniskirt and chunky mid-calf boots weren't convincing enough, the glint in her eye takes the cake. Paired with dark smoky makeup and a bold red lip, Mirai's expression reads like a cat pouncing on her prey.

And she's staring directly at me.

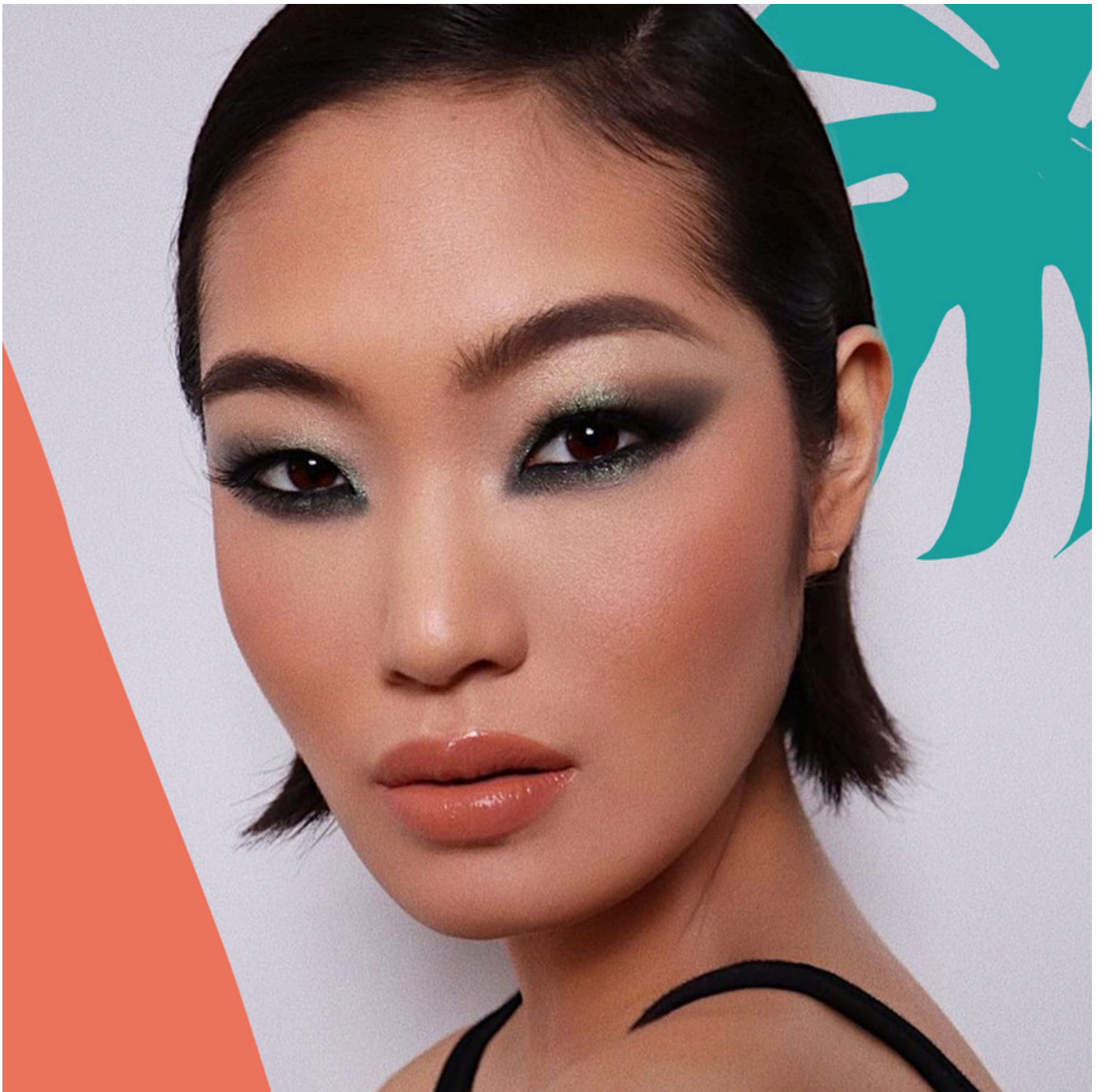
WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[meeting mirai.](#)

[Jan 19, 2022](#)

the two pics below are what i'd imagine her top and eye makeup looking (except swapping the green tint for red)!! they're not by any means faceclaims but i thought i'd be nice to give a visual of what i see.





[update 04.](#)

[Jan 22, 2022](#)

### **RAMBLE (WHEN TWILIGHT STRIKES).**

very excited to say that i did things!! i'll go chronologically, so, starting with **chapter two**, i finished the final import and then uploaded it on itch.io for my beta-testers to read as a little treat. there's one big different branch (Rylan's hunt, which i've discussed many times before) but otherwise, it's basically the

same so there's not much to miss out on. for those of you in the twilight and midnight tiers, you'll have early access to the twine build before it goes live publicly, just as a heads up.

for the twine port of **chapter three**, there's not much to talk about. i've done one scene for this chapter and that's about it. the copying and pasting is something i like to leave for myself when i need a bit of a mental break, but since i felt like writing this week, i put it aside and did it absently when i felt like i needed something easy to do.

speaking of writing... **chapter seven** is the news you've probably been waiting on. because of school and work, i only wrote two thousand words for it but it felt so good to get back into it. not to jinx myself, but i didn't find any trouble with getting started again after a break which is wonderful, since that's usually my problem. instead, everything just kind of... flowed. i think it helps that i have a super clear vision of Mirai. i mean, i have visions for all my characters but she's one that's been in my head for longer—and she's definitely a favourite. i think she's going to be a super fun character to interact with. if i had to pin her down, i'd probably say she's a mix of Eri (from chapter six) and K. she's wildly unpredictable and extremely dangerous, which is an interesting combo to explore.

so far, i've written the bit where she first meets the hunter and the ros with all their variations. as K is someone she knows already, their interactions have to be my favourite. K can talk back to Mirai in a way that none of the other ros can, meaning taking them to the VIP room makes for a very different branch than the others. my plan for next week is to get a little further with this scene and flesh out Mirai's character a little more. if you can't tell, i'm very excited about it. what i have down right now is very minimal, but it's work that i really enjoy so i'm excited.

## **RAMBLE (SECRET PROJECT).**

as with last week, not much progress here. in all honesty, i could start writing if i wanted to, but i'm kind of stalling—i just don't think i'd be able to handle writing three different things at once (chapter seven, the twine port and this wip). i don't want to not work on this at all, however, so i've slowly been filling out my master doc instead. like before, i'm still figuring out side characters and the different organizations found within the story, giving them bios and appearances etc., which has been a hell of a time. everyone has the most unhinged names and i love it lol.

i've said many times before that this wip is nothing like my current one and with my world coming together slowly, nothing could ever be more true. i think that's the best part about this. i wouldn't be happy writing two similar stories, so stretching out the muscles of two different sides of my brain, so to say, feels really nice. that being said, i don't expect everyone who likes *when twilight strikes* to like this story, but i just see that as an opportunity for those who didn't like my first wip to potentially like my second one. this stuff is subjective and, as i'm writing for my own enjoyment, i don't really mind. rant aside, i'm really excited for where this is going.

## **STATS.**

- 226,843 (+ 2k)

\* includes word count from chapter seven only.

## SNEAK PEEK.

Mirai's gaze flicks to Blane, whose expression remains stoic as the two make eye contact. She studies them for a brief second, the ends of her mouth lifting upwards slightly, before she walks away.

— taken from chapter 07.

[ghost.](#) [\[blane rekner\]](#)

[Jan 26, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** Blane contemplates an impossible relationship.

Your fingers trail Blane's arm and they shiver, eyes fluttering shut.

"Tell me if you want me to stop," you whisper.

Blane's breath hitches. Every single touch, every breath you breathe on their skin, they adore—they've never been able to hide it from you. Your fingers trail higher, up Blane's forearm and to their neck. A shiver rolls through their body.

"What are you doing?" they ask.

"Do you trust me?"

Blane only hesitates for a second before answering, "Yes."

"Then close your eyes."

They do as they're told and, a moment later, they feel your lips brush over the sensitive area of their neck. A gasp escapes from them, pitching higher when you shift part of your weight onto their body. Your knees are still on the bed and you're keeping yourself hovered above Blane, but you're close enough that you're practically touching.

You *are* touching.

"*Name...*" Blane groans.

You hum your response against Blane's throat, sending vibrations down their body. Any other words are severed from Blane's mind as you kiss your way up their neck and to their jawline. One hand is clutching their hair, fingers looped around white locks.

One of Blane's hands reaches up to wrap around your waist but you swat it away. They want to try again but they don't, distracted as you move your lips to hover over theirs. It's all they can do not to surge up and meet you—they know you'll just pull away.

"Stop teasing me," Blane protests.

"What do you want?" you whisper in reply. Your breath is warm against their skin.

Blane swallows. Shouldn't that be obvious? They know you know the answer, but you just want to hear it from them. "For you to kiss me."

Though you're not touching, they feel you smile. "Whatever you wish."

You move down to meet their lips but before they can touch, you're gone. Blane startles and shoots straight up in their bed. They glance over at their clock, but they don't need to look to know what time it is. 4 AM. The time they always wake up from these kinds of dreams.

If they squeezed their eyes shut and fell back against their pillow, maybe they'd return to you and that dream, but once they're awake, they can never go back to sleep. Settling back into their blanket, they stare at the ceiling.

They've had multiple iterations of that dream before. Sometimes, they're more domestic, the knowledge that you're in a relationship buried at the back of Blane's mind as the two of you cuddle on the couch. Other times, they're more realistic, stealing kisses in the hallway at IAOS, keeping the new romance hidden until you figured it out. And sometimes, like the last time, it's pure bliss: the two of you at the bookstore and Blane gazing at you as you browse, their eyes nowhere near the shelves.

Each time, their subconscious has reached for something that could never be. They never thought their own mind could be cruel to them, but there you were. Taunting them, teasing them.

Blane has never truly understood how people fell for someone until they fell for you.

All they want to do is kiss you. Cup your cheek and lean in to press their lips softly to yours. Kiss until both your lips are swollen and bruised. Until you pull away gasping but with a wide smile and dilated pupils and an urge to do it all over again.

But Blane is too much of a coward to admit that to you, knowing how slim the chances are that you reciprocate those feelings. How could you, when they've been nothing but horrible to you? And if by some miracle you did, you deserve better than someone like Blane.

They can barely pull themselves into some semblance of a person for themselves. They wouldn't know where to start with you.

So, instead, they settle for the dreams. For the ghost of you and the relationship that could be. Even if you evaporate each time they think they're about to get their wish.

[update 05.](#)

[Jan 30, 2022](#)

### **RAMBLE (WHEN TWILIGHT STRIKES).**

i'll preface this update by saying that it's probably the worst one i'll ever give so i apologize in advance. to make a long story short: time got away from me. most of my week was eaten up by school or work and i genuinely could not find any time to do anything else.

for **chapter three**, i think i got through importing half of A's training room scene to twine and that's it. i'm a little upset at myself since i thought i'd be able to get the twine build out by january (and now i want to get it out before my one-year anniversary in february) but things happen.

as for **chapter seven**, again, not much happening here. mentally, i figured out my writer's block and plotted out some of the next couple of choices for the scene i'm writing, but none of that shows on my word doc. fingers crossed that i have more time this week so i can get some of that out because some part of me is worried i'll forget it all if i don't write it soon lol.

because this update is so sparse, i'll clue you in on something i was thinking of last night, namely, the romance lock. as of now, i know my story follows the basic flirt options, aka one shy and one bold. i was considering continuing that for the first kiss scenes where there is one option to *be* kissed or *to* kiss, but i think i want to change it up slightly. what i want to do is much more work but i think it'll pay off.

it's hard to explain, but here it goes: i want to create more branches. for example, in A's kiss scene (and yes, you will be able to kiss *most* of the ros in this book), you can choose to kiss them quite early on. if that's the case, the scene will end slightly earlier and result in one version of an aftermath conversation. however, if you don't choose to kiss them then, they might continue rambling and you'll get to experience something completely different. as the conversation goes on, you'll be given a choice to kiss them (again) or potentially, be kissed. i guess what i'm trying to say here is that i don't want there to be two linear ways to have your first kiss with an ro. this applies especially well to Blane's route, as i plan on splitting that up depending on if you were rude to them, nice to them, neutral etc.

something to keep in mind though is that some ros won't make a move to save their life. it's just not in their nature, so there may be some scenes where the hunter will have to be the one to lean in, but i haven't quite decided. maybe with the branches, things will lead to another and they might feel brave enough with the circumstances. who knows?

### **RAMBLE (SECRET PROJECT).**

i don't know if i'll bother explaining what i didn't do with this project lol because as you can guess, it was basically nothing. on another note, i'm wondering if maybe i should create the blog for this now and then have a super long wait for the demo. it's something that's popped into my head after seeing some other devs do so, but considering how drained i get from one blog, maybe i'll leave it.

### **STATS.**

- 227,340 (+ 0.5k)

\* includes word count from chapter seven only.

### **SNEAK PEEK.**

“Do you know what this is?” [Mirai] asks.

My gaze darts between the wine bottle in her hand and then back to her. I'm not in school anymore, but this is probably the closest thing to a test that I've experienced for a while.

— taken from chapter 07.

[drabble vote.](#)

[Feb 2, 2022](#)

onto the final two drabbles (of the first round) so who do you want to see first? after this, i'll likely be posting drabbles in this order unless otherwise asked <3

n alves

rylan villanueva

19 votes total

”

### when twilight strikes: anniversary shorts.

it's been one year since i released the intro post to when twilight strikes out into the world!! so as a thank you for sticking around and reading my story, i've compiled a collection of short stories for each of the ros, all of which you can customize to your hunter. i hope you enjoy <3

NEXT

Choose a story.

- Late Night Calls. [A Devereux]
- A Caged Heart. [Blane Rekner]
  - One More Step. [N Alves]
  - Ocean Tides. [K de Vries]
- Midnight Spontaneity. [Rylan Villanueva]

[a little something...](#)

[Feb 4, 2022](#)

for my upcoming anniversary on the 24th of this month!! the titles of the stories are subject to change but each story will allow you to write in the name and pronouns of your hunter, among other things <3

[update 06.](#)

[Feb 6, 2022](#)

### **RAMBLE (WHEN TWILIGHT STRIKES).**

hey, so funny story: we're changing gears. i'll start how i usually do and describe what i did for the twine build, aka **chapter three**<sup>\*\*\*</sup>.<sup>\*\*\*</sup> i was hoping to have it all finished by now but i had a bit of an... eventful day yesterday which prevented me from working on it, both physically and mentally. i only have the lab, filing room and announcement left, so i'm certain i'll be able to upload all of it. fingers crossed.

in terms of **chapter seven**<sup>\*</sup>,<sup>\*</sup> i don't think i touched the doc the entire week. oops. but i swear i have a reason: i'm working on an **anniversary special**.

many of you have already seen the sneak peek for it and know about it, but this is the first time i've said the words this straight up. damn. if you saw my poll on tumblr, that's what this was for. not very subtle, am i? in terms of what the special is, it's a collection of short stories with each ro from their pov in the crush stage, as that's what won the vote. most of the stories will be romantic but if i have time, i'm going to try and add in a platonic 'route' for each.

i don't anticipate it to be very long. each story might fall into the two thousand word range, with one to two choices in each (for my own sake), so in total, it might round up to ten thousand. the main reason for this is because i didn't know if i'd be able to write this special to begin with. i've had so much happening in my life recently with school and mental health and multitasking all these projects at once that i wasn't sure if i'd be able to handle another. but it's happening and i couldn't be more excited.

i wrote most of A's story for it last night which was adorable. it just kind of came out of me. i sat down and half an hour later i was writing my concluding sentence. i'm extremely comfortable writing A's relationship with the hunter which may have been part of the reason why, but whatever it was, i'm glad that i got things done. as for everyone else, i have all of the other ros' stories and settings planned out so it's just a matter of writing it. if i set aside a day for each ro, i should theoretically have this done in time for my anniversary on the 24th. and if i have it done earlier, i'll release it on here for early access.

### **RAMBLE (SECRET PROJECT).**

how many weeks will i say that i don't have much to report here? i don't know. i want to say this is the last week but with the twine build and now the anniversary special, this is taking the backburner—again.

in other news, i'm comfortable enough with this story to perhaps do some character introductions, so if you're on my midnight tier expect those sometime this month!! if i have time this week, i think i'm going to try and work on the twine build for this story a bit, but i'll have to see if i end up having time for it. let's hope.

### SNEAK PEEK.

A long stretch of silence follows. A can almost feel [name] falling asleep on the other line. They have a vision of draping a blanket over [them] and kissing [their] forehead goodnight before they shake it off.

— taken from the upcoming anniversary special.

[update 07.](#)

[Feb 13, 2022](#)

### RAMBLE (WHEN TWILIGHT STRIKES).

let's start how i did last week, which is with twine. for this week, i finished the import of **chapter three** (!!)

and moved on to a tiny bit of chapter four. i would have gotten further in—i literally copied like, two sentences—but i had other things to do this week. namely, the **anniversary special**.

whatever remaining pieces of A's story i had left were finished, as well as both Blane and K's stories. if i'm writing things involving all five ros, i tend to go in order—that is, A, Blane, N, K and Rylan; for some reason, this has become the default list in my head—but for this, i'm simply going with whoever's story i feel like writing. between N and Rylan, i'm not sure whose story i'm doing next, but i have both stories plotted in my head so it shouldn't be too difficult. fingers crossed. earlier tonight, i also imported both A's and Blane's stories into twine so aside from another edit or two, those are good to go for launch.

i'm not doing anything for valentine's day, so i think people will be pleasantly surprised with this special—Blane's and K's stories especially. you're used to seeing bits of affection and fluster from the other three ros, but these two are constantly guarded. Blane's story allows you to see what happens in their head as their crush evolves and K's story, since they're more perceptive, gives you a glimpse of how they react and deal with having feelings. i know i tend to write angst with these two, which, fair enough considering that's the bulk of their routes, but the stories i've written are more on the lighthearted side. i

didn't want to bog people down with a sad ending, so i hope people are satisfied. as much as there can be angst and pain with these two, it all works out and i want to remind people of that.

i'm on a time crunch to finish this by the 24th, but i really want to upload it early for patreon. so, if i can manage it, the anniversary special will go live on the 17th for the midnight tier, and on the 19th for the twilight tier.

### **RAMBLE (SECRET PROJECT).**

onto my side wip: for once, i think i did exactly what i said i wanted to do. with a bunch of projects requiring writing or editing, i've been reluctant to start writing my side wip so i turned to the ui instead. i had a good chunk done before the beginning of the week but now, it's pretty much done aside from adjusting little things like light mode and dialogue boxes. it's both similar and different to the ui for *when twilight strikes*. it uses some of the same elements, but if i'm being honest, i think i might like this one more. still, i'm proud of them both and i can't wait to reveal it (publicly) one day. for now, i'll be sharing a sneak peek of it on the midnight tier later this week so stay tuned.

for next week, i think i'll be too busy with *the midnight hours* stuff to focus on this, but if i can, i want to continue fixing up the ui and fleshing out the world in my word doc (which i've probably mentioned too many times at this point). my plan is to finish the twine port for *when twilight strikes* and take that off my plate before starting to write this story, so hopefully, i'll get to it within the next month or so. i'm on break for school next week so i should have extra time to get some things done.

### **SNEAK PEEK.**

It's involuntary, the way their gaze slices over to look at [name]. It's happened too often lately.  
It's almost like they're attuned to [them], everywhere they go Blane can't help but glance over.

— taken from the upcoming anniversary special.

[anniversary special is live!](#)

[Feb 17, 2022](#)

early access to my one-year anniversary game is live!! each story is just over two thousand words each, with the total word count coming to about eleven thousand. while unfortunately, the stories are linear with one to two choices in each, you'll be able to customize your hunter's name and pronouns, as well as all of the ros'.

the game can be found [here](#) and the password is "itsherbirthday." enjoy <33

[melodies. \[n alves\]](#)

[Feb 19, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** after sneaking down to play the lobby's piano, N is caught off guard by the hunter.

**note:** so sorry it's been so long since the last drabble. i've been focusing on so many things i didn't have time to write, but i promise you'll get one more for Rylan before the month ends. this is also written with the mindset that the hunter doesn't know how to play piano, so if yours does, just pretend <3

When N needs to wind down, they tend to reach for music. It's been their escape for as long as they can remember. Some people find an outlet in writing, others in art, but for N, pouring their feelings out into the notes and melodies of a song works best.

Theoretically, they shouldn't be here.

It's nearly seven and everyone is supposed to come by N's apartment for their monthly get-together, but instead of preparing, N has snuck down to the building's piano. They wouldn't have to do this if they had their own, but until they can afford it—and figure out where the hell they'd put it—the lobby will have to do. Besides, the staff never seem to mind it. It's a public instrument after all, and since N can actually play, compared to some of the people who... attempt to, it sounds much more pleasant than someone pressing random keys.

In all honesty, there's not much to complain about when it comes to atmospheric music—unless it's being played in the dead of the night, of course.

Eyes closed, N's fingers glide over the keys, playing a song they know by heart: *Clocks* by Coldplay. It was one of the first songs they'd heard on piano—and one that helped them fall in love with the instrument in the first place.

It's easy to lose yourself in the music when you play. Even if you've memorized the song, your brain is still focused on something. For N, it's often the feelings created by the song.

As much as they adore the melody, *Clocks* always makes them feel... sad, in some ways. Playing things that remind them of their childhood often does that. There's a bitter taint to everything, a sorrowness despite the hope.

N is so lost in the music that they don't realize someone is watching until the song ends. When their fingers hit the last note, the clap startles them.

"That was beautiful," you compliment.

N whirls around so quickly they think they get whiplash. "[name], I didn't realize you were here."

"I tried my best to be quiet. I didn't want to interrupt you."

"Right." N winces, trying to recall the conversation. "Uh, thank you, by the way. I'm glad you liked it."

"Of course. I wouldn't have said that if I didn't."

For a moment, N doesn't know why you're here. But then it hits them. They're sure the dumbfounded realization is clear on their face—they've never had much of a poker face.

"Is it seven already?"

"A couple of minutes past." Your smile is kind, forgiving in a way that washes away any of N's worries. "I was running a little late because of traffic and the group chat said you weren't home so, I figured the piano must have been you."

"You know me so well."

"We've only known each other for months now." You step forward, either not noticing how N takes a sudden inhale at the movement or choosing to ignore it. For their sake, they hope it's the former. "Do you have that memorized? You didn't use any sheet music."

"I don't know how to read it," N admits. "I taught myself how to play so my methods are a little... abstract. I mostly play by ear."

They shift so that you get a better view. "It's not as hard as it looks. A piano has twelve notes and eighty-eight keys in total. Once you figure out what they all are, you study the most common scales and chords. When you have that down, you can pretty much..."

N trails off the moment they look back at you, who's looking at them with a soft admiration.

"What is it?"

"You're adorable."

N doesn't think they heard you right. Their heart just about sinks into the ground, butterflies erupting in their stomach as a replacement.

You laugh at their silent reaction. "The piano, you teaching me the basics? It's cute."

"I probably shouldn't have given you so much detail for someone who only asked if I memorized a song," N replies. They wince again, if only to cover up how much their heart is pounding. Being called both adorable and cute in the span of seconds by someone they like is *not*, in fact, good for their health.

"I like hearing what people are passionate about." You offer them another smile before checking your phone, likely texting the group chat. "Maybe next time when we're not late to somewhere, you can tell me more."

With N's phone now facing upwards on the piano, they can see every missed call and text message. But the group can wait a moment longer. For now, all N does is sink into your eyes and smile, hoping you see how much they'd want this.

"I'd love that."

"Good," you reply. "We can figure out a day we're both free on the way up."

N doesn't think there's a moment they've left the piano feeling lighter than they do now.

[update 08.](#)

[Feb 19, 2022](#)

## RAMBLE (WHEN TWILIGHT STRIKES).

it feels like forever since i last did one of these but in reality, it's only been the standard week. weird. part of it is probably because i did so much this week. as most of you know, i recently published an **anniversary special** with early release on patreon. a few of you have already expressed that you enjoyed reading it which makes me so happy! i spent a good chunk of my time working on that so it means a lot.

this also means, however, that for **chapter seven** was more limited. regardless, i did sit down yesterday and tonight and finally, finally got some writing in for it. the last time i'd open that doc was sometime in january, which tells you how long it's been. i had to do a bit of a read back to see what i'd already said and didn't, but it wasn't that hard to get back into the groove of it. i have an entire outline of the chapter planned but a lot of the introduction to Mirai is me winging it, which is why i got a little confused.

speaking of, i've talked before about how much i adore Mirai but i'll say it again: she's amazing. my goal with writing her is to make her come off as a nonchalant type of danger, the kind that makes your palms sweat and results in you holding your breath as you wait to see what her reaction will be. so far, i think

i've achieved that, but i'm not far into the chapter yet so i'll have to see if i can keep it up. i have a week off from school this week (still homework though, rip) so hopefully, i'll have tons of time to write.

another thing that will probably be interesting to explore in this chapter is K's dynamic with Mirai. K is someone that has yet to interact with many side characters yet. you've only seen them with Quinn, so it'll be nice to introduce someone else into the mix and illustrate how they can be when they're comfortable around someone. i wouldn't describe K and Mirai as friends by any means, but when you're an immortal and are as powerful as the two of them are, you tend to keep in touch with one another—even if you don't choose to.

### **RAMBLE (SECRET PROJECT).**

yeah, didn't touch this one. i did want to add this bit in here though because i think i'm going to do one to two character introductions a week and then reveal the plot of my next wip. all of this will of course be before any of it is posted on tumblr so for those in the midnight tier, you'll be getting a first-hand glimpse.

### **STATS.**

- 228,643 words (+ 1.8k)

\* includes word count from chapter seven only.

### **SNEAK PEEK.**

“Yes,” Mirai answers. Her pronunciation exaggerates the length of the word. With her blank stare and the slight curl of her lip, she looks like a predator examining her prey. “Here you are. I hope you don’t plan on wasting my time anymore than you have.”

— taken from chapter 07.

## CHAPTER 07.

"No," [Mirai] agrees, flashing a brief and dead smile, "but that's the point. Don't get too comfortable here. You may have power elsewhere but right now, you're only here because I allow it. I'm informed of every person that walks through my doors. I could have escorted you out before you even got a glimpse around."

"I'm offended," K deadpans. With that dry tone, they sound the farthest thing from it.

Mirai's shoots them a look. Though it's again full of annoyance, something about the familiarity of them knowing each other eases the expression.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[k & mirai.](#)

[Feb 22, 2022](#)

[update 09.](#)

[Feb 26, 2022](#)

### RAMBLE (WHEN TWILIGHT STRIKES).

hi hi!! i'm going to write this super quickly because i have a lot to do tomorrow, so i'll start with twine. i first wanted to get this out in january, and then february, and now i'm thinking maybe march. indecisive, i know.

but here's my problem: if i do that, i'll need to stop writing completely and spend all my time working on the build—and i don't want to do that. so for anyone who's wondering, i don't know when this is coming out. it'll be in spring for sure and hopefully, because i'm working on chapter seven at the same time, it won't be a long wait for that afterward. i think i'd rather do this than have a long wait in between both, so i hope that's okay. i get anxious thinking about how long it's been since i last updated, but i've been trying my best and i know that. there's not much else i can do.

as for what i did, i'm currently still on **chapter four** working on Rylan's break-in scene. working on the twine build isn't particularly hard, per se, but it's extremely draining. it's a bunch of copying and pasting and reading over old sentences for grammatical errors and word choices. there's little escapism in it other than a mindless task for me to do if i'm not in the mood for writing, so sometimes i struggle with it. regardless, i don't regret my move to twine and can't wait for the release date.

as for **chapter seven**, i somehow spent the entire week writing one choice set? granted, it's over two thousand words long, but by the time i finished, i didn't ever want to write about the topic again. with five ros to accompany you to meet Mirai, i had to account for flavour texts for each, as well as what individual hunters would say based on personality traits and stats. i love how personalized this makes the game, but sometimes it's a bit tedious.

i just wrote the final bits for the scene today—where Mirai asks you why you think she should hear you out—and will be moving onto the second scene later this week—in which the hunter explains the situation. after that, i only have one or two more choice sets planned in this 'act' which is super exciting. there are about five in this chapter so getting even one done will be a huge relief. the first act has fewer interactions between the hunter and the ros, which is likely why i'm slogging through it. i've grown really used to the ros and their individual voices that speaking with other characters takes me more time to get comfortable. acts four and five, however, will be a lot of hunter x ro so those should be a breeze. genuinely can't wait to show sneak peeks from those.

## **RAMBLE (SECRET PROJECT).**

at this point, i might as well take this section out because i barely ever have time to work on it lol. i'll get there eventually.

## **STATS.**

- 231,758 words (+ 3.2k)

\* includes word count from chapter seven only.

## **SNEAK PEEK.**

Meeting [Mirai]'s eyes, I declare, “Because a hunter being desperate for your help is more entertaining than your next vampire client whining about their problems.”

“And what’s to say you won’t whine about your problems?” [she] counters. “Whining is still whining, regardless of who it comes from.”

— taken from chapter 07.

[Feb 28, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** Rylan and the hunter come back from a late-night out.

When Rylan first showed up on your doorstep on a random Thursday night, they weren't expecting anything. If you'd turned them away, they would have winked and saluted a goodbye, brushed it off like they usually did. But you didn't.

Instead, you asked what they were doing there and, with some surprise, they'd replied that they were bored and wanted some fun. After some back and forth, they managed to get you to grab a coat and leave with them on an evening adventure.

The thing with Rylan is that they never plan things out. When they showed up all those months ago, they had no idea what they were doing. The two of you walked around until one of you saw something of interest and pointed it out.

The routine is still the same today, except, Rylan feels like they try... harder, these days. Harder to impress you. Harder to make sure you're having a good time and that these Thursday traditions are something you actually want to do, rather than something you feel like you're obligated to.

Rylan glances over at you now, licking ice cream from a cone with a content expression.

"Is it good?"

"When is ice cream never not good?" you counter. You beam at them before going in for another taste. The smile sends a shiver down Rylan's spine.

"When it's warm," Rylan teases. They laugh at the sudden change in your expression, escaping your glare as they sprint ahead of you and begin to walk backward.

"How would you know? Have you tried it?"

"Only a psychopath would willingly eat warm ice cream."

"Maybe I'll try it just to spite you."

"Be my guest," Rylan laughs. Changing topics, they continue, "So, on a scale of one to ten, how was tonight? Better than last week?"

You take a thoughtful taste of your ice cream. "I don't know if you'll ever top last week."

Last week was one of the rare occasions where Rylan actually had something in mind. They'd seen a poster for fireworks in Central Park and took you there without explanation. The two of you had eaten more food than Rylan had ever eaten before laying down in the grass for the show.

And though the fireworks were pretty... you were prettier. They spent a good chunk of time staring at you, watching as the lights illuminated your features and how the joy brightened your eyes so that every time you went to point something out, you looked like you were glowing.

"I have to," Rylan replies. "I can't have a firework show be my peak."

"We'll see about that."

Rylan turns around, falling back into place beside you. "How's this? Next week, we go to an arcade and we win each other giant plushies. They'll be so big we can barely carry them home."

"And where will I put that, exactly?"

"In your living room of course. Every time you pass it, you'll think of me. Think of it as a memento."

It takes a while for the words to register, but when they do, you give Rylan a slow smile. The period in-between consisted of you staring at them, breath hitched and your heartbeat skipping a beat. If Rylan didn't have supernatural hearing, they'd think they said something wrong.

But maybe, it was just right.

"Sounds like you already have it all planned out."

"Only for you," Rylan answers. Usually, they'd plaster on a grin after delivering such a flirtation, but tonight, there's too much truth in their words for them to fake a smile. What comes upon them instead is a soft smile, one that's hesitant and shy and not at all like them.

But it's true. Because there's no one else they'd do this for.

You don't have a response to that, so the two of you walk the next few seconds in silence. You're about five blocks from your apartment when Rylan catches you shiver out of the corner of their eye. Without even thinking about it, they pull out a hat from their pocket. They'd stuffed it there ages ago, but since it messes their hair up, they never wear it.

For Rylan, fashion comes before warmth.

They step in front of you and you, startled, stop in your tracks, giving them ample time to place the hat on your head.

"You should bundle up better, hunter. Humans get cold so easily," they remark. They finish adjusting the garment and shift their eyes to meet your gaze, but whatever they were expecting, it isn't this.

The look you're giving them practically sends them over the edge. It's almost like you're seeing right through them. Your eyes are wide, your lips parted. You're staring at Rylan like you've never seen them before.

Rylan gulps. "Dress warmer next time, will you?"

You nod, eyes darting between theirs as if you're not sure where to look. "I will. And if you win me a plushie, it can keep me warm as we walk back."

"I better not lose then."

"No, you better not."

Neither of you mentions the arcade for the rest of the way back.

[drabble vote.](#)

[Mar 2, 2022](#)

this is the order i'll be using to post drabbles throughout march and april :))

a devereux

blane rekner

n alves

k de vries

rylan villanueva

30 votes total

[update 10.](#)

[Mar 6, 2022](#)

## **RAMBLE (WHEN TWILIGHT STRIKES).**

so, super excited to say that i made decent progress on both the **twine** and writing fronts this week. i wanted to finish my import for chapter four today but i think it's more realistic if i say it'll be done by the middle of this week. the only reason it's taken so long is that it's not only a matter of copying and pasting, but also making grammatical changes and rewriting sentences i feel weirdly about.

for example, i did end up changing some of what A says to the hunter if they are "forced into" finding Caine. it's less harsh this time and they seem a lot more sympathetic, which is more fitting to their character. if you choose this route, in chapter six before you enter the club there's a scene that allows you to forgive them (if you didn't choose to be paired with them, a mirror scene will come in chapter eight). i did get an ask about this section asking if i could add more options, which i will do, but i'm thinking that if you choose to not forgive them at all, i'll lock you out of their romance route. it just doesn't make sense for them to want to date the hunter if they know the hunter still holds a grudge.

onto **chapter seven**, i'm pleased to say that i've moved onto the second act. i'm excited to write this one mostly because it really shows off who Mirai is. in this act, she asks to speak to the hunter alone—though it's more of a statement than a request. i haven't gotten far into it yet, but i've written the part about the ro checking with the hunter to see if everything is okay before they leave. it's a really nice scene and while not necessarily romantic, it really shows how they feel about the hunter, especially for Blane and K. it illustrates that they aren't just callous assholes and can be considerate when they want to, which is something i've wanted to show for a while.

goals for next week include getting past this act so i can move onto the next one, aka my favourite and what i'm anticipating most for this chapter. i'll reveal more about it when i get to it, but i think most people who play my game will be wanting this act the most.

## **RAMBLE (SECRET PROJECT).**

okay, update on this section, i'm going to move it to the midnight tier and make progress posts when i actually have something to update on. it feels like a waste having it here since all i say is "yeah didn't do anything" lmfao. i assure you, i'm still working on this just as much as i am when twilight strikes.

## **STATS.**

- 234,170 words (+ 2.59k)

\* includes word count from chapter seven only.

## **SNEAK PEEK.**

Still, Blane lingers like they want my confirmation to leave. It's so jarring to see them so considerate that I'm frozen, but when my mind catches up, I nod. Eyes dart across my face before I hear footsteps fade behind me.

— taken from chapter 07.

[sunrise. \[n alves\]](#)

[Mar 8, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** N and the hunter wake up together after a long night.

When the sun creeps through the cracks of N's window, they begin to wake up. They're groggy from the events of the night before, where the two of you had jumped around in their living room blasting music and singing from the top of your lungs, but once they awake, there's no going back to sleep for them.

Last night felt like a fever dream, and for a moment, they almost wonder if it even happened. But glancing at your figure beside them, they know it did.

They'll never get used to the sight of waking up beside you. The first time you slept in the same bed, they didn't want to wake you up. They stared at you for longer than they probably should have, eyes tracing your features as if pressing them in their memory. They must have fallen asleep at some point because the next thing they knew, they were opening their eyes to the sight of you staring back at them.

They'd smiled and you had smiled back.

N thinks about that moment often, but they no longer have to wait weeks or months to experience it again.

They stare at you now, peacefully sleeping with soft breaths coming out of your nose. Saturdays are supposed to be days where you sleep in, but the sun will wake you up sooner or later; N's blinds can only do so much.

Reaching out, N trails their finger on your forearm. They watch as goosebumps form on your skin at their touch, a smile touching their lips at the sight. They aren't drawing anything in particular—they just like the feeling.

A soft groan falls from your mouth as you squeeze your eyes shut, trying to preserve the little bit of darkness there is left.

N's finger trails up to your bare shoulder, making loops on the skin there before slowly inching towards upwards. You're pretending to be asleep now, but N doesn't mind. Their finger traces your jugular and then rests at its final destination on your lips.

Your eyes fly open at that, but before you can say anything, N cups your jaw and gives you a light kiss.

“Good morning,” they greet, voice raspy from first use.

“I have morning breath. At least let me brush my teeth first,” you complain, scrunching up your nose. You swat N away and they laugh, pressing their forehead to your arm, sending vibrations through you from their movement.

“But what if I want a good morning kiss?”

“Then you’ll have to wait.”

N fakes a pout at that. The both of you know you’re not leaving the warm bed anytime soon, but you play the charade anyway.

“Can I do this at least?” N asks. You look confused for a moment, but N shows you what they mean a moment later when they press a kiss to your cheek. Your eyes widen, your hand reaching up to touch the place where they touched.

“You’re impatient.”

“Because I like you.”

The words fall off their tongue so easily. The nerves they’d felt when they first began to like you would have prevented them from doing anything but fumbling, but now, the grin that they make every time they see you comes with a surge of confidence.

You attempt a frown. “Cheater.”

“Is that so bad?” N questions.

Your eyes dart across their face. N never breaks eye contact with you, watching as you study them. After a long silence, you shake your head. “No.”

“Good.” N leans forward as if to kiss you again but pulls back just before you can touch. Laughing at your annoyance, they pull off their blankets to go to the bathroom. “Be patient, you can get your kisses after I brush my teeth.”

“Traitor.”

It’s safe to say that when you were both freshened up, N had to give you more than one kiss to make up for their behaviour.

## CHAPTER 07.

I won't be the one to break the silence, so I watch Mirai as she gets up from her throne. Again, her steps are calculated, as if she spent her time watching me and [pair] confer plotting out which tiles she's going to walk on.

"Caine Atheron, what an interesting choice of a subject," she muses. In a rare occurrence, she's not looking at me but rather, the wall. "I'm not surprised he's missing. If it were to happen to anyone, it'd be him. Hard to narrow down a list of suspects when he has so many enemies, but here you are. You've found a thread. It's almost admirable."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[alone with mirai.](#)

[Mar 10, 2022](#)

[update 11.](#)

[Mar 13, 2022](#)

### RAMBLE.

apologies for the somewhat late update, we had daylight savings here in canada and it's seriously messed up my sleep schedule.

onto what i did, chapter four's upload onto **twine** was a success! i'm now two chapters and a bunch of codex entries away from finally, finally posting it publicly and giving it to you guys. i'm entering the period of school where things are starting to pile up, but hopefully, i'll be able to get to chapter five sooner than later and finish those up. chapter six will probably be the worst to code but it'll be a reward when i'm finished.

for **chapter seven**, i got extremely close to finishing act two. i stayed up until three am last night writing, but eventually got tired and went to sleep. there's so little left that i'm certain half an hour of writing tonight will be enough for me to finish it, and then i'm onto *the* scenes. the scenes i've been wanting to

write since i thought of them at two am. again, it's one of those things that you can play with all five ros and get different reactions, which is always super fun, so i hope it convinces you to play more than one route. i'm still figuring out how this scene will work with K, since they're still in their 'leave me alone i hate all of you' phase, but i promise i'll be fun for everyone.

i am a bit upset about leaving mirai behind, however. she'll definitely make appearances in the future, but she was so fun to write that no longer having long conversations with her for the rest of the chapter is bittersweet.

i don't know if i've mentioned it before, but acts three and four are basically the same act except they're part of a branch. so once act two ends, you have the option to do one or the other, which is always more work to write but so satisfying when it all comes together. i'm working on act three next, which has the ro scenes so if you're on the twilight tier or higher, be on the lookout for some sneak peeks later this month. i know i have a decent way to go, but honestly, the more i think about it the more i think the twine build and chapter seven will go up within a month of each other. they're going to be super close. hopefully that makes up for the long break lol.

## **STATS.**

- 237,914 words (+ 3.74k)

\* includes word count from chapter seven only.

## **SNEAK PEEK.**

She spares me a glance, eyes so blank it's frightening. "I've known Caine Atheron for longer than you have and I can assure you he's had more than nine lives. Is that fair, hunter?"

I stare at her. She's taken my words and run in a completely different direction than I thought the conversation would go.

Seeing me speechless, Mirai smiles. It does nothing to add light to those already dead eyes.

— taken from chapter 07.

## CHAPTER 07.

Rylan frowns, tilting their head to listen. When they come up with nothing, they slowly poke their head above the countertop to double check. Unconsciously, I feel myself doing the same.

Big mistake. The person is still here. And, as if the scene is playing in slow motion, they begin to turn in our direction.

### CHOICES:

- Let [pair] pull you back. [♥]
- Pull [pair] back. [♥]
- Duck and signal [pair] to stay hidden.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[close proximity trope? close proximity trope.](#)

[Mar 18, 2022](#)

i use Rylan as an example, but note that this choice will appear regardless of who you chose to enter the VIP room. you will not, however, be able to pull K back as it would be extremely out of character for them and they'd dislike it more than feel butterflies over it.

[update 12.](#)

[Mar 20, 2022](#)

### RAMBLE.

this has been a weird week. i went full steam during the first part of the week and then by the second, i was bogged down by a lot of homework and found myself (unfortunately) prioritizing school over writing. i wish i could say otherwise, but alas, here we are.

for **twine**, i'm still chipping away at chapter five. i got a bit done yesterday when i needed a mindless task, but again, things like these take time. it's extremely time-consuming. i almost wish i had started with twine first instead of choicescript but i know my non-tech-savvy brain would not have been able to

handle that lmao. for a better understanding of where i'm at, i plan on powering through K's scene next week and possibly Rylan's if i find the time, but that's optimistic.

for **chapter seven**... i've hit a block. well, sort of. i wrote the beginning parts of the first branch scene this week and set up the outline for it, but as i got further in, i realized i didn't really like it. it honestly just felt like filler, which i hate. every scene and every line that's ever said should contribute to the story in some way. it doesn't have to be plot, but it should at the very least give you a glimpse of a character's personality, show off their development or at least connect to something that will happen in the future. i only wrote about 600 words for it, so thankfully it wasn't a lot of work lost, but i'm back to the drawing board. i did get an idea immediately after that feels a lot better, however, so it's not like i'm completely in the dark.

the problem (so to say) with this new scene i've thought of is that it requires a different conversation for each of the ros. this, of course, means more writing, and if someone doesn't end up going through multiple routes, a 'shorter' chapter despite the seemingly long word count. i never mind all these tiny branches since it helps customize the story so much, but it does get tedious sometimes. i'd rather you wait for a product that i'm proud of, however, so let's all hope it turns out well.

finally, while on the topic of writing, i also made a little progress on the close proximity scenes i've been hinting at for ages. it's not even now that the scene happens, but i got ahead of myself and decided to write a bit anyway. so far, so good. there's already what i think is a cute flirtation towards the beginning of the chapter so this really seals the deal with the romance for now. it's difficult finding a balance of giving too much and giving too little, but i think i'm doing okay for now. occasionally i want to give you much more than i should, but i rein it in; that's what drabbles are for.

## **STATS.**

241,361 words (+3.45k)

\* includes word count from chapter seven only.

## **SNEAK PEEK.**

“I’ve always wanted to [redacted],” Rylan jokes.

I’m surprised. “You mean you haven’t done it before?”

They grin. “Each time is a different experience, darling. Keep up.”

— taken from chapter 07.

[contacts. \[k de vries\]](#)

[Mar 23, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** you didn't think late-night phone calls were only reserved for A, did you?

Loneliness isn't supposed to be personified, but over the years, that's what K found themselves doing. It was a spirit that roamed the earth alongside K, curled up beside them as they drifted to sleep, stood by their side in their darkest times. When K had no one, loneliness was there to pick up their pieces.

It's paradoxical, but it's the only way they can describe it.

With the introduction of Rylan and their misfit group of hunters, however, K has found that it visits them less. Loneliness comes and goes, but when it threatens to stay, Rylan is the one who chases it away. Well, Rylan and you.

K is loathed to admit it. They don't like relying on others.

They can settle for needing Rylan to keep them company sometimes—though they'd never admit it; Rylan's ego is as big as it is—but throwing you in the mix... not good. Because it's not merely your company that K craves, but your presence. The very essence of you, from the simple notes of your voice to the scent that is slowly become as familiar to K as their own fragrance.

How nauseating.

K glances over as their phone starts ringing. It's nearly the dead of the night but of course, someone has to be bothering them. They sigh and lean over to read the caller ID, ready to press the decline button when they hesitate.

They've never known what to save you under. You were once named as 'Rylan's Friend' in their phone, which was promptly changed to 'The Hunter.' A and Blane were saved under 'Quarrelling Lover #1' and 'Quarrelling Lover #2', while N was saved under 'Non-Annoying Hunter,' so it was easy to distinguish who you were.

As everyone else's name stayed relatively the same, however, your name eventually changed. Again and again and again. After 'The Hunter' it was your first initial. That confused K whenever you popped up on their screen, so they changed it to your name. But then that felt too personal.

Seeing your name on the caller ID sent a weird wave of emotions through K every time they saw it, so they changed it to 'Do Not Answer.'

Do not answer, because if they did, K would fall deeper into the hole they were digging for themselves. Do not answer, because if they did, K would break their promise of not getting attached to anyone. Do not

answer, because if they did, they might figure out what that weird wave of emotions actually was—and they know themselves well enough to know they wouldn't like it.

You're still saved under 'Do Not Answer,' but the words don't do much other than making K feel guilty for picking up. It's what they've conditioned themselves to feel, but it's an addiction. You're a drug that they cannot rid themselves of. K has done drugs in the past, but they know that you'll do more irreparable damage than any substance they've ever tried.

Rarely does this knowledge stop them.

"Why are you up?" K says in greeting.

You pause, slightly shocked that K even answered, they suppose. In your defence, the last couple of times you called, K stared at the caller ID for so long that you ended up giving up.

"I couldn't sleep," you reply. "Why are you up?"

"Which answer do you want to hear?"

"Any."

K thinks about it for a moment. Of course, they can't tell you the truth, so they'll have to settle for something else. Not a lie, but a diversion. "I was thinking about tomorrow. I have to run an errand that I've been avoiding."

"I didn't think you were the kind to procrastinate." K can practically see your arched eyebrow.

"I'm not, but I try not to go there unless I have to. It's... complicated."

There's a pause. "Do you want me to come? I can go after work."

"I don't think they'd like the idea of me bringing a hunter," K responds dryly. Some part of them acknowledges how kind it is for you to offer tagging along even after a long day of work, but if they're going to spend time with you, it won't be during one of their deals.

That's a separate part of their life.

"Probably not," you agree. K hears shuffling on the other line—probably you sinking into your pillows and blankets. "How long will you be gone?"

"I don't know. It's on the other side of the city."

"Oh."

Another stretch of silence. K should just hang up here, save you the pain of the awkward conversation and them the chance of ending up talking to you all night. Just when they're about to suggest it,

however, you sigh.

“Can you tell me something? Just so I can drift off?”

“That bad?”

“Yeah.”

K hesitates. There's still an out here. They could suggest you listen to some music, turn on a playlist composed solely of the soft sounds of rain—but instead, their mind is trying to decide what they should tell you.

“I lived in Paris for a time,” K starts. Again, that wave of guilt hits them, but they ignore it as they settle into their bed. “I was younger, more impressionable, and more naïve. The supernaturals are more entwined with human life there, which I saw a challenge.”

They hear your breathing as they continue on, rambling about their life and the experiences. You never say anything, but K likes that better. It makes them feel safer to admit things. That should scare them, but it's easier when they don't have to see your face.

They know you're asleep when your breathing turns steady and you don't respond to their soft calls. K stares at their phone and the runtime of your call. They stare at the contact they've saved for you at the top of their screen and sigh, hanging up and swiping it away.

They need a new name for you.

[update 13.](#)

[Mar 26, 2022](#)

## **RAMBLE.**

usually, people start with the bad news when they have two announcements to make, so i'll start with that. basically, i had a rough start to the week. i didn't say it last week but i was honestly stressed about the content of **chapter seven**, specifically the scene i was working on as i had no idea what to write in it. i said i had an idea but when i wrote it, none of it made sense and i hated it all, so i scrapped it. it's in my 'scraps' document, sitting there for what will probably be the rest of eternity. long story short: i cut about three thousand words. i posted this on tumblr but truly, it had to be done. i feel better without them, which is great, but it does mean i was put behind in terms of progress, which... isn't so great.

that being said, there is good news: aka i figured out what the fuck i'm doing and what i'm writing isn't in fact, being scrapped because i actually like it. there are still going to be branches of different dialogue depending on which ro you chose to accompany you, but i don't think i'm going to have any choices in those scenes. if i do, it won't be for everyone. each ro talks about something different alluding to their background, character, or arc, so some things are topics that can be commented on and others are just... 'oh' moments. i actually feel N's and Rylan's are the most interesting so we'll see what everyone thinks.

also, this isn't the purpose, but i do hope this encourages people to play all the routes, or at least, attempt to. there's a lot of content you get about each character if you choose to constantly spend time with them.

i'm working on the scene now and hope to be done by next week, with five ros and different reactions for each of the choices, things add up. it's the only reason i'm moving so slow. if i have five choices, i have to write twenty-five variations. not fun. but also, extremely gratifying,

for **twine**, i got a little farther than i thought i would, which is wonderful. K's scene is imported and i got through a bit of Rylan's. that'll be done by next week as well as (hopefully) the two's joint dinner scene. after this, it's the rest of chapter five, all of six, and then writing the codex entries and it's good to go! and grammar checks, of course, but we don't talk about that.

## STATS.

242,803 words (+1.45k)

\* includes both the deletion of content and addition.

## SNEAK PEEK.

A hums, taking a step further in. Their eyes dart over my face, scanning my expression and body language. I have no doubt it was the first thing they looked for when they walked in, but I guess they wanted to give me the courtesy of not being instantly bombarded with questions.

— taken from chapter 07.

[catch 22. \[blane rekner\]](#)

[Mar 31, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** Blane is in a bit of a predicament, and it may or may not involve you.

**note:** a different drabble from what i usually write, but it's what i was in the mood for so it's what you're getting haha. i hope you enjoy regardless <3

How many times will Blane have to repeat to themselves that they hate you until it finally becomes true? If it was a hundred, they'd already be at that point. If it's a thousand, they're working toward that next. If it's more... well, Blane worries they might be out of time. Out of time before they have to accept that it's not true at all.

Because out of all the people they hate the most, it's themselves.

Blane hates themselves because everyone else does. And everyone hates them because they hate themselves. It's a never-ending cycle, a loop that makes sense to no one other than Blane. Even then, sometimes it doesn't.

Sometimes Blane lays in their bed, staring at the ceiling waiting for the world to crush them and everything beneath them to come crumbling down. Sometimes Blane ignores the calls from N and presses their eyes shut, wondering if tomorrow will finally be the day that this feeling goes away. Sometimes Blane thinks about what they're doing with their life and can't breathe, panicking, panicking, *panicking* until they drift off in shivers.

Everything is so stupid. From an outside perspective, the solution is simple: stop being an asshole. Stop treating everyone so poorly and maybe you'll find yourself happier as a cause of it.

But that's a catch twenty-two.

Blane had a horrible upbringing and an even worse childhood. They never think about it anymore, but the past isn't always just the past. Sometimes it's the present, sometimes it's even the future. If Blane could shed that part of them, they would, but they can't.

It'd be like ripping off their own skin.

They've pushed through life with all the strength they can, reinforcing their heart with steel, strengthening their defences so that nothing would hurt them. Ruining relationships with others before they can even start, making everyone hate them so they won't have to deal with the heartbreak of the fallout in the future, is part of that plan.

But just when Blane thought they were invincible, they met you.

The fucking bane of their existence.

Deep down, Blane knows you've done nothing wrong. You had little to no choice in being Caine's favourite, just as Blane had little to no choice in being Caine's least favourite.

You're a victim just as much as they are, if you can even call it that.

If they're honest with themselves, they couldn't care less about positions. You're a good hunter, a great one, even. Blane knows that you got to where you are because of skill, not because Caine randomly decided to place you at the top one day.

And that's fine.

But everyone needed a reason for why Blane was so snappish and they decided that this was it. That it was you that they hated and the Rankings and the unfairness of the department inner circle.

They weren't entirely wrong.

Blane dislikes you, but it's not for the reasons that everyone thinks.

Blane dislikes you because when you walk into a room, their gaze immediately goes to you.

Blane dislikes you because when they come into work, you're the first thing that comes to mind. Whether you're in or not, whether you were injured on your hunt, whether the two of you will cross paths today.

Blane dislikes you because when they wake up in the middle of the night, it's because they were dreaming about your lips. Your kiss. Your hand clasping theirs and your arm brushing theirs. Your legs intertwining and your smile widening because you saw them enter the room.

Blane dislikes you because they don't at all.

N would tell them to just drop their charade, to show everyone who they've shown N—the person who isn't an asshole but merely someone sensitive who, in retaliation, keeps their walls way too high—but it's not so simple.

As much as Blane hates hiding, they hate feeling hurt more. They've felt enough of that for a lifetime, so if this is the sacrifice they need to make to never feel it again, so be it.

One day, things will change and they'll stop seeing you every day. You'll transfer or they will, you'll get different jobs, live different lives. You'll live in different cities, perhaps even countries. Blane will no longer have the arrow in their heart slowly threatening to break their defences open.

Everything will be okay.

When they learn to dissolve the feelings they've begun to develop, everything will be okay.

[update 14.](#)

[Apr 3, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

i don't have a lot to say this week, which is both good and bad i suppose. my mental health hasn't been doing great which is why this update is a lot later than i usually post them, but i didn't want to leave you hanging.

**twine** is going smoothly. so smoothly that i thought i was going to finish all of chapter five yesterday if i had been up for it. unfortunately, my mind was not in the headspace for that. good news is that i promise it'll be finished by this week. i might give myself a bit of a break to do codex entries afterward, but rest assured that the twine build coming this month. i can't wait to finally press publish on it.

**chapter seven** is going smoothly too. alas, there's not much to say about it since so much of my time was taken up by variations. one set of choices alone reached over two thousand words, simply because i had to account for each of the ros' reactions. it took me a while to power through all of those, but it captures a wide range of reactions for the hunter which i think will allow for customization.

in between writing those, however, since i apparently can't focus on one thing for too long, i wrote Blane's solo scene that comes directly after the choice set, which is there the sneak peek below comes from. i struggled with a lot of it, constantly going through phases of writer's block, but the final outcome is something i'm happy with. what happens in it is very small and not necessarily something big for the plot, but key to Blane's character. it's almost like an easter egg if you choose to go with them, because otherwise, it's not something you really talk about.

Rylan's scene was also thought about, but i only got through the introductory part. i do this thing a lot where i'll plot scenes out when i'm away from my computer (in this instance, i was brushing my teeth) so i know what i'm going to write, i just haven't done it yet. procrastination at its finest. the scenes are a little longer than i thought they'd be so i don't know if i'll be able to get through all of them by the end of next week, but i'll try. as long as school doesn't kick my ass i guess.

## STATS.

246,783 words (+3.98k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Blane scowls. "Why are you asking, [surname]? Still don't trust that I'm here for good reason?"

"Why not? You've never shied away from your dislike of Caine."

Blane goes rigid, emerald eyes dangerously bright. "Because he has never hidden how much he hates *me*. And yet, I'm still here, on a quest to save his sorry ass."

## CHAPTER 07.

"You know, if this is going to work, you're going to have to start telling me the truth."

Their reaction is instant.

"Why?" Rylan asks. "What does me talking about my feelings do anything to help what we're doing? Don't act like you care, hunter. You've hated me ever since we met. If I wanted to talk about how I feel, you wouldn't be my first option."

I grit my teeth. "We can't help each other if you lie."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES



[a glimpse behind the mask.](#)

[Apr 5, 2022](#)

[update 15.](#)

[Apr 10, 2022](#)

### WHAT I DID.

i'm not going to lie, i was pretty swamped with real-world stuff this week. i had a good amount of shifts and homework that took up my time and when it hit night, the time i usually write, i was usually too tired to do anything. regardless, i'm working. i still am, i promise.

**twine** saw the completion of chapter five uploaded and the beginnings of chapter six. that's my biggest chapter yet (chapter seven is coming for its crown), so it's going to take more time than the other ones to import, but i'm done with school this coming weekend so after that, i'm free to work on this for hours on end. i have yet to start the codex entries but i may leave that for a later update if need be. i just really need this out by the end of this month.

for **chapter seven**, last week i talked about writing Blane's solo and a bit of Rylan's. this week, N's and Rylan's were completely finished and K's was started. since i'm writing no choices in these scenes, i tend to write them in one or two goes. as we reach chapter seven, we're about a third into the book. the timeline indicates that the characters haven't had much time with each other yet, but it's enough that you shouldn't have to squint to try and understand who they are. these scenes slowly drop hints at each of the ros, who they are, what their backstories are, what their mindset is etc. to describe each in one word, A's is bittersweet, Blane's is perplexing, N's is emotional, K's is insightful, and Rylan's is tension-filled. it's hard to say what each one consists of without giving spoilers but i think that does a decent job. they're all really fun to write so hopefully, reading through them will give you the same feeling.

tonight, i plan on finishing K's and then working on A's immediately after. i'm confident that i can get both done by the end of the week, especially knowing my motivation is getting to write those close proximity scenes.

speaking of, those are going to be so much longer than anticipated. i wrote a *lot* for A's and Blane's—and those were only the shy flirt options. i assume the bold one will have a similar word count, so don't be surprised if i spend an entire week (or more) on this choice set. not that i mind though. i've been wanting to write this for months now so the process is super rewarding. seeing everyone's reactions will be even more so.

## STATS.

250,168 words (+3.39k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

With a shiver, I glance over at N, who's examining Mirai's wine bottles like they're the most interesting thing in the world. Knowing they don't drink, the act is clearly for my sake. It's enough to make me crack a smile.

[i love you. \[a devereux\]](#)

[Apr 12, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** sleepy nights with A and the hunter.

A works a lot. Arguably too much. They slack off from time to time of course, but when they get into something, they hyperfixate on it. Like, focus on it for hours non-stop without pausing for breaks hyperfixtate.

It's exactly what they're doing right now. Hunched over their desk, the light dim and bent so close to their papers that they've nearly caught on fire at least twice, A squints. Whatever scribbles they've written over the last little while have gotten more and more illegible. They'd switch to their laptop but getting thoughts out on paper is more useful to them.

They'll decipher the notes one day. Even if it requires the damn Rosetta Stone.

They're so focused on their work that they don't even hear you come in.

"You're still up?"

A turns, taking in the sight of you in your pyjamas, hand over your eyes trying to shield them from the harsh light. You look like you just woke up. Cute. Very cute. A doesn't think there will ever be a time when they won't find you attractive.

"So are you," A points out.

"The bed was cold."

"Oh."

Guilt trickles into A's heart. They frown, feeling a crease form on their forehead. They promised to be in bed by midnight—to get their full eight hours of sleep if anything—but they don't need to look at the clock to know it's past then. Much past.

You step into the room, eyes adjusting. A doesn't say anything as you walk over to their desk, hands folding over their shoulders as you lean over them.

"You can do this tomorrow. It'll still be here." Your voice, like always, is soothing, one that has the power to lull A to sleep. They can feel your hot breath on their ear. They lean into the back of their chair, lean into you, eyes fluttering shut.

Still, they can't help but protest.

"I'm almost done."

You shake your head, pressing a light kiss to A's cheek. Their skin warms up immediately. "That's what you've been saying for the last two nights. You'll say it tomorrow too. I know you. You're not going to finish that tonight."

A sighs. They know you're right, but it doesn't make them any happier.

"Come to bed," you urge. "I promise you'll feel better. You need to rest. The more rest you get, the more energy you'll have to work on it tomorrow."

A has always been stubborn, but a lot of that melts away when it's you. It's always you. Anyone else and A might have stayed here the rest of the night, falling asleep on their desk as they accidentally smeared all their ink. But because it's you, they're actually willing to leave.

"You have to warm me up though," A mumbles. You grab one of their hands, fingers interlacing like they have dozens of times before.

"You're the one who owes me that."

A doesn't have time to respond before you're gently pulling them out of their seat. Their back is screaming in pain because of how long they've been stuck in that position, something you notice and respond to with a pointed look.

You reach over and flick the switch to A's lamp, turning it off and bathing the room in darkness. A can't see, but they know the layout of your shared apartment like the back of their hand.

You tug them lightly as you guide them out of the room and down the hall. There are nightlights here—mostly because A always needs a late-night snack and had stumbled to the kitchen too many times prior to their installation—so it's easier to see where you're going.

The two of you make a left as you enter the bedroom, the door shutting quietly once you're both inside. But even though you're here, you don't let go of A's hand, pulling them towards the bed and then onto it.

The moment they hit the soft cushion, A sighs in relief. "So comfy."

"I told you."

You settle into the bed as A snuggles into the blankets, draping it over you when you're laying down. You smile at that, a smile so bright they can see it even in the dark.

Though you spent time trying to convince A to come here, you don't say anything—and neither do they. The two of you face each other, heads on pillows and eyes slowly closing. Sleep threatens to take A, but they manage to stay awake long enough to admire you. To trace your features with their eyes and marvel at how lucky they are.

"You're my best friend, you know that?" A whispers. Even though you're dating, A hasn't stopped saying that. It'll always be true. Platonically or romantically, you will always be the one A runs to. Their forever person.

You open your eyes. "And you're mine."

For A, the words mean more than an I love you.

[Apr 17, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

school is done and i have about a month off work so we all know what that means: it's grind time. for **twine**, i'm currently working away at chapter six and am confident i can finish it by this week so i can do bug fixes and overall touch-ups. this is the cha[pter that i have to edit the least since i wrote it most recently, so it's going much quicker than everything else.

that being said, i'm officially announcing that the twine build of when twilight strikes will be live for the midnight tier **wednesday, april 27**; live for the twilight tier **friday, april 29**; and live publicly **wednesday, may 4**. i would make it earlier but as always, i'd rather surprise everyone by moving up the date rather than pushing it back, so these are the latest dates you'll get the game unless there's some sort of emergency. i'm unsure whether the codex entries will be in this update or if it'll just go liver with chapter seven, so i guess we'll find out together. if anything, these are super short and *most* of the lore is taken from what has been said in-game anyway, so it's not a lot to miss out on.

in terms of **chapter seven**, i've reached them. the holy grail scenes. next week, alongside finishing up the twine build, i will be writing most and hopefully all of the close proximity scenes. i thought i might be able to get to it this week, but i added in a new choice set and gave myself more work than i thought. five choices, twenty-five responses. yay. in real life, i'm focusing on moving houses right now but in between all the chaos i'm sure i'll find time to get past these. i've been raving about the close proximity scenes for months, after all. there's nothing that will stop me from writing those.

after all of that, i finally finish up this branch and move on to the other one that you could have chosen instead. it has a very different vibe so i'm hoping that the change in tone will be a refreshment rather than something that hinders me. like with most things i write, i have a general idea for what i want to do with this scene but none of the details are figured out yet. i will spoil that the choice of whether you brought a weapon into *Crimson Rouge* comes up here, so that may give you a clue as to what happens. definitely a lighter route than the other one i wrote, but that doesn't mean it's worse by any means. just different.

## STATS.

253,908 words (+3.74k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

K holds my gaze as they stand up, making their way around the bar and emerging behind the counter. "I don't have to. Everything always falls into your lap when you're a hunter."

"Are you ever going to stop insulting my job?"

"No."

## CHAPTER 07.

I've never been this close to A before. It's different when you're tumbling in the training room or knocking into each other on the field. Those moments are temporary. We touch for a mere moment, oftentimes with thick hunting jackets in-between us, before pulling apart. But we can't do that now.

For what feels like eternity, we stay there, frozen in our position until we're certain that the guard is gone. The footsteps fading on my left and the sound of their body brushing against the curtain confirm it.

A and I relax—until we realize how close we are.

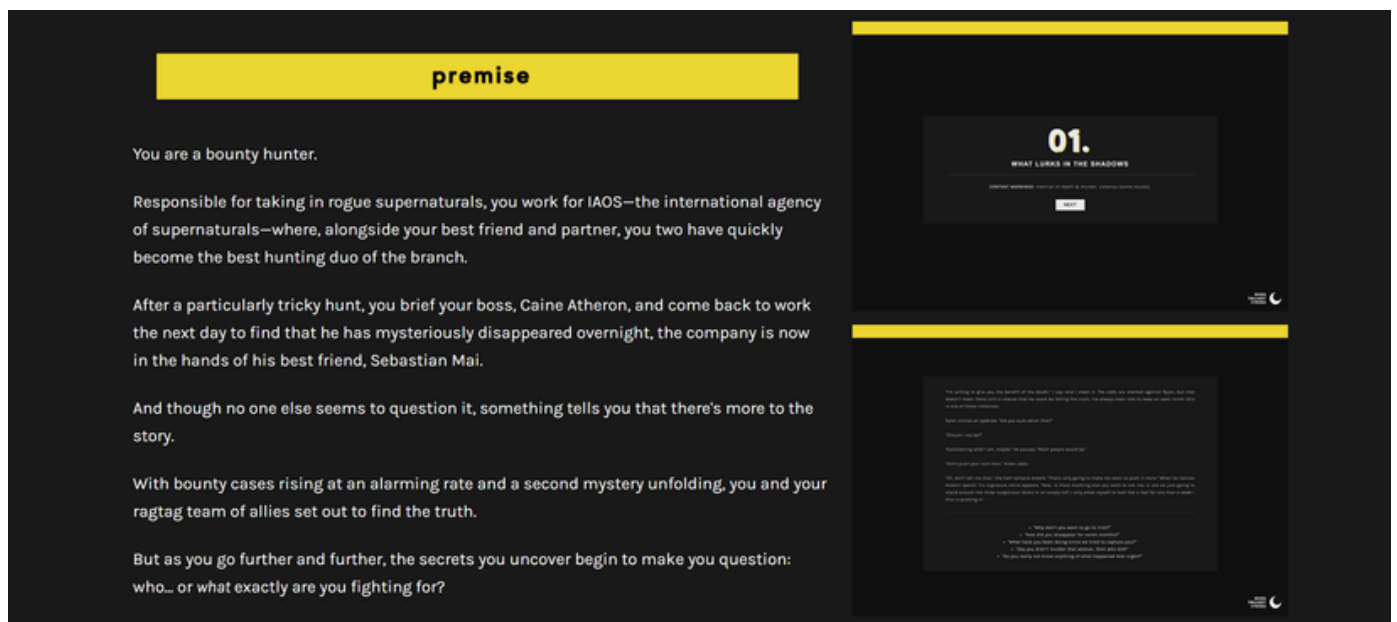
WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[touch and go.](#)

[Apr 19, 2022](#)

[twine build is live!](#)

[Apr 22, 2022](#)



i know i said next wednesday but i tried my hardest so here you go, the twine build is live and ready! you can play at this [link](#), password is "shesarried".

as i didn't beta test this, there will inevitably be some bugs, so feel free to email me (evertidings@gmail.com) if you wish. regardless, i hope you enjoy the new interface! chapter seven will be coming up next <3

[update 17.](#)

[Apr 23, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

it feels so good to say that i no longer have to update you all on the status of the twine build because it's done, it's fully done. codex and all. there are likely some bugs but i'll be trying to find as many as i can before the public upload, so for those of you who've already played it, bear with me. you don't realize how useful beta-testers are until you don't reach out to them for help, lol.

because i was so occupied with twine, however, i really didn't get much done for **chapter seven**. tragedy, i know. the only writing time i got in was last night, which, though successful, isn't exactly a lot to update on. i finished a major choice set and set things up for the close proximity scenes, which i will be working on all of next week. i have no doubt the total word count for these will be close to five thousand or so, but it'll be worth it. i'm hoping to get these done soon so i can move on to the next branch, which will bring me a lot closer to the end. if i had to guess, i'm likely about 60-65% done with

the chapter. progress will come a lot quicker now that i don't have to divide my attention to two things, so hopefully, i'll be able to say i'm done within the next two to three weeks. fingers crossed.

apologies for the super short update! i swear next week i'll have more to say.

## STATS.

256,478 words (+2.57k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

"Rather gruesome, don't you think?" Rylan asks. "Wouldn't you rather find your boss alive, warm flesh and all?"

I grimace at that description. "Never say that again."

[afloat. \[blane & n\]](#)

[Apr 28, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** N gets injured from a hunt. badly.

**content warning:** mentions and descriptions of blood and injury.

**note:** a little different from what i usually post on here but i want to branch out from the usual romantic drabble and write about the ros and their different backstories/relationships instead. if it's not your taste, however, a Rylan drabble will be next as per the poll.

N's vision is coming in and out. Blane's face floats in their vision, lips mouthing words they don't understand. Everything sounds underwater. They *feel* underwater.

Their left leg is numb. Their right hand feels like the weight of an anvil. It was only a cut, a small throw across the pavement and a scrape against the rough surface, so why is everything swimming? Maybe they got a concussion.

Blane is saying something again, hovering their face directly over N's. They can see the panic in their partner's eyes, the emerald hue bright with emotions that they usually shove down.

"Stay with me," Blane seems to be saying. "Keep your eyes fucking open, Alves."

Easier said than done.

From what N last remembers, their leg is wrapped up in bandages. Once white, they're now soaked through with scarlet, though that doesn't stop Blane from applying pressure to the wounds. Their hands are stained, but they don't seem to notice.

N doesn't think they've seen Blane this panicked. They've both had injuries from a hunt before, scars from them, even, but neither of them have been close to passing out. The worst they had was Blane breaking a bone, which they managed to stay conscious for.

N is losing too much blood to stay awake for much longer.

"Come on, come on," Blane mutters.

N hears what sounds like a distant doorbell, though it could have easily been their imagination. Sounds are roaring through their head, like the world just turned everything up to maximum volume. The pain in N's leg worsens as Blane gets up, flashing a brief anxious look before moving out of sight.

Whatever Blane was doing before, it was keeping N at bay. But now? Now, they're falling. The ground is opening up beneath them, engulfing them in a single gulp and stealing away the last slivers of light.

They catch a glimpse of an unfamiliar person—a warlock, most likely—and a snippet of Blane's voice, desperately asking "What do I do?" before the world goes black.

—

N wakes up in a room that isn't theirs. It takes a while for their brain to put the pieces together, but they're in the infirmary. The pristine walls and the smell of rubbing alcohol suddenly make sense.

Though their leg still aches, the majority of the pain is gone. Moving it still hurts, but N thinks they could stand if they tried. That's an improvement.

N woke up thinking Blane would be with them, but they glance over at an empty chair. They aren't too bothered, thinking their partner simply went to get some food, but then they hear the voices.

Caine.

Their boss seems to be in an argument with Blane, demanding why N was first brought to their apartment rather than the infirmary. As usual, Blane goes on the defence, explaining how N didn't know how bad their wound was until they pulled up. By the tone of his voice, N can tell that Caine doesn't believe that—why he wouldn't confuses N—but he doesn't say it aloud.

They leave it at that.

N rests their head back against the pillow as footsteps replace the sound of conversation. Blane pushes aside the curtains and enters N's makeshift bedroom, eyes filling with relief the moment they see N is

awake.

N is expecting a comment or even perhaps a rant about Caine's unfair treatment of them, but there isn't either. Blane simply sits down beside N on the infirmary bed, careful not to crush them, and meets their gaze.

"You're awake."

"I am."

Blane's gaze sweeps N's face. They don't have to say anything for N to understand. They heard it in their voice last night. Saw it in the panicked looks and shaky hands. They both knew N wasn't going to die, but that didn't mean the situation wasn't alarming.

Still, they say it anyway.

"Promise me you'll check your wounds next time," Blane whispers. "Even if you think they're minor."

*I don't think I could go through with that again.*

[update 18.](#)

[May 1, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

last week i gave y'all a really short update so here i am with a moderately longer one. i feel like i spoiled most of what i can say about this chapter in previous updates already, which is why my updates sometimes repeat information or sound sparse, but i'm trying lol. i really am.

**chapter seven** is going smoothly, thank god for that. i thought i'd be able to finish all the close proximity scenes last week, but i ended up being super busy. nevertheless, i only have two more to write (the bold flirt scenes for N and Rylan; K doesn't get one as explained in an earlier update). i can't even express to you how fun they are to write. i know when i edit them i may need to tone them back a bit, just because we're still towards the beginning half of the book and i can't really go overboard with feelings this early, but i can't help myself. i think it's natural to be a little flustered around someone when you're stuck close together, especially if you're brushing against each other, so who knows? maybe i'll keep it all in and you guys will get the pleasure of reading it (or, i hope).

i did get a little tired of writing romance scene after romance scene, however, so i went ahead and skipped a bit to the second branch scene that i've talked about. i've stated previously that it has a very different vibe from the first branch, so it's a good breather for me to take. i'm not sure how long this branch is, but as most of the scenes are shared no matter which ro you chose to bring into the VIP room, it'll be a quicker write than the first branch. i plan on having the entire chapter written by the middle of this month and hope to send things out to beta testers around the 20th, so we'll see how things go.

and lastly, moving away from the topic of chapter seven, i've been making tweaks to the twine build ever since it came out. it's hard to catch bugs on your own so i appreciate all the emails and comments and asks, but god is it hard to keep up sometimes. i'm so happy that everyone is liking the build and little changes however, it makes it all worth it <3

## STATS.

260,698 words (+4.22k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

A's cheeks are tinted with pink, though it could very well be the red lighting of the club. In the dark, it's hard to tell.

[always. \[rylan villanueva\]](#)

[May 6, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** Rylan and the hunter spend a night building puzzles.

Your legs are tangled, limbs intertwined with one another until there's no differentiation between who's who. It's just you and Rylan, sprawled on the floor with the half-finished remains of a puzzle laying before you.

"You know I don't have the patience for these kinds of things," Rylan groans, picking up a piece with feigned distaste. They were into it at first, but after everything started looking the same, they quickly lost interest.

And by quickly, it was five minutes.

"But you want to spend time with me," you counter.

Rylan pouts, but there's no arguing with that. They'd do anything to spend time with you. Having known you for as long as they have, they still can't get enough.

It's never enough.

The kiss in the hallway before you leave to work. The smell of your favourite fragrance that lingers on every piece of furniture you two own. The cuddles at night, the way Rylan tugs you every night to pull you closer. You always protest to that one, but when your chest touches their back—or vice versa—you can't muster up the strength to let go.

Rylan breathes you in like you're oxygen and they'll be damned if they ever let that go.

They watch you as you hum, tongue bit with concentration as you try to figure out where the next piece goes. They'll admit they've done this more than help, but once in a while, they'll feel smart enough to try to pitch in. Rylan's deft hands weren't made to do puzzles, as it seems.

"If you're not going to help with the puzzle, could you grab some more snacks?" you ask.

Rylan shoots you a lopsided smile. "And leave you all cold?"

"I think my leg is going numb underneath you." With your wry expression, it's hard to tell if that's true, but even so, Rylan unravels themselves from you and stands up. They grab a blanket from the couch and drape it over your lower legs, earning a small smile from you before they leave for the kitchen.

The kitchen is littered with snacks. Most of them are as a cause of Rylan, who can be found chewing on something almost every hour of the day. They burn more calories than most, so their solution is simply to eat more meals.

Not that you mind. You get a kick out of the snacks too, or so, that's what Rylan believes.

They eye a box of crackers and grin to themselves, reminded of when they broke into your apartment. It's tempting, but they end up grabbing two bowls of ice cream instead, sticking two mini spoons into the cold dessert.

When they get back, you're still stuck on the same piece as before, eyes narrowed until you eventually let out a noise of triumph and place it down. The sight puts a smile on Rylan's face. They place your bowl down and place a soft kiss on your cheek as they settle beside you.

"See, you don't even need me. You can do this all on your own."

"But who would provide my food then?" you reply, arching an eyebrow.

Rylan shrugs playfully. "I don't know. You could probably pluck anyone off the street to do it for you. It's not like it's a hard job. Of course, no one's going to know you as well as me, so you risk food poisoning here and there, but I'm replaceable."

You laugh, tilting your head back and Rylan grins, relishing the noise. When that smile dies, however, they find themselves wanting to ask something they probably shouldn't. Surely it's gotten redundant now, but they say it anyway.

"Do you ever get tired of this?"

"Hmm?" You glance up, looking caught off-guard by the question. "Get tired of what?"

"Puzzles, game night," Rylan supplies. "Being smarter than I'll ever be."

You flick them on the thigh. "You know that's not true."

"I don't mind admitting it, darling." The pet name makes you flush with heat, something Rylan can feel even without touching your skin. The knowledge brings back their smile. Temporarily. "But do you? Do you think you'll ever?"

You shake your head, eyes sincere. You know where this is coming from now. You've heard Rylan's past, the issues they've had with trusting people and staying with them. Just because you're dating doesn't mean Rylan's insecurities sometimes don't think you're the exception.

You rest a hand on their leg. "How could I, when I have you?"

Your answer is the reassurance Rylan needed; the strand of dark thoughts that had entered their head exits out again. They don't like admitting it, but sometimes they need the reminder. One day they'll be able to live without it, but in the early stages of their healing, the words help.

They take the hand that's on their leg, holding it up and pressing their lips to your skin.

"You always will."

[update 19.](#)

[May 8, 2022](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

this is probably one of the most productive weeks i've had in a while. and all because i avoided the scene i was supposed to be writing in favour of something else. ironic, isn't it? either way, i'm super happy with everything that i came up with this week. sometimes when something isn't working out, switching lanes is all that you need to remotivate yourself.

i thought chapter six was fun, but chapter seven is a riot. it may be my favourite chapter yet, but i haven't reached the end yet so i can't decide. i don't know. as i was sitting in my bed the past couple of days, typing away at my laptop and writing out a scene i wasn't even planning on having, i was reminded of why i started writing this in the first place. it's easy to lose track of that when you feel like you have a quota to meet, or some sort of deadline you have to reach. i've been struggling with that for a couple of months now, but once in a while, this happens.

my favourite part about writing this story is that i don't take it too seriously. yes, i want to make sure my characters are realistic and have their own arcs. i want the plot to make sense and not have any huge gaping plot holes. but most of all, i started writing this because i wanted to make a fun escape where i could squish all my favourite tropes in story and have a blast with it. i guess that's your little teaser of what i recently wrote. i've already talked about the close proximity trope and honestly, that was the only one i was going to squeeze in here, but i found a spot for another trope i adore and just *had* to include it. it's an optional choice, so if you're not a fan you can opt out, but it does a great job at setting up chapter eight and i can't wait to reveal it.

but enough with being super vague. for the next coming week, i only have two more scenes to write. with me, that can either take three days or two weeks, depending on how much extra content i decide to write. it's safe to say i'm near the end, however. if i had to give it a percentage, i'd say i'm about 80% done. my only problem with the scene i'm currently working on is that i don't really have a plan for it. i mean, i did, but then i fell asleep and forgot it all, so i'm back at square one, just mindlessly writing and hoping that it all flows. i've cut it a couple of times already, so i'm hoping that i'll soon get to the point where i can keep what i've written, rather than put it in my scraps document.

## STATS.

268,669 words (+7.97k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

There're shouts from all around me, everyone seemingly focused on something happening at the very middle. It feels like a high-school fight, where students gather around to cheer others on and shout advice for how to punch each other.

[drabble vote.](#)

[May 11, 2022](#)

for the next batch of drabbles <3

a devereux

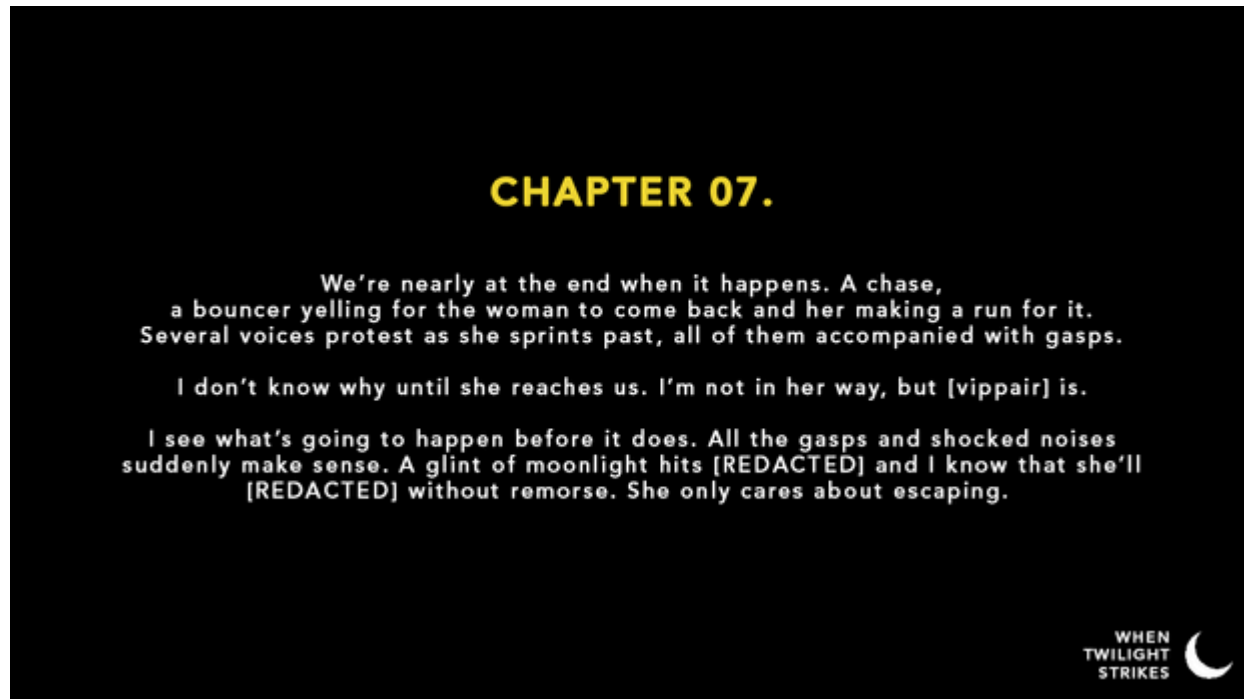
blane rekner

n alves

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rylan villanueva

32 votes total



[trackstar.](#)

[May 12, 2022](#)

sorry for all the cut out stuff! i'm at the point where *everything* is a spoiler so this is the best i can give you while still keeping things a surprise <3

[update 20.](#)

[May 15, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

i don't think i've ever worked faster in my life. it's came to the point where i became tired of writing chapter seven, so much that i binge wrote the rest of it in 1/2 days. i honestly just wanted it done. so with that said, if you already didn't see from my tumblr, the good news is that it's completely written. the bad news? i need to edit it still. we still have time to go until release but it's getting closer, i assure you.

editing is always a tedious process. with 136 pages in my word doc, it's quite a lot to go through, especially as i always do two rounds of it. the first round is usually to fix up sentences i don't like, or fill in gaps that i didn't realize i missed. the second is usually to catch grammar mistakes and change any dialogue that my brain on the first round somehow thought was good. spoiler alert, they are not. i'm currently about the page 50/60 range of my first round of edits. i'm hoping to finish both rounds this week and send it off to beta-testers by the weekend, so fingers crossed. once it's off to them, it's pretty much sit and back and relax for me, occasionally fixing up whatever errors they find.

having written this chapter for so long though, it's kind of interesting reading back what i wrote all the way in january/february. the scene with Mirai, which i was having doubts with as i wrote it, turned out really good actually. like, really good (or so my first round of edits brain is telling me). in fact, it's one of my favourite scenes in the book so far. the way she acts and her dialogue is completely different to any other character i've written, so i think it'll be a lot of fun.

## STATS.

276,923 words (+8.25k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Her gaze rakes over me, eyes taking in details that I'm not even sure I myself are aware of. She looks like she's looking through me and at me at the same time. Her eyes are a mixture of a hazy night and the midday sun—foggy yet somehow also clear.

[lover. \[rylan villanueva\]](#)

[May 19, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** Rylan comes to pick up the hunter after work.

**note:** two Rylan drabbles in a row, huh? missing my half-vampire i see. can't say i blame you guys.

Sometimes Rylan dreams about you. They dream about stolen kisses in a shared apartment before you go to work. They dream about laughing until their sides hurt, kisses on both their cheeks and over their face as you attempt to calm them down. They dream about looping an arm and leg over you when you're cuddling in bed, pulling you closer until you're practically intertwined.

When Rylan wakes up, they have to remind themselves that some of these aren't dreams—they're memories. Memories so joyful that they've found their way into their dreams, replacing the nightmares that used to haunt them.

Quite a deal, if they do say so themselves.

Dating a hunter has its downsides though. As an ex-bounty, Rylan still gets nervous when standing outside your building, waiting for your shift to end. They've yet to be called out for their past (falsely accused) crime, but the suspicious looks they get say everything.

They have no doubt that it's even worse for you. All the talking behind your back must be exhausting, but you have yet to break up with them for it. Rylan wouldn't blame you if you did. They brace themselves for the conversation every night, knowing that eventually, this bliss and paradise will end, but it never comes.

Maybe it never will. It'll take them some time to adjust to that idea.

They glance down at their phone, checking the time. You should be any second now.

Just as they think that, they see you. You're obviously tired, weighed down by your physical bag and emotional one, but when the two of you make eye contact, you immediately brighten.

"Hi lover," Rylan greets, pressing a quick kiss to your cheek.

"Lover? That's new."

"Do you like it?"

You accept their offer to take your bag and trade it for the pastry they offer, something they picked up along the way here. "Hmm, I don't know. Whatever happened to darling?"

"I can switch back if you like. Maybe I can try out kitten. Puppy? My little demon?"

Having taken a bite of your snack, you nearly spit out your food. "I'm starting to regret saying anything. Lover is fine."

Rylan taps their chin. They jump in front of you, walking backwards so you can see their eyes. "No, it's unoriginal, you're right. I need to come up with something. Cinnamon roll? Muffin? Hunter who fell in love with their oh so charming bounty?"

"I beg to differ. You're the one who fell in love with me, Villanueva."

Rylan grins. "Is that so?"

"Oh yeah. The moment you broke into my apartment, it was over for you." You take another bite, waving your hand around jokingly. "You never stood a chance."

That feels like ages ago, eons. It's true that Rylan thought you were attractive from the moment you two met, but it wasn't until later that they developed real feelings. There were so many small moments, giant hints that they should have taken, but Rylan was oblivious.

Oblivious to their own feelings.

It was you that brought them back down to earth. They lived years with their head in the clouds, barely registering anything that was in front of them, but the more you spent time together, the more Rylan felt like they had something to be on the ground for.

Someone.

Rylan steps forward, stopping you in your tracks. Your eyes widen as you halt to an abrupt stop, crashing into Rylan—but they're prepared. They put their hands in front of them, cushioning the two of you before they go in for a kiss.

PDA has never bothered them, but maybe doing it right outside your work is a little much.

Still, they don't care. All they can focus on is their lips on yours, the way you melt into their arms and kiss them back with as much passion as they do—maybe even more, though Rylan will always disagree.

"I love you."

You grin. "I love you too."

Rylan beams harder at the words and pokes your cheek. "I used to hate IAOS because they put a bounty on my head. Now I hate them for taking you away from me for so many hours a day."

"You can't keep me all to yourself. I'm very in demand."

"As always, my little demon. Race you to the end of the parking lot?"

They take off before you can say anything, but it doesn't take long for you to start running after them.

"I thought we agreed on not using that one!" you call out.

Rylan laughs but doesn't reply. It doesn't matter what they call you, because whatever name they give you, they all mean the same thing.

Their darling lover. Their forever person.

## CHAPTER 07.

As much as I can't see, I also can't smell—the scent of alcohol and body perfume mixing together burns my nostrils. Even the smell of the night can't mask the combination. I feel like I'm going in circles. My head turns at every voice, every word that sounds anything similar to my name.

Not that Blane would actually call my name, but still.

I'm about to make another turn when a hand reaches out for me. Instinctively, I take a step back but relax the moment I see who it's connected to.

"Do I need to hold your hand?" they ask, a scowl already on their face. The question is so out of place that I can only blink, to which they sigh. "Don't get lost."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES



[lost and found.](#)

[May 21, 2022](#)

[update 21.](#)

[May 22, 2022](#)

### WHAT I DID.

bit of a boring update but i am proud to say that i've officially finished chapter seven and sent it off to beta-testers! i've gotten a couple of inquiries about not knowing the password but i have not released it yet—it's currently only open to the beta-testers. once i input their feedback and fix all of the mistakes i didn't catch myself, the game will open to the patreon tiers and then eventually, to the public. chapter seven will go live for the midnight tier **may 27th** and the twilight tier **may 29th**. there will be a post on here that will let you know the password, so don't worry about that.

in general, i'm going to take the rest of the week off and try to recollect myself after the madness that was chapter seven. i spent a lot of time on it, so much that i haven't really been able to do anything for myself. i'll likely start writing chapter eight (if i'm in the mood) and chip away at chapter one of my side wip. oh, and of course, write some drabbles to post for here <3

## STATS.

278,590 words (+1.66k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Everything feels terrible. My skin is sticky, my ears ringing, my nostrils burning from a mixture of alcohol and body perfume. Claustrophobic or not, a situation like this is enough to make anyone hate enclosed spaces.

[starry night. \[k de vries\]](#)

[May 25, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** K and the hunter deal with a power outage.

The two of you are in the middle of making dinner when the power goes out.

K sighs, their half-finished meal still on the stove. There might be enough heat to finish it, but they don't fancy doing that in the dark. Not when you're somewhere in the living room, likely using your phone for a flashlight while flailing around in the dark.

"[Name]?"

"Yeah?"

K abandons their pan and summons an orb of light in their hand, using it to make their way towards you. They're not surprised to find you standing, looking at them with a pained smile.

"Great date, huh?" you joke.

K cracks a smile of their own. "If you enjoy lukewarm dinner. The power will likely be back soon; storms like these die quickly." They pause. "Did you want me to grab candles?"

"Are you trying to make this more romantic?"

K blushes. They're glad for the dark because otherwise, you would have seen the pink tinge in their cheeks. They didn't think about it that way. They could easily continue using their magic to light up the room, but they thought you may be more comfortable with candles. It was a practical thought, not a romantic one—though they're not sure they mind it being the latter.

These dates have meddled with their mind.

"Is that what you think I'm doing?" K asks.

"I don't know, you tell me."

"Sometimes I'm just being pragmatic."

"And sometimes you can use that to your advantage to make things romantic."

"Maybe," K concedes. "If you want candles, I can get them, but I can also do this..."

They twist their fingers and let the light from their hand explode, the magic exploding into a dozen stars that scatter around you. They hang in the air like ornaments on strings, illuminating the awe on your face.

They'll never get tired of it. It's not like you haven't seen magic before, but you always regard K's magic as something special. More unique than the rest. In some ways, it's true—every warlock's magic is a little different—but something about your expression always warms K's heart.

K is their magic—there's no separating the two. It's essential for their partner to at the very least accept it for them to even consider being in a relationship with them. To see you embrace it so dearly means more to them than you'll ever know.

"I think this is better than candles."

"Yeah?"

"Don't act like you don't know it."

K laughs at that. Lightly, they grab your hand and tug the two of you to the floor.

"Come," they tell you.

"What are you doing?" you respond, but you don't get an answer until the both of you are laying with your backs to the rug, looking up at the ceiling.

K vanishes the array of hanging stars and for a moment, there's nothing but darkness between you. An obsidian ink that spirals throughout the air, bathing the two of you in silence. They wait a moment before unveiling their purpose, twisting their fingers once more to create a night sky freckled with constellations.

When they were younger, they used to be able to look up at the sky and point out a hundred different stars, making up patterns that they saw and naming the ones that were already discovered.

It's one of the things they miss most about the past. With pollution looming over cities, it's rare that you can ever see any stars anymore—especially in New York. The city that never sleeps always has its lights on. Even on a good day, it's impossible to see anything but the moon.

K grabs your hand and tugs it forward, pointing it at a glowing constellation to their right. "That one's Ursa Major." They move your hand to the left. "That one's the Big Dipper. A little overrated if you ask me, but there's worse."

Even if you know the constellations yourself, you keep quiet and let K talk you through everything. At some point, they stop pointing out real constellations and start making their own, forming anything from random animals to attempts at portraits of your friend group.

They're terrible—drawing with stars isn't exactly easy—but neither of you care.

"You're amazing," you breathe.

K blushes again, but this time, there's not much they can do to hide it. They turn their face towards you, letting you see the darker hue of their cheeks before leaning in for a kiss.

Soft lips brush against yours, teasing until they can't handle it any longer. They press forward, savouring the feel of you, the hum of pleasure you make. Butterflies dip from their stomach and down to their toes, but they embrace them, not shying away from how happy they feel.

When the two of you pull away, K leaves their hand on your cheek, their palm cupping your jaw with affection. "I really like you."

You break into a smile. "I really like you too."

And then you're kissing again.

[chapter seven is live!](#)

[May 27, 2022](#)

# 07.

## THE VIPER'S DEN

CONTENT WARNINGS: depictions and mentions of violence. descriptions of blood and injury.

play chapter seven now on [itch.io](https://itch.io)!! the password you're looking for is **notexactlyapartyintheusa** (no spaces, all lowercase). i seriously hope everyone enjoys it. i've worked on this for what feels like forever now and while it's been hard, i'm very happy with the outcome <3

in this chapter...

- meet Mirai, who, honestly, is a pain in the ass
- learn more about the ros' backgrounds and struggles
- enter some dangerous situations, including one where you can be in close proximity to your chosen ro
- use those fight or flight instincts
- make some crucial choices...

[update 22.](#)

[May 29, 2022](#)

### WHAT I DID.

chapter seven is up for most of you on patreon and i couldn't be more excited. i'm still having beta-testers test out some last kinks for the public update but most of them are minor, so anyone playing now should have no problem.

with that out of the way, i've begun working on chapter eight. not enough that i can say i've made a lot of progress, but it's going. i'm not sure how long this chapter will be but looking at the variations so far... oof. it's going to be a lot. what sucks is there will be a lot of scenes many readers won't read depending on choices and routes, but that's what happens when you write an interactive story; there's not much i can do. i'm hoping i won't take as long as i did to write chapter seven as i will chapter eight. with me on

summer break and the occasional day off from work, i should find more time to write than during the school year.

i can't say much about chapter eight yet, but it picks up immediately after the events of chapter seven. i wouldn't say it's low stakes, but it definitely comes down from the high of chapter seven and tries to nullify what happened. this chapter is much more lowkey, which, after two back-to-back chapters of action, is kind of needed. i have a vague idea of the direction it needs to go, but we'll see if it ends up happening. as usual with me, i never really stick to the plan. sometimes it turns out well and sometimes it ends up in my scrap document. if i have the motivation this week, i might try and loosely outline the chapter.

## STATS.

280,382 words (+1.79k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Faces turn into shapes and words turn into an unfamiliar language as the world begins to spin.  
Hands help pull them up and into one of the cars, but they can't recall whose.

[vivid fantasies.](#) [\[a devereux\]](#)

[Jun 4, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** au where A and the hunter hide in a storage closet during a mission.

"In here," **A** hisses. Without thinking, they pull you inside a dark closet and shut the door quickly behind them, barely managing to stop themselves from tripping over the various clutter on the floor.

They hold their breath and, for a moment, everything is silent.

Pressing their ear against the door, A listens for any sign that you've been caught. The two of you will be in so much shit if you're caught. A set of footsteps near. Pause. Their heart nearly stops beating, thinking the person will open the door to catch their two culprits right there, but then the footsteps pass over.

A sinks down in relief. "I think we're safe."

"Oh, good." Your words are breathy and it's only then that A figures out why.

They hadn't realized what they were doing when they pulled you in here. It was a matter of securing safety and protecting the mission. And it's still that... except. Except you're too close now. The room is too small, it's suddenly too hot.

If things were different, maybe this would be an excuse to make out. The thought sends a wave of butterflies down to A's toes, a mixture of both desire and fear. Because while some part of them may fantasize, the other part wants to leave. Run down the hallway as far away from you as they can.

Because when you manage to leave the closet, all you'll see is the bright pink flush on their face. The dilated pupils and the bob of their throat when they try to act normal.

This cannot be how you find out.

If A ever does confess—when A confesses—it'll be on their own terms. It'll be the words coming out of their mouth like a fountain that sprung a leak. It'll be them nervous and closing their eyes shut, waiting for a response.

They don't want it to be something you figure out and ask them, putting them on the spot. They're nervous about this enough. That'll do nothing but put more pressure on them.

A's eyes are beginning to adjust to the dark. Another wave of desire tumbles through them. Fuck. They'll regret it when it's all over, when you look at them with wide eyes and say that you don't like them like that, but they can only hope.

An accidental brush of a hand, a fall into you, a turn of the head until your lips connect and then you're kissing.

Perhaps you'll pull away at first in surprise, and A will immediately backtrack and apologize for the damage done, but in their most vivid fantasies, you'll pull them back in for a second round and you'll be making out. Panting. Gasping for air in between biting down on lips and touching tongues.

One hand will be on your face, the other on your waist. They'll find pleasure in those touches, but nothing will compare to the feeling of your hands roaming their skin. Of—

“Should we go?” you ask.

A breaks out of their daydream, not even realizing they had fallen into one. Even more so, they didn't realize how much they wanted to stay here until you suggested leaving. Just a little longer in here is all they want. Just a little more time being confined in a space here with you, the only person they'd wish that for.

“What if they come back?”

You shake your head. “I think they're gone. We should try and leave before they come back.”

“Right.”

A reaches for the door handle and, with agony, opens it. A crack of light spills through and they can only hope that you gauge nothing from their attempt at an 'everything is perfectly fine' expression as they turn around after checking down the hallway.

“The coast is clear,” A announces. Swallowing hard, they step outside and leave the closet behind. So much for that.

[update 23.](#)

[Jun 5, 2022](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

okay now that chapter seven is finally out publicly, i can finally talk about what's happening with chapter eight. as you know, the previous chapter ended with a cliffhanger. we pick right off where we left with either a pov scene from the ro (if the hunter got hurt) or a pov scene from the hunter (if the ro got hurt). i wasn't planning on starting it like this until a beta-tester of mine suggested it, so you have them to thank. however, the scene is mostly simple. no screaming and crying, no carrying the hunter all bloodied. it's pure panic and adrenaline, which is how i would react personally. i'm all for cliches and tropes, but i think doing anything else would be a little much.

i've finished all the ro povs and have some work left to do with the hunter one (since there are five different variations for it) but other than that, it's good to go. one down, a bunch of more things to go.

the scene afterward is what you'd expect: a wind-down scene. the group spends time going over what they learned and their next steps, as well as healing each other's wounds. i can barely contain my excitement for this section because i have so many juicy ideas for it, but i'll see what happens when i get there. there's a big variation here depending on who you let get hurt (the hunter or one of the ros) so that might be a pain in the ass to write, but already, i'm going to recommend playing both routes.

you might find the hunter getting hurt more angsty, but having it the other way around opens some very interesting opportunities... same goes with staying in the vip room vs checking out the commotion. while the former allows you to have a conversation with the ro and enter a precarious situation (the close proximity scene), the latter will have some very very delicate scenes in chapter eight. think about the type of injury the hunter gets in the commotion scene vs what they can get in the vip room and you might get an idea of what i'm hinting at.

## STATS.

282,713 words (+2.33k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Blue sparks flicker in and out of their palms, like mini fireworks that refuse to light.

### CHAPTER EIGHT.

"As shitty as it is, I'm glad you didn't get like, memory loss or something," Rylan replies.  
"Wouldn't it be weird to wake up in front of a bunch of strangers in someone else's apartment?  
Not to mention why K has sparks glowing out of their hands... Too soon?"

A sighs. "Villanueva, one day you and I will have a  
talk about when the appropriate time is to make jokes."

"I don't think you're the right person for that, Devereux," Blane muses.

A arches an eyebrow. "And you are?"

"Everyone just shut the fuck up, will you?" K states, rubbing their temples.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[the gang is back.](#)

[Jun 9, 2022](#)

a little something i wrote last night..

[update 24.](#)

[Jun 11, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

if i'm honest with myself, i didn't do much this week. if i was more motivated and not in this rut that i'm currently in, i'd probably be able to finish chapter eight by mid-july. alas, the world seems to be against me.

i'm currently still chipping away at the early scenes in the chapter. just to keep me on my toes, i'm working on two branches at once: the one where the hunter gets hurt and then the one where the ro gets hurt. theoretically, they both talk about the same things and i do eventually hope to merge them (simply to save me from writing two whole different things), but the initial part where the injured person wakes up makes it hard for me to *not* write two different scenes. for example, if the hunter got hurt, then they'd wake up disoriented with the chance to ask what happened and where they are. on the other hand, if the ro got hurt, then you have the chance to jump up in relief or tease them about how long they were out. little things like that.

two branches is nothing compared to what i'll need to tackle next though. chapter seven has soo many variations that affect chapter eight, it's kind of crazy. most of it wasn't even supposed to happen (my initial plan never involved the hunter sacrificing themselves, nor having the option to be choked or held at knife-point). i always encourage people to have multiple playthroughs, but i think it's especially important in this chapter. right now, there are 4 main variations.

- 1. the hunter gets injured (stabbing)
- 2. the hunter gets injured (sacrifice + stabbing)
- 3. the hunter gets injured (neck wound; knife or choking)
- 4. the ro gets injured

and that's not even factoring in the different ros, including how each one will react and their feelings on the matter (especially if the hunter jumped in front to sacrifice themselves). i guess what i'm trying to say is this will be a very juicy chapter, but a really annoying one to write and code. the hurt/comfort that i'll be writing in the future though... ohh. so excited.

## STATS.

285,836 words (+3.12k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

"How'd you sleep, Sleeping Beauty?" I tease, the side of my mouth tilting upwards.

"Nothing close to a princess," A groans. They feel around for a nearby pillow and press it over their face. A muffled sound of frustration filters through the fabric.

[thirty-third floor.](#) [blane rekner]

[Jun 14, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** relieving nightmares and hallucinations are not a good combination.

**content warning:** panic attacks

**note:** i didn't mean to write something so sad but here we are. this drabble has more hints on Blane's backstory and the trauma they face as a result, which ultimately leads to their rude and defensive behaviour. it won't be fully explained until the chapter comes up in the game, but for now, you can guess.

There's little that doesn't trigger Blane. When they were a child, every waking moment was spent reliving nightmares over and over. They used to describe it as being forced to sit in front of a TV as their memories played on a loop.

No matter how terrible they were, no matter how much they made them flinch and cry, Blane wasn't allowed to move. It was torturous, but eventually, when Blane became numb to watching the scenes, they came to thank the program.

Before, mere reminders of their childhood used to make them want to crawl up in a ball and hide. It was so disruptive that continually got separated for it, sent to a different room or ushered away from the rest of the children.

It was the best thing they could have done for Blane.

Silence.

The world was too busy. Still is. Blane craves the quiet of the night, the soft hum of the atmosphere. Alone, they were finally given that chance.

Some people do worse when it's just them and their thoughts, but Blane has always thrived in that environment. When given the remote, memories are easy to control. Emotions can easily be switched off. When it's just them, Blane can finally enjoy that rare moment where they actually feel... okay. Like they're not one word from breaking.

It's this technique that Blane is trying to replicate now.

Work is always the worst place for panic attacks to happen. Blane doesn't get them as often as they did when they were a child, but unfortunately, they didn't go away completely. They wish. Hiding in an empty room on one of the abandoned floors of IAOS isn't exactly their favourite thing.

*Nothing happened. Nothing happened. Nothing happened.*

They don't know why their usual defences didn't work today. The years spent suppressing everything tended to be enough to block out the nightmares. But being numb isn't the same as being immune.

*Nothing happened. Nothing happened. Nothing happened.*

Blane's so distracted that they don't hear someone come in. It's only when a pair of shoes enter their line of sight do they look up.

You.

Always you.

Your eyes meet, but for some reason, you don't say anything. Blane is in a state. They're sitting with their knees pushed up to their chest, hands shaky and body trembling. Even if they wanted to say something, they couldn't—their tongue feels numb in their mouth.

A strand of hair has fallen in Blane's eyes. They watch you curiously, the world divided by that singular block of white hair.

To their surprise, you begin to reach out. A strangled noise crawls up Blane's throat but their limbs are frozen. They close their eyes shut, waiting for the contact of skin to skin, but it never comes. A light tug pulls at the top of their scalp and they open their eyes.

Your fingers are moving Blane's hair out of the way.

They feel close to passing out. Their heartbeat is racing too fast for it to be anywhere close to normal. Neither should be good things, but it's nowhere near the level of panic they felt when they were hyperventilating.

You tuck the strand of hair behind Blane's ear, releasing a soft exhale from them as a result.

They don't know where that came from.

Your eyes meet again but when Blane blinks, you're gone. Disappeared out of thin air. They sit upright, looking around wildly for where you could have possibly left to. The strand of hair is back in their face, like you were never even here.

They must be losing it if they're fucking hallucinating *you* of all people.

Blane's phone buzzes. They search for you a moment more before checking the notification. It's some random app they don't even use anymore.

Still, the reminder was useful. They open up their message app and text N the floor that they're on. Their panic attacks don't happen enough—at work, that is—that N will understand what it means immediately, but N knows enough that Blane is asking for their company.

That alone will be enough to bring them here.

Sighing, Blane tips their head back against the wall. They keep the hair in front of their eyes, not bothering to push it back. If they do, they worry they'll feel the ghost of your fingers against their face again.

One time is a fantasy. Two times is a mistake.

Three times... three times will be their unravelling.

[drabble vote.](#)

[Jun 19, 2022](#)

doing things a little differently this time. i took some [prompts](#) from tumblr and will be asking for you to vote on your top five, which i will randomly assign to various ros for a drabble <33

chin. [the sender hooks a finger and tenderly lifts the receiver's chin, tilting it up so that they can look at one another]

thumb. [the sender slowly glides their thumb across the receiver's cheekbone in a tender gesture]

forehead. [placing a hand on the back of the receiver's neck, the sender guides them close and rests their foreheads together]

linger [the sender lifts the receiver's hand to their lips and gently kisses their knuckles, lingering for a moment]

wait [realizing the receiver is about to leave the room, the sender hastily reaches out and catches their wrist]

play [while sitting together, the sender absently lifts the receiver's hand, idly running their fingertips across the lines of their palms]

cup [bringing both hands up to cup the receiver's face, the sender draws them in closer to them]

tug [the sender tugs the receiver close against them by resting a hand against the small of their back]

behind [upon entering the same room as the receiver, the sender steps behind them, and winds their arms around the receiver's waist]

81 votes total

[update 25.](#)

[Jun 19, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

so, progress was made. do i have much to show for it? absolutely not. but i wrote more than i thought i would—that's an accomplishment in itself. to go off what i described last week, i'm basically still making my way through the initial scene of recovery. the many variables make it a lot slower, but i would rather have this than have a non-personalized version of the story. i enjoy the little easter egg comments you get when you've chosen something in the past and it's brought up again / when the ros remember something you'd said. besides, i kind of need to differentiate between the different types of injuries the hunter can get / if the ro got injured. wouldn't make much sense otherwise.

not exactly sure what i'm working on next since things are moving so slowly, but i hope to get to some of the more exciting stuff soon. aka the hurt/comfort scenes. gosh. such an underrated trope in my opinion. i know most people probably had their hunter stabbed, but i might argue that the option where they're choked/have a knife held to their throat is more angsty. we'll see what happens when i end up writing it.

either way, what i like about this healing scene coming up is that it shows the ros have developed a connection with the hunter. even K, who's known the hunter for the least amount of time, will show that they care in some capacity (at the very least because it was a tense situation and they don't like seeing people hurt). even more so, i hope that it'll bring the chosen ro and the hunter closer, platonically or romantically. i'm not going to lie, having someone faint in front of you after being wounded is a pretty drastic situation, so whoever was involved is going to feel stronger towards each other than before. so the tougher ros to get to know like Blane and K... yeah. crack in their walls right there.

## STATS.

290,385 words (+4.55k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

A hums. "I like the record player."

"Thank you," N answers. "I don't have any mourning soundtracks though so please don't die tonight."

## CHAPTER 08.

They wouldn't have taken the group here if they knew it'd end like this.  
Having people injured on their conscious... No. They know this isn't their fault,  
not really, but K was the one paired with [the hunter].

Why did [they] jump in front like that? Why did [they] sacrifice [them]self for K?

Pain is nothing for them. It'd be easier to take it themselves than to watch this shitshow.  
Hunters and their fucking hero complexes. K would rather be the one bleeding out  
on the pavement than watching it, helpless other than to wait for everyone else to show up.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[incoming angst.](#)

[Jun 21, 2022](#)

[update 26.](#)

[Jun 26, 2022](#)

### WHAT I DID.

apologies for the short update once again. one week i get rid of my writer's block and the next, it's back in full force. really not the most convenient, is it?

in terms of what i've been up to, i decided to change the sequencing for some of the chapter. i spoke last week about writing the hurt/comfort scenes soon but i quickly realized how oddly placed it was. previously, it was sandwiched between the healing scene and the aftermath discussion, which, while not wrong, just disrupted the natural flow of how the conversation may go in real life. as such, i'm now going to have it fall after the conversation of Mirai and *Crimson Rouge*. it doesn't affect much on your end, but for me, it helps my flow (and hopefully, gives me more motivation to write). unfortunately, it delays me from giving you sneak peeks of the scenes, but when they come, i promise they'll be worth it. all you gremlins that enjoy angst will really like this chapter.

aside from that, i've been chipping away at the several variations you can get in this chapter. i spent my time completing the healing scenes for all three of the hunter's possible injuries and potential ro reactions to them, which, i have to say, are very very interesting. this initial reaction is supposed to be a mere glimpse of the conversation to come later, but i already love how it's turning out.

next up is the healing process for the ro (if they were injured) and the hunter reactions to them. i might regret saying this, but i think it'll be fun to code. whether if your hunter feels guilty for not stepping in or is in agony over the ro collapsing on them at the end of chapter seven changes a lot—depending on how the hunter responds, the ros will all act differently. K might be frustrated with the hunter taking the blame, for example, while A might feel tortured over it. i'll be saying this a lot when it comes to promoting chapter eight but it will be highly recommended to try as many variations as you can. i'll make them worth your while.

## STATS.

292,918 words (+2.53k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

"Which part?" A asks. "The disaster entrance or the disaster escape? We have options here, Villanueva."

"The 'we were looking for your boss and were only there at the club to find information on him, therefore we need to discuss that' part." Rylan batted their eyelashes. "What, is the the night getting to you, Blondie?"

[tender. \[n alves\]](#)

[Jun 28, 2022](#)

**synopsis / prompt:** the sender hooks a finger and tenderly lifts the receiver's chin, tilting it up so that they can look at one another.

N hates seeing you cry. They hate seeing anyone cry, really, but it hurts the most when it's you. There's a physical ache in their chest when they see you in pain, your body half turned away so they don't have to see you cry, your bottom lip stuck between your teeth as you try to hold everything back.

They hate it. It's one of the worst feelings, knowing someone you care for is hurting and you can't do anything to ease it. If N could take that weight off your shoulders they would. They would and would and

would a thousand times over.

But they can't.

You sniffle. The two of you are sitting on your couch. You're facing the window as if the view can help distract you from your pain.

They wish they knew what this was about. You were quiet, too quiet when N came over to you. They knew something was wrong, but they didn't want to press it. Asking people if they were okay is often the trigger for most tears.

In the end, you couldn't hold it in.

"Please, N," you beg, "just leave. I'll be fine. I just need some alone time."

"Do you really mean that?"

You don't reply. If you truly wanted N to go, who were they to protest? As reluctant as they would be, they'd respect your wishes and go. But your silence tells N you want the opposite.

*Stay. Stay with me. Hold my hand and comfort me.*

They never had this lifeline when they were a child. When N would cry in their room, all they could do is squeeze their pillow into their chest, while their headphones played some sad music that definitely did not help make them feel any better. They had nothing. No one. And it fucking sucked.

They know they can't speak for everyone, but they don't want others to go through what they did. If they can help ease someone else's pain then that's all they ever want.

Especially since theirs never was.

"Come here," they whisper.

N's hand lightly touches your shoulder, turning your body to face them. You comply without protest, though N wonders if it's more so because you're too tired to rather than because you're actually letting them.

"N..."

"Shh. It's okay, love. You're okay."

N places two fingers at the bottom of your chin, lifting your head up so your eyes meet. Your eyes are glistening with tears—it feels like a stab to the heart. But N doesn't let any of that show. Their gaze is firm, their voice steady.

"Look at me. Look at me, you're okay. I know it's not easy, but you're going to be okay. We're going to be okay. Whatever it is, whenever you need me, I'll be here for you. Remember that."

Your bottom lip trembles. "N, I—"

"Shh. It's okay."

N reaches out and uses their thumb to brush the stray tears from your face. One hand holds your chin still while the other takes away the lingering offenders. Not that you don't look beautiful with the tears, just that you look better without. Better when you're happy.

They lean forward and press a kiss to your cheek, one for either side. Their lips brush against damp skin, but they couldn't care less. Heat blooms beneath their touch.

"I love you, you know that, right?" N asks.

They pull you into a hug while you're mid-nod, face pressed into your shoulder as they squeeze you tight. They hold you there as you shake, as the sobs begin to rack your body again. They hold you even when the tears seep through their clothing and into their skin. The entire time, they're whispering one thing.

*You're okay. You're okay. You're okay.*

## CHAPTER 08.

Aimlessly, I trail the littered books and remotes laying there when  
I suddenly feel like I'm being watched. The moment I glance up,  
I meet a pair of brown eyes. Bottomless brown eyes.

So many emotions behind those eyes and yet,  
so little words to describe what they want to say.

I can see them struggling. N isn't the type to hide their emotions, but  
for once, I can see them all on their face. Concern. Guilt.  
Optimism. Pessimism. Gratitude. Shock. They never end.

I can tell they want to say something, but it never comes. Instead, we  
just stare at each other, eyes boring into each other's as N forces  
down a swallow and bites the inside of their cheek.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[bottomless.](#)

[Jun 30, 2022](#)

[update 27.](#)

[Jul 2, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

the first half of the week i was zipping through scenes. my writer's block seemed to be lifted, everything was flowing—life was good. and then i hit a roadblock, which is my explanation for why my word count did not increase as much as i thought it would.

as such, a lot of the things mentioned last week apply to this week. i've finished all the healing scenes for all (however many) branches, which leads to me to the common route scene where everyone discusses what they found at the club. conversations about Mirai are had and characters express their thoughts on her methods and what she told the hunter. hopefully, it'll give perspective on the situation as a whole and help you, the reader, decide your stance on it. because as confusing as things may be right now, you will eventually have to solidify your thoughts on the situation. is Caine's kidnapping truly something greater? or is he the victim?

it's been a bit since i've written group scenes so i'm really excited to get to these. the last they've all interacted is the end of chapter six, which while chronologically doesn't seem far, if you look at when i published that, you'll see it's been a while. like, a *while*. A and Blane bickering again, Rylan teasing K, Blane and N's partnership... they're some of my favourite things to write.

what's even cooler (at least, in my opinion) is that i get to show how some of these relationships have evolved. yes, A and Blane still dislike each other, but they're not always at each other's throats. they have empathy for each other and in some way, do care, as coworkers if anything. and then there're new pairings like N and K, who are getting to know each other and realizing that they're quite similar. or A and Rylan, whose friendship is only growing by the second. little things like that make me really happy.

## STATS.

296,424 words (+3.5k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Footsteps sound behind me, so light that they could only belong to one person. Blane rummages through the cupboards nearby and takes out a granola bar, tossing one on the counter for me and placing the box on the edge.

[pining\\_. \[a devereux\]](#)

[Jul 7, 2022](#)

**synopsis / prompt:** behind [upon entering the same room as the receiver, the sender steps behind them, and winds their arms around the receiver's waist]

A comes up behind you, arms looping around your waist and pulling you closer to them. You smell like home, a familiar scent that they'll never grow tired of. It holds them almost as comfortably as you do them. A giggle erupts from your throat at the slight tickle of A's fingers.

"Hi."

"Hi."

"Is there something you need?" you tease, leaning back into their arms. "I'm trying to finish some work for our next assignment. Apparently, I'm the only one being responsible right now."

A hums, burying their face into your back. "Does missing you count as something I need? I'm being very responsible for figuring out where your whereabouts are."

You laugh and the vibrations rumble through your chest and into A's, down to their toes. "You just saw me two hours ago. Unless you don't remember lunch?"

A pulls away. "And do you remember what happened after lunch? I got dragged away to finish some of our incomplete reports. And by some I mean five hundred of them. I can't believe I took that bullet for you."

You grin, having turned to look at A after they let go of you. Your eyes are sparkling, your smile bright enough that any of the exhaustion A felt from the paperwork washes away instantly. They could stare at your grin forever.

"Was it really that bad?"

"Without you?" A takes the opportunity to peck your cheek, pulling away just in time to see your delighted surprise. "Always. I tried to convince them it was a two-person job but they wouldn't budge. Can you believe that?"

"They are pretty strict on their rules here..."

"And rules are meant to be broken."

"I don't think they'd be happy hearing that."

"They'll let it slide."

You wrinkle your nose. "If you say so."

A laughs at that, finally turning their attention to the screen. You were swiping things around when they'd come in, likely sorting recent reports and findings of your latest bounty. Nothing the two of you couldn't handle, of course. You were at the top for a reason.

"How long have you been here?" A asks.

"A while. And I'll probably still be here for longer too. As much as I love having leads, there's a lot to process this time. Almost too much. Sorting it all and piecing the pieces together is taking longer than I thought it would." You make a face. "You can go home though. We're supposed to clock out now. I'm just going to stay until it's finished."

"You really think I'd leave you to do this alone?"

During the first couple of months of your partnership, you might have been surprised, but this behaviour isn't unusual for A. No matter what it is, whether it be something A loves or despises, they'd never leave you with the brunt of the work. Everything you do is a team effort. It's what partners are for.

You shrug. "I was giving you a way out. I know how much you hate paperwork. Plus you just came back from doing some."

"And you should know me well enough to know that I don't want a way out if it means spending time with you," A replies. They nudge your shoulder playfully. "Come on, the faster we do this, the faster we can go out."

You arch an eyebrow. "Go out? I wasn't aware we were doing anything."

"We are now." A picks up a nearby iPad with a grin, syncing it to the screen. "In the mood for some ice cream? It's on me."

"Your poor wallet. It's suffered since we started dating huh?"

"Beats my heart suffering from pining after you for all those years," A counters. You glance away at that, flustered, which only makes A love you more. Because they do love you. They adore you. Are infatuated with you.

They wouldn't have it any other way.

"Now," A says, gesturing pointedly at their tablet, "how can I help?"

[update 28.](#)

[Jul 10, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

i won't lie, i've had a pretty bad mental health week. with writer's block and a lack of motivation to do anything but stay in bed, i didn't write as much as planned.

i'm currently still hacking away at the discussion/aftermath scene where everyone discusses what they learned from the club. not much to update there as it's pretty self-explanatory, but i am liking the direction it's going. to keep things vague with the plot, i'm trying not to imply that one choice is correct above all the others and allowing you to choose whether you agree with the suggestions given out. some ros believe one thing while others think something else—you'll have the chance to side with an ro you agree with or form an opinion that is neither. basically, you're going to be doing a lot of debunking this chapter.

i still have yet to get to the hurt/comfort scenes i've been teasing, but again, i'm really looking forward to them. i adore the idea of each ro having their own personal reaction to the situation. it spices things up for both me and you, since i won't have to write the same thing over and over again while you will have the opportunity to read something new for each route.

lastly, i recently got an ask about if the hunter will get the chance to talk to A about their disagreement (if the hunter was forced into going along with the plan) and the answer is yes, you will. this also applies if you chose A to go to the club with the hunter and they had a fight outside. just wanted to clarify that for anyone who's wondering, since the ask is now buried deep in my ask box and i have no idea when i'll get to it haha.

## STATS.

299,640 words (+3.22k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

"Now, someone who speaks my language," Rylan cheers. "Pessimism will make you all age a thousand years. You should really listen to your partner, Rekner. Try looking on the bright side for once."

Blane shuts their eyes, looking pained.

## CHAPTER 08.

I arch an eyebrow. "You would have hated Mirai then. [Wordplay was] all she talked in."

Blane meets my eyes. "Then thank God you didn't pick me."

"|—"

"You know, I would've liked to see that," Rylan muses. They tilt their head towards Blane, looking at them sideways. "I wonder how long you would have tolerated her."

"Two minutes," A calls out.

"Ten," N replies.

Blane shoots them both a scowl. "Stop pretending like you know me. I wouldn't have jeopardized our chances of finding Caine. Or do you not want to prove your innocence anymore?"

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[wordplay.](#)

[Jul 12, 2022](#)

[update 29.](#)

[Jul 17, 2022](#)

### WHAT I DID.

this is going to be a shorter update. i've taken a bit of a break for myself this week and tried not to strain myself by writing, hence the minimal posts on here as well. apparently resting actually works, who would've thought? though i only wrote when i felt like it this week, which resulted in less progress, i'm a lot happier with the content i wrote.

i'm nearing the end of the debrief scene, which i've talked about for three weeks now, i know. it's been a little difficult finding places to add choices in this sequence since it's mostly just the ros talking about what they found and what they think of the information, but i think it's been well-balanced up until now. i'm confident i can finish this scene this week and then finally, finally move on to the hurt/comfort scenes. i will be going on vacation for a couple of days, however, so i'm not sure what time i'll get to

write other than on the flight there and back, but i'll try my very hardest. scenes like these are a lot more exciting for me to write, so they tend to not be as much of a burden. i love romance and pining as much as the next gal.

in terms of patreon updates, i know i've been slacking a little so i'm going to try and get another drabble and sneak peek up this week. thank you for being patient with me in the meantime <3

## STATS.

302,094 words (+2.45k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

"I learned that being stabbed hurts," A mutters.

Rylan cracks a smile at that.

[stay. \[blane rekner\]](#)

[Jul 19, 2022](#)

**synopsis / prompt:** wait [realizing the receiver is about to leave the room, the sender hastily reaches out and catches their wrist]

It's annoying that The Rankings are right there. Right at the center of the department, at the core of the hustle and bustle of the hunters that are either starting, continuing or ending their days.

It's an insult that Blane has to pass the board every day—but not for the reason everyone else believes. They don't care for their name below yours, not nearly as much as everyone claims they do. No. What's grating is how much the board has become associated with them.

Bring up The Rankings and the first thing that pops into mind is Blane. Blane and their bitterness. Blane and their distaste for a system that is blatantly unfair. Blane and their petty made-up feud with you.

What started as something easy to blame their attitude for has become Blane's biggest pet peeve. If it didn't do its job, Blane would've squashed the rumours ages ago. Their grumpy personality, every core trait of theirs that they've created and chosen to display, can all be boiled down to The Rankings.

No one but N knows the truth.

All this runs through Blane's head as they ride up the elevator. They don't acknowledge anyone as they make their way into the department, hoping to head straight to the media room and into solitude until their partner arrives.

Their wish isn't granted.

Because there you are, standing in front of The Rankings. The fucking Rankings.

They don't necessarily plan to go up and talk to you, but their feet are moving before their brain can turn them away. Blane stops a couple of meters away from you, staring more at the light on your face rather than the screen itself.

"Why do you bother looking at it? You know you'll always be first."

You don't look at them. "Unlike you, I'm not concerned about placement."

"Inflating your ego before starting the day then?" Blane's chest tightens. The words are too rehearsed. Memorized lines. "I'm sure Caine would be more than happy to do that for you. Wouldn't be surprised if he created a board in memorium of you when you leave."

"Too bad that version of me won't argue back with you."

"I already like that version better," Blane replies.

A nerve twitches in your jaw. "Is there something you want, Rekner? Or are you just here to annoy me like usual?"

Blane doesn't have an answer to that. They stand there, shuffling their feet while trying to come up with something to say. Part of them came here to annoy you, there's no doubt about that, but why they do so they can't figure out.

If they truly hated you, why do they come up to you so often? Why does Blane go out of their way to speak with you, to pick fights and make snarky comments, when they aren't obligated to have to deal with you at all?

They wonder if you've picked up on this at all. Despite their words and expressions and attitude, is it obvious that Blane actually... enjoys talking to you? To some degree? It becomes clearer each day, and it's all they can do to hope that you don't realize.

When it's clear they're not going to reply, you scoff.

"Of course. I shouldn't have expected anything more from you." You turn and meet their eyes, jaw set and expression determined. "Good luck with your case."

A more courteous farewell than they deserve.

You walk forward, brushing past Blane as you leave. Too soon. Too quick. The conversation was over in a blink.

They have half a mind to turn around and grab your wrist and tell you to... to what? Stay? You'd laugh in their face.

In an alternate universe, maybe they would have. Maybe they would have interlaced their fingers with yours, sucking in a breath at how much they like it. Maybe they would have found the words they've been wanting to say or conveyed them through their eyes.

Maybe you would have stopped, lips slightly parted and brow furrowed. Maybe you would have whispered their name.

Maybe you wouldn't have been rivals at all.

But none of it happens, because Blane doesn't reach for you. Their fingers twitch at their side, aching for some sort of release that they don't provide. They don't bother turning around to watch you go, opting to leave instead.

One out of three. You were one out of the three people they'll talk to today. The other will be Devereux, as it happens every day without fail, and the other will be N. That's it.

If Blane weren't so concerned with image and protecting themselves then their list would be longer. Sometimes they wonder if they'd like that. But when they pop in their headphones and find their usual corner in the media room, they realize they wouldn't.

They're just not built for it.

## CHAPTER 08.

"If you have something to say, spit it out."

I glance up, making eye contact. I expect Blane's usual scowl, a sulking frown that tugs at the corner of their mouth, but their expression is blank. A statement that would usually cause a fight between us does nothing to even aggravate them.

"How do you feel?" they ask. Their voice is soft, with a slight raspyness that I can't put my finger on.

[delicate.](#)

[Jul 25, 2022](#)

**note:** apologies for the silence recently! i just came back from vacation so the progress update will be coming either today or tomorrow, as well as more bonus content.

[update 30.](#)

[Jul 27, 2022](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

i'm back from vacation and more tired than ever, haha. despite being late, this update will consist of what i did in the last week up until sunday, which is basically everything i wrote in the airport and on the plane. i didn't have much time to write, but the break was really good for me. i treat this as my second job sometimes, which though you could argue it is in some ways, it started as a passion project and needs to stay one. the more pressure i put on myself, the less i feel like writing.

that being said, i'm very excited to finally start writing the hurt/comfort scenes. i was in the mood for some rivals to lovers angst, so i started with Blane (hence the recent sneak peek and the one below). i had a bit of a plan going into writing, but it proved to be more difficult than i thought. thus, i ended up playing out the scene in my free time, loosely planning trivial things such as how to keep the conversation flowing or how to lead into must-have scenes. i have yet to pick up where i left off from the plane, but i have a good idea of how things are going.

what's difficult about Blane is that they're not the type to show outright concern. it's completely out of character for them, especially if you're on the rivals to lovers route. still, as you'll eventually see, the hunter fainting on them was not something they took lightly. as cold as they are, it really did worry them. they struggle between that thin line of letting the hunter know they care (to some capacity) and letting the others do it for them. everything is a battle with them—something i hope to convey in this scene. i have no doubt it'll be one of my favourites when i'm done.

these scenes will likely take up a good chunk of my time for the next couple of weeks, especially as there are different variants depending on what time of injury was sustained and who got it, but i'm very happy to finally be here. it's been a long time coming.

## STATS.

304,264 words (+2.17k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

If it weren't for the situation, I might have laughed at how uncomfortable Blane looks. Something in me softens at the sight. A skip of a heartbeat, a lost thought that wonders if our bickering is as pointless as it seems.

[heaven.](#) [\[k de vries\]](#)

[Jul 30, 2022](#)

**synopsis / prompt:** thumb. [the sender slowly glides their thumb across the receiver's cheekbone in a tender gesture]

Wrapped in blankets of their bed, K wonders how they got here.

The actual logistics of it are simple. You waltzed into K's penthouse after work, somehow still full of energy despite the draining day. K was making pasta but leaned into your touch as you wrapped your arms around their waist.

The rest of the night was spent together, making the slightest of touches whenever either of you had a chance. When eating dinner, K's thigh brushed against yours. While playing a movie, K's fingers danced over yours. When kissing... when kissing, K wanted all of you.

The two of you stumbled into bed, K's arms never letting go of you and you never letting go of them. All you did was makeout, but god, did K feel like they were floating on cloud nine.

Hands tangled in their hair. The whispers of their name on your tongue. The soft sounds of contentment from both of you and the smiles against each other's lips.

It's been so long since K has felt like this. It's something they think about every day. Every night, occasionally, when they can't sleep—which is exactly what's happening now.

It's only just past midnight, but K is wide awake. They'd drifted off tangled up with you and now they awake in the same position. Fingers outreached, your head off the pillow and curled towards their body, your legs rubbing against each other's.

Love. Love, love, love.

A simple four-letter word that carries the weight of the world.

"K?"

A slow blink in the dark. Two familiar eyes opening to peer at them. They smile softly, barely even realizing they're doing it.

"You're still awake," you whisper.

Yes. Yes, they are.

Before K can think, they're reaching out, placing the palm of their hand on your cheek. Their thumb strokes your face, savouring how your eyes flutter shut at their touch. Something in their chest explodes, like a burst of colour in a world of black and white.

"I'll sleep soon. I was just thinking."

"You're always thinking."

It's true that they drift off a lot. Even in social settings, K can be found staring out the window, lost in their head about a million things. They don't even need a scenic view for it—they've drifted off staring at the floor plenty of times.

It's only with a select few people that they are grounded. Over the last couple of months, you slowly found your way onto that list.

"I have a lot of thoughts for a century-old being," K replies. That soft smile hasn't left their face. "Right now, a lot of those thoughts involve you. Do you not want that?"

"I want you to go to sleep with me," you mumble. Any other time and that may have caused a flustered expression or a teasing remark back, but apparently, you're too tired for any of it. Not that K minds. It's endearing.

"I'm in bed with you," K points out.

"Not good enough."

You curl into them like a cat and K laughs, a rumble that vibrates through their chest and down to their toes. It's a joyous feeling, being in love. They wonder why they ever ran from it at all.

"You're so demanding, aren't you?" they tease.

"That's what you get for dating a hunter."

If it was up to them, they wouldn't have fallen for a hunter. A hunter of all things, someone of an organization they despise. But you can't help who you fall for, and this is a prime example.

With your head underneath their chin, K snuggles into you, breathing in your scent. It's flooded their senses one too many times. Every time they catch a whiff of it, most often throughout their penthouse after you leave or in their bed, they can't help but fall for you all over again.

"I love you," K breathes. Though the words are impulsive, they mean every syllable. They mean it every time they say it. They feel it every time they see you.

Love. Love love love.

"Love you too."

[update 31.](#)

[Jul 31, 2022](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

hi hi hi. i've been extremely tired lately (still struggling with jetlag, maybe?) but i'll skip the chase and tell you what you came for: Blane's route is going really well. i'm so so happy with it right now. i had one of those moments when writing where i was in the zone, busting out a thousand words all in one go. so far, this scene has some of my favourite lines of the chapter, and seeing as it's only the first of the five variations, i'm very excited to see where the rest go.

i won't lie, it's a lot of work. i've definitely mentioned this before, but i have a separate scene for the hunter sacrificing themselves and another where they're injured. multiply that by the five ros and, well, i think you get the point. i'm trying to make things easier on myself by having shared common texts. the variation where the ro is injured, for example, will likely be the same scene for every ro with applicable flavour text. i'd love to personalize it more, but i know if i keep going, i'll burn myself out and the chapter won't be out until december or something ridiculous.

i'm not sure who's next. i tend to write whatever scene i'm in the mood for, so after Blane i might jump to K. i've been thinking about their scene lately, especially how much they'll scold the hunter for taking the knife for them or how much they'll try to act angry at the hunter being injured. if K isn't next, then i'm thinking of A.

for those who rejected A's plan at first and did not choose them to enter the club, i'll have to squeeze in a scene where they explain themselves. again, for convenience, i'm likely just taking the scene i wrote for this scenario outside of the club and changing a few things. if you reject them a second time in this scene, i'll eventually have to add a scene where the two of you address the awkwardness. maybe chapter ten or eleven, we'll see. i doubt many of you went on this route, but i like having the option there in case anyone wants to.

## STATS.

306,609 words (+2.3k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Their voice is light. Delicate, like it could be ripped apart by the merest of touches.

### CHAPTER 08.

"Stay with me. Come on, wake up. Open your eyes." Rylan's fingers scramble to find a pulse, though the beating of the muscle isn't enough to calm them down. "This isn't really a comfortable place to nap, you know. You can sleep when you get home. Come on, hunter. Wake up."

But they don't.

Some part of them wants to run. This is how they were caught last time, leaning over someone's body, hands shaking as they tried to get them to wake up. Of course, the woman last time was dead and [the hunter] isn't yet.

Still, the situation is too close for them to feel comfortable.

Run before someone accuses you of doing this yourself. Run before the group comes and assumes you were the one who caused the injury. Run before everyone thinks this was part of your plan all along, to get revenge on the person who tried to take you twice.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[do you get déjà vu?](#)

[Aug 5, 2022](#)

[update 32.](#)

[Aug 7, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

i'm writing this on break at work lol so i have to do this quickly—hi. how is everyone? aside from the constant naps and exhaustion, i think i'm doing okay. i hope you're all well!!

as for the content you're all here for: things are, thankfully for the second week in a row, going smoothly. i finished Blane's route earlier this week, which totalled out to be around 3-4k words. being halfway through K's—writing two angsty bitches in a row, we love to see it—i can say that it's nearing about the same. so basically: these scenes are a lottt. not that everyone will read it all—a majority comes from choices and variations—but it's there and i'm proud of it.

for K, i'm currently writing the variation where the hunter gets choked/a knife held to their throat. i'm almost certain this path was the least taken, but so far, it has the best best best angst for K. likely for most of the other ros too. what i've done with it is just... ugh. i love it so much. it has me punching the wall because i can't talk about it but just know that it's tasty. it follows a similar outline to the hunter simply being stabbed, but the flavour text for the former is just so much better in my opinion. just a little reward for people who wanted to explore a less enticing route, you could say.

next up i'm thinking of doing A. i'm not sure if i'll get to it this week, but fingers crossed K doesn't give me a hard time. i'm in the groove of writing grumpy reactions right now, so i'm hoping that works in my favour.

## STATS.

311,357 words (+4.75k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

K leans forward, brows knitted and lips tugged downwards in concentration. They shuffle close enough that they're in reach. "Here, let me."

[intuition. \[rylan villanueva\]](#)

[Aug 9, 2022](#)

**synopsis / prompt:** placing a hand on the back of the receiver's neck, the sender guides them close and rests their foreheads together.

**content warning:** discussion of death and grieving.

Anniversaries are hit and miss. Some of them are happy, like birthdays or relationships, where you celebrate how long you've been alive or how long you've been together with someone. Some of them are more mundane, like how long you've been at your job.

Either way, those are the kind Rylan likes. But what they're faced with now is not either of those.

Try and they might, forgetting this day isn't easy for them. They have little left from their childhood and even less from their parents. What they have—their classic leather jacket, some of their jewellery, and a recipe card—makes them smile most days, but on the anniversary of their parents' deaths, looking at them only makes them want to cry.

It's hard to keep up the act on this day. It's why when they were hellbent on guarding themselves, they'd isolate themselves for a day and go into hibernation. When members of their clan would ask where they went the next day, Rylan would usually lie.

They went to a spa. They went to an amusement park for the day and stuffed themselves with cotton candy. They tried to run away to Canada but decided against it last minute.

Today, they're healthier. They've shed their 'everything is okay' persona and opened up about their feelings. They're in a relationship with you, their rock in a stormy sea. They have a new group of friends who they actually spend time with.

Healthier.

But healthier doesn't mean completely healed.

It's a Sunday afternoon and Rylan is laying on the bed like a corpse, staring at the ceiling.

Mom and Dad. Oh, how they miss them. To lose your parents so young... Rylan envies those who still have them. The best people they've ever known, gone in a flash. Too quick.

They're shutting their eyes as you sweep into the room, your hand carrying a plate of chocolate chip cookies. Rylan's favourite. They smile at the sight of you, the smell of the baked goods wafting to their nose and making them temporarily forget their grieving.

"They're still hot, so be careful," you say in greeting. You sit on the edge of the bed, placing the plate down.

"When am I ever?" Rylan counters. To prove their point, they pick up the nearest cookie and take a bite, not even caring when it sears their tongue. You roll your eyes.

You're silent as Rylan eats, nibbling on a cookie yourself. Only when Rylan finishes another cookie do you finally speak again. They're thankful there's no pity in your eyes—if there's anything they can't

stand, it's that.

"Is there anything I can do to help?"

Rylan shakes their head. "Not really. It's just a shit day, really. Always is." They flop back onto the bed, finished with their second treat. "I just miss them. I miss them so much. I hate that it had to be me. Is that selfish?"

"Not at all." You place a hand on top of Rylan's. Whatever part of them was drifting away is instantly pulled back. "Is it selfish to wish that you had your parents back? Of course not. Anyone in your position would want the same."

"Then why do I feel so guilty?"

"You're not wishing it upon someone else." Your voice is gentle.

"I guess. I don't know." Rylan rises again, already restless. They play with your fingers, staring down at your hands as they do so. A much-needed distraction. "I miss them. I lose more memories of them every year. I can't— I don't—"

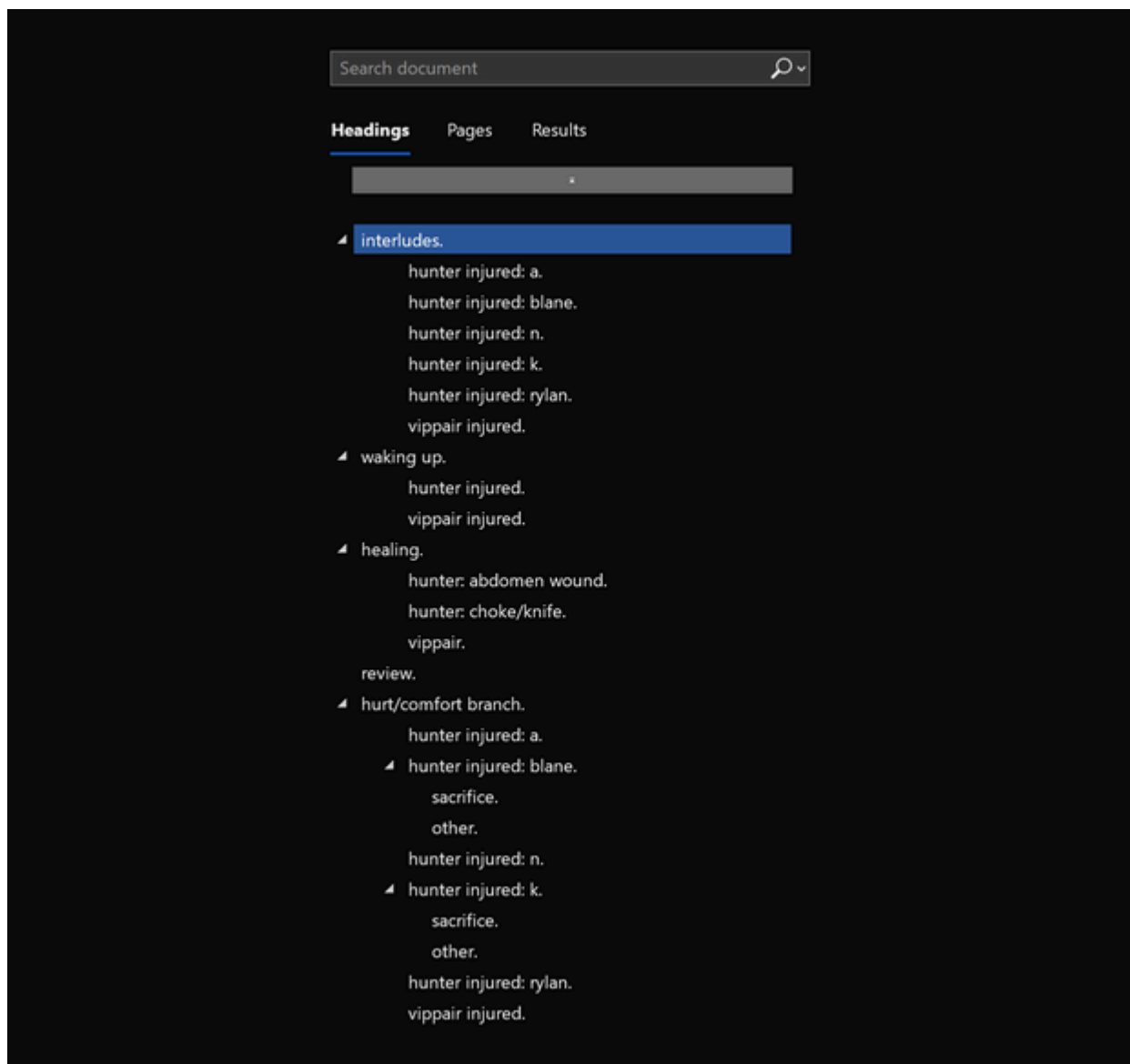
In an instant, you're pressing your forehead to theirs. One moment they're on the verge of a panic attack and the next, you're right there. Right here.

Rylan's mother used to do this with them. When they were feeling anxious, their mom would press her forehead to theirs, muttering under her breath how much she loved them. The physical presence of her was so soothing to them. It almost felt like she could take their worries away through the connection of their heads.

Rylan sucks in a sharp breath. How did you know? They've never told you about this before, but somehow, you knew exactly what to do.

You hold your position for as long as Rylan wants. When they pull away, it's only to tug you into lying down with them. They snuggle their face into the crook of your neck, eyes shut but not nearly as wet as they were a minute ago.

It's like they've let out a sigh of relief. The pain of their loss will never go away, but at least now they have a support system. They think their parents would be happy for them.



[in a nutshell.](#)

[Aug 12, 2022](#)

the current outline for chapter eight. and to think this is only half of it...

[update 33.](#)

[Aug 14, 2022](#)

WHAT I DID.

another week, another route down. i think i deserve a bit of a pat on the back for that one—i feel like i'm flying through these. granted, i might only feel like i took forever with Blane's route because i went on vacation in between and wrote most of it at the airport/on the plane, but still. i'm getting there.

this week, i finished K's route and officially moved onto A's. to talk about K's for a second... gah. the sacrifice scene was a lot more emotional than i thought it'd be. i mentioned on tumblr that the scene would involve K scolding the hunter for their actions, and while that did happen, it goes deeper than that. K isn't mad that the hunter took the knife for them, they're just... confused. and i think the scene portrays it perfectly. at this point, the hunter has only known K for two-three days (crazy, i know) so i can't really deliver a whole angsty scene like i could for Blane, but i like the variety. despite them both being my stoic and colder ros, their reactions are still very different.

moving onto A... gosh. at first, i was a little lost. i think writing Blane and K beforehand messed me up because all of a sudden, i forgot how A speaks. it took me a good half an hour or so but rest assured that i eventually got there. this side of A isn't something you're accustomed to, however. yes, there's still the banter and the grins and dimples, but seeing the hunter hurt and having them faint in their arms... not exactly a reassuring sight. they're worried, to say the least. i'm really excited to dive into this side of them.

in addition to the two branches (the sacrifice scene and the stab/vampire fight wounds) i'll also be incorporating a scene for A and the hunter to talk things out if the latter initially refused to find Caine. it'll be slightly different from the one that you can find in chapter six, but for the most part, i do plan to copy-paste it. just for my sake.

## **STATS.**

316,226 words (+4.9k)

## **SNEAK PEEK.**

How bad was it if they're looking at me like... like if they don't, they could lose me in the span of a second?

## CHAPTER 08.

A squints at me. "Say, out of curiosity's sake, how many times have I saved your life?"

"If I tell you, are you going to brag for the rest of the week?"

"No! I—"

I cut them off with a laugh. We're both grinning like fools and anyone can see that—especially N and Rylan, who are watching us from the kitchen—but I don't care. As shitty as tonight may have gone, at least I have this. At least we have us.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[two pretty best friends.](#)

[Aug 19, 2022](#)

[update 34.](#)

[Aug 21, 2022](#)

### WHAT I DID.

between bingeing haikyuu and going to work, i have no clue how i managed to write as much as i did. in fact, this is probably my most impressive word count update in a while and i don't know how it happened haha. but a victory is a victory and i won't complain.

my main win this week? finishing A's route. with that down, i'm more than halfway done the hurt-comfort scenes—and thank god for that. as much as i love writing these, they've started to drain me over the past couple of weeks. i was planning on doing N's next (the absolute lomi) but i might skip ahead and do scenes past the hurt-comfort. just for a bit of variety. if you haven't already picked up on it, i'm a very disorganized writer. i have a table of contents (if you can even call it that) for each chapter, but what's written in each one is a mystery. some are done, some aren't even closed to finished and some are just

ideas. i make up a lot of stuff as i go (another reason why i'd probably fail at writing a fantasy novel; my lore would just not line up) which, thankfully, works in my favour most of the time.

if you're wondering what happens after the hurt-comfort scenes... that's a surprise. i've already given away too much of this chapter to be saying what comes next haha. i'll be a change in direction, however, which is why i'm considering writing them next. after all the drama at crimson and introducing new characters left and right, a wind-down scene is exactly what's needed. both for me and the plot.

lastly, i wanted to touch a bit on the writing for A's route. i already gave previews for Blane and K, so it'd only be fair i'd do it here to. simply put, it really embodies the hunter's and A's relationship. after four years together and dozens of injuries, how A is going to react to things is a lot different from the other ros. i'm hoping my writing reflects the familiarity they have with each other and A's conflict with the whole thing. if you're looking for angst, you'll find more luck with Blane and K, but for the friends to lovers trope (if you're romancing them), i think what i've written will satisfy you.

## STATS.

322,852 words (+6.62k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

There are times where I feel like there's no one in the world but A and I. I can hear voices in the kitchen and footsteps down the hall, but they all sound muffled. When I look at A, it's like the rest of the world is underwater and we're in a pocket of air.

[an offer on the table. \[n alves\]](#)

[Aug 25, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** featuring a meeting between Caine and N at the six-month mark of Blane and N's partnership.

**note:** i'll be doing a couple of 'lore' stories in the next coming weeks, just to change things up a bit. hope that's okay with everyone <3

"Let me know if you want to switch."

N blinks. Did those words really come out of Caine's mouth? They're sure they're gaping, but if Caine sees the confusion on N's face, he doesn't show in. In fact, Caine merely sits there, arms crossed on his desk and his eyebrows furrowed with what looks like concern. False concern, really.

It ticks N off.

"Switch partners?" N repeats.

Caine nods. "Only if things don't go well. Partners are supposed to cooperate and work together. If Blane doesn't listen to you, then it might be better if I can pair them off with someone else. It's in your best interest as well. I don't want you getting hurt on the field because you two can't communicate."

Maybe Caine is being kind, but all N hears are insults.

It's been six months since Blane and N were paired off. Four months since Blane started to say more than single sentences to N. Three months since N was severely injured and Blane carried them to the infirmary at four in the morning. One week since Blane came over to N's apartment and met their dog.

Progress. Every day, a tiny bit of progress is made with the two, even if no one sees it.

N remembers the first day they met. When they were in that initiation room waiting to be paired off, Blane stood out only because they were the only one so aloof. They crossed their arms, staring blankly into the distance; their expression was far from serene. Almost everyone else was walking around getting to know each other, but Blane looked like they wanted to be anywhere but there. It scared everyone off from approaching them—even N, to an extent. But N wasn't put off as much as they were intrigued.

They didn't mind when they found out Blane was their partner. Some people looked relieved for themselves, others (boldly) gave their condolences—like N was some sort of scapegoat. It bothered them. They were neither upset nor happy with the pairing. A pairing was a pairing. As long as they could get along with Blane, they'd fare fine.

Six months later, however, Blane and N still get weird looks.

*Their partnership won't last. I give them two more months, tops.*

*How does Alves stand Rekner? They're a menace.*

*I wonder if Alves has Rekner on a leash.*

Rumours. Always rumours and gossip at this place. It's always worse after Caine's check-ins—the exact thing N is doing now. They're not excited to hear the new batch of conversations after this is done.

"I don't think switching partners is necessary," N replies. "I'm happy with Hunter Rekner."

Caine looks like he's barely refraining from raising his eyebrow. In response, N is barely refraining from blurting out something inappropriate.

"How have your last couple of hunts been?" Caine asks.

A change of topic.

"They've been good. Our success rate is growing. Hunter Rekner and I balance each other out in skills so when we're on the field, it's only a matter of deciding what to do, rather than who's doing it. I'm more of a planner than Blane is so sometimes we can clash, but that kind of thing only comes with time. I can tell they trust me more than they did a couple of months ago."

"Good. I recall seeing you struggling at first."

N feels their face flush with heat. Half of that struggle was the two of them simply being baby birds learning how to fly—that is, being new hunters. Of course they were having some trouble. What did Caine expect?

This conversation is annoying.

Blane and N may not be best friends, but they're still partners. The way people talk about Blane is infuriating. How they'll avoid saying hi to them in the hallway and only greet N. How they'll congratulate N on a successful bounty but not Blane.

Not that Blane makes it easy for people to talk to them, of course, but still. It doesn't excuse the way they're treated.

Caine straightens his papers. "Alright, you're dismissed. As long as both of you maintain your work ethic, we have nothing to talk about. We'll have another check-in in December."

N nods, rising from the uncomfortable chair. They want to leave. Now. They can't lose their cool in front of their boss. The repercussions... they don't want to know. Their hand is on the doorknob when—

"Alves?"

"Yes."

"That offer is still on the table. If you ever want it, it'll be there."

N grits their teeth. Fuck. So close. So close to escaping that comment. They pretend not to hear, stepping out and into the hallway. If Blane ever lets N beyond their walls, maybe N will scold them for making things so difficult on them.

They reach for their phone, rubbing a temple with their free hand.

**Blane:** I'm planning on staying late.

**Blane:** I'll buy Chinese takeout if you're joining\*\*. \*\*

N smiles. Switching partners? Not even a consideration.

[update 35.](#)

[Aug 27, 2022](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

hi, hello!! as you can see from the word count, i didn't do that much this week. i've spoken a lot about my energy levels the past couple of updates and as such, i've come to the conclusion that i need to take a break. that includes here, patreon. so for the month of september, i'll be pausing the billing cycle and won't be posting any new content. alongside university starting again and struggling with my mental health overall, i need to hit the reset button. the break also gives me time to draft some drabbles to post for the future, so i can upload one immediately instead of panicking and writing it the day of (oops, the secret is out).

this doesn't, however, mean that i won't be writing at all in september. writing has never really been my problem—it's more the pressure of my social medias and patreon. wanting to please people by having cool updates and showing off what i've done. still, the goal is still to get chapter eight out as soon as i can, so rest assured that i'll still be chipping away at the story. slowly but surely, i'll get there.

that leaves the conversation of the release date. i initially wanted to get it out in august, but clearly that's not happening. with my break in september, i'm thinking the update may come closer to october, though i'm not going to make any promises. i'll know more as time passes.

before i go, i do want to touch on the little that i did write this week. as i said previously, the hurt/comfort scenes were beginning to drain me, so i changed directions and wrote a common route scene instead—that is, text you'll read regardless of who's route or which injury was received. with only flavour text to remember, these scenes are a lot easier on my mind. the scene following this one is also similar (simplicity wise, i mean) so hopefully you won't have to hear my complaints about branches in the october update haha.

as a parting word before my break, thank you all so much for supporting me so far. it means a lot. more than i could ever put into words, which is ironic for an author but true. see you in a month<3

## **STATS.**

324,759 words (+1.9k)

## **SNEAK PEEK.**

"Are you done over there?" K responds. They point between us with an accusatory finger. "If we don't wrap things up soon, I might die of boredom."

[update 36.](#)

[Oct 1, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

hey, it's been a while, hasn't it? a whole month and a bit, where does the time go? it flew by for me, but i know i can't say the same for everyone else. i hope you're all doing well. i know the break helped me <3

now, onto business. i'm nearly, nearly, nearly done chapter eight. i wish i finished it before october, but at most, i'll be only two to three days past my fantasized deadline. when i left you in august, i had three major scenes to complete—i finished the largest of the two.

rylan's hurt/comfort scene is officially done as of last night and boy, it took a lot out of me. mostly because i wrote everyone else's back to back but wrote rylan's after changing tracks and jumping to a future scene. i lost a bit of the flow i had, though i'm hoping that it turned out okay. at any rate, it's still very fun to read and just as angsty as the others, so no worries there. my biggest concern is rylan acting out of character, but that's a problem i'll get to in editing. when you have a character that grins and laughs as much as rylan, sometimes writing their more serious side is a bit... off-putting, for lack of a better word.

the other scene i checked off involved the hunter going back to work. i can't say much about this one (i need to keep *some* of this chapter a surprise) but i really enjoyed how it turned out. it went some routes i didn't expect and thankfully, i ended up benefiting from it. there's also a mini conversation with A here that i think everyone will love. i adored writing it so much, it's a good ice breaker from all the heaviness prior.

the end of the chapter is a wild ride and will hopefully leave everyone wanting to read chapter nine (fingers crossed). just don't hate me too much for leaving you in suspense.

this week, i'll be working on the branch where the ro you chose you enter the vip room with is injured instead of the hunter. i expect it to be no longer than two or three thousand words, so i'll definitely be able to celebrate finishing the writing for chapter eight with you all next update. thanks for sticking with me everyone. i know i've made a lot of promises about when things are coming out, but i appreciate your support.

## STATS.

344,466 words (+19.7k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

In front of me, A's forehead hits the table and they jump up, startling awake. "Present!"

I glance up from my iPad. "We're at work, A. We don't do attendance here."

"Right." A rubs their forehead. "Reflexes. Sixteen years of school really drills it in you." They straighten and delete something off their laptop, presumably the keyboard smash that they typed while drifting off.

[to keep you company. \[k & rylan\]](#)

[Oct 4, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** Rylan crashes at K's place for a night.

**note:** this is set about a month and a half after K and Rylan meet. it's also about eight to nine months before they meet the hunter.

"You adore me."

"I do not."

"Oh, come on. How much alcohol do we need to drink before you admit it?"

"It won't happen. You have too much faith in yourself."

"Because I know you actually enjoy my company!"

\$K sends Rylan a sideways glance, a cup of wine in their left hand. Rylan, sitting on the floor with a glass of champagne, sticks out their tongue in response. They don't need words to understand that look. They've been on the receiving end of it much too often. Embarrassingly often.

Sometimes they wonder why they bother at all.

Rylan huffs. "Fine. If you weren't hanging out with me, who would you hang out with?"

K's eyes narrow. "No one."

"No one?"

"No one," K repeats. They keep their eyes trained on the red liquid in their glass, swirling it absently. "Spending Sunday night alone is not unusual."

"But it sure as hell is boring," Rylan answers. They sigh, crossing their legs underneath them. "For someone who doesn't work a normal nine to five, you sure as hell act like it. It isn't the 1900s anymore, you know?"

"I'm quite aware."

Rylan rolls their eyes.

"I'm glad it isn't," K adds. They ignore Rylan's surprise at the additional comment, taking a sip of their wine as they contemplate their next words. "It wasn't my favourite century, both for the world and myself."

They purse their lips. "Not that it matters. Time is simply a human concept—what year it is doesn't matter. It's only a way to keep count for those who care. Pointless when you have all of eternity to suffer through."

Rylan doesn't answer that. Instead, they reach for the nearest bottle of tequila and pour themselves a shot. It goes down their throat with ease.

K watches them. "Too much for you, Villanueva?"

"You won't scare me off that easily," Rylan answers instead.

"I don't know what you're talking about."

Rylan hums. Their eyes move lazily throughout the room. It's nothing they haven't seen before—an antique clock in the corner, an open large window with billowing white curtains, a plush loveseat with wooden legs—but somehow, it always looks different.

Maybe it's because they've only been here three times.

Three times they've forced themselves (invited, is what they argue) into K's space. Three times they've sat on the floor with K, both drinking until they pass out; Rylan spilling nothing but incoherent sentences, K composed even when their thoughts are muddled. Three times Rylan has felt the cold air of K's personality in their own home, more frigid than it is at the bar, but basked in it all the same.

Even in a place like Antarctica, the sun's beams can provide some warmth.

Rylan doesn't know what draws them to the warlock. They could easily go find someone else to annoy, someone who'd tolerate their presence more than K ever would, but they come here every time.

They tell themselves that they don't care that K seems more bothered by Rylan's presence than pleased, but it does. Not because they're hurt by it, but because it confuses them. If K truly didn't want Rylan around, they'd have no problem telling them so. But every time Rylan shows up at their door, K lets them in without fail. With reluctance and an eye roll, sure, but they've never been denied.

If Rylan's right about K, the two have a lot more in common than they think. In Rylan's experience, lonely people drift towards each other—they're no exception.

"You get all philosophical when you drink," Rylan comments. They stretch their legs. "Most people spill all their secrets when they drink. Alcohol is supposed to loosen you up."

"What are you getting at, Villanueva?"

"A lot of things. Which one do you want to hear?"

K studies them, hazel eyes narrowed. As usual, they're as clear as day, the alcohol doing nothing to the warlock unlike Rylan, who can feel their limbs both sinking beneath them and their energy levels begging to be released in the form of running laps around the room.

Eventually, K sighs, grabbing their bottle of wine and taking a swig straight from the bottle. Their glass is still half empty, though Rylan doesn't point that out.

"You can have the couch tonight. Spare blankets and pillows are in the closet." K stands up, not so much as swaying as they hold the bottle loosely in their hand. "If your unusually large appetite needs fulfilling, you can eat anything *but* my curry."

And with that, K takes their leave, leaving Rylan sitting on the floor, staring at the mess they created. It's the first time they've been left alone in K's penthouse. The first time K has silently given them their trust.

Rylan smiles at that. They reach for the nearby nightstand, pulling out a book at random that K has stored on the bottom shelf. If Rylan hadn't crashed K's penthouse tonight, they have no doubt this is what the warlock would have been doing. It's only fair for them to honour it.

They flip to the first page absently, eyes skimming the opening lines.

Rylan doesn't remember drifting off, but when they wake, they're still there, book opened to the quarter mark, a blanket thrown over their legs and a pillow underneath their head.

## CHAPTER 08.

K leans their head back against the couch. "If there's nothing else you need, [surname], you can go. You don't have to stay here to keep me company because you were there when I was stabbed."

I narrow my eyes, nearly getting right back up to leave. They're really making it hard for me to feel bad for them.

"Why is everything a transaction with you?"

"Everything you do is a transaction. I just make it more obvious."

"You're obnoxious."

"Then leave."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[transactions.](#)

[Oct 9, 2022](#)

[update 37.](#)

[Oct 10, 2022](#)

### WHAT I DID.

apologies for the late update! it's a holiday here in canada (thanksgiving; we do it a whole month earlier than americans for some reason) and i've been caught up between that and my job.

but enough of that. i want everyone to scroll down, look at the word count i accomplished this week and come back up. are your eyes bugging out of your head? mine too. you may be wondering: is this the same person who struggles to write 2-4k a week? the answer? absolutely not. the person i became this week to finish the chapter... you do not want to see her. she's a combination of being stubborn and also being so exhausted writing this chapter that she never wanted to open its word doc again.

all of what i wrote this week was solely the branch where the ro gets injured. that's it. i was kidding myself when i said that it would only end up being 2-3k words. if it was a common route, sure, but i

forgot to account for the different responses each ro would give and how while this is *technically* one branch, it's also a branch that splits into five. very fun.

i think a lot of people are thinking this route is the most boring and, fair enough. when you can get injured yourself, the angst surely must be through the roof compared to if you let someone else do it. they're not exactly wrong, but i'd encourage you to read at least one path from this route regardless. it's a lot more interesting than i thought it would turn out. by that, i'm referring to some of the things that the ros reveal or say to the hunter, all of which was not what i was planning on adding in yet, but was happy with nonetheless when i saw an opportunity for it.

with that branch finished, however, i've officially completed the writing for chapter eight !! of course, we still have some ways to go. i have to edit it (twice, i miss so many things on the first go), code it and then send it off to beta testers before it can touch patreon, but knowing that the hardest part is over is a huge sigh of relief. you may get it on halloween but i'm pretty certain that i can get this out to you this month. look forward to it <3

## STATS.

356,587 words (+12.1k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Rylan leans their head back against the armrest. "Out of all the places to wake up, this has to be top five. This might be the best couch I've ever sat on. Maybe this the kind of furniture only a Hunter's salary can afford."

"You passed out an hour ago and *this* is what you want to talk about?"

[update 38.](#)

[Oct 16, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

if last week was monumental for being the biggest update i've ever written, this week is monumental for being the smallest—my word count literally went down. it might sound odd, but i'm actually happy about it.

as you might know, i recently completed my first draft of chapter eight. my routine from here (if you've been with me long enough you'll know) is to do two rounds of edits, code and then send it off to beta-

testers. usually at this stage, i pile on a thousand or so words, mainly consisting of sentence bridges or scenes i completely forgot to write and left blank in my document (it happens more than you think, truly embarrassing if i do say so myself).

however, i've actually heard that you're supposed to shear off words when editing. i never understood that until recently, when i was reading my work last night with a puzzled look going 'why is this sentence here? it does absolutely nothing.' and so, as i've been polishing up the chapter, i've been taking off a couple hundred words here and there to make it more refined. i'm actually a lot happier this way. instead of having to dig through a hundred words to get to the point, you get there in half the time. of course, my usual writing style is still very prevalent. honestly, you won't miss much at all. in a way, it's a secret for everyone who reads this update—we know what i'll have improved and i, for one, will be happier for it.

i'm over halfway done editing and i expect to run through the second round much quicker than the first, so hopefully by the next update i'll be onto coding (and then sending it out!!). judging by the timeline, we might be in for a halloween ish update.

## STATS.

355,442 words (-1.1k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

“Does it really matter? It's not like you can change the past.”

K grits their teeth. “Do I not deserve to know why you risked your life for me?”

[you drew stars. \[a devereux\]](#)

[Oct 18, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** a little look into how much A values the hunter

A's skin is a map of scars. They litter their arms, trail their legs from their thighs down to their calves—they're certain there's one on the shell of their ear too, a nick from a near miss of claws from a werewolf who lunged at them in their first year.

For all the wonder of warlock healing, this is one of the downsides. The magic heals so fast, sometimes, that it's more prone to leaving scars. In A's case, it happens nearly every time, though they've earned fewer scars over the years—they don't get injured nearly as much as they do before.

Either way, A doesn't mind. They treasure each mark and the individual stories they tell, noting that each one was a near-death experience that they survived.

That's a perfectly reasonable thing to be proud of, isn't it?

They got their first bad one during their second year on the job. It'd been a slash on their upper left torso, courtesy of a dagger that a Fae had been carrying around. Later, it was determined to be the same weapon that was used in their murder spree across the city.

A doesn't remember much of that night. They think they've suppressed it, the pain of the wound too much for their hazy mind to hold onto anything.

What they do remember is your voice. An echo in the darkest chambers of their mind as they drifted in and out of consciousness. A panicked tone, a desperate request for them to open their eyes.

You told them later that they smiled in the passenger seat, mumbling incoherent words under their breath as you weaved your way through the traffic. What they were so happy about they weren't sure, but they had a feeling.

Because as long as you were there by their side, A didn't care what scenario they were put in. If they were dying, drowning in treacherous waters or bleeding out on the sidewalk, at least they'd be with you. Their favourite person in the world.

They once heard a saying that said simple stars become constellations when aligned.

If each interaction with you is a star in a cosmic universe, then the constellation is their being with you. The entire history of your relationship, from the moment you were paired to the day it'll eventually end, be it a bitter end to a friendship or because you're parted by death.

Laying on their bed, A's hand reaches up and traces the scar left behind from that fatal incident. They feel the bump beneath their fingers, as familiar to them as the calluses on their palm at this point.

Their free hand grapples for their phone.

**to: bestie :))**

**12:05am**

[nameeeeeeeeeeee] i can't sleep

too much thinking, distract me

you're the bestest at this

**to: dev-er-ruh**

**12:10am**

bestest isn't a word

**to: bestie :))**

**12:10am**

YOU'RE AWAKE

hii! help me

SOS this is serious

**to: dev-er-ruh**

**12:11am**

just because you can't sleep doesn't mean you have to drag me into it

**to: bestie :))**

**12:12am**

please??

**to: dev-er-ruh**

**12:14am**

sigh

what's on your mind

**to: bestie :))**

**12:15am**

do you remember how i got that scar on my chest? when that fae decided it was a good idea to run at me and i just didn't move out of the way in time because, dumb

**to: dev-er-ruh**

**12:15am**

you're not dumb

and what about it

**to: bestie :))**

**12:17am**

i don't know. it's just on my mind. something about it doesn't want to let me sleep.

do you think i could have avoided it?

**to: dev-er-ruh**

**12:20am**

maybe. but if you didn't get injured that night, you probably would've on the next one. it's inevitable. it's been four years since we started doing this, you know this as well as i do.

caine's going to kill you if he knows you've been up thinking about this

**to: bestie :))**

**12:23am**

as if he'll ever follow through

but thanks, i know you're right. it's just hard sometimes

A lets their phone fall back to the bed, hand falling away from their scar.

They hate that they've bothered you with this. There's nothing more you can do than give the same advice time and time again, hoping that A actually listens for once. They want to, of course, but it doesn't always work out like that—their anxiety has a mind of its own.

Their phone lights up again. Soft blue light emits from the device, illuminating A's speckled ceiling. Stars. A thousand stars littering the sky of their room. A constellation that is you and them.

They fall asleep before they can see what the message is, but they read it first thing in the morning. For the rest of the day, they're happy, bouncing around the department with an abundance of energy. You only laugh when you see how hyper they are.

**to: dev-er-ruh**

**12:28am**

i'm always here for you

## CHAPTER 08.

"[Name]?"

I blink. "Sebastian."

Tired is a word I've long stopped thinking about when seeing Sebastian.  
My mind makes the connection before I even realize I'm doing it.  
The two are synonymous. Tired, exhausted—it's simply who he's become.

It's why I'm not surprised to see a weary expression on my boss's face when I turn around. He carries a tablet in one hand, files stacked underneath.  
The bags under his eyes have begun to sink into his face, the wrinkles in his forehead more apparent than when I last saw them. Still, he tries his best to hide it.

Sebastian smooths a small smile on his face. "Question about one of your cases?"

"One of," I echo. "It's funny. A little over a week ago, we barely had two."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[petition to give sebastian a vacation.](#)

[Oct 20, 2022](#)

[update 39.](#)

[Oct 23, 2022](#)

### WHAT I DID.

i'm going to rush through this update since there's not much to say, but i'm getting very very close to the end. as in, the midnight tier will probably be able to play it friday (at latest).

i finished my first round of edits and am working on my second, simultaneously coding as i go. i usually separate the two but i got so tired of straight editing that i decided to mix it up a bit—and it's actually working really well. that's really all i have to say about this stage because, well, what else can i say haha.

what i will say though, is that i'm super super nervous for this update, probably more than ever before. most of it is my fault, really, because i've hyped it up so much and i have this fear of not meeting

expectations. i loved it on the first reread and find myself disliking parts on the second. of course, i remedy them as best as i can but sometimes i think that it's the chapter that's the problem, not the individual parts. that's just my inner demons though. if you like angst and stupid found family interactions and intrigue, this chapter is right up your alley. i just need to remember that. i had doubts about chapter six and it was more than fine when it actually came out. breathe in, breathe out. phew.

## STATS.

355,442 words (???)

## SNEAK PEEK.

My voice is soft, but A doesn't need me to repeat it. They lift their head and when our eyes meet, I know what I've said is true.

The worst bullseye I've ever made.



[chapter eight is live!](#)

[Oct 28, 2022](#)

finally, finally, finally, chapter eight is now live on [itch.io](#)!! the password you're looking for is **aspoookyupdatemeansangst** (no spaces, all lowercase). the chapter is bound to have some mistakes here and there as it has yet to run through my beta-testers, but i hope you enjoy regardless. it's been a wild few months getting to this point.

in this chapter...

- experience the consequences of being injured (or the consequences of an ro being injured, if that's what you got)
- angst angst angst
- develop some theories (while K loses all their brain cells)
- find out what Rylan named your group chat

- have a little chitchat with Sebastian (someone send him some help for real)

[obsidian ink. \[blane rekner\]](#)

[Oct 31, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** Blane recalls the one time they contemplated dyeing their hair.

Blane tried dyeing their hair once. They were thirteen, stood in front of a sink with gloves on and a box of hair dye in hand.

They didn't know what they were doing.

They stared at themselves, wondering how the shock of pure white would turn into obsidian ink. How it would look against the complexion of their skin. How they would startle the first couple of times they looked in the mirror until eventually, they got used to it.

Blane hates to admit it, but part of the reason why they considered it was because of other people.

They didn't care that they were bullied for their hair—the insults never bothered them. Other kids could pelt rocks at them and sneer and yell profanities and Blane would do nothing but shoot them a disinterested look.

What bothered Blane was how they ruined their quiet. Blane sat in the corner for a reason. They stayed silent during conversations and deigned to join groups at lunch because they enjoyed the peace of being alone. But their hair was too bold to let them hide. It brought them bullies and children pestering them over whether the colour was natural or not and teachers who would occasionally shoo them away only to glance suspiciously at Blane when they thought they weren't looking.

Blane found the dye in a cabinet somewhere. The expiry date was long past but the box was unopened, which they took as a sign that it was fine to use. Even then, they might have considered it.

But when it came to actually doing it, they found it harder than they thought. It was a matter of smearing the mixed dye into their hair. The smallest of movements, simply raising their arms—but it felt like a thousand bricks were weighing on their shoulders.

At the time, they didn't know what had gotten into them. If they dyed their hair, people would leave them alone. They would gain back their quiet and be able to sit in the corner of the courtyard unnoticed again.

When they threw the dye in the trash, they didn't understand why. It took them years to find the answer and it came in the form of Caine Atheron.

It was when Blane was a new transfer to the New York institute. Still a bumbling deer finding their way around the department, attempting to navigate the newness of being a Hunter. Caine had caught them exiting the elevator, trying their best to look like they knew what they were doing.

"Hunter Rekner."

"Caine."

Caine walked closer, his hair shining beneath the lights. Too bright for it to be natural.

From the moment they met, Blane decided that they hated Caine. Fucking Caine Atheron. Something about how fake the man was bothered them. His boisterous personality and loud voice were merely cover-ups for a lurking feeling of superiority and demeaning manner.

Caine may have been quick to hide his irritation when he saw Blane, but they caught it anyway. In Caine's eyes, the two would never be equal. Boss or not, Caine would always be the better person.

"Are you lost?"

"No, I was just taking a wander around the building," Blane answers. "Thought it would help clear my head over my recent case."

Caine hummed. "Ah. It's always good to get a change of scenery. If you need help, Hunter Alves is there too. You are a team, after all. The case isn't just yours to bear."

"Of course." Blane had to bite their tongue so they wouldn't remark something inappropriate.

"Alright, well, I'll leave you to it. If you need me, I'll be in my office," Caine called, already walking off. He had only stepped a couple of meters before pausing, turning around once more. "Out of curiosity, are you ever going to do something about your hair?"

Blane stiffened. "My hair."

"The white is a little obvious," Caine explained. "It stands out on a hunt and also is a dead giveaway that you're not fully human. It may be a disadvantage at some points."

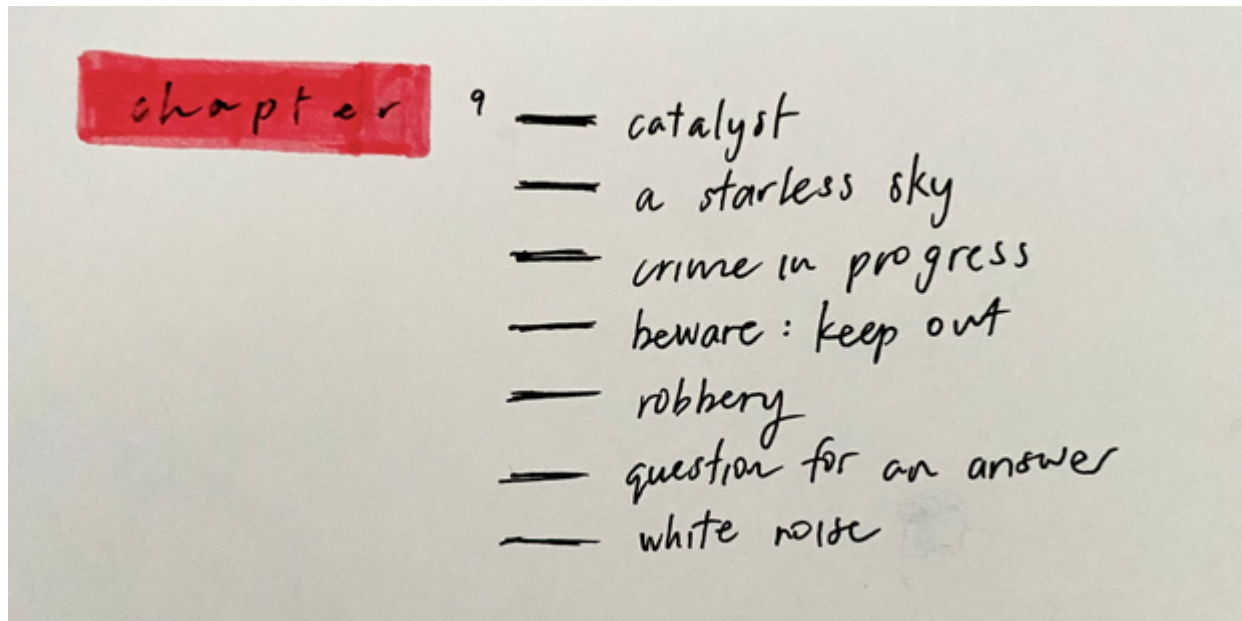
Though he said it with a tight smile, Blane could hear the underlying meaning of his words.

They refused to give Caine the satisfaction of looking at their elevator reflection. They already knew what they would see. Bright white hair that had been a hindrance their entire life. Bright white hair that was theirs and something they weren't going to change simply because other people were bothered by it.

So, dampening their frustration, Blane merely shrugged and responded, "I'll think about it."

Caine knew that Blane would never consider it beyond that moment right there, but Blane didn't care. Didn't bother to hide it, even.

It wasn't long before Caine stopped putting up his façade in front of Blane. They found that they liked that version of him better, even if his favouritism to everyone other than them stung sometimes. But like everything else, they learned to deal with it. They had asked for it, after all.



[possible titles for chapter 9.](#)

[Nov 5, 2022](#)

yes this is my writing. yes it's messy.

[update 40.](#)

[Nov 6, 2022](#)

right off the bat, i'll tell you that i have not started chapter nine (unless you count one sentence as a start. a sentence that has a ninety-nine percent being cut, that is). i know i usually give estimates on when the next chapter will be out but chapter nine is, unfortunately, my least planned chapter out of the

entire book. should i be admitting this? probably not, but here i am. not that i don't know what i'm doing —i have a vague idea for what needs to happen in this chapter, just not the specifics of how and when those happen. if i had an outline i could predict how long it might take me to write each section, but since i don't, i'm not going to risk putting a date on things yet.

that brings me to this 'update'. since i don't have chapter nine content to share, i'm going to go through a little walkthrough of my plans for the rest of the year.

**november** is Blane's and Rylan's birthdays. Blane's birthday post went up this morning and Rylan's will be on the 19th. depending on how much i've written for chapter nine, Rylan's post will either be a mini drabble or a sneak peek of them in the upcoming update. i also expect to hit a follower milestone this month so i'll be doing a giveaway for that on tumblr. i'm currently leaning towards personalized drabbles as the prizes, though that's subject to change.

for **december**, i plan on writing an interactive short story for the holidays, to be posted on the 'midnight hours: shorts' game on itch.io. it won't be very long and will have far less choices than the main game, but i hope to publish something as a little treat.

of course, the entire time i work on these, i will be chipping away at chapter nine. while the main game will always be my first priority, the bonus content works both as a treat for you and a switch of gears for me (which is something i learned i need after the pain that was chapter eight).

[drabble vote.](#)

[Nov 8, 2022](#)

thinking of doing a "you came, you called" series for the five ros. i'll do one drabble for each but depending on what wins, it'll either be 'you came' or 'you called.'

A Devereux (you came)

A Devereux (you called)

Blane Rekner (you came)

Blane Rekner (you called)

N Alves (you came)

N Alves (you called)

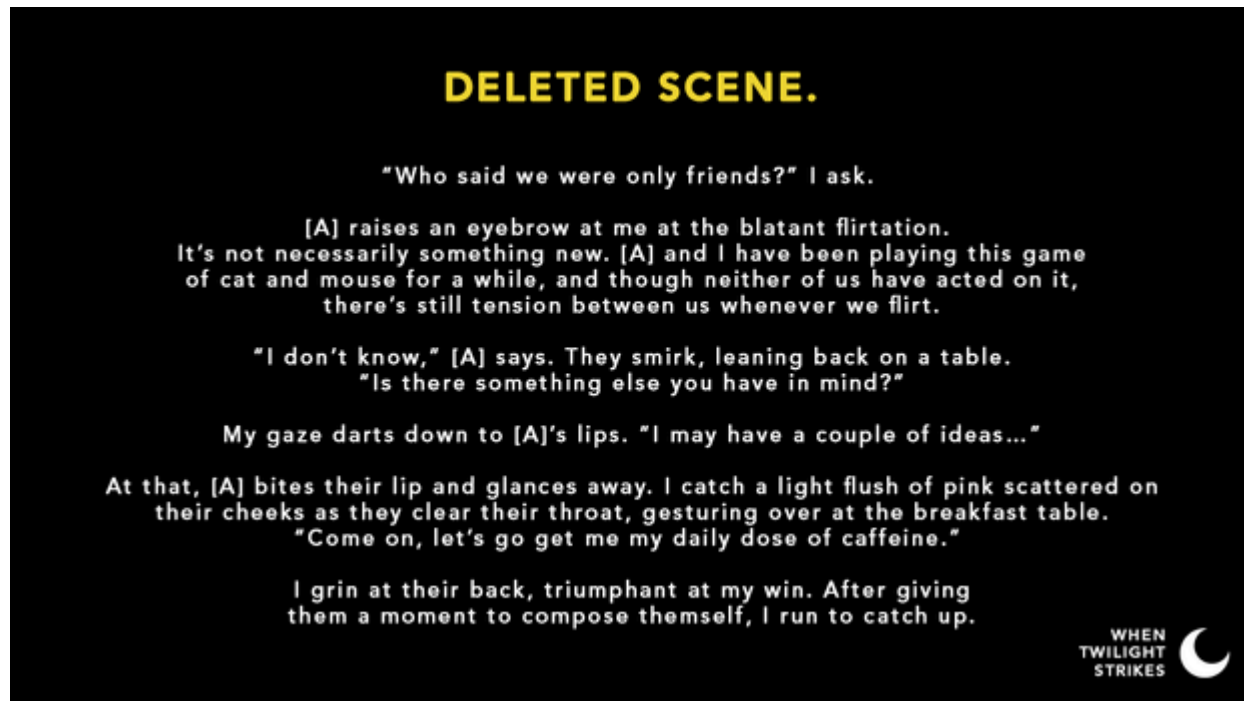
K de Vries (you came)

K de Vries (you called)

Rylan Villanueva (you came)

Rylan Villanueva (you called)

47 votes total



[deleted scene \(chapter one\).](#)

[Nov 9, 2022](#)

back last january when i was first starting the book, i had the idea of having an option for your relationship with A to start flirty right off the bat. in all honesty, i'm not sure why i scrapped the idea—i assume it had something to do with it not fitting my image of A's character—but it's fun to look back on nonetheless.

[update 41.](#)

[Nov 12, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

hi, i hope everyone is well! for this week's update, i'm happy to say that chapter nine is officially under construction!! i had previously mentioned that i struggle with writing the openings of chapters, mostly because i'd spent so long editing and coding that the 'flow', so to say, simply leaves me. with little to no plan for this chapter (initially), i was even more worried about getting writer's block, but thankfully, things have been smooth. while i'm not necessarily the type of writer to plan out each and every point, having a loose idea of what's going to happen tends to be helpful. as it is, i spent some time figuring that out and only had to write a couple of paragraphs before the rest fell into place.

regretfully, that means that K and Rylan are not going to have as much 'screentime' in this chapter. the main focus will be the four hunters as the chapter turns to more iaos-related problems, though it doesn't mean you won't be seeing the two supernatural ros at all. even as i type, i'm thinking of more ways to involve them in this chapter. while it's extremely important for me to balance out everyone's scenes, sometimes it simply does not work out in my favour. A, for example, gets a lot of time with the hunter by default of being their partner.

speaking of A, this chapter is already taking a very deep dive into their insecurities. not that i've written much, but (spoiler alert?) the events of seeing Natalia and Anaya really got to them. one of my greatest prides of this story is how "real" my characters feel, which is why i focus so much on their development *outside* of the mc. A's always been a bit of an odd puzzle piece as to where and how i'm going to build their arc, but now i'm seeing that this is the perfect chance (see? unplanned planning works). i'm also hoping to get a little in on N as well, namely their insecurities about being in Blane's shadow, so stay tuned.

## STATS.

357,587 words (+2.15k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

They were the warmest words I'd heard all day—but warmth means nothing when a blizzard is on the horizon.

[crash and burn. \[blane rekner\]](#)

[Nov 14, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** featuring a 'you came' Blane and a 'you called' hunter.

Blane is dry heaving. Their vision is blurry, spots dancing around the blurry objects in front of them. A bookshelf. An abandoned tablet. A hand that they know should be theirs, though it feels heavier than any limb in their body. It can't be theirs, can it?

They drag themselves to the wall, pressing their back against the peeling paint and soaking in the cold. A window, right above them. The outside world, just beyond this mixture of wood and plaster and whatever else was used to construct this damn building.

They fumble for their phone. They might pass out. They might just die here.

A green messaging app. Fingers tapping the last chat they had. Hands shaking as they slowly type out something they hope makes sense. A blue send button. Collapsing on the floor.

Blane curls in on themselves, knowing that no one would even think to enter this side of the Media Room—half the employees don't even know this section is here. Breathe in. Breathe out. Don't think. Don't spiral into thoughts that you know will only make things worse.

They don't know how much time passes until they hear footsteps coming.

Blane doesn't know who they called. They have few contacts and even fewer that they text, so whoever it is, it'll be someone they trust. Even Devereux has somehow made it on that list, though they're sure they're at the bottom of their texts—the last time the two spoke was because one was wondering where the other was. N knows about their panic attacks. It would be easy if it were them. They text their partner the most often out of everyone, though they have a feeling that N wasn't the last person they texted. K and Rylan—it wouldn't be them. Blane doesn't mind the two, but they're not particularly close. Which leaves...

You round the corner and see Blane on the floor, jacket draped over them like a blanket, body shivering despite it. It's not the greatest of covers, they'll admit, but it was the only one they had close enough to grab before the panic attack hit them.

Before the world came crashing down and they thought about how fucking shitty everything is. Everything has gone to fucking shit and they're no exception.

Their throat clogs up.

You approach them like you would a stray animal, hand outreached and posture unsure. Blane watches you, knowing how pathetic they look and how easy it would be to scare you off like this. The cruel and cold Blane Rekner, brought to their knees by anxiety and self-deprecating thoughts.

"Blane," you whisper.

They cringe at the noise, curling in deeper. You hesitate but move in closer, your hand slowly coming closer until it touches their bicep. Blane's eyes flutter at the contact. Something to ground them.

Something to make them feel less like they're floating outside their body and more like they're... here. With you.

"Blane."

Blane looks up, vision clearing. They hate the worry on your face. Hate knowing that they caused it and hate seeing their reflection in your eyes. They shrink away at the sight of themselves, but you hold tight. Grounded again. An anchor pulling their boat back to shore.

"You..." Blane breaks off, their voice hoarse. You wait patiently, eyes imploring but kind. They wish they had eyes like that. "You came. You came for me."

You smile. "Of course. You called."

Two words. A simple nine letters but it's their undoing. Blane, who normally hates close contact and physical touch, collapses into you. Your chest is warm as their body shakes, sobs wrecking their body. No tears ever come, but they know that if they fell, you wouldn't judge them. Not here, not ever.

"You came," Blane repeats. It plays in their head like a mantra.

*You came. You came. You came.*

They didn't have anyone like this before they transferred to this institute. And when they did, it was only one person. They never expected that number to ever grow. It'd be egotistical for them to ever think so but selfishly, they wished. They wished and it came true.

You stroke their hair, the touch more soothing than they'll ever admit. "You called, Blane. I'm here. I'll always be here if you call."

Blane lets their defences fall. The world falls back into place but the part of them that they always suppress when they see you comes crashing down. Feelings that have been there for ages but ones that they know they'll never have the courage to act on.

*I really do like you. It's okay if you don't like me back but... do you like me too?*

They don't dwell on the idea for too long. For now, they focus on your embrace and your soft murmurs and your presence. Because you came, you came and that's more than enough.

## CHAPTER 09.

Things don't get any more normal after work. I sit across from Rylan as they lay on the couch, their head on the ground and their feet kicked in the air.

The exact opposite of how one should sit on a couch, which has been mentioned by K multiple times.

"All of the blood is going to rush to your head," they protested.

Rylan grinned cheekily. "Blood? My favourite snack."

K had only shot the half-vampire a glare. The longer Rylan spent hanging there, the more K's brows would furrow. When all their attempts to get Rylan to sit in a normal position were ignored—likely because Rylan found it funny how much it annoyed K—K crossed their arms and declared they would not be responsible for whatever happened.

We've been here ever since.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES



[unconventional seating.](#)

[Nov 17, 2022](#)

[update 42.](#)

[Nov 21, 2022](#)

### WHAT I DID.

sorry for the late update everyone! work had been crazy lately and with me entering exam season, i've been finding it difficult to balance everything in my life. but you didn't come here for updates on my life, so i'll tell you what's been happening with *when twilight strikes*.

as it stands, i haven't written on the project in two days now. not because i don't want to, but because i just haven't found time. i tend to write at night after i've 'finished' all my homework for the day and recently i've just been crashing. as you can tell by the small sneak peek below (and the one posted the other day), however, i've hit a section of the chapter where you get to interact with K and Rylan, which is always exciting. i said last week that they won't have as big of a role so i'm going to try my best to make them as prominent as possible in this scene. it's a decent length (or is planned to be) so you won't be without them for too long this chapter.

as the story progresses and we enter the middle portion of the game, more and more elements are being introduced which can be difficult to balance. i've stated before that my characters are my pride and joy, which means i need them to change as we move forward. Blane isn't just the two-dimensional asshole that you meet in chapter one—they have a heart and display their vulnerability when the hunter takes a knife for them. Rylan isn't just the flirty and sarcastic character that lifts the tension in the room when things get rough—they struggle with demons themselves and have more passion than they let on sometimes. i have little experience with professional writing so this is definitely a challenge for me, but it's one that i accept and hope proves worth it when we get to the end.

aside from that, there's not much to share. i know my updates tend to be rambles of (near) nonsense, but know that i'm continually chipping away at the story and trying my best to post content here for you all. hope you're all doing well <3

## STATS.

357,587 words (+1.44k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

They didn't have all the details, however, so Rylan, being the nosy person that they are, demanded details before we had even gotten settled.

### DELETED SCENE.

Blane pauses. They don't say anything right away, but after a moment of waiting, they say, "I need to blow off some steam."

"And you have to do that here?" I ask.

I can tell that Blane wants to lash out at me for the remark, but they manage to pull it in. Curiously, I watch as they suck in a sharp breath as if the coming words are hard for him to get out. And then they utter the last words I expected they to say.

"Spar with me."

"What?"

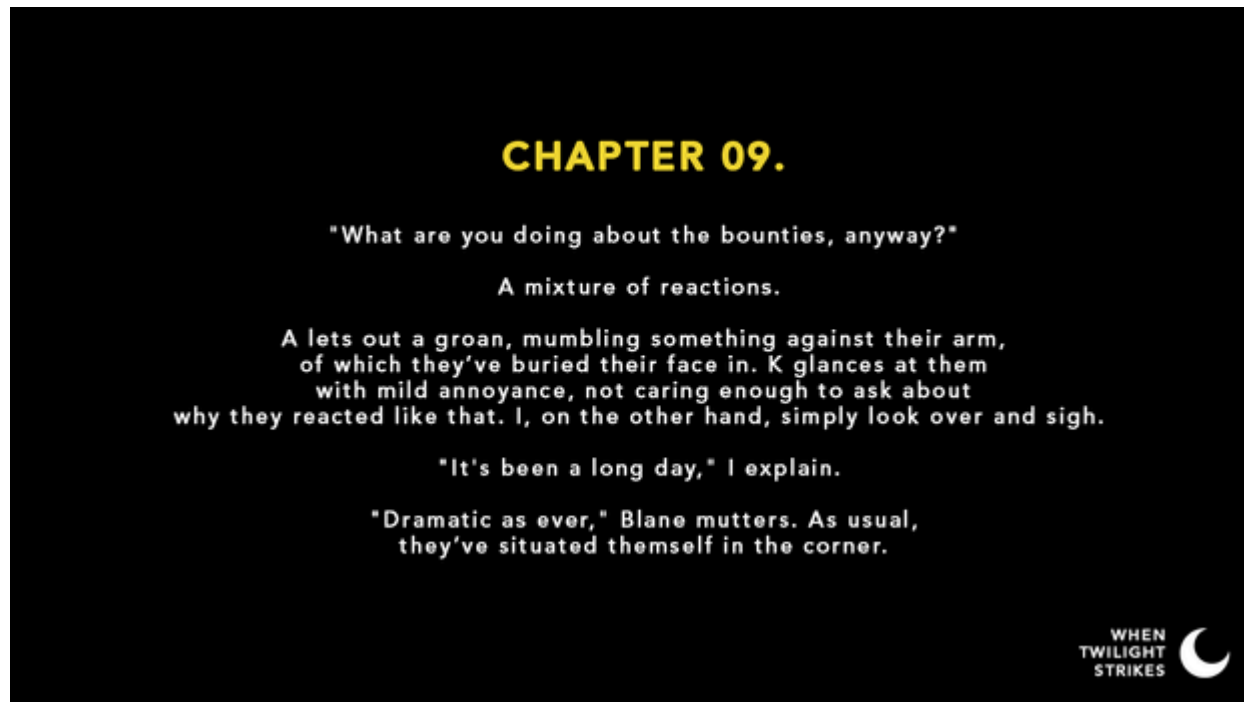
"You're in the training room, which means you're here to fight," Blane replies, voice monotoned. They shift the wooden stick again, holding it away from their body. "I need to blow off some steam, so I'm offering you a match."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[deleted scene \(chapter three\).](#)

[Nov 22, 2022](#)

an alternative beginning to the training room scene with Blane. initially scrapped because i thought they came off too aggressive, though looking back i don't see as much of an issue with it. if anything, the current version is ruder haha.



[oh, dramatics.](#)

[Nov 27, 2022](#)

[update 43.](#)

[Nov 27, 2022](#)

## WHAT I DID.

i'm going to make this short and quick: not much has happened. mentally, i'm not doing the greatest which makes writing this in my 'free' time even more difficult since i've been spending that sleeping instead. hence the short word count update. things might get even shorter for the next couple of weeks as i switch gears to write the holiday shorts i've been promoting. i know many of you would tell me that i should just scrap it, lest i put too much pressure on myself, but i think this'll be a good change of tempo

for me. i've spoken a lot about how multitasking works well for my brain, so i'm hoping this cures me of whatever funk i'm in right now.

in terms of the content i wrote this week, i'm still in the same scene as i was last week. i've simply written more remarks from Rylan and eye rolls from K and baffled interruptions from A. and while i adore these core traits and behaviours, at some point throughout it all, i started to feel like everything was super repetitive. but then i started thinking, a lot of things in interactive fiction tend to be repetitive. when you're writing five possible responses for one question, things are going to overlap. so from my point of view, it may feel like i've seen the characters do something a dozen times but from an audience point of view, they may have only seen it once. twice, at the very most. that's what editing is there for: to delete and change things that you missed the first time. i may hate doing it, but there's a reason i don't skip it.

apologies for how lacking this update is. i didn't want to skip posting completely but with so little progress, i don't know if there's much for me to say. if i get around to starting the shorts this week, i will talk about that in my next update and how it's coming along. of course, everyone in the twilight and midnight tiers will get early access before the public <3

## STATS.

360,250 words (+2.66k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

A crease appears in A's brow. "I can't tell if that's genius or cliché."

[a delirious state.](#) [\[a devereux\]](#)

[Nov 29, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** featuring a 'you came' A and a 'you called' hunter.

A likes to think they have a pretty strong immune system. Pretty strong, because every so often, there comes a time when A goes to bed perfectly fine and wakes up feeling like they've trekked through hell and back. This is one of those times.

It's five in the morning on a Saturday. A Saturday, for God's sake. They shouldn't be up, having only gone to bed a mere three hours ago (they were trying to beat the next level on this new game they got) but here they are, throat on fire and limbs aching. They let out a groan and reach for their phone, fumbling around until they hit the smooth surface of the device.

It's entirely too bright.

They check over the few notifications they got while unconscious and settle back into their blanket. Mainly spam emails and a coupon for their favourite clothing store, in which they'd been eyeing a jacket for a while now. Any other time, they would have made plans to go today. But alas...

"You're not sick," A mumbles. "You're not sick. You're going to go back to sleep and wake up perfectly fine."

It's not very convincing. Still, they pull themselves up long enough to head to their kitchen and swallow a tablet, hoping that the tiny pill will somehow magically cure them over the next couple of hours.

It doesn't.

When A awakes next, they're sweating, their blanket on the floor somewhere after they kicked it in their sleep and their pillows somehow sideways in position to where they first started. They don't even have the energy to even look at their phone, which, for someone as addicted as them, is rare.

The sun is up, so it must be around eight or nine in the morning. Painfully, they shuffle around until their face is close to their device. Their eyes flutter shut as they speak.

"Hey Siri," A rasps. "Text [the hunter] 'I think I'm sick.'"

They wait for the confirmation before turning around, burying their face into something soft. Their head is ringing and they feel like they're going to throw up—no, scratch that. They don't have enough food in their stomach to get anything out. They're so fucking delirious. Maybe water would help. They want water so bad. They vaguely remember leaving a bottle on their desk, but that's all the way across the room. They're scared that if they try and stand up, they'll faint. Not exactly the kind of sight they want you to see when you enter their apartment.

Wait... Why would you come visit them?

Their forehead scrunches in confusion before they suddenly remember that they texted you. Ah. How presumptuous of them to think that you'll come inside. They'll have to listen out for the knock on their door if you drop by with some soup. They're confident you'll do that, at least.

A flips over. Their blankets are colder on this side—a blessing when they're burning up. They hear themselves sigh into the cotton before they drift off again, too tired to even feel guilty about sleeping in.

"A?"

You sound like you're underwater. They suppose that's fair, considering their dream is of the two of you scuba diving. They don't know how you got there. One moment you were at work, stressing about an assignment and the levels Caine created to go alongside it—almost like Mario, except much more confusing—and the next, you were in the ocean.

"A."

It takes them a while to realize that you can't speak underwater. A pulls themselves out of their sleep, blinking groggily at you as you hover over their bed, brows knit with concern. You hold a glass of water in one hand and a bottle of medicine in the other.

"[Hunter]?" A blinks again, wondering if this is somehow still part of their dream. They reach out and touch your arm, surprised at how cool it is.

You crack a smile, pushing the glass into A's hands. "Good morning."

A looks down at the water, your hand still lightly gripping the side in case they drop it. With the state they're in, they're surprised they haven't yet. Their other hand lays on their mattress, trembling from chills. They pull their blanket closer to their chest.

"You... You came?"

"You called," you answer.

As if the answer is that simple.

A stares at you, bewildered as you make room for yourself on their bed. You don't seem real. You shouldn't even be inside. You shouldn't be near them. You'll get sick. They're going to pass this horrible illness onto you. You should have stayed outside and called them to let them know you were here. You should—

"A," you prompt. Your voice is kind, eyes flickering over A like you're soaking them in. They don't know whether to hide or ask you for a hug. As it is, they do neither, staring at you blankly. "When was the last time you ate?" you ask. "You can't take these on an empty stomach."

A racks their brain, remembering how they felt like vomiting at some point in the night but not being able to because nothing was there. They try to quiet their thoughts, focusing on one idea at a time so they can reply to your question. It takes too long.

But their silence is enough answer for you.

You sigh and shake your head, but not without affection. "I'll go get you something. You stay here, drink that water I gave you." A hand comes up to flatten A's hair, smoothing it against their forehead. "Go back to sleep, okay? I'll take care of you."

"But—"

"But nothing. Don't worry, A. I'm here."

As if they could ever worry when you're next to them. The words envelop them like that much-needed hug they wanted a few moments ago. Per your instructions, they lay back down after taking large gulps

of their water before. When they wake up next, you're sitting on their bed with a bowl of soup on their nightstand. It's at that moment they find themselves thinking how lucky they are to have you.

[update 44.](#)

[Dec 5, 2022](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

fun fact about me this week, i got sick. i live in canada, so best believe everyone around me is slowly getting ill and passing it on as they recover. unfortunately for me, despite how much i brag about my tough immune system, i caught that very bug. as it is, i spent a lot of time in bed rather than doing my assignments or writing, which explains, for the millionth time, why my update is so small. apologies.

i don't have much to say about chapter nine. i'm very much in the same spot as i am last week, just slightly farther along. still the same section, still the same scene—still the same choice set that i didn't finish last week, even. i'm currently writing something that, surprise surprise, wasn't planned initially. still, i'm very excited with how it's turning out and like the change of direction. it sets up things for book two a little and gives more insight into the lore of the world, which is something i tend not to focus on too much (a mistake? probably). as i'm sure you've learned, i'm a very chaotic writer. sometimes i wonder how this story is functioning as it is.

in other news, i started writing my lovely holiday shorts, coming out possibly by the end of the month or early january. i've changed ideas for it multiple times and i'm sure that it will evolve as i go, as most things i write do, but for now, i'm enjoying the little intermission. i don't want to overwork myself too much, so like the previous shorts i wrote, it will be more story-based rather than choice-based. this simply makes it easier on me when writing, since the branches for choices tend to take up a majority of my time and i simply do not have that luxury right now.

the one exception i will make, however, is branching off to have alone time with an ro of your choice. as always, these interactions can be platonic or romantic, though if it's the latter, i'm thinking of treating you all with a scene that takes place after the hunter and ro have established their feelings for each other. none of that pining stuff, we're going straight for the hand-holding and kisses and back rubs and soft smiles. i've teased you all long enough with the prospects of relationships, might as well give you somewhat of a reward.

## **STATS.**

362,134 words (+1.88k)

## SNEAK PEEK.

"It's really nothing to stress about—unlike our situation with Atheron." They wiggle their eyebrows at K. "See how I changed topics? Wasn't that smooth?"

### HOLIDAY SPECIAL.

It wasn't supposed to be a big thing. K casually mentioned  
one night that they were thinking of hosting a get-together at their place for the New Year.  
No gift exchange, no cooking elaborate meals and dressing up in fancy  
hundred-dollar outfits—just everyone in one place, watching the fireworks  
from their penthouse balcony as the previous  
came to a close and the new one ushered in.

K's fatal mistake, however, was mentioning this in front of Rylan.  
If they had told anyone else, we wouldn't have batted an eye.  
We made impromptu visits to K's all the time. They'd long gotten used  
to opening their door with a flat "Again?" before letting us in with a sigh.  
And while Rylan does the same thing (sometimes by just showing up on their balcony, which,  
I have yet to figure out how they do), they're a lot more... passionate, about parties.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[a fatal mistake.](#)

[Dec 8, 2022](#)

[lovely. \[k de vries\]](#)

[Dec 12, 2022](#)

**synopsis:** featuring a 'you came' K and a 'you called' hunter.

**note:** sorry for the radio silence this week! exams have been kicking my ass and i have written a grand total of 0 words for the new chapter and holiday special, so i thought it best to skip the progress update. promise it'll be back next week.

K de Vries wasn't used to having contacts in their phone. In fact, for a long time, they weren't used to having a phone period. It was only when the world began assuming everyone had a phone that they finally forced themselves to buy one. They aren't exactly opposed to technology, but when it comes to communication, they prefer sending letters by mail.

But they can admit texting has its benefits.

Take now for example. With a glass of red wine in their hand, K scrolls through their contacts list with a hazy vision. They're tipsy, they think. A fact that they'd be loathed to admit in front of anyone else, but with a whole bottle guzzled down, they definitely don't think they're sober.

The phone is ringing before they even realize they pressed call.

"Hello?"

K blinks. "[Surname]. I'm surprised you're awake."

Your laugh echoes through the phone. "It's eight o'clock on a Saturday, K. Not exactly bedtime."

You pause, giving K time to soak in your voice. They sink into their sofa almost immediately, partly ashamed of how much the sound soothes them but mostly accepting of it. There are worse things to be comforted by, they think.

"I thought you had a client. What happened to that?"

K takes another swig of their wine. "Canceled."

"And so you're..."

"Drinking in celebration?" K supplies.

"That's not what I was going to say."

"Unfortunate, because that's the correct answer."

You pause again and K can almost see your eye roll. They've been doing that a lot lately: imagining you when you're not there. You're stuck in their head while they're both awake and asleep, hauntingly beautiful, treacherous to the heart.

A familiar order at the café has them turning their head, wondering if you're there. A scarf they spot at the department store reminds them of you, making them think how lovely it'd look around your neck. An incoming call will make them shoot straight up in their seat, leaning over to see the contact only to be disappointed when it's not you. Except when it is, of course.

"Can I come over?" you ask.

K blinks. Talking to you has sobered them up, but they feel like they've missed a vital part of the conversation. They don't remember how you could have gotten to this topic. "It's late."

"And?"

"And it's impractical. I don't have anything prepared for you to stay over. My penthouse is a mess and I have no ingredients to make us breakfast tomorrow. You can't simply invite yourself over whenever you want, [Surname]. That's what Villanueva does."

"They get away with it," you point out. "Are you making excuses, K?"

That shuts them up. To be haunted by someone as lovely as you may be a gift, in some ways, but it can also be a trap. To be known so deeply inside and out, to have their tells recited back to them as easily as one would read a grocery list, it frightens them.

"Can I come over?" you ask.

K debates it. "If you want."

"Do you *want* me to come over?"

That, K doesn't know how to answer. You both know what the answer is, but as badly as K wants to say yes, they're having difficulty expressing it. Emotions used to be a weakness for them. To allow themselves to show them so blatantly now goes against every rule they set for themselves. Five years ago, if they ever felt something as strong as what they feel for you now, they'd bury it so deep they'd forget about it. But you taught them something. When they fell for you and failed to keep everything down, they were reborn by the epiphany that feelings weren't so bad after all. Even if it's still not easy for them.

K swallows down their fears. "I want you to."

"Okay. See you soon."

"See you soon," they whisper.

You hang up with a hum of contentment.

By the time they hear you knock, K is humming themselves. They open the door with a smile, something they don't even realize they're doing until later. There was once a time when that smile would have hurt their muscles, but now, it merely aches like something in the distance, a faraway memory that they recall but no longer are.

"Hi," you greet.

"Hi." Their eyes rake over your silhouette, taking in the small bag you have slung over your shoulder and the phone that you carry in your right hand. "You came."

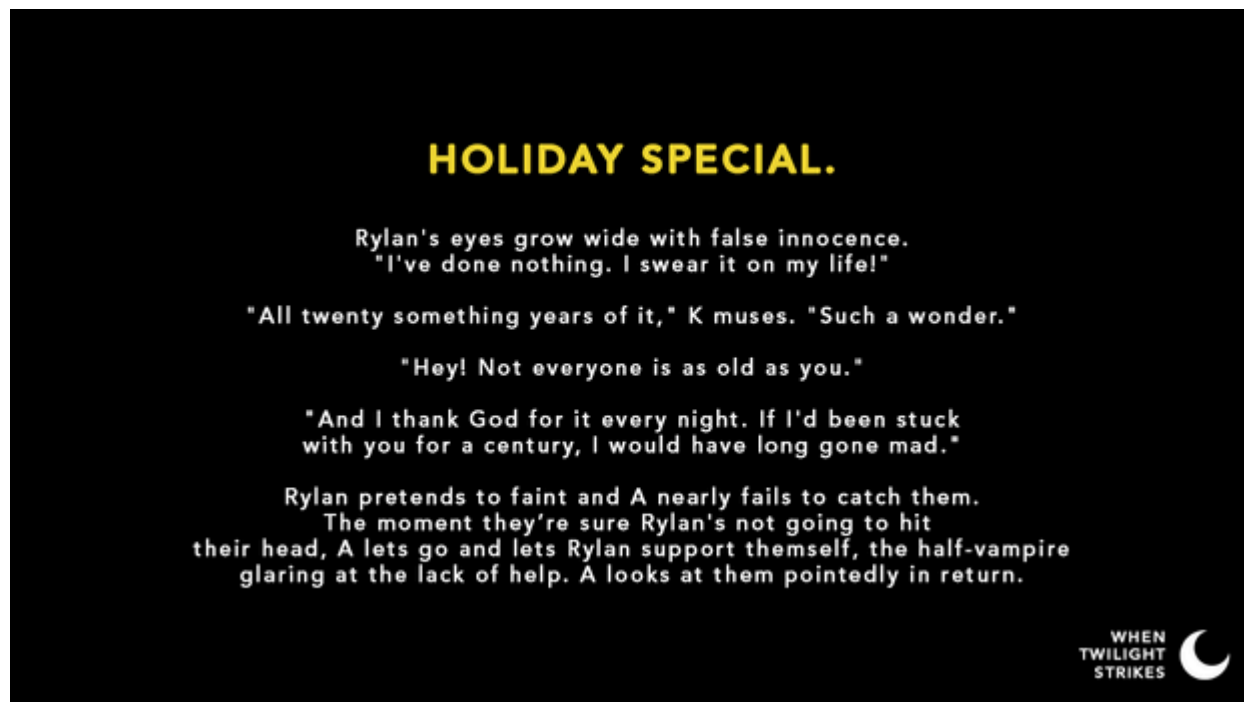
"Of course. You called." Your smile slowly turns into a smirk. "Besides, I never give up the opportunity to visit your penthouse. What would I do without that skylight?"

K doesn't answer, their eyes now roaming your face. Without a word, they lean in and press a chaste kiss to your lips, smiling once more when you chase them. It's not enough, but for now, it'll hold them until they can get—or give you—more.

"Yes, what would you do without that skylight?" they tease.

You make a face and K lets themselves laugh, stepping aside to let you in. "Come on. The night is young."

The saying is almost as bright as your eyes.



[just found family things.](#)

[Dec 18, 2022](#)

[update 45.](#)

[Dec 19, 2022](#)

WHAT I DID.

hey, so. i've been a bit quiet on here and i apologize. last week was one of the busiest of my life and i had no time to do anything but study and write my exams (all 5 of them, mind you). but as of five minutes ago, i am finally done and ready to get back to writing for leisure, rather than for school.

first on the agenda, the upcoming special. i don't have an estimate for how long it'll be, but i have the entire thing plotted out in my mind. i have a couple of days left before i go home for the holidays, so hopefully i'll be able to bust out the entire thing before then. my plan is to have it posted here in december and release it publicly in january. no confirmation on whether i'll sneak a kiss into the special or not but even without it, i think it'll be fun to play. the short is fluffy and involves the gang fooling around as usual and allows you to have one on one time with an oc of your choice at a stage where your romance (if there is any) has developed a little beyond pining from afar. those who are on Blane's and K's routes will finally get some food, whereas those on A's, N's and Rylan's routes can enjoy a sneak peek of the content that will be showcased more in book two and beyond.

speaking of books, i haven't touched chapter nine in a hot minute. not because i don't want to but because i couldn't. my priority is first and foremost the special, since it revolves around new years and would be extremely awkward to release in like, march. but i think the forced break has been good to me. i love my world and my characters but the act of constantly writing really wears you down. i don't listen when my asks tell me to take a break or when comments tell me that it's okay to not always be writing. to put it bluntly, i feel guilty. that being said, the time away from the main story has made me realize i shouldn't. i've always known that and i can't say that feeling will ever go away, but as of right now, i feel okay. better. when i finally get back to chapter nine, it'll be with a fresh perspective and a brand new set of eyes that will hopefully make the story so much better than it already is. if all of you have stuck by my side for this long, i want to make it worth your while. thank you, thank you (and a special thank you for listening to me talk about this in practically every update there is. you're sick of me, i'm sure).

## **STATS (HOLIDAY SPECIAL).**

2159 words (+1690)

## **SNEAK PEEK.**

"Water, water. Order up," Rylan sings. Their voice comes somewhere on my left.

## DELETED SCENE.

The footsteps stop at my words, but not before I see Blane walk into view.  
Their jaw clicks when we make eye contact, green eyes glinting in the dim lighting.

"Of course you're already in here," they mutter under their breath.  
"As if you didn't have enough bonus points with Caine already."

A shoots them a look. "You're here too you know."

Blane doesn't seem amused at A's comment, expression cold as they answer, "And now we're leaving."

It's only then that I notice someone standing behind Blane.

N, though clearly having been listening, doesn't so much as budge. Casually, they glance up from a file they were flipping through—they must have picked it up off the ground—and raise an eyebrow at their partner.

"Less than a minute and you already want to get out of their presence," they muse. "That's got to be a new record for you."

Blane gives N a sharp look and walks out of the room, posture more tense than it was before they came in.  
N, for their part, sighs, watching Blane's silhouette as it disappears. Shaking their head, they hand me the file.

"This goes in the vampire pile."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[deleted scene \(chapter three\).](#)

[Dec 23, 2022](#)

originally meant to be an interlude to the training montage, in which the media room option, lab option and files option did not exist yet. for context, Blane and N are suggested to go sort out some files by Sebastian, not realizing A and the hunter have been told the same thing. i'd almost forgotten how hostile Blane was, haha.

[update 46.](#)

[Dec 26, 2022](#)

### WHAT I DID.

merry christmas and happy holidays everyone! hope everyone has had a lovely break spending time with their loved ones (or taking time for themselves, which, i argue is actually better). i know i've been a bit silent on this front this month but i promise that in january i'll be back on track.

i estimate that the holiday special will be up either friday or saturday (the 30th or 31st). it'll be released to the public a little after new year's day. i only have three more routes to write, which will be another six thousand words or so. intimidating? yes. but with fewer choices to write, this is a lot easier than

conquering chapter nine. it's coming along really nicely and i'm super excited to put it out. the romance scenes so far are so so wonderful and the platonic alternatives are the sweetest. i've only written A's and Blane's so far, which means N, K and Rylan are being worked on really soon.

timeline wise, i would place the shorts somewhere between book one and two, though it's not necessarily canon. it's mostly a fun little story that lets you get back into the world of *the midnight hours* and hang out with the gang again. nothing too serious, nothing intense. that being said, if you see some cheesy lines about found family, look away. to me, the new year is about reminiscing, which is why i used the story as a bit of a lens for a reflection of the year. i've seen so much growth in *when twilight strikes* in 2022 and i couldn't be more grateful. that's the other reason for this short: a gift to you. i sincerely hope you like it.

chapter nine, unfortunately, has seen no progress again. i'm really trying to get the special out in time since it's centered around new year's eve, which is why i've been avoiding the main story. call me out, i apologize. i will get back to it when i can <3

### **STATS (HOLIDAY SPECIAL).**

8116 words (+5957)

### **SNEAK PEEK.**

"Please don't make me spend the first few minutes of the new year wrapping you guys up in body bags."

[new year's special is up!!](#)

[Dec 30, 2022](#)

## NEW YEAR SPECIAL.

It wasn't supposed to be a big thing. One night, Kaia casually mentioned that she was thinking of hosting a get-together at their place for the New Year. No gift exchange, no cooking elaborate meals and dressing up in fancy hundred-dollar outfits—just everyone in one place, watching the fireworks from their penthouse balcony as the previous year came to a close and the new one was ushered in.

Kaia's fatal mistake, however, was mentioning this in front of Rylan. If she had told anyone else, no one would have batted an eye. We make impromptu visits to Kaia's all the time. She's long gotten used to opening their door with a flat "Again?" before letting us in with a sigh. And while Rylan does the same thing (sometimes by just showing up on her balcony, which, I have yet to figure out how she does), she's a lot more... passionate, about parties.

It was supposed to be a get-together, but the word is synonymous with party for Rylan. Which is why, when I arrive at Kaia's door and am greeted by Nikolas, my only response is my jaw on the floor.

It's not particularly impressive. I've seen IAOS gone crazier with their holiday parties, decking the ceiling with streamers and every table in sight with those terrifying Elf on the Shelf figures (Arden screamed when she opened her drawer one year and found one staring back at her) but for someone who was expecting nothing, this is quite the sight.

NEXT

THE  
MIDNIGHT  
HOURS 

as mentioned in my weekly updates, the new year's special is now up and running on the [midnight hours: shorts](#) page on itch.io!! the password is "newyearsamegang" (all lowercase, no spaces) to get into the page.

it's a brief but chaotic and fluffy little short and one that i'm very very proud of. a brief synopsis of the story goes as follows: the gang gathers at K's penthouse for a New Year celebration. what turns into a small get-together turns into a party that creates a thousand memories.

i won't be posting anything more until the new year but i hope everyone has a wonderful time with their loved ones. thank you so much for everything you've done for me in 2022. it means more to me than you'll ever know.

[throw me a life vest. \[rylan villanueva\]](#)

[Jan 7, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** featuring a 'you came' hunter and a 'you called' Rylan.

Contrary to popular belief, Rylan doesn't have many apps on their phone. They're not like A, who has a thousand games and no order to any of their home screens. No, Rylan has a singular page with a dozen or so apps, having gotten rid of junk like the iTunes store (because why the fuck would they ever purchase songs when Spotify exists?).

It's why they're so easy to reach. Does that mean they'll appear the moment they get the text? Definitely not. But if you text or call them, chances are they saw and simply chose to ignore it. Either that or they were away from their phone, which tends to be the other fifty percent of the time.

They don't ignore it this time.

The moment they get your text, they sit up straight on the asphalt, ignoring the pain shooting up their tailbone. They're on the roof as usual, laying with their back on the ground, face to the sky as they attempt to spot the stars hidden by the endless light pollution. They aren't disappointed. When it comes to things like these, they expect to be let down. When it comes to you, however, it's the opposite.

[name :)], 12:04am

are you awake?

can you come over

[name :)], 12:10am

nevermind. ignore that

But it's hard to ignore something that aches like this. Rylan rubs their hands over their eyes, wishing they'd seen the texts earlier. They forget that their 'Do Not Disturb' turns on after midnight. Stupid, really, when only after midnight are they brought alive.

They curse themselves all the way to your apartment, having long memorized the route by heart.

They take the stairs two steps at a time and arrive at your door front with their hands on their knees, catching their breath. For once, they've decided to enter the conventional way and knock. Breaking in is fun and all, but the last thing they need is to be reported.

"[name]?" Rylan calls. They knock again, two raps of their knuckles against wood that ring hollow throughout the empty space behind. They strain to hear if you're awake but the silence is deafening.

After a moment's hesitation, they take out their lockpicks and begin picking your door. It's quick work, only taking them six seconds before they successfully make it in. If you had a house with a spare key under a plant pot, they wouldn't have had to resort to doing this. Therefore, it's your fault—and even more so if they get caught.

See?

One glance around your living room tells Rylan that you're not there. The lights are off and the blankets on your couch are used, indicating that you left and plan on organizing in the morning.

They're about to make their way down to your bedroom when they hear the flushing of a toilet and running water. A few seconds later, you emerge from your washroom, blinking blearily at the darkness around you—and then at the silhouette standing in your apartment. You jump before relaxing when you realize who it is.

"Rylan. I... What are you—"

They crack a smile. "Hey."

You glance at your window. "Did you climb through? I'm sorry, I locked it. I thought I told you that you didn't need to come. I wasn't... I wasn't expecting any company."

"Front door," Rylan explains. "I picked your lock, I hope you don't mind. You sounded a little stressed over text, I wanted to come by." They fiddle with their fingers as they speak. They don't know why they're suddenly so nervous. "I didn't want to leave you alone."

"Alone..." The word echoes between the two of you. "I would have been okay."

"Would you have?"

Your hesitation is all Rylan needs. One moment you're standing there valiantly, trying to mask your emotions and the next, you're stumbling forward into Rylan's arms, body shaking as it catches up to the feelings you've been hiding so long.

Though sudden, Rylan finds that they're not surprised. They mutter sweet words as you clutch onto them, stroking your back in what they hope is a soothing motion.

"Rylan, I—"

"Shh. You don't need to say anything. I'm here."

"But I—"

"[name]."

You pause, taking in a breath as you glance at them. You look exhausted, eyes rimmed with red and lip trembling, yet Rylan can't help but think about how beautiful you are. Inside and out. Through and through. They wonder how lucky they have to be to cross paths with you.

"You came," you whisper. Your hands tighten on their body, as if trying to convince yourself that they're real. "You came, even though I said you didn't have to."

Rylan feels themselves smile. "Of course I did. You called."

It's the only response you need to hear.

The two of you stand there for a couple of more minutes until Rylan eventually pulls you to bed. You pass out almost instantly, but not before beckoning Rylan to join you. They wake with your scent enveloping them like a hug, questioning who exactly saved who last night.

[update 47.](#)

[Jan 9, 2023](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

first update of the new year, how is everyone doing? i myself am still struggling with a bit of writer's block, but i've made more progress on chapter nine than i have in a while, so that's definitely something to celebrate. i did my normal thing of writing as much of the chapter i can by winging it in december and in january, finally decided it was time for me to map everything out. great decision, honestly, because i finally know what is happening. as big of a mouth i have, i can't say too much, but know that things are moving much smoother now.

that being said, i think i've made more work for myself. surprise surprise, guess who came up with a plot that creates ten times more writing than i would have had to write before? me. i'll state time and time again how much i adore branches despite the effort they take and i will never rescind that statement. it's been a while since i've had one of these kinds of splits, so i'm hoping that everything works out well and doesn't feel repetitive (much like these updates, which i struggle to write only because i worry and often forget what i wrote previously). if all else fails, i'll scrap the whole thing and make it a bonus scene for those of you on the midnight tier (fingers crossed that it doesn't get to that point though).

what's nice about this chapter is i'm diving into things i have not touched on before and going further into things i have briefly mentioned. mostly, i'm developing different character traits that will (hopefully) make my ros feel more fleshed out and like real people, rather than the standard npc that i'm trying to stay away from. some may be more obvious and easier to achieve (on common routes, for example) and others may be more hidden in branches and choices, but rest assured that this development will happen throughout and be showcased on more than one occasion. some characters like [A] are easier because they're so directly involved in everything the hunter does, being their partner, whereas [N] can be a challenge because they have less of a reason to talk to the hunter outside of a group setting. regardless, the challenge is fun...

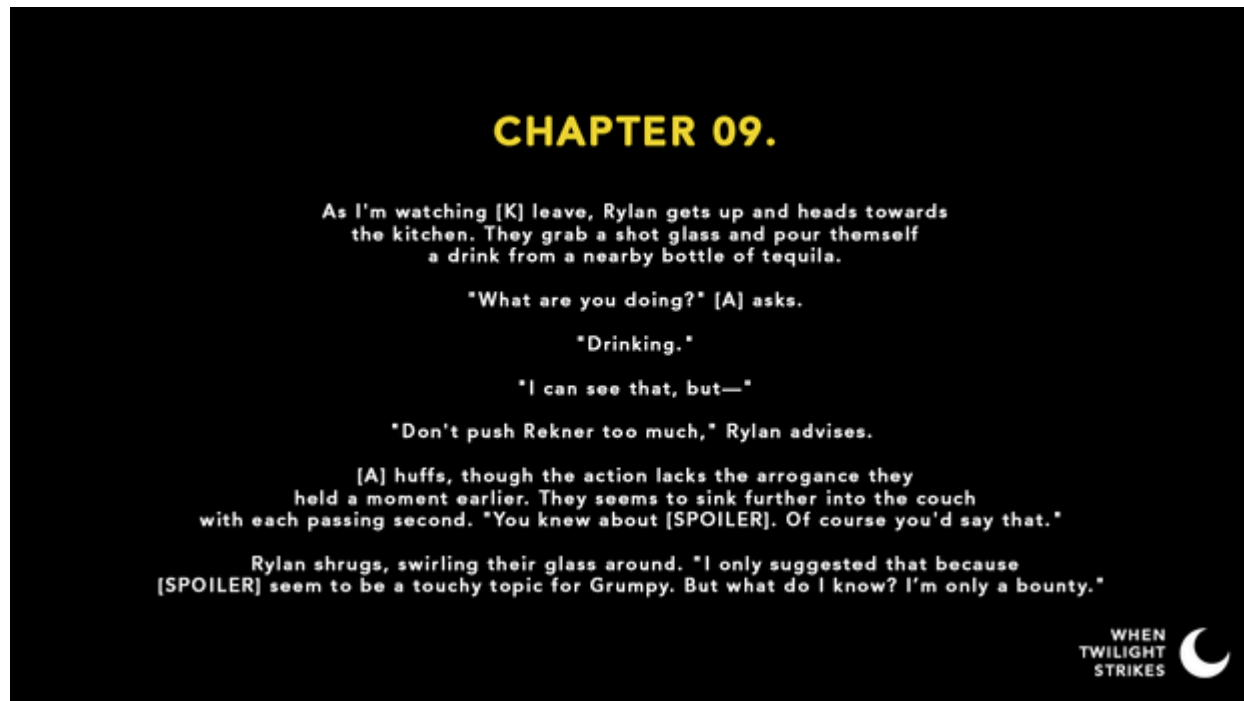
sometimes.

## STATS.

364,634 words (+2500)

## SNEAK PEEK.

[A] has the decency to look guilty, though they make no move to take back their words.



[\[spoiler\]](#).

[Jan 12, 2023](#)

[update 48.](#)

[Jan 17, 2023](#)

## WHAT I DID.

funny how i came down with a bad cold the next day i meant to post this. karma, am i right? i'll keep this relatively short because i'm currently dying, but there's not much to update on since last week.

with school being busier than i thought, i'm slowly trekking through the new chapter and trying to fit in time for it as much as possible. i'm currently at a "fork in the road," so to speak, and am working on one of three branches that will be for your choosing. i had my doubts about making this for a couple of reasons. one, because i was afraid that my story already has a million branches and this would grow repetitive. two, because i didn't know if it would move my story anywhere and turn up to be filler, meaning i'd just scrap thousands of words for no reason. and three, well, just pure fear that it wouldn't be interesting. as i write my first branch, however, i'm glad that i made the decision. it's a path specific to Blane and i love being able to explore their character more, since, in my opinion, their development is one of the more complex ones. the other two branches are A & N and K & Rylan, if any of you were wondering. you won't be able to do all three, so choose based on what you're interested in and go back to other routes on other playthroughs if you so desire.

after this, it'll be onto a scene that i've talked about before—not in detail but briefly mentioned—where your minds (and mine) will hopefully be refreshed from all the constant talking and plan-making. caine's missing? oh, whatever. let's have some fun.

## STATS.

367,589 words (+2955)

## SNEAK PEEK.

"You can use IAOS's insurance to get your hearing checked if you're unsure."

"Very funny."

## DELETED SCENE.

To my surprise, K is waiting for me when I step outside. Their eyes flick over my face, not out of concern, but out of routine more than anything. They pay no attention to Mirai behind them, despite her capturing most of the eyes in the room.

I shift my gaze to her as she unplugs the music and announces: "Night's over. Everyone out."

Outside, the shouts are increasing, sounding more violent by the second.

"You made it out alive," [K] comments.

"Are you surprised?"

[K]'s gaze lands on the flask in my hand. They seem to register that it's not a drink, but whether they recognize it or not is harder to tell. "If I am, it's a testament to Mirai, not you."

"I'm flattered."

The room is clearing out around us. People are trickling out of the entrance like a leak, dwindling the numbers from fifty to thirty to a dozen—but [K] and I don't make any move to leave.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[deleted scene \(chapter seven\).](#)

[Jan 18, 2023](#)

chapter seven was initially extremely difficult to write. i had a lot of plans for the separating branches (stay in the vip room or check out the commotion) but all of them fell through. this is one of the more minor changes, where the hunter exited the room after their conversation with Mirai, rather than the ro coming in. to follow up, i had created the choice of staying to snoop or following Mirai, where the former would lead to a personal one-on-one conversation with the ro of your choice, sitting on the ground in Mirai's private room.

i ended up scrapping the idea because one, my writer's block and two, because the snooping felt too similar to what had already happened in chapter four. i like what i did instead with the whole 'there's someone coming, quick hide' thing, but it'd be interesting to see where things would've went if i stuck with my original idea.

[all in your head. \[n alves\]](#)

[Jan 20, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** featuring a 'you came' N and a 'you called' hunter.

**content warnings:** anxiety/panic attacks

**note:** so sorry it took me so long to finish this five part series. hopefully you're not sick of it yet. that being said, this drabble is probably the saddest because i got so in my head about it. N is okay, i promise. they just need some hugs <3

N Alves can usually keep it together.

They're used to having to deal with stuff on their own, a skill they've had to develop being the middle child. Their older sibling was never home, their younger too busy captivating the attention of their parents to see what N was going through. Their parents barely seemed to remember they existed at some points, which forced them to mature at a much faster rate than any other child should have.

Usually. That's the keyword there.

Because N is getting anxious and they've barely even stepped out of their desk. They adore their apartment, but it gets lonely sometimes. Radar can only be a distraction for so long. The long stretches

of silence, the white noise that filters in their ears as they absently hear life move on around them outside—it makes them sick to their stomach. For once, for once in their life, they want to be heard.

They grapple for their phone. They're suddenly nauseous. They can't go back to their apartment tonight. Normally, they'd request to stay at Blane's, but their partner is currently at an appointment and the thought of lingering outside Blane's door is almost as bad as staying alone at their place.

Without thinking, they pull up the next contact on their list.

**[name !!], 5:07pm**

did you leave iaos yet?

**[alvesssssssss], 5:09pm**

just about. what's up?

N chews their lip. It'd be such a burden to drag you all the way back here. They hate being a bother to people. Is their anxiety enough reason to get you to come back? Maybe, no. Maybe they should leave you alone. They annoy you as much as it is. Surely you'll—

Their phone buzzes again.

**[alvesssssssss], 5:10pm**

i'm barely a block away if you want me to come back

**[alvesssssssss], 5:14pm**

N?

actually, do you want to meet for dinner?

They blink at their screen.

That's the thing about this. Time doesn't exist when they're having an anxiety attack. They'd stood there for five minutes zoning out, staring into space, numb to the vibration in their hand. They likely would have been there longer had you not double-texted. Triple.

They don't know what to do. They need to stop you before you waste your time coming here. And if you make it before that, they'll smile and shake their head, excusing themselves by saying they were in a weird mood. They're not supposed to be a bother to anyone, after all.

But dinner. Dinner doesn't sound so bad.

Dinner. Dinner alone at their apartment. Dinner with Radar sitting beside them, with the TV on in the background and voices droning on about some shit they don't care about. Dinner—

"N?"

Fuck. They've done it again.

N's eyes adjust to the sudden light. You've flicked on the spare light that they'd turned off, wanting a dimmer atmosphere to work into the night. What time is it?

5:19.

Barely past the normal working hours. On nights when they didn't want to go home, they used to stay longer. The only reason they'd come back was for Radar. N always felt so guilty when their dog ran up to greet them, knowing they'd kept him waiting longer than usual.

"[name]?"

"Hey."

They still can't tell if you're real. "Hey."

"You didn't answer my text." You nod towards the phone in N's hand. "How long have you been standing there?"

N glances around. They must have tidied up their desk while lost in their head, because their laptop is shut off and their papers are back in their respective files. It's been a while since they've had it this bad. All those weeks of bottling things up have gotten to them.

They force themselves to smile. "Not that long. Why did you come?"

The look you give them nearly sends them to their knees. It's accusatory but empathetic, confused and yet so solemn that they almost wince being on the other end of it.

"Sounded like you needed me," you whisper.

N doesn't bother denying it. "How could you tell?"

You take a step closer. Slowly, giving N enough time to pull away, you reach for their hands, folding over them with confidence as you tug them towards you.

"I know you, N. I know when you're feeling your best and when you're not." Your lips quirk into a sad smile. "You've been acting strange all day. I wanted to ask you about it, but I didn't want to push. You can talk to me. You know that, right?"

N ducks their head. Yes, you've always said that. They know. They know, they know.

But some voice in their head is telling them that isn't how this works. The middle child. They're supposed to be invisible. They're not supposed to have any problems. They're Blane's safety net, the person everyone goes to when they need help. They can't help anyone if they have issues themselves.

But who is their lifeline? Who is their safety net? Who who who whowhowhowwho—

"N."

Your voice brings them back to reality.

"Dinner's on me, okay?" you tell them. You must recognize what's happening, because your eyes soften. "If you want, we can talk about it after you've got some food in your stomach. Or I can tell you what chaos [A] got into today if that sounds better."

"Sure."

You smile and begin to lead the way out. N stares at your back for a moment, hesitating. For once, their head isn't telling them that you're leaving. For once, their head understands that you're waiting for them. It makes their heart start to slow to a normal pace again.

"[name]?" they blurt out.

You turn. "Yeah?"

N swallows. "Thanks for coming."

The look on your face is radiant.

"Of course."

## CHAPTER 09.

"Why are you so insistent on being here?" they ask. Ask, not demand, because, for once in their life, I don't know if Blane has the energy to be angry with me right now. Exhausted is one thing, exasperated another—but Blane is neither of those.

"Because."

"Because what?" Blane prompts.

My tongue goes dry. I could tell [A] wanted to ask me the same question when I told them I was going to check on Blane. Why I'm here is a question that even I can't answer, too riddled with complex emotions and natural instinct to be understood.

"I don't know," I admit.

Blane glances to their left, staring at themselves in the mirror. They look no different than they did in the living room. No red-rimmed eyes, no trembling breath or visible signs of discomfort.

"You don't know," Blane echoes.

"Not good enough of an answer for you?"

"I'd barely call that an answer to begin with."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[mirror mirror on the wall.](#)

[Jan 22, 2023](#)

[update 49.](#)

[Jan 23, 2023](#)

### WHAT I DID.

hope everyone is doing well! for my part, i've been feeling relatively better since last week which is a relief, to say the least. i know my word counts have been smaller than my updates last year, but i'm glad that i was able to write a little more this time around.

like last week, i'm still chipping away at Blane's branch. surprise surprise. it's taken me a lot longer than i thought, but i think the scene will be worth it overall. i've managed to incorporate both character development for Blane and plot development in it, so regardless of whether you choose this route, it'll be worth something to the story. this branch has Blane at a very vulnerable point—the most vulnerable you've seen yet (and will see for at least a couple more chapters). i think that's what makes writing it so fun. i often get in their head for drabbles and, of course, i know their backstory for the sake of foreshadowing and things, but i've yet to reach this point in the actual game. all will be revealed in due

time. and while i desperately want to write Blane's pov for this scene, it'll give too much away. maybe i'll write it as a drabble and post it here one day.

my goal for this week is to finish Blane's branch and move onto my second one. which one, exactly? i haven't decided yet, but i'm leaning toward writing the one with K and Rylan, just for a change of pace. A and N's branch connects a lot to Blane's, so it'll be nice to switch things up. i'm eager to get back to the bickering duo—even more so because i have plans for a more serious Rylan in this scene. for all their joking, writing their more sober side can be really fun.

if you can't tell, this chapter is a bit of a different tone. i'm hoping to shift the mood after the ending events of chapter eight. it was all fun and games before—now things are becoming troubling.

## STATS.

370,816 words (+3227)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Blane's eyes bore into mine. Emerald green eyes that have long lost their sheen. Are they worth less now? Or is it simply a matter of polishing the gem and restoring it back to what it used to be?

## CHAPTER 09.

"[A?]" N asks in greeting.

"Training Room," I answer. "Rekner/Blane?"

N pulls a chair from a nearby table and sits near me. "Media Room. Working on a case. I thought I'd come down and get some food for us."

"And bring it up to them? What a saint you are."

"I try. I thought I'd check in on you first, though, since you're here. An obstruction in my path." N's eyes glitter with amusement, though they're still considerably duller than they would have been last week. "Been holding up alright?"

I hesitate.

Yes. No. Maybe.

[...]

N notes my silence and hums. "Sorry, silly question."

"It's not."

"It is."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[angelic.](#)

[Jan 30, 2023](#)

[update 50.](#)

[Jan 31, 2023](#)

## WHAT I DID.

K's birthday post? up. Blane's branch for chapter nine? done. possible celebration for *when twilight strikes*' two-year anniversary? pending. who's proud of me, because i certainly am. (speaking of my anniversary, don't expect another series of shorts because god, do i not have the time for that this year. i wish though. like i said, i have an idea, but it's definitely not concrete yet).

in more ways than one, chapter nine has been confusing. from not knowing what i was writing for a brief time (there was a whole missing chunk in between the introductory scenes and ending scenes) to then knowing what i was writing only to realize that, oh shit, this is a lot—this has been a ride. and i know i've spoken about this week after week but after finally finishing Blane's branch, i just needed to repeat it. as much as i love the final result, the possibilities in that scene really fucked with my head. saying one thing could make Blane like you (but only if you hadn't said this one thing earlier!) and saying another thing could make Blane dislike you even more. brain rot. to say it was confusing is an understatement. it is an optional scene, however, so if anyone wants to save themselves the time of figuring out what exactly you need to say and do to make the scene work in your favour, you can. it's not nearly as confusing as getting Mirai to like you though, since (at least, to me) Blane is more obvious in what makes them tick.

but that's over and done with until i get to the editing stage, so let's talk about what i've moved onto next: K's and Rylan's scene. i've barely gotten into it yet (life has got me super busy lately, unfortunately) but the little i've written already shows so much of the pair's dynamic. you see their friendship in short stories or asks that i answer on tumblr, but in game, you've mostly seen them bickering, with K rolling their eyes and Rylan teasing. there has yet to be a scene where the two seriously show their affection, and while i wouldn't say this is exactly it, this is definitely a confirmation that they care for each other. a large chunk of this is because K believes they are alone at first (the hunter kind of eavesdrops on a bit of their conversation) but eventually they'll come around to show their emotions outright. character arcs, am i right? i'll be chipping away at this scene for the rest of the week and cannot wait to explore/show you all the different sides of everyone<3

## STATS.

374,230 words (+3414)

## SNEAK PEEK.

N winces, glancing at the door. They look both years younger and decades older.

[valentine's day. \[part one\]](#)

[Feb 4, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** part one of a collection of very short drabbles surrounding the event of valentine's day.

### **A Devereux.**

[A] finds Valentine's Day funny—until it isn't. It's not until they develop their first crush do they realize why people celebrate the day in the first place. To receive flowers or chocolates from someone they like, what a dream. Never mind that it's prompted by a date on a calendar, the fact that the other person thought of them is enough.

Which is why when they walk into IAOS on February 14th, they're anxious with anticipation. Not that they're *expecting* a card, but they sure do want one.

They'd spent days wondering if they should drop the hint and days more wondering if you received it, whether you would have felt compelled to give them something only because they were so obvious about it.

You're nowhere to be found in the main area, so [A] sighs and makes their way to their desk, hoping to drop off some papers before they head for the kitchen to get their much needed espresso shots for the day. They throw their papers unceremoniously onto the surface, barely missing the steaming cup set beside their keyboard.

They blink. It takes them a while to realize that even if they'd left their cup from yesterday, it wouldn't be hot. Nor would it have latte art on it because God forbid, [A] cannot do latte art to save their life.

The drink is accompanied by a small piece of paper, propped up against their mouse.

*Happy Valentine's Day, Partner.*

Even though they haven't drunk their latte yet, a warm feeling bursts in their chest. Oh. This is better than flowers or chocolate.

They take out their phone and snap a quick picture, sending it to you with a bunch of smiley faces and exclamation marks. It could very well be an appreciation latte for being partners, but if [A] decides to

fantasize a little, no one is there to stop them. It's Valentine's Day, after all.

### **Blane Rekner.**

The only reason Blane thinks Valentine's Day is useful is because of all the chocolate that goes on sale afterwards. They're not one to indulge in desserts, but once in a while, they'll get a craving for something sweet. Once in a while often happens when it's on sale.

Which is why when they pass by the aisle a couple of days before February 14th, they're confused by the small urge to buy a box. Buy a box and... give it to someone.

They wrinkle their nose at the intrusive thought.

The prices of the chocolates are ridiculous, let alone the fact that they have no one to give them to. No stupid butterflies when they see a certain someone or clammy hands when they realize they're about to cross paths with— No. There's no one.

Later, they'll try to justify their purchase. They'll tell themselves that they were thinking of [N], knowing their partner deserved more than Blane offered. They'll say that [N] is the best partner they'll ever have and silently hope that [N] never leaves them, like they think [N] will do when they're most vulnerable and insecure.

And when they give the package of chocolates to [N] on that dreadful day, they're nearly convinced. The smile on their partner's face is worth it, a bright grin with even brighter eyes.

It's only when they hear your voice across the room, laughing about the valentine's card that [A] gave you will that confidence falter.

They truly didn't have a person in mind when they'd picked up the chocolates and placed it in their cart, but they realize now that some part of them had wanted to give it to you. For all the trouble they've caused you, for all the hurt and anguish they continue to bring about, for—

Nothing. No one.

### **N Alves.**

[N] still remembers the first Valentine's Day card they received. It was in elementary school, another random card amongst all the others their classmate had handed out to everyone, but it still filled them with wonder. The chocolate taped to the card was so sweet. Their smile lasted so long, their parents asked them why they were so happy that day.

Years go by and [N] gets used to receiving cards. They learn that the ugly cards are given out to people the person doesn't like, and the pretty cards are given to people they do. They think they fall somewhere in-between. The cards go in a box at the back of their closet.

It's a tradition mainly meant for children, however, so when IAOS lays out a couple of boxes of cheap dollar store Valentine's Day cards, [N] is elated. They take a stack and bring it to their desk, using their favourite pen to write people's names. They try to pick out cards they think match the personality of the person they're giving it to.

To Blane, a snarky one-liner.

To [A], a cheesy joke that will be sure to get them laughing.

To—

They blink at the card suddenly blocking their vision, glancing up. You smile as your gazes meet, waving the flimsy paper like it's some sort of prize.

"Happy Valentine's Day," you greet.

[N] looks down at their card, covering it up with a hand. "You're quick. I haven't finished yours yet."

You shrug. "I got here early this morning. Don't worry, you can give it to me later."

Before [N] can say anything, you're skipping off, presumably to hand out the other cards. They can't help but smile at the sight of you, thumbing the card between their fingers as they break the sticker seal. It's the same card they were going to give you and though perhaps they should be, they can't bring themselves to be mad.

[update 51.](#)

[Feb 6, 2023](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

uh, yeah. so small update this week. i somehow managed to write more while i was sick which ?? doesn't make sense. but i don't know, time just got away from me. one moment it was tuesday and the next, it was sunday. boom. what's funny is i got a lot of writing done in my head, but very little on paper. i do this a lot. when i get stuck on a scene, i close my laptop and (often because i write at night) crawl into bed. in those moments, it takes me no more than a couple of minutes to break through my writer's block and figure out the dialogue and choices that i could use in that scene. then i'll go and fall asleep and forget absolutely everything i had in my head so when i open the document next, i'm staring at it blankly trying to recall things that are far gone from my memory. fun. you'd think i'd learn by now, but i'm

often so tired that i simply cannot bring myself to grab my phone and write stuff down. that's my excuse, anyway.

like last week, i'm still writing K's and Rylan's scene. for some reason, Rylan has taken over it entirely and K has stayed mostly silent for the majority. still, i'm not too mad. K tends to be a quiet person and especially so in Rylan's presence, so it makes sense. my only issue, for lack of a better word, is how Rylan is acting in this scene. i might have to change a few sentences here and there because, uh, it's not like they're out of character, but it's definitely a change from how they usually act. i think most of you know their grins and laughs are mainly a front, so having them act differently isn't exactly wrong, it's more *how* they act when they're not wearing a mask. i would say it's more melancholy than sinister, which is where it's bordering right now, so, yeah, likely changing some things. that's the process of writing, after all.

## STATS.

375,475 words (+1245)

## SNEAK PEEK.

I lick my lips. "And what do you think that is?"

"Oh, we're playing that game, are we?"

## DELETED SCENE.

"No, stop it." I shake my head, eyes squeezing close in frustration.  
"Stop acting like you care for her. You're just taunting her with  
what she wants, pitting me against her."

Mirai's smile tells me this is exactly the reaction she wanted. "But aren't you? Isn't  
your organization against everyone standing next to you right now?  
How can you expect to come to the enemy for help and still be disgusted by us?"

"I'm not— You're not—"

"Mirai," K warns. Their look is pointed, the only forceful expression  
they've made towards their vampire ally tonight. But, unfortunately for me,  
the expression does nothing to calm Mirai down.

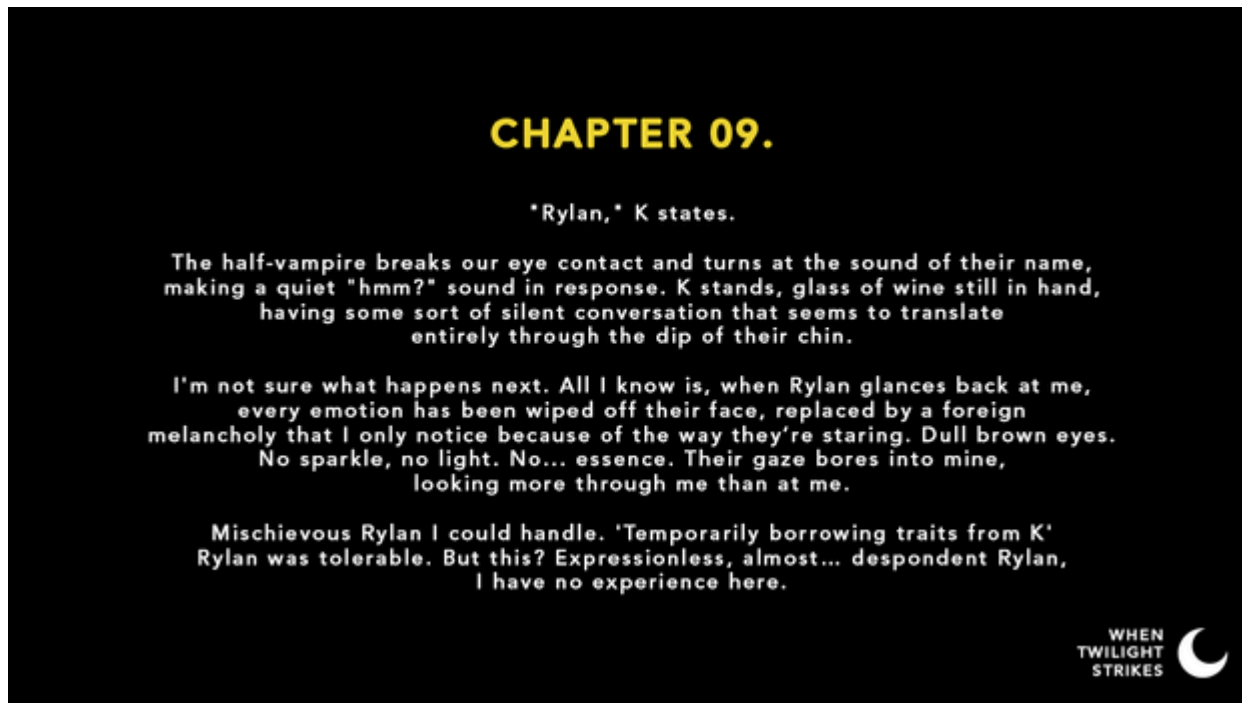
Somewhere in the crowd, the rest of the group is watching me fumble this.  
We should have left while we had the chance, snuck out in some secret back door  
in the VIP room. Now we're here and I'm arguably making things worse for everyone.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[deleted scene \(chapter seven\).](#)

[Feb 10, 2023](#)

this was back when i was deciding what exactly to put in the 'go check out the commotion' branch. i was having a bit of writer's block and for a time, had Mirai show up in this scene. for those of you who have played this scene, you'll know that she does nothing of the sort now. some part of me regrets not writing another scene with Mirai since she's such a fun character, the other is glad this didn't make it. i cut it for a reason; it just didn't flow.



[melancholy.](#)

[Feb 12, 2023](#)

[a couple of announcements.](#)

[Feb 13, 2023](#)

tiers.

**edit:** apparently i can't change the prices of my tiers while people are subscribed to it haha so i'll be keeping the tier prices as is. the only change now is the number of days of early access

you receive. sorry for the confusion !

i just wanted to clarify a few things about my tiers and lay out (approximately) what i'll be putting out each month. things are subject to change and this isn't set in stone, but this is generally what you'll be getting with your pledge:

#### ***DUSK tier***

- 4 weekly updates /month (generally posted on sunday or monday)

#### ***TWILIGHT tier***

- 4 weekly updates /month (generally posted on sunday or monday)
- access to 2-3 sneak peeks /month
- 3 day early access to new chapters & shorts content [changed from 5 days]

#### ***MIDNIGHT tier***

- 4 weekly updates /month (generally posted on sunday or monday)
- access to 2-3 sneak peeks /month
- access to 1-2 deleted scenes /month
- access to 2-3 drabbles /month (usually about 700-1000 words)
- 5 day early access to new chapters & shorts content [changed from 7 days]

to explain the early access change, it's mainly to give me more time to work on things. i found myself pressed for time when uploading the last two chapters so giving myself two extra days between announcing a new update before posting it here will do me wonders (and also give me more time to look things over, since my last two early access updates were kind of rough edit wise). so, in the future, things will likely look like:

- announce new chapter on tumblr/itch.io
- release update for midnight tier 2 days later
- release update for twilight tier 2 days after that
- public release after 3 more days

(total timeline: 7 days)

#### **two-year anniversary.**

as some of you may know, the anniversary for when twilight strikes (not the actual posting of the game, but the announcement of the game; a weird anniversary to celebrate, i know but stay with me here). i haven't been able to write any new content for the event so instead, i will be releasing the first bit of chapter nine !! i know it's been a long wait for this chapter and while i'm not done, i'm finally finding my footing and am so excited to unveil it further.

an official announcement for this "anniversary preview" will go up on the 17th, with the midnight tier getting access on the 19th and the twilight tier receiving it on the 21st. for now, i'm keeping it on the down low. i'm making this post public to be transparent to anyone who may sign up between now and friday, but am keeping my mouth shut otherwise. see you soon !!<33

[update 52.](#)

[Feb 14, 2023](#)

## WHAT I DID.

apologies for not getting this up yesterday, but at least now i have an excuse to say happy valentine's day !! i am painfully single but hey, i never refuse free/cheap chocolate. oh, and while i'm on the topic, part two of the valentine's day drabbles (K and Rylan) will be up sometime this week.

with that sorted, let's talk about chapter nine. chapter nine, chapter nine. oh, how i've been talking about this chapter for months now. i know you're all sick of it (lord knows i am too) but for anyone who missed my announcement yesterday, i will *finally* be revealing the first bit of it for my anniversary (february 24th). it's about ten thousand words or so and has really evolved since i first wrote it in november. i've gone back and added some choices/interludes that really set the tone for the rest of the chapter, so hopefully, it'll satisfy and give you a glimpse of what to expect while you wait for the rest of it. and the best part? it doesn't end on a cliffhanger. or, not a dramatic one like the last couple of chapters, anyway.

aside from working on getting that up, i'm still writing K's and Rylan's branch and should be nearing the end very soon. i have a whole week of break coming up which, in addition to my piles of homework, i plan on using to finish that up. i can't say this route has gone exactly to plan but that's the beauty of writing. it really has a life of its own now and even without reading it back, i know it's more interesting than i initially outlined it to be. i'm very excited to unveil it.

after i finish with K and Rylan, there comes the choice of working on A's and N's branch or the common route scene that wraps up the end of the chapter. knowing me, i'll likely go with the latter and occasionally jump back and forth between the two. a little messy, perhaps, but it always ends well for me so, who can complain? A's and N's branch is definitely different from K's and Rylan's but for the most part, does cover some similar topics so the switch-up will be good for me. i've come to learn that my brain works best this way (after many months of suffering) but either way, i'm excited to write. going back to my routes in chapter one with the final scene, so that'll be fun.

## STATS.

378,795 words (+3320)

## SNEAK PEEK.

"If that is your definition of a riddle, I will pay for a dictionary to be delivered to your apartment," K answers. The emotion in their eyes has flattened. "Either you get something in return from me or you don't. That's the gamble, [surname]."

[valentine's day. \[part two\]](#)

[Feb 17, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** part two of a collection of very short drabbles surrounding the event of valentine's day.

## K de Vries.

K doesn't understand the point of Valentine's Day. To them, it is merely another mundane holiday, an excuse to dress up and shower your loved ones with gifts. It's a flimsy excuse, if you ask them. It's preposterous that humans need an excuse to show their significant other affection. In their eyes, it should happen without being prompted.

On top of that, why is everything pink? The colour scheme just about melts their eyes, searing itself at the back of their eyelids so much that even when sleeping, they're haunted by the shades of red. They only manage to get rid of the horrid colours when February is over.

It's only when they see you so excited about it do they start to think differently.

When Rylan told them to meet at a restaurant, they were prepared for a dumb celebration. Some cheesy cake with a cheesy song to pair with the cheesy outfit that Rylan will inevitably wear. They were prepared to complain, to feign food poisoning to leave early, but then they saw you.

You, dressed not in red or pink or white but in an outfit that compliments your eyes. You, smiling at the balloons strung around the place. You, with a flush on your cheeks from excitement—one that deepens the moment you catch K's gaze.

Their heart skips a beat.

"[surname]."

"K."

K situates themselves next to you and smooths out a non-existent wrinkle. "I should have known you'd be the type to enjoy this holiday. It's nothing more than society trying to suck money out of you."

Your laughter is bright. "Maybe, but that doesn't mean you can't have fun. I used to think Valentine's Day was less fun when you're single, but now—" you shrug "—I don't think it really matters. It's fun spending time with all of you. Makes things less lonely."

K drags their gaze around the restaurant. It's filled with couples, pairs of people giggling across from each other and beaming like the entire world is in their view. They forget how it feels to be in love. They never wonder about the feeling, but right now, they find themselves doing just that.

"Really," K responds. "You're saying looking at this doesn't make you lonelier?"

You shoot K a smile. "Not when I'm with all of you."

Ah. That's unfair, they think. K has always been an eloquent speaker, but when it comes to things like this, they're always lost for words. They've never been good with emotions, never been good with expressing how they feel, but right now, they think it's easy.

It's always easy with you.

### **Rylan Villanueva.**

Rylan can't say they enjoy Valentine's Day, but unlike K, they've never been opposed to it. There are years where they find the mere sight of a couple sickening, and others where they are enamoured by the thought of it. This year, they're somewhere in between.

"They love me, they love me not," Rylan hums. "They love me, they love me not. They lov—"

"Rylan?"

They stop in their tracks, glancing up as their fingers pick the stray petal that they'd been counting. Your eyes meet and Rylan feels their heart skip a beat at the sight of you. They could blame it on them nearly tripping in surprise, of course, but even they know better.

Wretched thing.

"Hunter! Long time no see."

"You saw me yesterday."

"Exactly," Rylan counters. The grin comes to their face easily, though unlike most of their smiles, this one is genuine. They pick two more petals off the rose as you stare at them.

*They love me, they love me not.*

You nod at the bouquet in their arm. "Gift from someone?"

"If you're suggesting that you want to take credit for it, I'll look away." Rylan laughs when you roll your eyes. "No, not a gift. I found it laying on the side of the street, a gift tossed by someone else. Thought I'd give the flowers a little more use than sidewalk décor."

"Is that why you're tearing it apart?"

Rylan shrugs. "I'm playing a game."

"For who, exactly?" you ask.

Rylan pauses. They'd begun with K, asking the flowers whether the warlock actually cared for Rylan (the answer was yes). From there, they moved on to members of their old clan, their foster mother (the answer was no)—nearly everyone in their past life. Eventually, though, they played long enough that dismissed choosing people completely, playing for fun rather than answers.

They love me, they love me not. They love me, they love me not.

It's only now that they realize that each time they landed on 'they love me', a small part of them wanted to associate it with you. They feel their heart skip another beat at the revelation. They've never been more glad that between the two of you, they're the one that can hear heartbeats, not you.

"Rylan?"

They blink, realizing then that they hadn't answered your question. Their eyes dart around the street, landing on a stray couple in the window of a nearby café. They wave their hand haphazardly. "For strangers. Trying to see if couples truly like each other or if this will be their last Valentine's together."

"That's horrible."

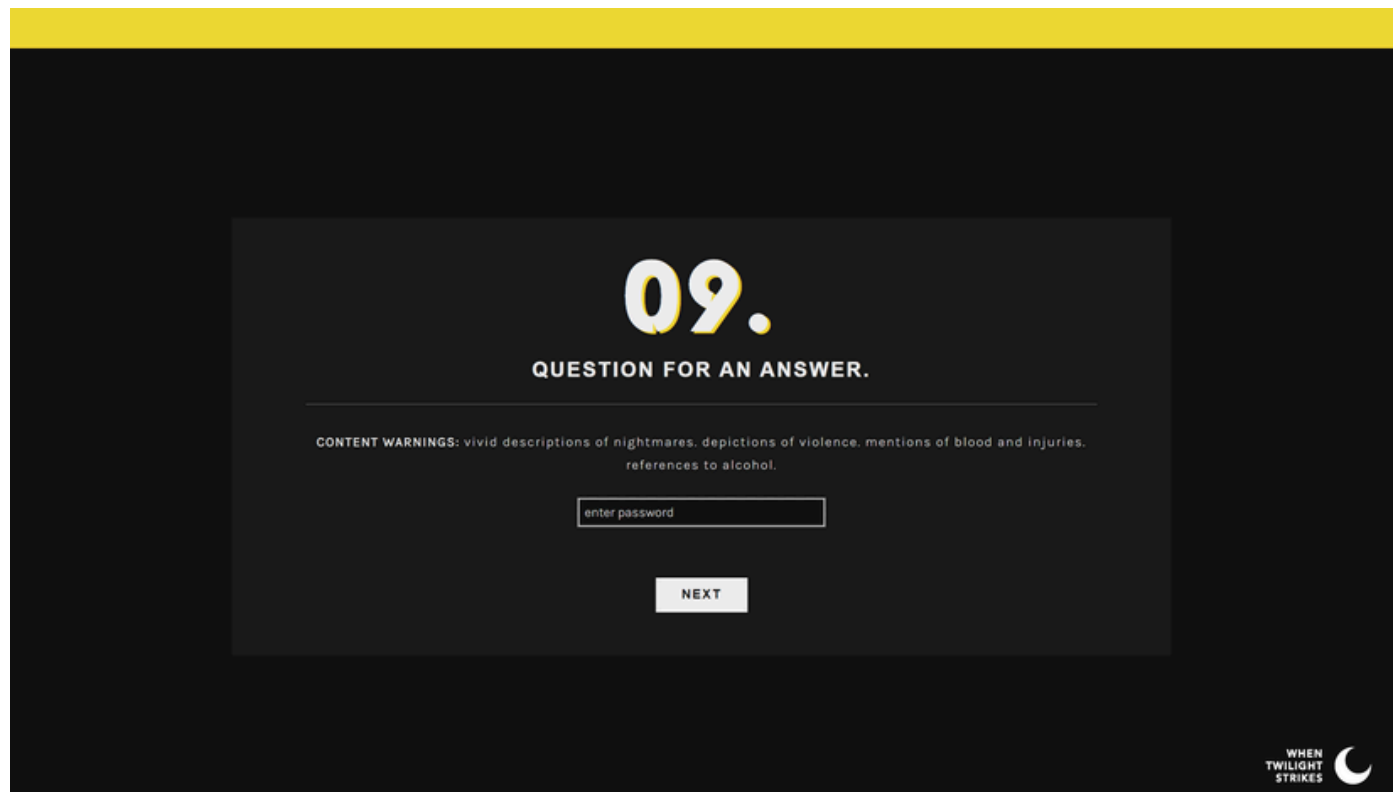
"I never said it wasn't. Want to play?"

You shake your head. "I'll leave it to you."

Rylan can't deny their disappointment at that, but when they realize you're not leaving them, their mood brightens. They ramble all the way back to your place, pointing at random couples and picking petals for them until the rose has given an answer. You look mortified at each proclamation that a couple won't last, but Rylan is too busy basking in the tranquillity of your presence to really care.

[part one of chapter nine is up!!](#)

Feb 19, 2023



ahh i'm happy to say that the first part of chapter nine is finally out! it's not as long as i wish it was and i apologize, but i truly hope everyone enjoys it. the password is "stresslevelsthroughtheroof" (as always, all lowercase and no spaces).

let me know what you think <3

update 53.

Feb 20, 2023

## WHAT I DID.

i'm going to keep this short because clearly, i didn't do much. with part one of chapter nine releasing on friday (for the public; the midnight tier already got it and the twilight tier will receive it tomorrow) i spent all of the week doing my 'upload chapter' routine. basically: edit it twice, run it through grammarly for small (and dumb) grammar mistakes, code and upload. i was hoping to get some writing in but alas, the

only writing i did was fixing up my various scenes and sentences. clearly it took much longer than i hoped it would, but with it out of the way and me on break (!! ) i'll hopefully be able to get a more impressive word count for next week.

for anyone who's played the new part already, i hope you enjoyed it. and for those who will soon (be it tomorrow or friday when it goes live for everyone), i truly hope it lives up to your expectations. <3

## STATS.

378,930 words (+135)

## SNEAK PEEK.

His gaze dulls as he lifts a crooked finger, pointing it directly at me.

### CHAPTER 09.

Blane's eyes glint. "Nothing?"

When I don't respond, they take a step forward, eyes locked on mine. One more step and they'll have left the bathroom. "Let me make it easier for you then. I'm here because I'm selfish. Not because I care for Caine, but because I care for myself above all."

My mouth goes dry. "That's..."

"What you wanted to hear, right?"

I manage to find my voice. "If I wanted to hear that, I would have just said so."

"But you're relieved," Blane presses. "It's easier when you're not the first one to say it. I'm not like you or Devereux. I'm not like [N]. I'm just as bad as your bounty or [K], except at least they have the decency to pretend they tolerate you."

Blane's words are full of self-loathing.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[a glimpse inside the soul.](#)

[Feb 21, 2023](#)

[update 54.](#)

[Feb 26, 2023](#)

## WHAT I DID.

if i told you writer's block has come to kick my ass again, what would you do? groan? because that was my reaction when i sat down the other night and realized, oh shit, my brain really isn't working and why can't i write this scene i had so many ideas the other day? see, if you've been here long enough you'll know that my solution to writer's block is simply to write another scene. it works well enough, except, this time, it didn't. even worse. my other solution is to close the document and try to map out the conversation verbally or in my head. now when this happens i don't usually write things down and tend to forget them by the next day—not very productive, i know. but i had my notes app handy this time and to my surprise, there were actually coherent sentences written down in there.

ramble aside, this is where i'm at: virtually the same spot i was last week, except, now i have an idea of where this branch ends. in fact, i've nearly written all of it (leaving the choices blank for me to fill in later), so, progress? honestly, i'd love to get this branch done so i can finally stop talking about it for next week, but each time i wish for that, it doesn't end up happening. K and Rylan are simply too stubborn to let go, i suppose.

i know it must be frustrating reading these updates because of how similar they all sound (trust me, i'm very aware) but i really appreciate you all sticking by me. this chapter has been a pain in the ass for me (even more than the other chapters that i've complained about relentlessly) but i don't want to put something out that is half-assed, so my only other option is a long wait time.

i truly do love these branches though and can only express my excitement for them while i continue writing. a majority of my branches so far have been for flavour text more than anything, but with these, i feel as if each group has its own thing to offer. while you still learn the same information from each, one branch might provide more depth into something than another. you don't get to choose all three either, so it's very much a gamble.

## STATS.

382,025 words (+3095)

## SNEAK PEEK.

It's why, as cruel as it is, I can't help but think that vulnerability doesn't suit them. It's alien, a foreign creature that has buried itself into their mind and is showing itself through their eyes.

[advance to go. \[a & rylan\]](#)

[Mar 3, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** A and Rylan have developed a tradition of playing monopoly at A's apartment. it's just... common sense.

**note:** i'll be doing a miniseries of some rare pairings for the next couple of drabbles, just for some change. after that we'll be back to our regularly scheduled polls and ro x hunter stories <3

"I'll trade you two of my light blue properties for one of your dark blues," A offers. They hold up their cards, waving them in Rylan's face with a teasing grin.

The half-vampire is not amused. "That's a scam."

"It's a fair trade!"

"A scam."

A's mouth opens then closes. As much as they like playing with Rylan, a downside to their opponent being a half-vampire is they can't lie. "Okay fine, maybe it's a bit of a cop-out, but if you get the third light blue property, then you can charge me double any time I land on them."

"And how many times have you landed on those houses exactly?" Rylan points out. They flick one of A's houses off the board, the piece bumping into A's leg. "Right, none. Meanwhile, I've landed on them so much, I have their prices memorized."

"All the more reason for you to make the trade!"

Rylan huffs. "Absolutely not. You're not getting away with your puppy dog eyes this time, Blondie."

"Rylan," A whines, dragging out the last letter.

"No."

A sighs, knowing the battle is done and lost. They drop the cards to their side as they fall back against the floor, the soft tufts of the carpet cushioning their fall. An arm raises to shield their eyes, though with the sun setting in the background, there's hardly any use for it.

Rylan hums. A can feel their breath on their arm as they lean forward. "Does this mean you forfeit?"

"Just give me a five-minute break. My head is hurting."

"Ah, I knew all that math would prove to be too much for you." A thump comes from A's left that sounds suspiciously like Rylan falling on the floor. A lifts their arm just high enough to sneak a peek and, sure

enough, Rylan has pulled back and is settling themselves into a comfortable position beside the monopoly board.

A closes their eyes again. "If you bring up the fact that you have the multiplication table memorized again, I'm kicking you out."

"Me? Bragging that I know what twelve times twelve is? Why I could never." Another shift. "Exactly how low do you think of me?"

"Very."

Rylan throws a plastic house at their arm and A laughs as it ricochets onto the board, likely knocking over some properties in the process.

It's funny how things happen.

All of this started from a text message. A simple "I'm bored please someone save me" sent to the groupchat at one in the afternoon. No real intentions behind it, no actual hope that someone would actually cure Rylan's boredom—but A did.

It wasn't like they were doing anything. That Saturday, they were laying around their apartment, bored out of their mind as they flipped through Netflix for what seemed like hours trying to settle on something.

Rylan's text was an opportunity for A to actually have some entertainment, so, ignoring K's comment about Rylan needing to get a life, A invited them over. Except, when Rylan arrived, they didn't want to do anything but stay inside. The moment Rylan got inside, they groaned, fell dramatically on A's couch and complained that it was ridiculously hot and they'd melt into the sidewalk if they had to leave the air conditioning. A rolled their eyes, but honestly, they weren't too keen on leaving the chilled apartment themselves.

It was why they eventually pulled out monopoly, stuffed at the back of A's spare closet. They'd initially been looking for flashlights—for some reason A doesn't remember anymore—but the moment Rylan saw the board game, they declared that's what the pair would be playing.

The rest is history. One loss led to Rylan showing up at A's apartment the next week for a rematch, which led to A demanding Rylan for another rematch the following weekend, which led—

Yeah.

At some point, it became more of enjoying each other's company than actually getting revenge for their losses, but neither have said that aloud. A and Rylan might be good friends, but they still walk a thin line. A knows Rylan doesn't fully trust them yet—and A doesn't blame them. Still, A is determined to make Rylan open up to them one day.

Even if it takes years.

"Blondie?"

A takes their arm off their eyes and turns, gray-blue eyes meeting bright brown ones. Rylan blinks owlishly. There's a stack of cards between them, just short enough that A can see the curve of Rylan's hesitant smile.

"Rylan."

"Do you still want to play?"

A keeps their expression neutral as they examine their companion. Rylan's worried about their answer, that much they can tell, but for what reason they don't know. It's easy to forget how vulnerable Rylan can be sometimes. They exude so much confidence that you become caught up in it, sometimes even stuck.

A shakes their head. "Do you want to go get food instead? I know a great place around the corn—"

"Say no more!" Rylan jumps up and flashes A a blinding grin, so bright it can only be genuine. They rush over to A's side and pull them up, ignoring the protests that spill from A's lips between laughter. "Come on. I've been starving for an hour now. I might actually die if I don't get food in my stomach."

"I doubt it."

"I'll collapse over the board and ruin the entire game," Rylan warns.

A laughs again and sends Rylan a grin of their own. "I was getting tired of it anyway."

[update 55.](#)

[Mar 7, 2023](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

a bit of a late update this week—i apologize. in all honesty, i've been obsessed with playing hollow knight recently and have done little of everything else. homework be damned.

in terms of chapter nine, things are... going. what is there to say other than i'm still writing it, really? as i've mentioned, i've been focusing on the scenes after the three branches rather than finishing the third branch itself. sorry to [A] and N, but i'm really not in the mood to write their scene after writing two

variations of it already. a bad idea? perhaps. but i'd rather go back and add references rather than push through something and create a product i'm unhappy with.

like most of my story, i've been spontaneously writing the latter half of chapter nine. i certainly have a plan, but up until a few days ago, it was quite... linear. almost repetitive, if i want to be harsh. i said before that chapter nine will revisit scenes that were in earlier chapters, which created the problem of making sure they, though sharing the same characteristics, maintained their individuality. i really can't say much without giving the entire scene away, but (while i was brushing my teeth) i had a bit of a eureka moment and figured out how to do exactly that. i still have some scenes in between where i'm at now and when this new plot point will kick in, but i'm super excited to write it. i'll be fun, i think. what i love about writing is how fluid and malleable it is. i've changed dozens of things from my original plan of *when twilight strikes* but each one has (i hope, at least) made my story that much better.

before i end, i want to add a quick note that i've also managed to add some romance choices in the latter half of the chapter which i'm super pleased about. i was initially thinking i wouldn't be able to have any at all, which is fine, but with the romance lock slowly getting closer, i definitely want to create as many opportunities as possible for you to connect with your chosen ro (if you plan on romancing someone). some very fun things happening :)

## **STATS.**

385,303 words (+3278)

## **SNEAK PEEK.**

"I think it's healthier to think that than to spiral into a rabbit hole."

"I think a lot of things are," [A] answers. The response is automatic.

## CHAPTER 09.

Everything moves so quickly. Everything moves so slowly.

At the back of my mind, I am haunted by the pile of cases we haven't solved.  
At the back of my mind, Caine stares at me in the dark.

He blinks, waiting for me to say something.

When I don't answer, his mouth begins to overfill with blood. I can only watch as the crimson liquid spills out through the cracks of his lips, his hands stained as he clutches at his throat. The noise he makes feels like a dagger to the heart. A strangled gurgle that I'm certain my mind did not make up—something so realistic I must have heard it in the past.

I feel myself drowning too.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES



[daytime haunts.](#)

[Mar 9, 2023](#)

[update 56.](#)

[Mar 13, 2023](#)

### WHAT I DID.

what did i do you ask? great question. i think i spent more time daydreaming about *when twilight strikes* than actually writing it, which, i've come to learn happens a lot. if only i had a function where the dialogue i recite in my brain would translate to my word document. alas, that doesn't exist.

so, in terms of what i actually wrote down, i only have two scenes of this chapter left. granted, they're very big scenes (like, it'll take me weeks to write these big), but i'm one step closer to having this finished. my word document says this chapter is only thirty-three thousand words long. considering how long i've been stuck on it, it feels like much more. still, there're twenty thousand words you have yet to see and even more on the way, so when put like that, it doesn't sound so bad.

for this week, i mainly focused on one scene: the aftermath of the (horrible) meeting at K's penthouse. aside from the hunter, the only character present in this scene is [A], which is why they're featured in the

sneak peek for a second week in a row. it's because i don't have any other options, not because i favour them or anything i swear. i spent a lot of time focusing on flavour text for those of you on the 'forced to say yes' route, as i have named it in my variables, or the 'didn't agree to accept Rylan's offer but was forced into it by [A]' route. the latter is just a tad bit too long. it came to my attention recently that some interactions between [A] and the hunter make little sense if they're in a fight, so i hope that this is more realistic. on that note, i also went back and added some flavour text in chapters eight and nine regarding this, so for anyone on this branch, i hope it reads more accurately.

for next week, i'll either be starting the final scene or jumping back to [A]'s and N's route. chances are i'll write a little bit for both. i'm craving a bit of a change from [A]'s character right now, so i'll see what i can do. the perk of them being the hunter's partner is that i get to write them whenever i want. the downside? i sometimes think i write about them too much. sometimes i worry if they're featured too often that you'll get sick of them, but that's just the nature of the story. at least for book one, it can't be helped.

## STATS.

387,930 words (+2627)

## SNEAK PEEK.

[A] stills, glancing over at me. A faint pink has risen to their cheeks and the tips of their ears. Over the years, I've come to learn that they don't blush easily. Even in the coldest and hottest temperatures, I would never say their cheeks are rosy.

[two of a kind. \[blane & k\]](#)

[Mar 17, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** Blane and K get coffee while waiting for the others to arrive. they don't hang out often.

It's not that they don't like each other, it's that they're too similar. Both are quiet, both preferring to stay out of the spotlight and listen, rather than be the one speaking, both blunt (though Blane often errs on the side of rude) and, most of all, both widely uncomfortable in new surroundings.

Blane didn't have much of an opinion when they first met K. They admired their powers and their will, but they never saw K as more than a temporary companion.

Of course, that's what they thought of everyone.

A lot of things have changed since then. Since *The Event*. They never thought they'd be glad to be roped into something so ridiculous, but Blane can't deny that their life has gotten livelier since.

Still, they can't say they're exactly close with everyone. N will always be their best friend, Devereux will always be a pain in the ass (though Blane can begrudgingly admit they now tolerate their presence), Rylan will always be way too much and K...

Well.

K sits across from Blane in the café. They claimed a table for themselves, expecting other company, but after the rest of the group made various excuses as to why they were going to be late (did all their subways get delayed?), they moved to seat a booth.

K taps their nails on the countertop, staring aimlessly out the window. "Any updates?"

"No." Blane turned on their phone again, staring at the blank wallpaper. "Rylan might get here first. N is still caught up in line and God knows where [the Hunter] and Devereux are."

K's lips lift into a small smile. "It's amusing that you still call them by their surname."

"The fact that I willingly spend time with them is enough," Blane answers. They meet K's gaze, emerald eyes steady as the warlock's hazel ones search them. K does that a lot, Blane finds, but rarely do they ever share their findings. Sometimes Blane thinks K is seeing something different from everyone else.

K nods towards the menu board. "Have you decided what you want?"

"I'm just doing an americano with coconut milk," Blane answers.

K gets up, grabbing their wallet as they leave to join the line. Blane starts to protest, but the warlock shoots them a stern look. "It's on me, I insist. It's the least I can do to apologize for Rylan's lateness. They're the one who put this together, after all."

Blane can't find the words to argue. Here's another reason why they never spend much time with K. Being a group of six, they're all split equally into three pairs: [the Hunter] and Devereux, Blane and N, K and Rylan. Perhaps the others have branched out more, but Blane has always felt they'll stay the closest to N. They suspect it's similar for K with Rylan.

They spend time outside those pairings of course—A and Rylan have grown quite close (much to Blane's fear) and N and [The Hunter] have definitely become better friends—but in the end, they naturally gravitate toward their initial duos.

Or maybe that's just Blane. They never make individual plans with anyone except for N. They know N has gone out with K a few times and [The Hunter] has been with Rylan, but Blane has never been brave

enough to ask. They're only part of this group because of happenstance anyway—they don't want to push their luck.

"Did you need any sugar?"

Blane blinks, glancing up. K's hand is just retreating from their mug. "Brown, please."

K nods again, leaving to grab some packets while they leave their drink on the table. It's iced, to Blane's surprise, sprinkled with cinnamon and something that resembles crystalized sugar.

"An iced espresso," K explains when they come back. They sit down, sliding three packets across the table. There's an unspoken sentence of 'I didn't know how many you needed' but K never says it aloud. Blane is grateful for it.

"I thought you liked hot coffees?" Blane replies.

K wrinkles their nose. "Rylan. They told me I had to get it. Tastes like a cinnamon roll apparently."

They say the sentence like they just proclaimed the drink tastes like sewage water. Blane bites their tongue so that they don't laugh. They bite even harder when K takes their first sip of the drink, coughing as it washes down their throat.

"That bad?"

K shakes their head. "Too sweet." They slide the cup over. "Try it."

"I don't—"

"I insist."

It's the second time they've said those words and, both times, Blane finds that they can't refuse. They take the cup gingerly, hands adjusting from burning hot to ice cold. K doesn't seem to mind that Blane will be drinking from the same straw, so they bend down and take a sip.

K laughs at their reaction. A strange and rare noise, but not an unpleasant one. "Not a fan?"

"Too sweet," Blane answers, repeating K's words.

"We'll leave it for Rylan then."

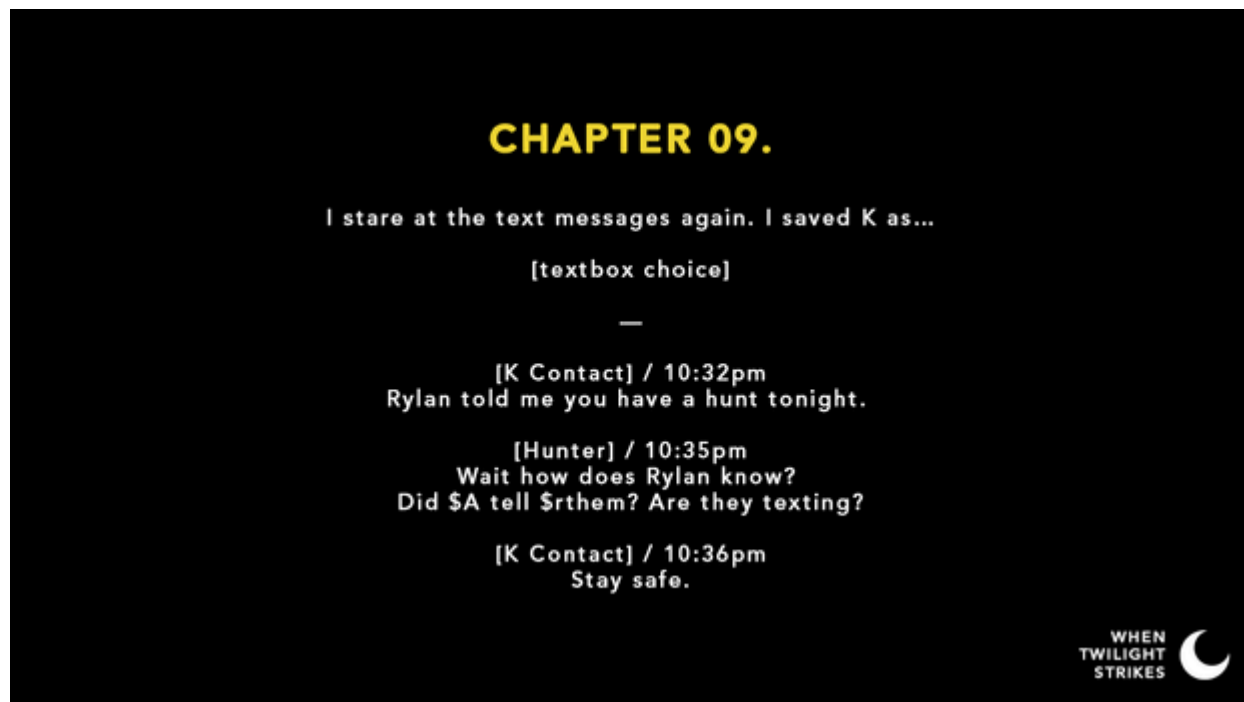
K checks their phone absently, looking for a text from the mentioned half-vampire, presumably. Blane hesitates before pushing their americano over. K's eyebrow raises ever so slightly but waits for Blane to speak. Again, they find that they like that.

"Try it," Blane suggests. "It's only fair."

"Thank you for the offer, but I'll pass."

Blane hums. While K declines Blane's offer, they don't feel bad about it. Rejection is an ugly feeling. A couple of months ago, Blane would have been embarrassed and remained silent for the rest of the day. The one time they spoke up, only to be shut down.

Now, Blane only pulls the mug back to themselves. They know that K was only being honest. It's taken them a long time to get to this stage—taken a long time for the K and them, Blane thinks—and though there're still steps to be taken, for now, this is progress.



[on texting basis.](#)

[Mar 19, 2023](#)

[update 57.](#)

[Mar 20, 2023](#)

WHAT I DID.

i got carried away again. no one is surprised. not that i regret it, of course, because gosh this is a lot of fun, but it also means i'm a little more behind than where i thought i'd be. still not guessed it? i added a (small) new section to the chapter.

yeah.

it's not a big loss. i'm super happy with this new segment and while it may be double the length i was expecting it to be, i think it adds a lot to the story. those of you who have seen the sneak peek titled 'texting basis' will know what i'm referring to. it's a fun little bit that develops your relationship with a chosen ro (platonic or romantic) and showcases their various character developments. this is especially the case for Blane and K (god knows they need it). i still have to write N's and Rylan's branches for this scene, but i'm certain everyone will enjoy it. i got to add in a variable that i didn't know i would be able to and i'm extremely excited about it. the endless possibilities of being able to use that in the future... so fun.

on top of working on that, i'll likely be switching gears and backpedaling back to [A] and N's branch toward the first half of the chapter. i initially put it off because i wrote Blane's and K's & Rylan's back to back and needed a break, but i'm now finding that i'm missing potential flavour text and references by not having this written. i can go back, of course, but that seems like more work than just getting it done.

i'm making it sound like a task. it's not. it'll be interesting to see [A]'s new perspective on Blane. in some ways, this scene is a turning point. [A] and Blane will still bicker in the future, but you might see that [A] isn't as harsh as they were before. on top of feeling guilty, they also realize the weight of their words and that Blane (surprise surprise) has feelings too. [A] found a boundary that they didn't know was there and, after seeing Blane literally shut themself in a bathroom, they don't want to push it again.

i also want to add that i got some constructive criticism on itch.io this morning and i deeply appreciate it. while with each update, i try to go back into earlier chapters and fix various coding and grammar mistakes, i also use this opportunity to add more flavour text. if anyone has any feedback to make *when twilight strikes* feel more personal to your individual hunter, please let me know. more consistent use of your hunter skill or less playful bantering if you're in a fight with [A] are two examples, of which i recently fixed the latter. hope everyone is doing well <3

## STATS.

391,244 words (+3314)

## SNEAK PEEK.

[A] wrinkles their nose. "Is that me?"

I grin. "You look like you're trying to be the main character of a sad music video."

## DELETED SCENE.

Blane watches me process the information, watches as it sinks in and rolls through my brain. Their expression has reverted back to its stoic self.

They clench their jaw. "Why am I here, [surname]? Why did you choose me to come with you to meet Mirai?"

My [eyecolour] eyes dart across Blane's face. They stare at me, waiting for an answer that I don't have. I could rack my brain for some sort of explanation, make something up, but I know it wouldn't be the truth.

"I don't know," I eventually admit, glancing away.

Blane's gaze lingers on my face, even when I'm trying my hardest not to glance back. When they look away, it's like a weight has been lifted off my chest. The tension that had been in the air a moment ago lightens and I feel like I can breathe again.

It's a long time before either of us speak again, but when someone does, it's Blane.

"Why did Mirai want you alone?"

The change in topic would be jarring if I didn't know that they'd ask eventually. It was always coming; it was only a matter of when.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[deleted scene \(chapter seven\).](#)

[Mar 23, 2023](#)

initially, the 'stay in the vip room' option was going to be a little different. it was going to feature the hunter and the chosen ro lingering in Mirai's room to look for clues, including a scene where the hunter gets to sit on her 'throne.' after looking around for a while, i had the hunter and the ro, in this case Blane, sit down and have a heartfelt conversation.

like most scenes i scrap, this was a result of writer's block and i got rid of it because i wasn't liking the flow. i also didn't think this fit the intensity of Mirai's interrogation in the scene prior. a cool down was necessary, i agreed, but i thought it was a bit odd that the characters would sit down and have a conversation there, of all places. maybe save it for later.

[update 58.](#)

[Mar 27, 2023](#)

### WHAT I DID.

today's update is going to be sparse. and when i mean sparse, i mean *sparse*. as a university student, i am currently entering the dreaded exam season, which means eight upcoming papers and little to no

time to focus on when twilight strikes. it breaks my heart, really, because i genuinely do want to write and connect with the characters, but i just, can't. at risk of failing my courses and taking another year, i really can't. however, while the next month is not going to be that exciting in terms of weekly updates, things will still be normal on patreon.

in terms of where i got this week, i'm still chipping away at the romance scenes. i managed to do N's this week and was going to get to Rylan's, but decided not to in favour of working on A's and N's branch from earlier on. as i said, i found myself missing opportunities for flavour text in future scenes by not completing this earlier, so i've gone back to complete it. so far, so good. it's been fun, actually and this path is a lot more linear than my other scenes. or, it is for now. we'll see how carried away i get.

## STATS.

393,484 words (+2240)

## SNEAK PEEK.

**CHOICE:** "I'm not an owl!" [Hermione Granger voice]

### CHAPTER 09.

Rylan shoots me a grin. It's slow and dangerous, much like the ones they gave [A] and I during the two times we attempted to capture them.

"You know, when we first met, I found you hard to read," they drawl. "You backtracked, made contradictory comments one moment and then perfect clarity the next. Your partner, on the other hand, couldn't be more obvious—they wear their heart on their sleeve. Passion like theirs only makes them clumsy at hiding their feelings."

Rylan pauses. "Do you ever wonder why I went to your apartment, Hunter?"

I can only stare. The thought has crossed my mind on occasion, most often during the week right after Rylan had broken into my place, but I never came to an answer.

Rylan takes my silence as a cue to continue.  
"[A] would have been the easier choice, but I found you interesting."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[do you ever wonder?](#)

[Mar 30, 2023](#)

[why me? \[n & rylan\]](#)

[Apr 1, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** N contemplates why Rylan wants to hang out with them.

"We don't hang out much, do we?"

N looks up from their phone, watching their guest shuffle through the pantry in hopes of finding cookies. N told Rylan ages ago that they don't have any, but the half-vampire insisted that "no decent person would not have cookies in their house." Hence, their situation. N on the couch, Rylan in the kitchen.

"Ow." Rylan bumps their head on the countertop as they emerge, rubbing it absently with a hand.

N's lips tug into a smirk. "I told you there weren't any."

"Which is blasphemy," Rylan responds. "We're going to get you some immediately. I'll even allow oatmeal raisin as an option; you just need some sort of cookie in the house. What do you even snack on?" They close the cupboard. "Did you hear my question?"

N blinks, taking in the information slowly. They now know why [A] and Rylan get along so well—they both talk so fast. It's a wonder they can understand anything.

"About what I snack on?" N asks.

"No. I said: 'we don't hang out much, do we?'"

N lowers their phone as Rylan jumps on the couch, settling beside them with a grin. A familiar sight that N's seen dozens of times before, but never one-on-one. Rylan's right—they don't spend much time with each other. It's not like they avoid each other, necessarily. No, more like N has never thought of themselves as someone Rylan would choose to hang out with.

[A] and K are obvious choices. Once [A] got over their hesitation in being friends with Rylan, the two have been inseparable. And K, of course, has been Rylan's friend long before the group formed. There's history there that cannot be erased.

Blane... Well. Rylan likes annoying them. N has heard a few stories of Rylan knocking on Blane's door to "say hi to the plants" or "drag them out to get some sunshine; you can't stay couped up all day." They're quite similar to what Rylan sometimes does with N, except the excuses tend to be more centred around their dog, Radar.

As for the Hunter, well. N isn't quite sure what their relationship is, but at the very least, Rylan talks about [them] a lot. More than they do N, they're sure.

Maybe N and Rylan don't hang out much, but it doesn't really bother N.

So then why do they—

"Did you want to?"

Rylan blinks. Their eyes are brown, but whereas N's are the colour of rich chocolate, Rylan's are more like cacao beans.

"What makes you think I wouldn't?" Rylan asks.

Now it's N's turn to blink. "I don't know. Just... You never text me."

"Same goes for you." Rylan cocks their head. "Communication goes both ways, Alvey. Do you know why I show up at your door front so often? I mean sure, Radar is cute, but I like you. It was one of the first things I said to you, remember? You remind me of a dozen different people I already know, but somehow, also not."

"Gee thanks."

Rylan waves a hand. "What I mean is: you're interesting. Fun to be with, fun to spend time with. I know you think you bore me, but it's far from it. [A]'s too similar to me, Blane is too grumpy, K is even grumpier—sometimes I think hanging out with you is the best of the three."

N stares at their companion. When Rylan came barging in earlier, N thought they'd be upset that Radar was napping, but the half-vampire never asked. N brushed it off, assuming they'd lose all of Rylan's attention the moment Radar got up anyway. Now, they're not so sure.

"You do?" N hears themselves ask.

Rylan flicks them on the arm. "Why do you say that like you don't believe me? I nicknamed you Alvey, didn't I? That's better than the ones I gave everyone else."

N bites their tongue. They've self-sabotaged dozens of relationships before and almost all of them began with conversations like these. People hang out with them, but a small part of them always wonders if the other person is only there because they want something.

Blane's number. Tricks on the field. A playmate for their own dog. The recipe for the brownies N baked the other day. Their opinion on a new gadget. Another—

No.

N has spent ages vying for attention in their household. Each time they got a fraction, it slipped away through their fingers. It has damaged them beyond belief. And here Rylan is, giving them the affirmation they want—and N is ruining it for themselves.

They force a smile. "Does this mean I need to give you a nickname?"

"Nah. That's my thing." Rylan gets up, pulling N to their feet with them. "I mean, if you really want to sure, but I can't say I'll approve. I am the master of naming, after all." They tug N towards the door. "God, you have a lot of shoes. Do you think we're the same size?"

N frowns. "Wait, where are we going?"

"To get cookies, of course!" Rylan nudges a pair of sneakers towards them before bending down to lace up their own. "I did tell you that it was blasphemy that you don't have any in your apartment, didn't I?"

This time, the tug of their lips comes naturally. Maybe N hasn't ruined things after all.

"I guess you did."

[update 59.](#)

[Apr 3, 2023](#)

## WHAT I DID.

most exciting news of the week? i added a new interlude. even better? i've included a sneak peek of it below. it's a scene that focuses on Sebastian and what's going through his head—something i wrote in one sitting but am extremely happy with. it was never something i initially planned on, but i recently got a comment asking why Sebastian is still friends with Caine despite all his... uh, bad habits. and i kinda went, *huh. that's a fair point*. and so, this interlude is supposed to answer some of these questions, as well as give a better understanding of Sebastian as a person.

aside from Caine and the ros, i'd argue that he's actually one of the most important characters of the story. up to chapter nine, Sebastian has been extremely distanced. i made him the opposite of Caine mostly because i thought the dynamic would be fun to play with, but also because i wanted to visually demonstrate the shift in the department after Caine's disappearance. i guess i have a thing for characters putting up a facade (Blane, K, Rylan) because Sebastian has more to him than the impersonal persona he puts on. i had hoped to show this through various breakages during conversations with the hunter (chapter eight), but i think the interlude will help confirm what i'm trying to tell. it's vague enough that you might still be left with some questions, but specific enough that it should tide you over. for now.

in other news, i'm still writing (you guessed it) A's and N's scene. i say it's a joint scene, but i'm actually hoping to focus on N's character for this scene. though i adore A, they've had (and will have) more than enough opportunities to showcase their arc, simply due to them being the hunter's partner. of course, this development for N only happens if you decided on this branch as opposed to Blane's or K's and Rylan's, but still. the chance is there. i admit that a lot of development happens depending on the branches you choose, but the goal at the end of the story is to have all the characters have an arc (whether it be detailed in your playthrough or not).

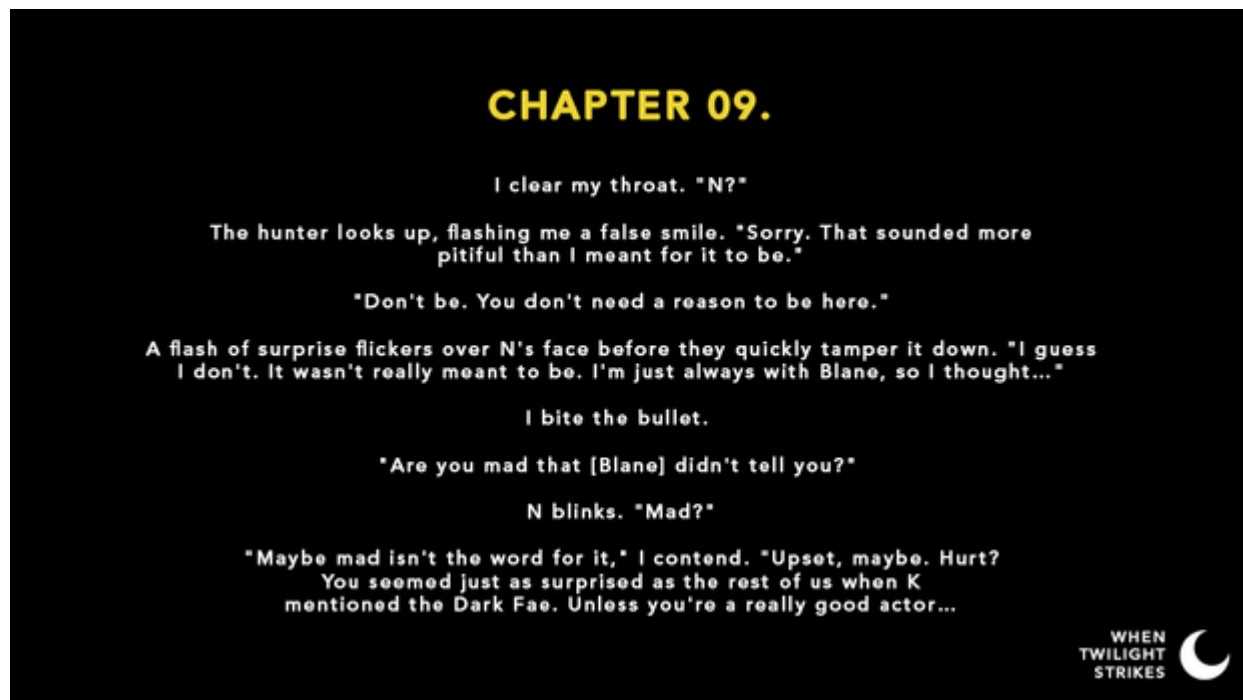
exams are still in progress. essays are still a thing. i am still drowning in homework—but i hope you all are well lol. <3

## STATS.

395,408 words (+1924)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Except, when Caine had been told the news, he merely smiled and shook hands of congratulations. One of those was Sebastian's, but he never received the words in return.



[so, are you?](#)

[Apr 7, 2023](#)

[Apr 11, 2023](#)

## WHAT I DID.

i know i usually do my updates on monday, but i'll be honest: i pretty much just slept all day. at the risk of typing out something completely incoherent, i decided that a tuesday (though still late) update would likely be better. hence, this. i'm still very much scatterbrained from my exams, so bear with me.

in many ways, i'm still at the same place i was last week. still working on A's and N's branch, still chipping away at the final scene for the chapter and thinking about different variations for it. i am, however, closer than i was before. for one, i have the entirety of A's and N's branch laid out—all that's left is for me to fill it in. sometimes, this is the hardest part: writing the words themselves. ironic considering this is an interactive *novel*, but if things don't work the way you want, simple tasks like these can be impossible. writer's block is truly a curse. it's why i wanted to have another project on the back burner to switch between, but it seems my brain cannot multitask like that. i can write multiple branches at one time, but only if they're in the same universe, it seems. limitations.

i previously stated that i want A's and N's branch to be more focused on N and so far, i've done exactly that. there are still chances to interact with A of course (what kind of author would i be if you didn't get to address them at all) but since the conversation is mostly about the situation with Blane, N takes up a focal point. i'm very aware of how often N's conversations center around Blane and am trying to stray away from this narrative, but in this case, there's not much of a choice. N's arc focuses a lot on how they feel dependent on Blane and invisible in their shadow. much of their constant mentioning of Blane attributes to this, but a variety of topics is necessary. that's what makes them "human," i suppose. as much as they adore Blane, N also resents their constant association to them. considering this, it'd be silly for them to talk about their partner all the time. my only hope is that i can incorporate more conversations in the future to reflect this.

## STATS.

395,408 words (+2891)

## SNEAK PEEK.

"It's not like I don't understand. My relationship with my parents—" [N] cuts themselves off, clearing their throat.

## CHAPTER 09.

Bounding over to [A] when we arrive at [K]'s penthouse,  
flashing me grins and knowing looks when someone  
says a funny comment—texting me at nearly midnight.

I've tried to shake them. I really have. But Rylan Villanueva is like a  
leech that doesn't want to let go. A bloodsucker of another kind,  
latched on for dear life and hooked into my skin with barbs  
that I seem to multiply each time I pick them out.

I don't know if they're doing it on purpose.

Some sort of psychological approach to get me to like them and appeal  
for their innocence when they eventually turn themselves in. They  
may act otherwise, they're certainly smart enough to pull it off.  
The question is whether they'd go through the effort.

Maybe they're simply an annoying person. [K] can certainly attest to that.

I glance back down at my phone, wrinkling my nose.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[bloodsucker.](#)

[Apr 14, 2023](#)

[not friends, just something. \[a & blane\]](#)

[Apr 17, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** A buys something from IKEA. fortunately or not, Blane is available to help.

**note:** so sorry it's been so long since the last drabble went up—tonight has been the first time i've been able to write in at least a week. that being said, i'll be skipping the weekly update because i think i wrote, like, 100 words max. exams man.

Fact: [A] and Blane don't get along.

Fact: [A] and Blane have more in common than they think.

Fact: [A] and Blane have become somewhat friends.

[A] isn't sure how it started. Certainly not after Blane came barging into Caine's office, threatening to tell Sebastian what they and the Hunter were doing. And certainly not after they got kicked out of K's

penthouse (which time, you ask? Doesn't matter). But it started somewhere. After being forced to be in each other's presence for hours at a time, multiple death experiences, and a begrudging piece of advice in dark times, [A] and Blane have become....

[A] doesn't like to say it aloud.

It's strange. They're like two puzzle pieces that can never slot together and yet somehow, they've found a way to work in harmony with one another. Well, maybe harmony is stretching it.

Because as much as they have accepted their newfound relationship with Blane, [A] still finds themselves scrunching their nose every time they realize how dysfunctional they are. They must be doing the expression now because Blane is wearing the exact deadpan stare they always do when they notice [A] is making this face.

"What is it now?" Blane asks.

[A] forces themselves to smooth out their expression. "Nothing."

"That doesn't work on me. Try again."

[A] sighs, sinking down onto the floor. Dysfunctional is one way to put it. "I was just... thinking."

Blane arches an eyebrow. "Surprising considering how empty your head is. What about?"

[A] forces themselves not to punch Blane in the face. "About us, I guess. Not in a romantic sense, I mean. Like, I mean. How I called you over to build my IKEA table out of all things and you actually, I don't know, came? Like—"

"Devereux." Blane's voice is low, holding a now familiar hint of mirth that overrides the years of previous annoyance. "Don't make me throw the manual at you. You ramble too much and you're as much of an idiot as you were when we first met, but if I didn't come, you would have been grumbling in the group chat about your table the whole week."

"I'm not an idiot."

Blane points at the table leg closest to [A]. "You tried to put that on backward."

This time, [A] picks up a nearby screw and throws it lightly in the other hunter's direction. Blane dodges and releases a small huff of air—their version of a laugh. Before, [A] might have been discouraged but now, they take what they can get. A smile curves at the edge of their lips.

"You were the one reading the instructions."

"I showed you a picture."

"Exactly! You weren't even doing your job."

"I said I was decent at deciphering IKEA instructions, not an expert."

"That's the first time I've heard you admit you're not the best at something."

Blane ignores the comment, turning a scrutinizing gaze on the table. They poke it with a finger and the structure wobbles slightly in response, but otherwise stays standing.

[A] bites their lip. They allow for the table a couple of extra seconds to steady itself before asking: "You don't think we need to rebuild it, do you?"

Blane turns to face them. They survey the ground, littered with various nuts and bolts and wooden rods that definitely should have been used at some point. "All the major pieces are in. It should stay standing as long as you don't put a whole roast dinner on it or something." A pause. "Not that you can cook."

[A] gawks. "I can cook perfectly fine, thank you!"

"Is that why we bought takeout?"

[A] thinks about the pad-Thai they had earlier and against their will, their stomach growls. Blane smirks at the sound and [A] glares in return. It's so familiar that it brings [A] back to their original thought of how strange this all is. They refuse to admit that they're friends, but they'll agree that they're something.

[A] sits back up. "Hey, Rekner?"

Blane's expression mellows the moment they see [A]'s. "Devereux."

"I'm only going to say this once, so if you miss it, that's your fault. I'm not repeating it. It's never—" [A] sucks in a breath, cutting themselves off at Blane's glare. They clear their throat. "Thanks for coming."

Blane doesn't say anything, eyes roaming over [A] slowly. They're silent for so long that [A] debates breaking their promise and repeating the words, if only to get rid of the awkwardness of the situation, but then, ever-so-slightly, the other hunter nods.

"Invite me to test it out sometime and we're even," Blane says.

"Deal."

[update 61.](#)

[Apr 25, 2023](#)

## WHAT I DID.

i always do this. exam season comes around, i say that i'll be active and still have some sort of media presence, then, boom, i disappear. my apologies. i underestimated how much time i spent ripping my hair out and stressing over classes. but that's over now. my next big task is moving out and then i'll be more free to focus on this project.

you'll notice by the word count that i didn't write that much. tragic, but i blame the exams. it's been two weeks since i've done an update and in that time, i've finished A's and N's branch and am working on the final scene. *final*. lord, did it take a long time to get here. as i always say, it will be a while until after the chapter is finished that it'll go up (editing and coding take more time than i'd like) but we're on the way there. out of the three available branches, i think this one is the least heavy. Blane's is hard for obvious reasons, whereas K is always a hardass and Rylan is being unusually difficult on that route, so if you're looking for a bit of a refresher, A's and N's would work best. not to say there's no depth at all, but perhaps it dips a little higher than others.

i'm hoping to finish the chapter within two weeks or so but i have a mini vacation coming up so i likely won't be able to write during that time. i'll queue some posts up in advance (i actually will this time) so you won't be content starved, but otherwise, i'll be away.

on another note, i was thinking of opening up some commission slots this summer. don't know if anyone would be interested but i might consider it if there's enough interest. take care everyone <3

## STATS.

397,616 words (+2208)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Against the background of cars whipping past each other and laughter echoing throughout the night: a nearby scrunching of gravel, the heavy drag of a foot approaching.

## CHAPTER 09.

[A] frowns. They look like a child who's just been told off. "Worse?"

"Worse," I repeat. "Have you forgotten that their drugs are different than ours? It's not smoking for pleasure, it's enhancement drugs to make them faster, stronger—more powerful. If you want to defend supernaturals, then this was a bad example."

"What isn't a bad example for you."

"Sorry?"

[A] clears their throat. Their eyes meet mine and they no longer look like a child, but rather, a teacher who's fed up with a child's shit. "You heard me. Anytime I note anything positive about supernaturals, you shut it down. There's no point with you."

Irritation pricks me. "Then why keep trying?"

"Maybe because you work at a supernatural organization that believes in the opposite of what you do? You would think you might have changed your opinion overtime."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[backlash.](#)

[Apr 27, 2023](#)

appears only if you choose a route where your hunter does not like supernaturals :))

## DELETED SCENE.

It's nearly impossible to tell if [Rylan is] joking. "In a way, they remind me a lot of [K]. And if I can crack their hard exterior, then I can certainly make friends with Blane."

Good luck with that," I tell them. "I don't know if you're able to tell, but Blane isn't exactly the friendly type. Their only friend is [N]."

Rylan raises a single eyebrow. "And you're not?"

"Why do you care?" I ask, adding a harsh scoff to the end of the question. "Shouldn't Blane's issue with me be 'entertaining' to you? That's all you care about, right?"

Rylan stares at me and for a moment, it looks like I may have struck a nerve. But a smile is quickly plastered on their face and any other emotion they may have felt is wiped away. "Looks like you know me better than I thought you did."

I make a face.

"I was merely curious," Rylan continues. "If I'm going to be part of this group, I might as well know how it works."

I consider the words. "Fine. Blane acts the way they do because of the leadership board we have at IAOS. The Rankings. They don't like knowing they're second best to [A] and I. Happy now?"

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[deleted scene \(chapter five\).](#)

[Apr 29, 2023](#)

the original Rylan asks what the relationship between A/the Hunter and Blane is at the beginning of chapter five, in the conversation including N. it was meant to act as a way to also reevaluate your stats and approach to Blane's hostility, but was ultimately deleted because i figured it was too early. you can compare it to a 'stat check' in a way, though it has no repercussions (if you can even call it that) other than changing flavour text.

[update 62.](#)

[May 1, 2023](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

we're here. we're at the home stretch. after months of fucking writer's block, i can finally see the finish line. it won't be immediately, definitely not next week, but chapter nine is nearing completion. all that's left of this chapter is the final scene, which, depending on how crazy i decide i want it to be, can range anywhere from an additional 5 thousand to 15 thousand words. whatever the outcome, though, i want it to be my best. i want this project to be one of, if not the, best representations of my capabilities as a writer and a creator, so even if i end up pulling my hair out in stress about how long it's been since i've updated, i'm not going to rush it.

the final scene, as i've teased a couple of times before, references (mimics?) a scene that happened earlier in the book. i wrote that scene all the way back in january of 2021, so i'm curious to see how much my perspective has changed since. maybe it'll be similar, maybe it'll be completely different. either way, i'm going to make sure it's fun. as much as i adore writing times where my characters bicker or have those *oh* moments with the hunter, i think it's these kinds of scenes that really connect the story to its original goal. "you are a bounty hunter." i mean, can my hinting get any more obvious than this?

it's times like these when i wish i could make this game into a visual novel. to see everything come to life not just in my head, but on the screen in colour and texture. the concept has always intrigued me, but i don't have the artistic abilities or the confidence to confide in another artist with this project to be able to let it go. maybe when it's finished, but really, i got to start thinking a little more realistically.

as mentioned last week, i'm going on a mini vacation this week so i won't be able to be active in real time. however, i've (so far) queued up a sneak peek and a drabble (which will be dropping tomorrow) so you won't be content starved. thank you for your support <3

## **STATS.**

400,218 words (+2602)

## SNEAK PEEK.

This is Rylan. Rylan, who will absolutely turn my words against me because it entertains them. Rylan, who doesn't seem to know the definition of personal space, grinning way too wide and way too close for comfort. Rylan, who makes me nervous for reasons other than being a bounty.

[only you. \(k & rylan\)](#)

[May 2, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** K wants nothing more than a quiet afternoon. Rylan has other plans, namely, getting their warlock friend out of the penthouse.

"What if—"

"No."

"Okay, but if—"

"No."

"How about—"

"Do you really think if you keep trying, I'll eventually say yes?"

Rylan lets out a large groan, falling back on K's couch with the mannerisms of a cat. K considered adopting one once, back when they thought an animal might fill the void in their heart, but ultimately passed on the idea. They're glad. If they had one, it would likely double the number of times Rylan swings by their penthouse.

"You'd think that just once, you'd let me get a word in," Rylan answers. They kick their feet up on the armrest. K has to resist wrinkling their nose. "You don't even know what I was going to say!"

"Something stupid, surely."

"Like what!"

K shakes their head, taking a swig of water. "When do you not say something stupid, Villanueva?"

"All the time. I'm a very smart individual," Rylan insists. They cross their arms with a small huff. "Besides, I didn't come here to be bullied. The goal was to get you out of the apartment, you old warlock. When was the last time you stepped foot out the door?"

K scowls. "This morning."

"The balcony doesn't count."

This time, K doesn't answer. They didn't think their friend would notice the spell they were in, but of course, Rylan is more perceptive than K gives them credit for. They'll pick themselves out of it eventually. When K spirals, they know it's only a matter of time before their head rights itself again.

Because harmful thoughts are just that: thoughts. K is just as susceptible to them as the next person, but what gets them through them is knowing even if their worst fantasies come true, there is nothing they can do.

Pure acceptance.

K is nothing more than a tree swaying in the wind. They are subject to the will of the world. Their immortality, their unhappiness, their loneliness—all problems out of reach. They've been alive for over a century. Whether it is to their liking, their issues always sort themselves out one way or another.

When it's clear K isn't going to respond, Rylan prompts, "Have you been eating?"

K's gaze flicks to the kitchen, where their fridge has been slowly emptying itself out. They value their health enough that they'll force themselves to go grocery shopping when everything is finished, rather than live off those instant noodle packs that Rylan adores.

"Yes."

Rylan arches an eyebrow. "So if I open your fridge right now, it'll have the entire grocery store in it?"

"I don't buy the entire grocery store."

"It often feels like it."

Rylan sits up, examining K with a scrutiny that could rival theirs. Narrowed brown eyes, calculations that practically hover over their brain, head tilted as if the angle might help them figure out how to fix this. Not one to forfeit a challenge, K stares back at their friend.

"Where do you usually shop?" Rylan asks.

K frowns. "Variety of places. I get the bulk of my stuff from the local grocery store about two blocks away. The rest I get from scattered stores from the neighbourhood."

"Including those bagels you once bought for me?"

"Including those bagels. Though, the store might be closed now."

"Then let's check!" Rylan jumps up faster than K's eyes can track, appearing in front of K so quickly they nearly spill their water. "It's only three in the afternoon, they might still have an hour or so left before closing. You're hungry, right? Let's go grocery shopping."

K feels a pounding begin between their eyes. "Rylan—"

"What are you going to eat tonight? Pasta again?"

K glares at their friend. "It's very good pasta."

"I have no doubt, considering how good you are at cooking," Rylan responds, compliment falling off their tongue easily. "But you're missing Filipino food, I can feel it in my bones. Your stomach is practically begging me for it." They grin. "Let me cook for you tonight. Then, once we go grocery shopping, you can get that relaxation you want."

"For what price."

Rylan gasps and places a hand over their heart. "You wound me. I don't charge when it's for my friends—you know that. The only price you'll be paying is the grocery bill."

"And the kitchen if you burn it down," K mutters. But the battle has already been fought and lost. They stand and ignore Rylan's cheers, placing their glass down on a nearby table. They pause, considering something. "If you make me some dessert tonight, I'll buy you bagels next week too."

Rylan's eyes widen. "Really?"

"Really."

The half-vampire whoops and all but drags K out the door, barely giving them time to grab their keys and wallet. They babble the entire elevator ride down, receiving nothing more than the occasional nod and hum from K, but Rylan couldn't seem happier.

And though K looks bored out of their mind as Rylan attempts to add item after item to the shopping cart, they send a silent thanks to their friend for rousing them out of their penthouse. Rylan knows, of course. They're just kind enough to let them keep up their façade.

## CHAPTER 09.

Groupchat: Penthouse Crashers (Sorry [K]).  
members: you, [A], Blane, [N], [K], Rylan

—

Rylan / 10:22pm  
sunshine and grumpy, did you two sort out your issues?

[A] / 10:22pm  
what happened to blondie?

Rylan / 10:23pm  
didn't feel like using it. and you didn't answer my question.  
if you haven't made up we're not having another meeting

[A] / 10:25pm  
we'll be fine

Rylan / 10:26pm  
\$N? can you testify?

[N] / 10:27pm  
It'll be sorted. Promise  
Also, \$A, aren't you [redacted]? Should you be on your phone?

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[penthouse crashers.](#)

[May 5, 2023](#)

## DELETED SCENE.

"You're curious," [K] guesses. They look up again, meeting my eyes with a raised eyebrow. "Or possibly scared of what I can do?"

"As much as you might want to think so, I'm not scared of your magic."

"Perhaps that'll come later." They smile mockingly. "You know, I'm surprised you haven't asked about it. Most people ask me about the colour of my magic at first chance. With the way they spit it out, you'd think it was burning on their tongue." I smile awkwardly. "Actually, I wanted to ask, but I figured you get the question often."

"An incredible guess," [K] replies. "With those deduction skills, it's no wonder why you're catching bounties left and right."

[...]

"You humans are so entitled. When you ask us questions, you act like warlocks are merely humans that can do magic," [K] says, back turned to me. "But when you're hunting us down, you make sure to emphasize how different we are."

"You're generalizing," I reply.

"Why shouldn't I? Should I not be wary of all hunters like you're wary of all supernaturals? Or is it a double standard that doesn't apply to me?"

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[deleted scene \(chapter five\).](#)

[May 8, 2023](#)

an alternative scene for the hunter to ask about K's magic in chapter five, though a much harsher version. it was ultimately cut because of this, as i wanted a better impression of K; this version of K tugged in a direction that was different from what i wanted the character to be, so it was scraped. i still really like some bits of this conversation though, particularly the line: "with the way they spit it out, you'd think it was burning on their tongue."

## CHAPTER 09.

But the air changes before we can get too far.  
[A] feels it quicker than I do, stiffening in their steps  
backwards, halting my own.

It's subtle. Something so small that it could be hidden beneath a sudden pick up  
in the breeze. A laugh that is stiffer than the one that came before it but gone  
so quick you think you're imagining things. A slight discomfort in your  
ankle during the next step, only to be righted again momentarily.

A fluke in the universe. A misstep, a mistake. That's what most write it  
off as. But when you're accustomed to it, when you're actively  
looking for that subtle change, you'll find that it never quite leaves.

There's a sickening feeling in my stomach. The kind when you  
know someone is looking at you, watching you. Where  
you can feel their smile despite the silence, a smirk that  
promises they're better than you. Deviance. Confidence. Arrogan—

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[dread.](#)

[May 15, 2023](#)

[update 63.](#)

[May 15, 2023](#)

### WHAT I DID.

apologies for the lack of update last week, i was in the states and had written like, three words so i figured it wasn't necessary. it's not like i don't repeat things in every single update anyway... ahem.

but yeah, the home stretch. we're there. we're closing in. i spent a good chunk of this week reorienting myself with where i left off the last time i opened my document, but after i righted myself, i found that there truly isn't much left to do. i could write the entire scene right now if i wanted. it would take me several hours, but i could do it. i have it all mapped out, from the beginning to the end to the smallest details that i want to use to hint at future events and plot points. i haven't been this excited for a chapter in a while, though maybe that's because i also haven't updated in so long...

i have three more weeks before i start my new full-time job, so i'll be grinding this chapter out to hopefully finish the writing and editing process during that time. the next step will be to go back to previous chapters and add flavour text here and there, as i've been encouraged to do by overwhelming feedback, and then getting it beta read. while i have a current team, i think i'm going to switch things up and put out a new form to see if there are any new applicants wanting to give things a try. it can be a one-time thing or a more 'permanent position,' for lack of a better term, which might help with the ghosting i've dealt with. it's all voluntary, of course, but i appreciate it to the fullest extent.

other projects are also being brainstormed, such as another interactive short story to be played as a bonus. i think a huge part of what caused my writer's block was the boredom of writing one singular plot. jumping from scene to scene helped, but as i've been writing drabbles here and there, i realize how much i enjoy writing mundane scenarios with the characters. going out to a cafe, bickering at work over lunch, throwing parties at K's penthouse without their permission—little things like that. this story isn't necessarily the most serious, but sometimes it can weigh a little heavy. with summer approaching, i can definitely find an excuse to write some lighthearted stories. we'll see how far i get though.

## STATS.

402,268 words (+2050)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Unlike Blane's however, the stranger's hair is clearly dyed, the colour garish against dark ingrown roots.

[fever high. \[blane & n\]](#)

[May 19, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** Blane is the type of friend who never gets sick. N is the type who gets sick from being coughed on. featuring N's dog, Radar.

Blane doesn't get sick. They've gotten close, hacking up phlegm and sniffing horrors that they would rather not repeat, but they've never had a day where they've been bedridden, shivering from a fever with a voice so hoarse they could barely rasp a greeting.

Blane has never been sick, but they know firsthand how horrible it is through [N].

As it is, they stand outside their partner's apartment, shuffling through their bag for the spare key that [N] lent them in case of emergencies like these. It's past noon on a Saturday, a time when [N] would normally be walking their dog, Radar. But Blane can hear the dog shuffling inside, whining lowly in the distance.

Blane saw it coming the moment [N] developed a tickling in their throat on Thursday. Their partner had denied it, coming into work on Friday with a bout of sneezing that even they couldn't deny.

This morning, [N] texted Blane with a simple 'I have a fever' and promptly passed out, judging by their lack of response. It was enough that Blane had gone to a local restaurant to buy some soup (two servings, since they were going to force [N] to have it for dinner too) and headed straight to [N]'s apartment.

Blane finds the key and slots it into the keyhole. At the same time, they hear Radar perk up and begin to run to the door. Blane has just enough time to put down their bag before the dog is on them, climbing their legs and nuzzling their chest.

"Hey buddy," Blane greets.

Radar circles them a couple of times and Blane gets the hint, following the dog down the hall to [N]'s room. It's dark, curtains drawn and the door only open because Radar busted out. They lean down to give the dog a couple of pats and, satisfied, Radar gives Blane a kiss and plods over to their bed beside [N]'s.

Blane has seen [N] sleep dozens of times. The hunter seems to be in the running for the worst sleep schedule, because at no point in the day will they not nap. On their desk, during lunch break, on the car ride home on the days Blane drives them to work—even if it's for a mere minute, [N] will find a way.

It's a talent, really.

In theory, seeing their partner like this shouldn't surprise them. The slow rise and fall of [N]'s chest. The small puffs of air that they blow out of their mouth. No, what scares Blane is the shuddering. The light sheen of sweat on [N]'s forehead, the furrowed eyebrows even in their sleep.

Blane hesitates and takes a step forward. They're about to muster up the courage to shake their partner awake when Radar barks, causing [N] to shift. Blane's shoulders slump in relief as brown eyes meet emerald.

"Blane?"

Blane can't help how their lips slip into a smile. "Hey."

"You—" [N] struggles to get up and Blane reaches forward to tell them to not exert all their energy. Their partner glares at the words but must be too exhausted to argue, because all they do is fall back into their cushions. "What are you doing here?"

Blane gestures to the bag. "Got you some soup. I figured you'd have some medicine in your cabinets, but if you don't, I can go pick some up."

[N] squints. "Soup?"

"Soup," Blane repeats. "Spelt S-O-U-P. Usually served hot, though I'm sure there's the odd version here and there that's meant to be cold. Good for colds and warming up. Ever heard of it?"

"Don't be a smartass."

"Don't get sick."

[N] rolls over. Coughs. "Not my fault that I got coughed on in the elevator. IAOS pays well for their employees to take sick days. You should be asking them why they decided to come in and give their disease to me." They cough again. "Ugh, this is awful."

Blane frowns. "When was the last time you took your meds?"

"Uh, about when I texted you."

They wince. It'd been several hours since then. "Take some with your soup then. I got it from that local store that you love so much. I'll go warm it up for you and get you a glass of water. Do you have a thermometer somewhere? We should take your temperature."

"You'll find it with the medicine," [N] answers. They're already starting to nod off again, if the slow drawl of their words is any indication.

Blane debates waking them up again, but eventually decides to let them rest for the short time it takes them to prepare their lunch. They get up, gesturing Radar to follow as they head for the door, the Golden Retriever happily complying.

Just as they're about to leave, however, they hear [N] croak out a soft word.

"Blane."

"Hmm?"

[N] shifts again, tilting their head up just high enough to meet Blane's eyes. "You're my best friend."

Blane stiffens and watches as [N]'s head falls against the pillows again, promptly passing out. They want to ask [N] what they mean, if they really meant it, if they're saying this simply because of fever-induced hallucinations or because Blane, cold-hearted Blane, made the small effort of getting their partner soup.

But it's [N]. Of course they mean it. Of course they would say something that shatters Blane's world right before falling dead asleep.

Down the hall, Radar whines for Blane to catch up. They force their legs to move and shut [N]'s door softly behind them.

They only planned on staying for an hour or so, but after making soup, they can't find it in themselves to leave. They find themselves at [N]'s bedside until past midnight, where they eventually curl up with Radar in a pile of blankets and dog toys.

It's where [N] finds them the next morning. The photo is still somewhere in their camera roll.

[update 64.](#)

[May 22, 2023](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

mondays are universally hated. they're the first day of the week (though i'd argue that sunday takes that role), a day when most people have to go back to work. as someone who is on summer break and won't be working until june, mondays mean weekly updates. inevitably, i end up repeating what i said last week in most of my overviews, but it can't be helped. being a slow writer (which is clearly what i've become) means writing the same scene for sometimes weeks on end.

which brings me to this: i missed a spot. remember when i said i finished with A's and N's branch? yeah, apparently not. i was scrolling through my doc the other day and lo and behold, there was a huge chunk of text missing for various choices i planned out but never wrote. i have this problem where i'll lay out five or six choices and only write one before continuing with the rest of the story. i like to argue that it keeps me from forgetting where i was going with the choice and what text i want to put after. in reality, writing choices is really draining for me. it's different dialogue and inner thoughts but all leading or referencing the same thing. in other words, they're merely variations of each other.

in my defence, i truly did think A's and N's branch was done. really, it's not a big deal, but it's a little frustrating to think i was closing in on the final scene when in reality, bam, i had more to write from when

i was being lazy earlier. luckily, i had a decent amount of motivation this week to get most of it done, so what's left is just three (four?) more blanks for me to fill in and then i can get back to the end of the chapter. the end.

i'm truly on the very last scene of the chapter. i've been at this stage for a while now, but within this scene, there have been dozens of uh, other, scenes, for lack of a better word. segments. sections. i don't know. what matters is, i have two 'segments' left and then i'll be done with this chapter. it's been haunting me since november but we're nearly there. with that, i can happily say that chapter nine will release sometime in june, though i do not have an estimate as to when yet. as always, the twilight and midnight tiers will get early access and i'll announce in the weekly update a more concrete date when i have it. thanks for sticking by me <3

## STATS.

406,319 words (+4051)

## SNEAK PEEK.

[[A] will] mention their parents sometimes, tell me how good their mom's soup is and how she's been asking to have me over at the next holiday dinner.

## CHAPTER 09.

Allan lifts a leg as he attempts to knee my stomach and I twist my body out of the way. I take the opportunity to kick out at the leg keeping him balanced, a scowl gracing my expression when again, he merely stumbles.

Fucking Fae.

Behind me, [A]'s opponent gives a shout. Following the noise is the sound of [A]'s taser going off again, though the attempt is seemingly unsuccessful if the snarl in response has anything to do with it. I almost want to switch positions with Allan so that I can see what's happening, but I don't want to give him an advantage to escape.

Enough of this. This is taking too long.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[profanities and the fae.](#)

[May 27, 2023](#)

[update 65.](#)

[May 30, 2023](#)

## WHAT I DID.

it's nearly june. isn't it crazy how fast time passes? one moment you're wearing long sleeves and waiting for the snow to melt and the next, you're in a tank top and shorts wondering when the weather will calm the fuck down. that's how it felt for me, anyway. june brings a lot of things. ice cream, the sun beating down on your neck, [A]'s birthday—it's bound to be a lot of fun.

there isn't much to say in terms of new content. i'm sure you're all tired of me repeating things—i am too. this is my last week before i start my fulltime job so i'm hoping (fingers crossed) to finish the chapter by this week. it's really just a matter of forcing myself to sit down and write, but with an attention span like mine, sometimes that can be difficult. either way, everything is outlined. i had a rough idea in my head of what was going to happen and ended up writing that down on a notepad the other day. it's not necessarily something i need to follow, but i feel good knowing where and when exactly i'm stopping.

in other news, i recently went back into the game and decided to re-evaluate some stats. i have yet to upload the new version (it'll come out when chapter nine does) but the 'laidback/intimidating' and 'independent/collaborative' stats have been booted. i found that i wasn't using the two very much and they didn't really add to the story, so yeah. the laidback/intimidating stats are completely cut, while the choice of whether or not you choose to trust [A] in chapter one will be added/taken from your relationship points with them. the same goes for any other time you decide to be cooperative or not, though in the case that it's not with [A], it'll be added/taken from the other ro's relationship points. this grants more opportunities to raise or lower your bar with certain people, which i use to unlock or lock certain choices (more so a plan for the future).

hopefully when i come on here next week, i'll be yelling about how i've finished the chapter so. good luck to me i guess. hope you're all well <3

## STATS.

409,563 words (+3244)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Both of our chests are heaving, pants loud and coming out in puffs of smoke. My ears are ringing; the only sounds I can hear are coming from us.

[update 66.](#)

[Jun 6, 2023](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

super quick because i'm already super late and ah, sorry everyone. i severely underestimated how tired i'd be after work and haven't been able to do anything other than pass out when i get home, honestly.

but hi, hello. the update for this week is simple: no, i did not manage to finish the chapter before starting my full-time job. yes i will be grinding it this entire weekend. now, do i need to? not really. but i've been wanting this done for ages now and i'm going to make it happen. truly, it's only a couple more blank scenes i need to fill in (i say that and my next update will have like, ten thousand words added). still, i'm going to make a homerun this weekend.

after that will be the usual editing process, along with bonus content to make up for my recent absence on it (a short story will be up as soon as i can write one, i swear it). the beta-testing form will be created and posted (most likely) next week. as well, [A]'s birthday is in two days !! i'll see if i can come up with a quick drabble for it but life has been so busy lately so, no promises. maybe i can sacrifice some sleep for them...

anyway, sorry this is so short. exciting things are on the way <3

## **STATS.**

414,237 words (+4674)

## **SNEAK PEEK.**

[N]'s face comes into view, a furrowed brow and a bow in their hand.

## CHAPTER 09.

After the most recent hunt, I heard whispers of 'inhumane' and 'monstrous' floating throughout the department. They were presumably words taken from the report, though how my coworkers got a hand on those is a mystery. No matter.

I understand.

Allan slams my head into the pavement. Stars swim in my eyes, but I'm not knocked out yet. In my haze, I hear someone yell. It takes me a moment to realize it's me, a scream strangling my vocal cords as I raise the baton to his neck. The sound that follows is a lowly gasp, a wheeze so desperate that, if I hadn't known better, I would have thought it was someone's last breath.

Allan's body lifts off mine as he arches in pain, and though most of his body weight is still on me, the moment is long enough for me to shove a hand against the sore spot again and push him off me.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[stars in your eyes.](#)

[Jun 11, 2023](#)

[update 67.](#)

[Jun 12, 2023](#)

### WHAT I DID.

hi hi! how's everyone doing? nearly halfway through june and i'm panicking because of my self-given deadline, but it's fine, it's fine. why? because i finished the hardest part: the writing. yup, that's right. i, kristi, who have been working on this chapter since fucking november with the fattest writer's block i've ever had and numerous numerous setbacks, have finally finished the body of chapter nine.

it feels good to say that.

what's next is a bunch of admin that i really don't want to do, but need to if i want this chapter to see the light of day. i'll be doing my usual two rounds of revision (one for grammar, the other for flow and story), followed by coding and beta-testing. in between, i'll be fixing up the stats that i likely broke when deleting the 'laidback/intimidating' and 'independent/collaborative' stats, as well as going through the chapters to add more flavour text to make the game more personal to each player.

while i'm at it, i'm going to start tracking the highest and lowest points you can currently get with each ro. i have a good idea of the range, but the exact number will be helpful for the romance lock. it still feels a bit early, but when you think about it, it's also kind of not. i'm still unsure on the length of the game, but we're definitely at or past the halfway point right now. seeing as my initial plan was to have the lock three-quarters of the way through, it's on the horizon. i know exactly where i'm placing it, so it's really just a matter of if i feel like i need some more filler before it happens. the lock was supposed to feature a first kiss for some of the ros, but it really depends on whether it feels natural or not. [A] for example, the hunter has known for ages, so the pining makes sense. Rylan on the other hand, though open to an early kiss, may feel out of place due to their limited interactions with the hunter. as of now, i count the one-on-one times in chapters three/five, crimson rouge and the aftermath of crimson rouge as the main bonding scenes. chapter ten might feature one too, but that's up in the air right now. as are most things.

we'll see.

## STATS.

418,033 words (+3796)

## SNEAK PEEK.

Blane holds my gaze, eyes softening slightly. "We'll take care of [A]. I promise."

[all fun and games.](#)

[Jun 14, 2023](#)

**synopsis:** the gang plays Mario Kart. things end how you'd imagine.

**note:** wrapping up the ro&ro fics with a little group drabble. poll will be up sometime later to start writing ro x hunter fics again, including an option for requests <3

"Devereux," Blane growls, "I will choke you in your sleep."

"Kinky."

"Devereux."

"Oops, my finger slipped."

The group watches in horror as [A] lets the blue shell loose, effectively knocking Blane from first place to tenth right before they reach the finish line. Blane sets their controller down with a blank expression, turning their head to face the culprit. [A], for their part, has the sense to look guilty.

"I said oops?"

Blane looks ready to throttle them.

[N] pounces on Blane's controller before they can do so, skillfully blocking their path to [A]. "Let me have another go at it. I got knocked out of the tournament too early."

Rylan snorts. "That's because you suck."

"Radar was howling in the other room!"

"And?"

Now it's [K]'s turn to snort. They haven't partaken in the Mario Kart tournament but have graciously lent their TV and penthouse for the occasion. From time to time, they'll get up and check on the cookies that are baking in the oven, but for the most part, they've stayed planted on the couch.

I, on the other hand, won the first tournament, lost the second and was promptly kicked out of the third because it was "a battle between [A] and Blane only, to settle their score."

Secretly, I think [A] really just wanted to see the look on Blane's face if they blue-shelled them. As it turns out, it wasn't very expressive. Just like [A] wanted to rile Blane up, I'm sure Blane wanted to rile [A] up by not showing their emotions. Meaning we'll probably have another Mario Kart tournament in the near future until one of them breaks.

The thought tires me out (affectionately).

"Is he better now?" [K] asks.

"Hmm?"

"Your puppy."

[N]'s eyes brighten. "Yeah. Thanks for letting me use your spare bedroom. He's in a bit of a weird mood, I think. Last I checked, he's sleeping it off. I'll probably have to go after he wakes up. He'll want to go for a walk." They grimace. "An extra long one."

"I can walk him if you want to stay," Rylan offers.

"And buy him treats on the way home again? No thanks."

Rylan gawks. "That was one time!"

"One time too many."

"Went off my credit card too," [K] grumbles.

[A] laughs at that, flipping back to the home screen to start a new round. Blane, successfully distracted by [N], gets up after relinquishing their controller, heading to the kitchen to fill up their water. They don't do so before sending [A] a death stare, of course, but my partner merely sticks out their tongue.

[A] holds out their controller. "Want another go, [name]?"

I shake my head. "Maybe after."

"Okay." [A]'s heaves a fake sigh. "You know, I wish we had more controllers. It isn't like someone here doesn't have a very expensive car we can use to go to a very cheap department store and buy moderately priced controllers... And an unlimited budget..."

"Shit, you're right," Rylan says. They snap their fingers. "Thanks for offering, Blondie."

"Very funny."

"I'm already lending you my penthouse and kitchen ingredients," [K] answers, clicking their tongue. They move over slightly as Blane comes back, giving the other half of the couch up. "You want more controllers so bad? Use that IAOS paycheque of yours."

"They spent it all on overpriced coffee," Blane mutters.

[A] groans, selecting Rosalina for the round and flops backwards. "Not my fault New York is so expensive! And not my fault that I support locally owned cafes who charge, like, a thousand dollars for their drinks."

"A thousand," I deadpan.

"A thousand!" [A] exclaims, throwing their hands up. Rylan narrowly moves their legs in time to avoid being hit, watching with an amused smile.

"As I said, IAOS paycheque," [K] says.

[A] groans again, leaving [N] to choose the course. They're nicer than most of the group, leaving it up to random selection rather than choosing tracks they're good at. Rainbow Road is the last one in the tournament, making [N] grin and [A] groan for a third time.

The last one is ten times louder and longer than the others.

"Karma," Blane says, sipping their water. "Kick their ass for me, [N]."

"Will do."

Rylan turns to me. "Want to make bets?"

I arch an eyebrow. "On what, exactly?"

"An extra one of [K]'s cookies?"

I mull it over. [K] watches out of the corner of their eye, having caught interest after hearing their name. Their cookies are a godsend, truly—even a non-cookie lover like Blane admitted it. Losing would be devastating, but winning... Plus the bonus of seeing Rylan's face as I eat their share? Priceless.

"Deal."

Four games later (including a screaming match during Rainbow Road between [A] and Blane), I hold Rylan's cookie in my hand. They watch mournfully as I take a bit, pouting as [K] snickers beside them. They're not much into sweets, but I can tell they're purposely denying Rylan their share in solidarity with my win.

[A] and Blane are playing another round, their yelling now background noise. [N] sits behind them, shouting encouragements and choking on laughter but trying to hide it when [A] shoves Blane, causing their character to fall off the tracks.

Later, [K] will drive us to Target to buy extra controllers. They'll complain the whole way there, but smile at the chorus of "thank you!" that follows. Later, we'll have several more tournaments, trying to settle who's the best player between the six of us.

But for now, we're here, in [K]'s penthouse on a random Sunday, enjoying good food and each other's company.

[update 68.](#)

[Jun 20, 2023](#)

## **WHAT I DID.**

so sorry for not posting this yesterday—and for not posting it until way too late today. ten o'clock at night is not an ideal time for these updates, but i was in the middle of editing chapter nine when i realized that, oh shit, my update wasn't up yet. so here i am. needless to say, i'm a little scatterbrained right now.

edits are going slower than i expected, but they're picking up pace. the goal is to have the chapter edited twice and coded by sunday (the 25th), which is the same day it'll go out to beta testers and those

of you on the midnight tier. by then, the chapter is basically done aside from a few grammar errors and occasional coding ones, so you'll basically be reading the finished product. those on the twilight tier will receive the chapter on the 27th.

i told myself that this chapter would be going up in june and i'm sticking to it. it's a bit of a tight schedule, but it's not impossible, so it's happening. maybe it's a bit of a cop-out publicly posting it on the very last day, but hey, it's not breaking my promise. i hope this is worth the wait <3

## STATS.

414,237 words (+???)

## SNEAK PEEK.

They merely shrug. "I can be lenient when I want."

### CHAPTER 09.

I hesitate. "I don't know."

K arches an eyebrow. As expected, they're not impressed. "You don't know?"

"You don't need to repeat it back to me."

"I am merely making sure that is your answer." Their gaze flits over me. "There is little you can be unsure of in this world, [surname]. If you don't know where your partner's loyalties lie, you have a problem."

I shake my head. "It's not a question of their loyalties. I know they want to find Caine."

[...]

"You asked what I think you're here for, [surname]," K says, hazel eyes narrowed with precision, "but in truth, you are an enigma. I'm willing to bet that you're here for several things, even if you do not know it yourself yet."

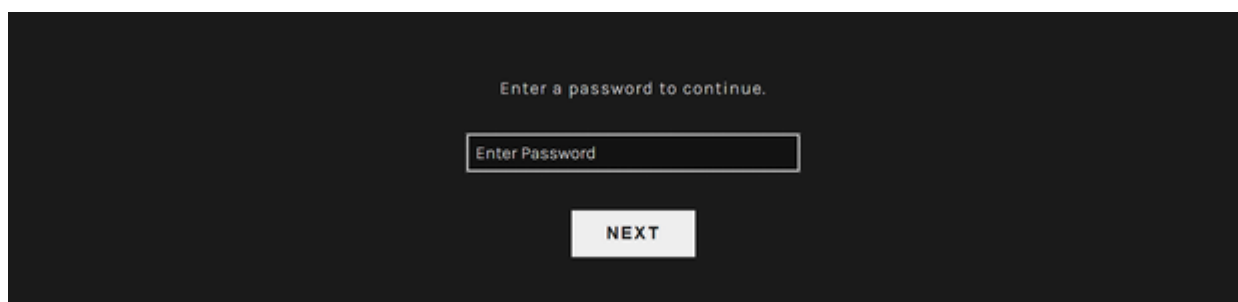
WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES



[an enigma.](#)

[Jun 22, 2023](#)

last sneak peek of this chapter before it goes live!!



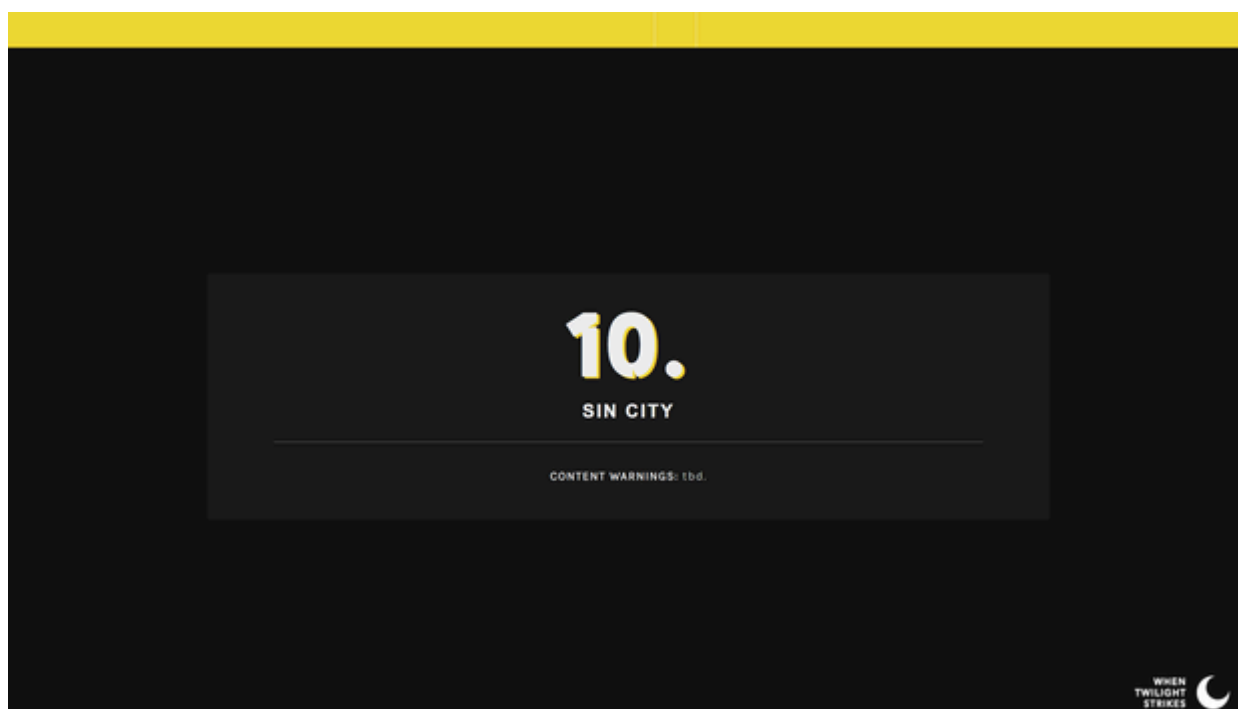
[\(the rest of\) chapter nine is live!](#)

[Jun 25, 2023](#)

ahhhh i can finally say it!! i'm so pleased to announce that the rest of chapter nine is live. the password is placed right where the first part left off (after Blane storms to the washroom and K says everyone else has 10 minutes to leave).

it's been one hell of a ride to get here but i truly hope you enjoy <3

**password:** psychedelicdreams (all lowercase, no spaces)



[chapter ten.](#)

[Jun 30, 2023](#)

[drabble vote.](#)

[Jun 30, 2023](#)

theme for the next series is 'firsts' :)))) let me know who you want to see first (pun not intended)! a drabble will be up sometime this weekend.

a devereux

blane rekner

n alves

k de vries

rylan villanueva

37 votes total

[First... \[K de Vries\]](#)

[Jul 2, 2023](#)

**Synopsis:** First time reaching out.

It's normal to find you at K's place nowadays. If they're not at their own apartment, they're at K's penthouse, curled up in the dark as the two of you watch a movie, or watching K with silent adoration as they cook dinner.

At first, K wasn't sure what to think about the change. Rylan forces their way into the door practically every day, but there was something about having you over that was different. It's strange how quickly it became natural. Once a week became twice a week which became every weekend which became—

K likes your apartment. They like the condensed space, the homey feel to the furniture you picked out. They wonder how you had gotten everything up, whether the movers did it for you or if you struggled to

haul the couch up the stairs to your complex. They never asked though. Never really let their thoughts stray too far, lest you look at them strangely for such a question.

Of course, you wouldn't do that, but some insecurities linger.

They warned you it had been a while since they'd been in a relationship. You responded by saying that K could take all the time they wanted.

So considerate. K knows you're more patient than anyone else would be in your position. And while you've stated multiple times that you don't mind waiting, K can't help but feel guilty. Each time they initiate a kiss, they feel a stab of pain at how happy you look. Each time they think it might be a good idea to hold your hand, they nearly drown in shame at the fact that they had to tell themselves to reach out.

They've confided in you about these worries constantly. Once while laying in the dark, your backs against the hardwood. Once while you were tasting cookies that K made.

A year ago, they wouldn't have told you about their concerns at all. Would've buried them alive underneath a mountain of more pressing thoughts, or so they told themselves. The only way it would've come out is if forced, something Rylan had to do more than once to get rid of the "emotional constipated look" K had on their face.

K glances over at you, sitting beside them on their couch as you text someone. Judging by your wrinkled nose, you're not having a pleasant conversation. Always taking work home with you. K loves and hates that about you.

"Bad news?" they ask.

"No," you answer. "Just— No."

"[Name]..."

You sigh. "It's nothing, K. I promise. Some intern just messed up some of my paperwork so I'll have to redo some of it. It's just mine too; [A]'s is absolutely fine. You think this is some sort of karma?"

"Karma for what, love?"

Your expression softens at the nickname. "I don't know. I'm mainly joking but it really seems like everything bad happens to me. Unless you count the one time one of the newer hunters ran into Blane and spilled hot coffee all over them."

"Unfortunate that I was not there to see it myself," K muses.

"The look on their face was pretty funny." You crack a small smile. "They had to go to the infirmary after to tend for their burn but honestly, I think they were more annoyed at having their shirt ruined than the actual injury. N was rolling their eyes the whole time."

K hums. "I can imagine. It goes to say, though, that bad things happen to people all the time. An intern screwing up your paperwork isn't karma for anything you've done, [Name]. You're a good person. Much better than I've been for most of my life."

"Don't say that."

"It's true. I've changed a lot since I met Rylan. Even more since I've met you."

"It's crazy that I once thought you couldn't be sweet." You squeeze their hand tighter. "This is really nice."

"What—"

K blinks, staring down at your interlaced hands. Their thumb is caressing your skin with slow methodical strokes that seem almost lazy. They hadn't even realized they'd reached out for you, let alone started rubbing the back of your hand.

You smile as the realization hits them. On anyone else, it might have seemed smug. On you, K only feels encouraged. Because for all their lamenting about how they always have to remind themselves to initiate contact and intimacy, they did it without any prompting this time. It was reflexive, even.

Still, they need to know.

"Is it?" K asks. They force themselves to continue caressing you even when their uncertainty threatens to swallow them whole.

In response, you tighten your grip. "Of course. It's coming from you."

And if K practically melts at that sentence and leans into you for a cuddle, no one but you has to know. After all, there's no one but the two of you.

[update 69.](#)

[Jul 3, 2023](#)

**ramble.**

this isn't going to be so much of an update as much as it is a sort of, ramble for me to plan out what's happening next. so hi, how's everyone doing? last i was here, i dropped chapter nine and ran for my life. as some of you may already know, i'm currently working on bug fixes for the few that have been caught

and am fixing up the relationship stats. i went through the game and counted everything last night (which is tremendously tedious by the way) so i now have a better idea of the numbers you need to hit in order to get certain choices and flavour text and whatnot. i'll likely be launching the bug fix sometime this week (potentially friday again?) so if anyone is interested, that's there.

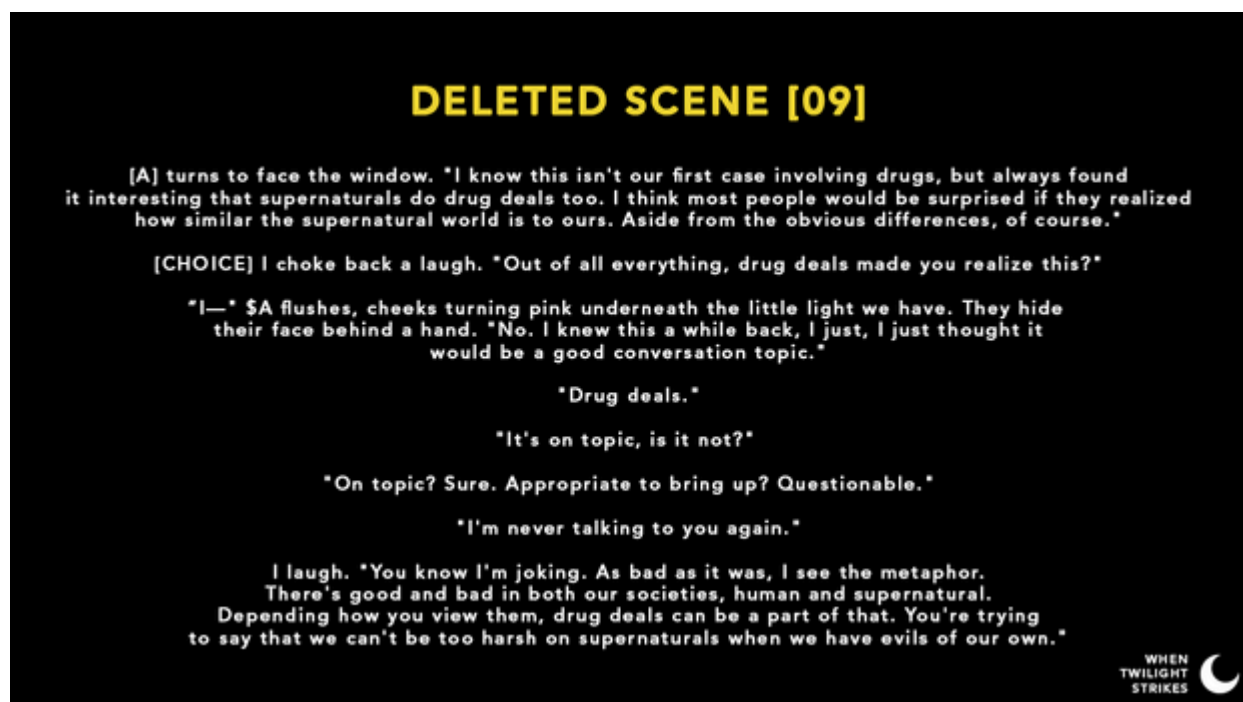
as for chapter ten, well. i haven't started it. the release of chapter nine caused me a lot of stress and honestly, i need a break. what i will say is chapter ten is a lot more planned than chapter nine, so fingers crossed i don't have as much trouble writing this one. it starts off with some really fun scenes that i think will be very fun for all of you to read, so i'm excited. it's relationship stat dependent, however, which is part of the reason why i'm counting the points now. i should have done it from the beginning, obviously, but your girl is lazy. and not the brightest.

i just love making things harder for myself.

hopefully by next week i'll have some actual words written down for chapter ten that i can share. i recently also got a boost of motivation to work on my secondary project as well, so maybe i'll share something about that. it's been dead for a good year now, but who knows? maybe i'll revitalize it. as always, thank you for your support <33

stats.

- 420,550 (=)



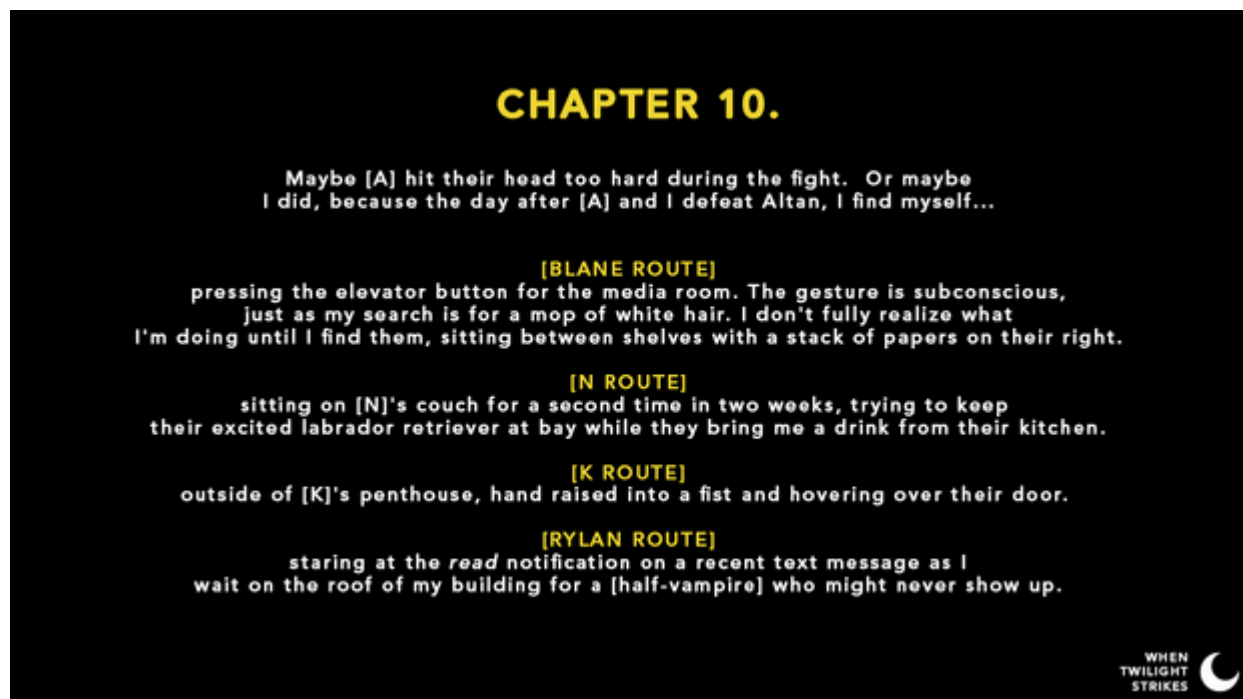
[deleted scene \(chapter nine\).](#)

[Jul 5, 2023](#)

ah yes, the most recent deleted scene in my 'scraps' document. it hurt to discard this one too, especially since the choice set was over 2000 words long. but as i've learned, numbers aren't everything.

i scrapped the scene for three reasons. one, because it made the pre-stakeout feel super long and took away from the anticipation a little. two, because it felt a little bit like [A]'s random question in the car in chapter one. and most importantly, three, because i felt like the purpose the choice served wasn't actually necessary. this late in the game, i feel like your actions towards supernaturals is more telling than being asked questions about them and answering how you feel.

i actually put up a sneak peek for this choice set (though the antagonistic answer) a couple of days before i deleted it. funny how things work.



[this is where it begins to matter.](#)

[Jul 9, 2023](#)

small note before any of you panic: [A]'s route is also an option! theirs just doesn't follow the same text format as the other four so i didn't include them :)

[update 70.](#)

[Jul 10, 2023](#)

## **week of july 3rd-9th.**

one week has gone by since chapter nine was released and damn, it feels like it's been years. i know many of you are waiting to see what happens next in chapter ten, but as i usually do when i begin a new chapter, i've been taking my time. i tend to lose motivation after i spend a week editing and coding (and then fixing up the various bugs and typos), so the progress has been slow. as some of you may have seen, however, there is a plan for it. the sneak peek i posted yesterday is just a tiny glimpse of the work i have cut out for me, but i'm very excited. i'm up in the air about whether the opening scene of chapter ten should be decided by stats or a free choice, though, so i'll have to see. i'll likely be putting up a poll for it on tumblr this week if any of you want to give your two cents.

i think i said this last week, but chapter ten is a lot more thought out than chapter nine. i have a solid plan for the opening as well as the end. all the details i leave to be sorted out as i write. it's how i get scenes like giving the ros contact names in the last chapter, which is a fan favourite, apparently. i'm glad :) since it's such early days, there's not much else to say right now. hopefully next week i'll be deeper into one of the branches to give a more detailed update on what you can expect.

aside from that, i've been slowly reintroducing myself to my side wip and writing that on the side. i started this way way back last year but never really found the motivation to write more than a couple of thousand words. i can't say it won't die again, but for now, i'm enjoying switching between the two stories. they're two very different genres so it's kind of like a reset for my mind.

hope you all are well <3

### **stats.**

- 422,192 words (+1642)

### **sneak peek.**

"Something about taking care of my body," [A] grumbles, crossing their arms across their chest.

[First... \[Blane Rekner\]](#)

[Jul 14, 2023](#)

**Synopsis:** First time cuddling.

It's no secret that Blane Rekner does not like touch. Which is why when people find out they're dating you, aside from the obvious reasons why you two should technically make a bad match, their eyes bulge out of their heads and their jaws drop to the floor.

They know. They know they're not very affectionate, that holding your hand is something they only managed to do a week into your relationship and that your first hug consisted of Blane being so stiff that they swore they forgot how to move for a second.

But they're trying.

And you're here beside them on their queen-sized bed, with space between the two of you enough that Blane could reach out if they wanted, but far enough that they're comfortable. They respect that you've left so much room, but sometimes, they wish you pushed a little more. Though it'd terrify them, maybe with a push, they could finally grow into a better significant other.

You'd definitely kill them if you knew they were thinking that.

Blane flicks their eyes to your screen. You're scrolling on Twitter, smiling at a tweet as you give it a like.

"[Name]."

You pause, glancing over with surprise. "Yeah?"

"Can we—" Blane cuts themselves off, frowning. They have no idea how to word this. "I mean, can you, um..."

Giving enough time for Blane to back away, you reach out and grab their hand. They enjoy this, the small strokes on their skin. Both your fingers and palms are covered in calluses from work, but it somehow makes the touch more soothing.

"You know whatever it is, you can tell me." Your eyes are earnest, filled with adoration that sometimes, Blane doesn't think they deserve.

Blane blushes. "I know. I just— it's embarrassing."

"Don't you think we're past that stage now?"

You're long past that. They're pretty certain that stage comes before seeing the other person practically dying in front of you, but the two of you have never done anything the conventional way.

They duck their head. Bite their lip. They think about their hand in yours and the way they feel when you kiss. Not like fireworks, like everyone describes them as, but a wave crashing over them—exhilarating and terrifying at the same time. But as long as you know how to ride it, you won't drown.

Blane sucks in a breath. "Can we cuddle?"

You blink slowly. For a horrifying moment, they're worried you'll reject them. But a split second later and your face is breaking into the softest smile they've ever seen, eyes crinkling at the corners and everything.

"Of course. Do you want to lay on me?" You shift your position and open your arms, creating a space for them. "I was just on Twitter, but we can watch YouTube videos together if you want?"

Blane only hesitates for a second before moving closer. They place their head against your chest, hearing your heart beating steadily beneath them. The rhythmic noise calms them down enough to relax their posture, settling into you more comfortably.

"You don't have to change what you're doing," Blane answers. They inhale, nearly smiling at the familiar scent of your lotion. "I'm okay like this."

"Are you sure?"

Your body is warm. Blane's legs are tangled hopelessly with the blankets. One of their arms is splayed around your waist, the other curled beside them. They used to watch movies with people in similar positions, wondering how in the world they were comfortable. Now they understand.

Blane hums in response, pressing their face closer to you. They let their eyes flutter shut as they feel you thread your fingers through their hair. It's a nice feeling. Maybe next time the two of you can try cuddling while sleeping. Maybe spooning.

"Thank you," Blane mumbles.

Though they can't see you, they know you're smiling down fondly. "You don't have to thank me for this. You don't ever have to be scared with me, okay? You know that, right?"

Blane lets out a content sigh. They could fall asleep right here. "I know."

[update 71.](#)

[Jul 17, 2023](#)

**week of july 10th-16th.**

i always feel like i do so much more until i look at the word count. don't get me wrong, i know that numbers aren't everything and progress is sometimes made without writing at all, blah blah blah, but huh. i truly did think... oh well.

i decided on a whim to start with Blane for this chapter. well, i actually started with [A], but i got stuck on a certain bit and didn't know how to move forward, so naturally, i moved on to Blane and created the exact same problem. yay me. to be fair, i am in the middle of trying to fix it. as easy as writing dialogue can be for me, it can also be the bane of my existence. sometimes it'll flow and sometimes it won't. right now, it's Blane's mood change that is causing the problem. what begins as a relatively relaxed conversation turns tense after the hunter makes a certain comment, which, would be fine usually, but i need Blane to say one more thing before the scene ends. doesn't exactly make sense to speak up again just when they shut the hunter out a moment ago, at least, not for Blane. they're a complicated one.

it's true that all the branches are unique, but i still have to make sure they all share the same information to the reader. there are certain goals i have for this particular scene that i want to hit. characters like [A] and [N] usually make this easy, since they're so open to begin with. Blane and [K], on the other hand? not so much. Rylan wavers somewhere in-between. but i like having the variety. the way Blane asks the hunter how they're doing is so different from how [A] would do it, which makes it all the more fun.

the plan for this week is to sort out Blane's branch and have it done, before moving on to someone else's. not sure who's yet, but it'll be someone's. i also think i'm going to make the choice of who to go to your choice, rather than something reliant on stats. though we're close to the romance lock, we haven't reached it yet—i'll give you a couple of more chances to feel out who you want to pursue (if applicable).

#### **stats.**

425,896 words (+3704)

#### **sneak peek.**

I let out a quiet hum, placing my head on the table. My cheek is pressed to one arm, allowing me to face the window.

## CHAPTER 10.

I let out a quiet hum, placing my head on the table. My cheek is pressed to one arm, allowing me to face the window. It's a cloudy day. The only time I saw the sun was when I was entering the building—its hidden itself ever since.

With my head close to the table, I can hear every scratch of Blane's pen. It's easy to tell when they're writing and when they've finished a sentence, a short dot punctuating the end.

It's even easier to tell when they've stopped.

"How's Devereux?"

Blane's voice punctures the silence.

I keep my head down, eyes still trailing the slow-moving clouds. "Good. Still in the infirmary."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[daydreamin'.](#)

[Jul 21, 2023](#)

[update 72.](#)

[Jul 24, 2023](#)

july 17th-23rd.

you know how people manifest things into existence? i feel like i do the opposite. like how last week i said i'd start someone else's route. did i intend to? absolutely. did i get around to it? no. because once again, i underestimated how many words i write for choices. i could write two sentences and call it a day but nooo, i have to write nearly 300 words for each one. times that by 5 or 6 and well, it's time-consuming, to say the least. not that i don't like it, it's just. damn.

on that note, i'm sure you can guess i've finished Blane's route. i think i'll be doing N's next, so it'll be their sneak peeks that will be featured in upcoming updates and posts. i recently have felt so much fondness toward them (not that i didn't before, it's just, heightened i guess) so i'll have to see if that seeps into their scene. if anything, it'll make it better. this is already meant to be a sort of soft, relaxing

scene—and with N's nature and lack of angst with the hunter, it'll be even more so. add their dog into the mix and well, it'll be very cute, let's just say that. in this house we love radar.

i don't really have much else to update on other than that writing is going relatively smoothly. i had a few days last week where i knocked out before i wrote anything for the night, but despite having no outline for this chapter, it's going a lot better than i thought it would. for context, i usually make a rough mindmap of what potential branches i might include and where they'll eventually lead to. this time, it's mostly engrained in my head. still, regardless of if i need them or not, i can't deny that the maps are fun to look back on. i have one from chapter six and it's fun to see how things changed from paper to, well, word doc. if anything, i think i'll have to make a sketch of the second half of the chapter so at least i'll have something i can store in my files. maybe i'll post some of my old ones on here for fun hehe.

hope you're all doing well and taking care of yourselves <3

### **stats.**

429,453 words (+3557)

### **sneak peek.**

"You noticed all of that?" I hear myself ask.

Blane tilts their head further to the left. "I doubt there's anyone who hasn't noticed."

### [update 73.](#)

[Jul 31, 2023](#)

### **july 24th-30th.**

N's branch. probably one of the only routes where there's no angst and yet, i somehow made it happen. i would blame the [notes asks](#) that i was writing on tumblr yesterday, but i wrote this bit before that so... granted, it was a long time coming. and really, i'm making a big deal out of it but it's only for those who have been rude to N in the past and wish to apologize. so. that was kind of your own doing if you went that path. it wasn't a pleasant scene to write by any means. unless you held a grudge against N for being partners with Blane, i don't really see any reason to be rude in the first place, but i still had to leave the option there in case people wanted it. that makes apologizing kinda awkward though, since, well, you're apologizing because you just thought N sucked? hard to explain.

aside from that, i've made decent progress with their branch. i've started doing this thing where i'll write the entire scene out from beginning to end without filling in the text for possible choices. this method lets the conversation flow more smoothly through the scene as a whole, rather than me having to stop and pick up where i left off, possibly forgetting things. those are the positives. the negatives? when i get to the end and think i'm done, i'm not. i'm really creating a sense of false hope for myself here.

but N's route has been nice. a lot nicer than the whiplash Blane gave me. their dog Radar makes a pretty prominent appearance in this scene and i have to say, writing dog mannerisms is a lot harder than i thought it'd be. still, very cute puppy. i might add a mini-choice to let you cuddle him or, if you're not a dog person, kinda just pet him, but that remains to be seen. it's an easy enough addition, anyway. i just gotta slot it in somewhere...

nothing much going on other than this. i've been catching up on a lot of sleep and giving myself more breaks than i think i ever have with this project, so it's been nice. i hope you all are well <3

**p.s.** for those on the midnight tier, [A]'s 'first' drabble will be up within the next two days :))

#### **stats.**

432,092 words (+2639)

#### **sneak peek.**

"And I'm not holding you hostage," [N] responds easily, "but I think having company is better than being alone, don't you?"

[First... \[A Devereux\]](#)

[Aug 1, 2023](#)

**Synopsis:** First time using pet names.

You see, the thing with [A] is they don't think before they speak. They have absolutely no filter. Once a thought enters their mind, it's out of their mouth the next instant. It's gotten them into trouble more times than they can count, but an upside of their unfortunate... habit, let's say, is they're rarely ever phased by other people anymore.

Or so, they thought.

Because the moment they hear the word, *that* word, they drop the strawberry that was halfway to their mouth and simply gape at you.

"[A]? Did you hear me?" you ask. "Do you know where..."

You trail off when you enter the living room, frowning at [A]'s dysfunctional state. Their throat feels dry. They feel the sudden urge to tackle you and pepper you with kisses while simultaneously shake you by the shoulders to make sure what they heard was right. They're not sure they can do both at once.

"What's wrong?"

"Um," [A] says intelligently.

You take a couple of steps closer, examining the scene before you. [A]'s bowl of strawberries is halfway done. Your TV is playing music softly in the background and your coffee table has traces of [A]'s iced latte left, counting the coaster and dots of water from condensation.

"Are you—"

"Can you say it again?" [A] says hoarsely.

Your eyebrows furrow. "What's wrong?"

"No, not that. The—" [A] licks their lips, trying to find the words "—thing you said before. When you called me from the other room."

This time, you don't respond right away. [A]'s acting weird enough for you to actually consider what they're asking, so [A] watches you run the last minute or so back in your head, waiting for it to hit you like it did them. And when a slightly embarrassed and flustered look crosses your face, they know it has.

"You mean me calling you babe?"

[A] makes an indignant squeak, toppling the bowl this time. "Again?"

You smirk, all traces of hesitation leaving your body. "Babe."

[A] can feel the heat rushing to their face, stopping right at their neck. One more time and it'll definitely reach their cheeks, but for now, they're determined not to make too much of a fool of themselves. Not anymore, that is.

"I think that's the first time you've used that," [A] breathes.

"Probably, but if I knew it would cause this reaction, I would've used it a lot sooner," you tease.

"Don't make fun of me," [A] mumbles.

"And who would I be if I didn't take advantage of this?"

[A] feels their lips turn into a pout. They cross their arms for good measure and turn their body toward the window. Both of you know they're not actually mad, but you also know that they're one of the most dramatic people to exist.

"Babe," you drawl. A shudder runs through [A]'s body and you laugh, letting them know you didn't miss their highly embarrassing reaction. "Relax, I won't use it against you. But it's going to be a problem if you get affected every time I say the word."

[A] huffs. "I'll get used to it."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

"And if I called you baby?"

This time the heat really does rush all the way up to [A]'s cheeks. They feel their eyes widen before they grab a nearby pillow and bury their face in it, ignoring your laughter as they let out a groan.

You're going to be the fucking death of them.

[update 74.](#)

[Aug 7, 2023](#)

**july 31st-august 6.**

i'd be lying if i said i finished what i meant to do. i would've last night except i knocked out before i could so. there's that. not that i'm disappointed in myself. sleep is sleep and well, i kinda need a lot of it (sometimes i wonder if it's more than the average person). to look at some numbers, i'd say N's branch is 85% done and K's is about 15%. add those two together and i technically completed my goal, right? (say yes, please say yes).

N's branch is what you'd probably expect. they're always a nice change of pace when i switch from writing Blane, for example. the more i write about them, the more i fall in love. i know there are people out there that dislike 'kind characters' because they come off as boring or lacking personality, but i really don't feel like that's the case with N. i could just be biased, but the little quirks N has already shown in this scene alone says a lot to me. they have depth in their family problems and insecurities about being

in Blane's shadow, but still manage to keep their head up throughout all of it. it's admirable, actually. my goal with their character is to make their personality more than just being 'the nice one'. the best example i have of this is probably chapter eight, but as the story progresses, you'll definitely see more.

K's route, on the other hand, is predictably different. it's opening to be a lot more pleasant than i thought it would, but seeing as i've only written a bit so far, their grumpy persona is ought to come out soon. that's what we all love them for, right? i really enjoyed showing another piece of who they are in chapter nine and i'm excited to do it again in chapter ten. as i've said before, i don't plan out my chapters to the detail so i'm not sure how this scene is going to go yet, but i have no doubt it'll be as interesting to read as the others. K is the last to meet the hunter and also among the ones who take the longest to open up, so their route (platonic or romantic) is definitely more of a slow burn. it requires some meticulous pacing and a lot of scenes where you feel like you might not be making progress, but i think you can already see a change from who they were in chapter two. i have a feeling this will be another one :)

**stats.**

435,243 words (+3151)

**sneak peek.**

They look slightly flustered, averting their gaze. "Don't make it embarrassing. I'm half-tempted to take it back."

## CHAPTER 10.

"I do. You can't let everyone down if one person isn't disappointed."  
N looks at me through thick lashes. "I promise you, whatever happens, you won't let me down. And I doubt anyone in the department will be mad too. You know them for years. Do you really think they're going to turn on you for this?"

"I—"

"Sure, they might be discouraged, but they're not going to hate you."

I huff out a laugh. "You're won't even let me talk."

"Because I'll have an argument for everything you bring up. Might as well help you save your breath," N quips. "Whatever happens tomorrow, it'll be okay. And if anyone gives you a hard time, I'll send Blane to scare them."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[on your side.](#)

[Aug 9, 2023](#)

## DELETED SCENE [06]

"We're not on business," Blane says. "Us hunters get nights off once in a while."

The bouncer looks unimpressed. "Hard to believe that when you work even on holidays. Your hours tend to consist of twenty-four-hour service, three-hundred and sixty-five days a year."

"Which is why you can understand why we want to get inside so badly," Blane counters, arching a single brow. "Days off are rare and I'd rather not spend the better part of my night arguing with you on whether or not I'm allowed inside."

I shoot them a sharp look. "Blane..."

They ignore me.

"That attitude isn't getting you any closer," the bouncer replies.

Blane smiles, a gesture that could rival the Cheshire cat. "Maybe not, but once we're gone, you won't have to deal with me anymore. Surely you don't want to be screening us here all night?"

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[deleted scene \(chapter six\).](#)

[Aug 12, 2023](#)

from the first sentence, you might be able to tell why i deleted the scene. point blank, it's wildly out of character. by chapter six, i was still experimenting with the ros personalities and thought it might be fun to have Blane display a different side of them when on the field, namely one that is much bolder than they are.

aside from when they're picking fights, i'd say i've written Blane to be rather quiet. and so, i eventually decided this 'side' of them didn't feel right and went for a Blane that was 'softer' than you'd seen before. if i was going to show any 'hidden' personality, that was the one i wanted to shine.

[update 75.](#)

[Aug 14, 2023](#)

august 7th-13th.

i don't like playing favourites, but i think what i wrote this week has to be my favourite thing in this chapter thus far. bold claim, i know, but i really really really like it. i'm not sure what it is. something about K being kind to the hunter while also being their usual grouchy self is just. ah. gives me serotonin. because as much of an asshole they can be, they're not going to kick someone while they're down. their perspective is that it's easier to speak the truth with no fluff or sugarcoating to lessen the impact, which is why they come off so harsh. they're also not afraid of voicing out their thoughts, so if they're irritated, you're going to hear it.

that being said, they do know when to tone things down. if Rylan's having a rough day, for example, K isn't going to outright say: "you look like shit." sure, they may think that, but you're more likely to find them getting out ingredients from their kitchen to make Rylan's favourite meal or pulling out their credit card and beckoning Rylan to accompany them on a shopping trip. they're a big believer in confronting your feelings in a rational manner, meaning you need to calm down first. not that they acknowledge their emotions themselves but, what can i say? they don't like taking their own advice.

i can spoil much about the hunter's case, but bearing all this in mind, i'm sure you have somewhat of an idea of how their branch went. i think because i haven't been able to write this side of K (except for a tiny sliver in the last chapter) that i'm so excited about it. i had previously mapped out the entire conversation in my head and it went down exactly how i wanted it to on paper, which i'm super pleased with.

in terms of what's next, because i did my usual thing of writing the skeleton of the route, this week i need to go back and fill in the choices i left blank. for now, i think i can officially say i'm more than halfway through the first part of the chapter and therefore about 35% finished chapter ten. it might not seem like much, but i'm pretty happy with my progress this time. at this point in chapter nine, i was still suffering severe writer's block and had very little content to share, so i'm already doing a lot better. fingers crossed that it keeps up.

as always, i hope you're all well and taking care of yourself <3

#### **stats.**

438,937 words (+3694)

#### **sneak peek.**

K emerges a minute later, holding a giant dark grey blanket that they deposit on my lap.

[First... \[Rylan Villanueva\]](#)

[Aug 16, 2023](#)

**Synopsis:** First time being referred to as a significant other or partner.

It took a while for Rylan to become comfortable being seen with you in public. Usually, they'd call that a red flag. In their case, well, they think they deserve a little bit of leeway. Because you see, a relationship between an IAOS employee and a supernatural already raises some eyebrows. Make that a hunter and their former bounty? Well.

You can imagine how that is.

But once they got used to it, they thought you two would be okay. They never cared much for others' opinions to begin with, so it wasn't long before they were swinging your arm around without a care, rather than with a pinprick of anxiety down their spine.

Except things were not fine. Because they forgot that when you're in a relationship with someone else, chances are that strangers might think you're not. And those strangers, depending on how bold they are, might potentially, maybe, possibly ask to take you out on a date.

And it's not like they're the type to get jealous. Well, sure, they might get a little heated if those strangers take it too far, but they know they have nothing to worry about. You can handle yourself, at any rate, and it's not the first time this has happened.

Except this time, Rylan nearly spits out their drink when they hear the words.

"Ah, sorry. My partner is just over there."

*Partner.*

There are only a few reasons you'd be saying that. One, you ran into a fellow bounty hunter at the café the two of you are at and you're pretending Rylan works for IAOS to get the other person off your back. Two, you're pretending you're in university and Rylan's your partner for a school project.

Or...

Rylan glances up just in time for you to give someone an apologetic smile. The stranger laughs good-naturedly and waves you off, commenting something about how "they're very lucky to have you." Except Rylan's so dazed it takes them a few minutes until they process that.

A moment later, you say your goodbyes and start walking over to the table. Rylan got their drink a couple of minutes ago, but you were informed you had to wait a bit for the café to restock. Hence why the other person probably thought you were single.

"Hey."

"Did you just get hit on?" Rylan blurts.

You arch an eyebrow at the blunt question, placing your glass down. "I didn't think you were paying attention. But yeah, I did. They backed off pretty quickly when I told them I was with you though."

"You called me your partner."

"Yes?" You look amused. "Are you not?"

"Well, yes, but—" Rylan shakes their head, their usual confidence nowhere to be seen. "I think that was the first time I heard you call me that."

Understanding dawns on your face. Your lips form an 'o' shape; Rylan has to resist the urge to lean over the table and kiss you right then and there. They can feel the heat rising to their cheeks, but they refuse to be called out for it, taking a sip of their drink to hide their face.

You pick up on it anyway.

"Aw, Rylan. I always forget I have this effect on you."

Rylan presses their hands to their cheeks. "Nope."

"I do."

"Nope. You don't. I was just commenting."

"But you liked it, didn't you?"

A flurry of butterflies erupts in Rylan's stomach. Liked it? They don't know how to describe it. They haven't heard someone refer to them so fondly in years. A decade, even.

For all their bravado, the two of you know that Rylan's biggest fear is being left behind. It was the biggest obstacle in your relationship, with you slowly teaching them they don't need to run because not everyone leaves. And though they have no doubts about how now, knowing you willingly come back to them always leaves them lightheaded.

"Maybe," Rylan mumbles.

"What's that?"

They take their hands away from their face. "I liked it. Is that what you want to hear?"

You smirk and lean back into the booth. "Yes."

"You've gotten cheekier since we started dating."

"And who do you think I got that from?"

Rylan narrows their eyes playfully. They reach over and take a piece of your croissant, popping it in their mouth with a smirk of their own. "No idea where you got it from, but that person must really be something, huh? Think you could introduce me to them someday?"

You shake your head. "You're a scoundrel."

"Only for you, darling."

You laugh and push Rylan's face away as they lean closer, this time trying to take a sip from your straw. But even though they fail, they're not deterred. They got what they wanted, after all.

[update 76.](#)

[Aug 21, 2023](#)

**august 14th-20th.**

i think i've done it. i've finally jinxed myself. it's either that or the stress of school coming up (excuse me while i go throw up) that i've been unable to write lately. or, that's a lie. it's not that i haven't written any words at all. it's just that every word i write feels... dull. for my standards, at least. i've been told i can be a bit harsh on myself so honestly, maybe someone else will read it and say it's completely fine, but to me, it's just not up to par. i'd rather close the word doc than write a couple thousand words that i'm not proud of. i'm being dramatic. i know that. but it's frustrating. not being able to do the thing i'm supposedly good at is just. like. come on brain, work for once.

all that said, i did manage to get some work done before my little episode. the goal was to finish K's route, but i left off yesterday with a couple of more choices to fill in. i'm not necessarily estatic to finish that off but maybe if i move on from this scene, i'll get my inspiration back. quite the 180 from last week where i was saying how much i love K's scene, huh? of course, my slump doesn't mean i hate the scene now. it's just become the bane of my existence as of yesterday, so forgive me if i don't look at it as fondly anymore.

then, as i'm sure you all know, after K, i have [A]'s and Rylan's branches left. i'm hoping that their energetic personalities will help me regain my own energy, but that remains to be seen. i've mapped out Rylan's scene in my head already so all that's left is to get it out on my document. [A]'s is still up in the air, but they come to me so naturally that i'm not worried about what i'm going to write (only that i can; fuck writing slumps for real). in all honesty, if this keeps up, i might skip over the branches entirely and move onto the second major scene in the chapter. i really don't want to take a break from this story. as stuck as i may be right now, it genuinely is such a highlight of my life and i truly can't stay away from

these characters for long. if i do end up pausing for a bit, you'll definitely still be getting content one way or another.

i know this is a more negative update but if all turns out well, this will just be a temporary thing. nothing can be worse than my writer's block writing chapter nine. so. if this turns out to be anything close to that, i'll rip my hair out. but it's not. i won't let it. manifest it with me. it'll be fine.

hope you're all doing well <3

## stats.

441,951 words (+3014)

## sneak peek.

K looks unperturbed. "And you never said sorry for interrupting my evening either, so does it really matter?"

## CHAPTER 10.

I don't know if I'd even get the words out  
before they decide they've had enough.

But they're being so nice right now, much nicer than I  
thought they'd be. The fact that I'm sitting on their couch  
with a blanket is a miracle, let alone one they  
got for me. And the macarons...

K was likely expecting a quiet night by themselves,  
baking desserts until they ran out of ingredients in their pantry  
and putting them in tupperware to give to their neighbours  
tomorrow. Me barging in was not part of the plan and  
yet, they've only offered to make me more comfortable.

"That's what I thought," K says, taking my silence for an answer.

I glance away, finally tugging the blanket over my legs.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[macarons.](#)

[Aug 23, 2023](#)

[update 77.](#)

[Aug 28, 2023](#)

## august 21-27th.

if you're a fan of rambling, you're in for a treat because that's what the entirety of this update is going to be. if you're not? well, sorry. because (as i said on tumblr) Rylan's character is currently beating me up with a baseball bat on their characterization and i just. that's really the only news i have. because if i thought K was causing me a writing slump, i don't even want to know what Rylan's doing with my head right now.

i'll start easy though: K. K, who was once the bane of my existence but suddenly is no more, since that role has been taken over by a beloved half-vampire. there's not much to say here. earlier this week i sat myself down and forced myself to write the couple of choices i left blank that i was dreading so much. i said i was overdramatic last week and while sometimes that's not the case, this time i definitely was. it was way way easier than i thought it'd be. i think i just had one (1) bad night in terms of writing and let it define the entire week. i still have to read over the scene (and maybe i'll cringe and throw something at the wall) but for now, it's done. it's done and i'm leaving it alone until i do edits later on.

now for the harder part. i can't really talk about Rylan without **spoiling the chapter** a bit, so if you don't want to know, **don't read** this next bit. simply put, while the point of the branches to develop the relationship between the hunter and the chosen ro, it's written under the guise of the hunter being nervous/wanting to be distracted from thinking about the interrogation with Altan, which is the second part of this chapter. and while A, Blane and N can all give advice to the hunter on the topic, K and Rylan are a little different. i managed to shape K's conversation in a way that it makes sense that they commented on such a thing, but i can't figure that out for Rylan. and, well, i kind of came to the conclusion that i can't. because it's uncomfortable for them to talk about another one of the hunter's bounties when they are one themselves. but i hate the idea of inconsistency between routes so much that i tried it and, well, i had to scrap it. so back to square one there.

i've ended up centering that branch around a different matter instead. it still addresses the interrogation but unlike the others', Rylan's branch is more of a distraction to the problem than a reassurance. it's why i [hinted](#) their route has some necessary angst in it. the scene dives deeper into their character than i initially meant for it to, but i think it's a really interesting one. not as happy as N's, for example, but i do promote their route (platonic or romantic) as a forbidden kind of thing. it's just finally kicking in now :))

## stats.

444,579 words (+2628)

## sneak peek.

"Hate to interrupt your daydreaming, but maybe it's a better idea to do that when you're missing me."

[First... \[N Alves\]](#)

[Sep 2, 2023](#)

**Synopsis:** First time coming over.

**Note:** I think I'm still in the angst headspace because this is definitely not as fluffy as I intended it to be, but I think it provides a good look inside N's head that I haven't really been able to showcase so... You win some and you lose some. At least the ending is cute? (Don't kill me)

N is far from a control freak. Compared to some of their coworkers, they'd say they're quite laidback. It doesn't stress them out when someone touches their traps or when their favourite mat in the training room is occupied (this has pissed Blane off more than once), for example.

There is a level of control that they desire though. It took them a while to understand it, but they'd describe it as feeling obligated to burden responsibilities, especially if they aren't theirs.

It's most obvious in the first few times you came over to theirs. They'd been a bundle of nerves, serving more food and drinks than two people could eat. They'd bring you blankets if you so much as twitched and offer spare pillows each time you shifted your position.

Needless to say, it took a while for them to relax. As the weeks went by, they slowly began to understand that you didn't need five drink options and the choice to pick a movie every week (even if they felt bad about taking that away). That you came over simply because you enjoyed N's presence. That N was enough.

And while they have their off days, N knows this is true.

It's when they come over to yours that this is truly put to the test. With no control over anything, N has to force themselves to sit back and let you be the host for once. You're as flustered as they initially were, embarrassed over accidentally tipping a cup over and the mess in your living room that you swear you meant to clean.

N quickly understands why you looked so amused those first few times.

"How much ice do you want in your water?" you call.

"Doesn't matter. Half the glass, maybe?"

You enter the living room holding two cups, both plastic again in case one of you knocks it over. N accepts theirs gratefully, your fingers brushing as they reach forward. They bite their lip, sending you a smirk as you roll your eyes over the obvious and purposeful gesture.

"I could've spilt that, you know?" you scold.

"Then I would've gotten to borrow some of your clothes," N answers easily. They lean back, taking a sip as you quickly avert your eyes. "Or maybe I could've used that as an excuse to get you to come over to my place again. Radar misses me."

"Radar's with Blane. I'm sure he's having the time of his life."

"Knocking over all their plants, sure."

You hide your smile behind a hand. "Radar's fine. You're fine. What's so bad about my place that you don't want to stay here, hmm?"

It's nothing, of course. You know as well as N does that they adore your place. The IKEA sofa and ancient-looking curtains left from the last tenant, the creaky floorboard and the sideways-facing toilet in the guest bathroom. They adore it here. In many ways, it's their second home.

But it's strange for them to not have any responsibilities. It's odd that their hands aren't moving, that their mind isn't thinking of how to make dinner or where all their spare toiletries are in case you stay the night. Once upon a time, they'd also be stressing themselves out hoping you wouldn't leave too early, but those days are long gone.

"You know that's not it," N whispers.

You shuffle closer. Eyes asking for permission, you slowly place your hand on theirs, your thumb moving in slow circles against their wrist. N feels the pressure from their shoulders lift and some of their anxiety fall into an abyss.

"Then?"

They hesitate. "Just nervous. I've never stayed over before."

"Does it stress you out that you're relaxing?"

"... It sounds bad when you put it that way."

You laugh. "Because it is kind of bad. It's unhealthy to think that way. [A] suffers from the same problem."

"Funny how you got stuck with both of us then, huh?"

"No. I'm extremely lucky to have you both in my life. You especially." You press your forehead to theirs.  
"Let me take care of you. Let me take care of things tonight."

N exhales, breathing you in. They don't dare open their eyes but merely twist your hands so that they're clasped together, squeezing once, twice. Then, without warning, they tackle you into a hug. A noise of surprise escapes your mouth as you tumble backwards, barely managing to stay on the couch.

But surprise turns into laughter and soon the both of you are giggling, N's face pressed into the crook of your neck and your face in theirs.

"Thank you. You always do," N tells you.

"Of course," you breathe back.

They don't doubt you for a second.

[update 78.](#)

[Sep 5, 2023](#)

**august 28th-september 3rd.**

erm, hi. i definitely meant to write this up yesterday but, uh, i once again underestimated how draining it is to move and unpack and clean bathrooms that you shouldn't have to clean but do, and— you get the point. i'll be stuck doing this for the rest of the week (so many boxes in my room, yay!) so i don't expect to have a big word count for the next update. this one, however... i mean, not to hype myself up, but it might be the biggest word count i've had in a while. tame compared to the five to seven thousand i used to do but hush, it's something.

basically, i just sat myself down and stared Rylan's character in the eyes and told them to stop giving me such a hard time. and while i doubt that's what made it work, something must have happened because the scene i was struggling so much with suddenly made sense (it was the giant notepad page of notes, definitely that). while i do warn that it's less fluffy than the other routes, i'd argue that it's the one with the most development. not to say that the others aren't (Blane's and K's are huge improvements, i think) but this one is... different, in a way. it's hard to explain. moral of the story, Rylan is no longer the bane of my existence. [A], on the other hand, who is the only scene i have left, might take the title next.

to give myself a break, i might skip their scene for now and move on to the second half of the chapter. things are already totaling out to be twenty-eight thousand (and with the addition of [A]'s branch, it'll probably be past thirty thousand just for the opening scene) so depending on where this scene takes me, we'll likely be hitting fifty-thousand. i say that because while i'm the writer, these scenes tend to have a life of their own and take control rather than the other way around. chapter seven, for example, was never supposed to have a stab scene. chapter nine? the fight scene with Altan was much more intense than i thought it'd be (i wrote that entire thing zoned out, if you can't tell). so yeah. good results? sure. but it's often very unexpected so i never quite know what to say.

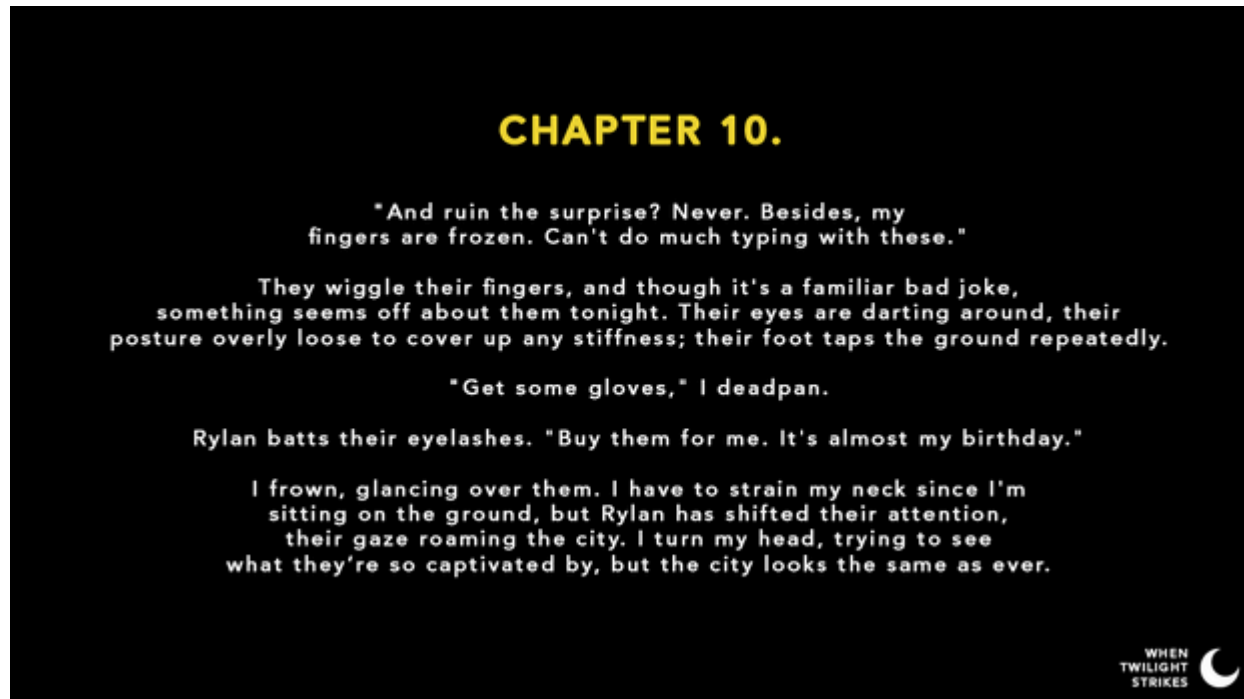
i'll keep you all updated on where things head, of course. i might be a little quieter on tumblr this month because of school, but i promise to maintain things on this front. a new sneak peek will be up later this week <3

### stats.

448,542 words (+3963)

### sneak peek.

With [Rylan] sounding so enthusiastic, it's easy to pretend we're not who we are.



[an early present.](#)

[Sep 7, 2023](#)

[what's next?](#)

[Sep 8, 2023](#)

what do you want the next batch of drabbles to be?

fluffy

angsty

somewhere in-between?

53 votes total

[update 79.](#)

[Sep 11, 2023](#)

**september 4th-10th.**

this update is going to be ??? because that's really the only way i can describe my state of mind right now. it almost impresses me that my brain can work this way because it's so unconventional, but it does—and who am i to complain? you could say my brain is akin to having multiple tabs open on a browser. i'm a multitasker at heart and find it difficult to stay focused on one task for a long period of time. when it comes to this project, i'll write a scene for one branch and then a couple of sentences for a completely different one, one that often has no correlation. then maybe i'll jump to writing a drabble to put up here or answer an ask or two on tumblr (though, this usually ends with me scrolling through my inbox, being scared of the number and closing it). usually i only have to resort to jumping between scenes in a singular chapter to keep my focus, but this week, i was all over the place.

i'm currently writing three different scenes in chapter ten, one at the very beginning of the chapter and two towards the end. another tab of my brain is yelling about first kiss scenes, a fifth is writing an entirely different wip that has been on the backburner for much longer than i want to admit. a sixth is wondering if i can even pull off fluffy drabbles anymore after that angstfest (as tumblr called it) i went on. i could talk about the seventh, but, well, you get the point.

still, i can't say it's not productive. if i get fed up with one scene i simply toss it aside and move on to another. university has yet to ramp up the workload so i've had a lot of free time to hum and haw about what i'm doing. i'm hoping to finish [A]'s branch soon (famous last words) so i can get to the 'meat' of the chapter, for lack of a better word.

Ciel, as you'll see in the sneak peek below, is the unnamed drug dealer in chapter nine. the very one that many of you found hot which i don't pretend to understand. i would ask someone to explain it to me but then again, i'm not sure i want to know. nothing i wrote about them necessarily screamed 'sexy' to me, but i've long accepted that people will always thirst over non-ros. anyway, the point here is that they make a return in chapter ten and i'm extremely excited to write more interactions between them and the hunter. not that i think the game's been lighthearted recently, but i'm hoping to emphasize an even darker side to things with these scenes. Mirai got us started and, if it works out, Ciel will tie it all together. that being said, i still don't view this as a very heavy game so i don't expect things to take a wild turn. i'm simply going to build on things like the reoccurring nightmares that the hunter has or the mounting anxiety of unknowns happening in this world. slowly but surely, i'm guiding us to the climax of the story and i'm excited to show everyone what's in store when we get there :)

(that entire last paragraph was such a ramble, my god. if you made it this far, congratulations on surviving an update that made absolutely no sense but also one i won't be rewriting because my brain is too scrambled to try)

#### **stats.**

451,605 words (+3063)

#### **sneak peek.**

Ciel has the nerve to smile when we walk in. Their face is marred with a bruise on their left cheek and a cut splitting their lip, making the expression more threatening than it would be normally.

## DELETED SCENE [10].

"Why did you leave, anyway? Trying to run?"

"Needed a change in scenery," Rylan quips. It's a lie, of course, but I wasn't expecting any different. "Point is, you don't have to be worried. You're the best for a reason. Besides, having a bounty tell you this should probably make it worth more, right? A lot of people are downright terrified of you."

I barely hide my grimace. "We don't have to talk about this."

"I know. But there's no point ignoring it. For all I know, tomorrow you could decide I'm not useful anymore and turn me in." They twist one of their rings. "You might be risking your job, but if you told someone I forced you into this, they'd probably believe you. For me, if this falls through, I lose everything."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[deleted scene \(chapter 10\).](#)

[Sep 14, 2023](#)

this is kind of like a sneak peek and deleted scene in one since this is from chapter ten, but it doesn't spoil much since i've changed the entire thing. i ranted about this in a recent update, but Rylan's character was really messing with me for a bit. the first draft of this scene was extremely somber and included Rylan reassuring the hunter that they're the best in the city, which felt odd considering the pair's relationship. while the other branches include that conversation to some degree, i just couldn't figure out a way to make that work here.

you'll see what i ended up doing when the chapter releases but i'm a lot happier with it. when i write branches, i tend to have the same topics relayed in each but rewritten to suit the characters and setting. i couldn't quite do that here which bothered me, but i think it's for the better. in other words, Rylan's branch in this chapter takes a different route from the others and might be worth checking out if you wish to develop your relationship (platonic and romantic) with them.

[The Start of Something New. \[Blane Rekner\]](#)

[Sep 16, 2023](#)

**Synopsis:** Blane and the Hunter navigate a new relationship.

**Note:** Fnhsjkfksjf

Blane isn't quite sure how they got where they are. A bed that isn't theirs, an apartment that isn't under their name. Under covers that they didn't buy, listening to the soft breathing coming from a mouth that's not their own. A scent that isn't their usual lotion, the lingering taste of toothpaste they don't normally buy.

The two of you had gone to bed late last night.

Though still drowsy from sleep, Blane can recall the night with perfect memory. You invited them over for dinner, under the guise of having 'too many ingredients.' Surely you could have come up with a better excuse, but Blane didn't comment, agreeing easily and counting down the hours until work was over.

By the time the clock hit five, they were nearly shaking from nerves. It wasn't the first time they'd been over—and would hopefully not be the last—but for someone so adept at reading other people, Blane could never decipher you.

They wished and they wished, hoping that the breathless kisses and soft smiles meant something to you as it did them. It was greedy of them to ask for something more, especially since you were already doing them the favour of giving them a chance, but it didn't stop them from dreaming.

Blane went home long enough to drop off their bags before they were out the door again, the route to your apartment already memorized long ago. You greeted them with a brilliant smile, bright enough that Blane had to brace themselves from saying something stupid as you let them inside.

You began talking about something that happened at work as you chopped up ingredients for your dinner. Blane offered to help but you waved them off, telling them they only had to "stand there and look pretty."

The words sent a wave of heat from Blane's cheeks down to their toes. They were robbed of speech for a good couple of seconds after, something you laughed at even though you seemed just as flustered as them.

They busied themselves with setting up the table while you chatted, rearranging forks and knives around and around again just to give themselves something to do. At some point, they heard the sink run as you washed up, apparently done with preparations. They turned to watch you dry your hands and swallowed as you abandoned the kitchen and joined them in the dining room.

"Hey," you whispered.

"Hey. Are you done?"

"Nearly. You can help me with the next part. I might need a second opinion."

Blane's eyes dropped to your lips. Despite how embarrassing the action was, they didn't bother hiding it. "Okay."

It was the only word they could get out before you pressed them against the table with a searing kiss. Blane gasped against your lips, hands braced behind them. Your bodies were pressed together, the cutlery behind Blane shifting from how much the two of you were moving.

One hand was behind their head, another holding their hip. They jolted when your fingers brushed skin, still cold from the tap. You laughed at that, taking the opportunity to trail kisses down their jaw and throat. It was all Blane could do to keep themselves quiet.

By the time you returned to their lips, they'd gained some of their confidence back. Blane's hands moved to your face. Their thumb brushed your cheek softly as you asked for entrance to their mouth with your tongue, something so at odds with each other it was almost laughable, but they didn't complain.

The rest of the night followed a similar pattern. One moment you'd be talking and the next, Blane was pressing a kiss to the hollow of your throat or your breath was fanning Blane's earlobe.

The kisses weren't all as intense as the first one.

When you finished your first round of food, you got up and pressed a quick kiss to Blane's head on the way to get seconds. They blushed scarlet at that, but you had the graciousness to keep quiet. Something similar happened after the two of you brushed your teeth. With Blane standing in front of the mirror, you slowly wrapped your arms around their waist, kissing the nearest bit of skin you could find. It was so domestic it nearly sent Blane to their knees, but somehow they managed to stay standing.

When you dragged them to bed, the kisses got softer. You spent your time fussing over their hair, peppering kisses over their face and cheeks and forcing their face back to you when they tried to hide.

The two of you spent what felt like hours exploring each other, and while in any other context, it should've been sexual, it was anything but.

You talked about everything and anything, from fears to favourite colours to regrets. You intertwined your fingers and held tight when Blane explained their asexuality; they learned how to cuddle someone when you described a recent nightmare.

You got tired first, yawning mid-sentence and covering your mouth with embarrassment. Blane merely laughed and pressed a kiss to your cheek, shifting so the two of you could hold each other while you slept.

You spent a couple of minutes staring at each other, giggling when someone kissed the other's nose or smiling when a hand caressed cheek. You were half asleep when you said it, as if reading Blane's mind. Later they'd learn they weren't being subtle about how scared they were of losing this, but you assured them it was no burden.

"I'm not going to run away. I really like you."

And while in the past, Blane would have simply passed that off as a lie and continued self-sabotaging themselves, this time, they basked in the warmth of your words and chose to believe you.

[update 80.](#)

[Sep 18, 2023](#)

**september 11th-17th.**

another week, another update and another time where i have to figure out how the hell to put what i did into words. for a writer, i'm not very good at explaining myself. the fact that i'm able to produce anything coherent in these updates is a miracle in itself. as it is, i've spent ten minutes trying to write my next bit so if it makes no sense, just pretend it does. smile and nod.

last week, i said i had three scenes left to write. for simplicity's sake, let's call them A's scene, Sebastian's scene (wooo ! making a comeback) and Ciel's (the drug dealer) scene.

Sebastian's scene required only a couple of hundred words to finish, so i got that done and out of the way earlier in the week. you could almost call the scene an interlude with how short it is, but it's an important piece in bridging things together. super cute super sweet. as time goes on i find that i like Sebastian more and more. not that i disliked him before, but i saw him as much more of a side character than i do now, where i find myself smiling softly when he appears. simp.

saying that A's scene follows the same formula as the other ros would assume there was a formula to begin with. i might have called it this earlier, but writing this and struggling with conversation topics really made me doubt myself. definitely didn't help when my imposter syndrome came rolling in and had me questioning whether the scene was even important, but that's just my insecurities speaking. because this scene, like everyone else's, *is* important. i'm tempted to write out a document on A's character development and how this scene will contribute to it just to get my thoughts in order, but i haven't gotten around to it. with my perfectionism streak, however, i probably will at some point. it doesn't show you a side of A you haven't seen yet, unfortunately, but it does explore a little more of their anxiety and restlessness. true to my recent strategy, the outline is done and all that's left for me to do is fill in the choices. i'm hoping to get that done this week.

that leaves me with Ciel. ah. the less i say about this the better, i think. i've already given out way more information than i wanted to for this chapter, including revealing that Ciel's going to feature in it. vaguely speaking, it's an interesting scene. i would consider what i've written so far to be mostly tame, but i'm

just reaching the part where tensions are going to peak. next week i can speak a little more on this, but if all goes well, this might become a favourite scene of mine.

hope this was understandable lol. my brain is fried from school and i didn't want to put off the update until tomorrow. take care of yourselves <3 (and for anyone who's new from the Blane drabble, hi !)

#### stats.

455,865 words (+4260)

#### sneak peek.

Ciel leans their chin into a hand, elbow resting on the table. "Aren't you getting tired of this? Surely this conversation is no more fun for you than it is me."

## CHAPTER 10.

[A] sighs, sinking deeper into their cot. "It's just— I hate it here. Anywhere's better than this hellhole. It's too bright and it smells like rubbing alcohol all the time. Anyone who comes and visits me only stays for a couple of minutes. You're the only one I can really talk to."

I frown. "What?"

"Fallon came by to give me lunch. Emery popped by to ask how I was doing and then left after they ran out of things to ask me. Anaya came by briefly. She's still being monitored but she's not stuck here like me. We talked about how shitty it is in here."

"And did that make you feel better?"

[A] thinks it over. "For a second."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[the infirmary. again.](#)

[Sep 20, 2023](#)

[update 81.](#)

[Sep 25, 2023](#)

## september 18th-24th.

this is going to be a short update because apparently my nerves have decided to??? i don't even know. my hands won't stop shaking lol and i can't really type right now but that's beside the point! the point here is: we're at the home stretch. granted, it's a very long home stretch that will make things feel like we aren't at the end, but we are. i promise, we are.

i finished off A's scene and all i have left is Ciel's before the chapter ends. i spent my time in class outlining how i want it to play out (funny considering i pay to go to university) so i have a very clear picture of what i need to write next. my only problem is, well, actually writing it. but i have a good feeling about things. i'll be working on this for the next couple of updates so things might start to sound redundant, but it's a relief to be at this stage. there was a point where i thought i'd never finish those opening branches. i don't expect to be able to put out the chapter next month but early november at latest, is what i'm thinking. don't hold me to that though.

in other news, i've been thinking about what to do for my third anniversary in february. planning way ahead here haha, but it was actually something i was going to keep exclusive for a higher patreon tier but decided against. i'm perfectly content with the three right now and adding more feels a little more than i can handle. but i like the idea and want to put it out in the world at some point, so that might be where it ends up. initially, i was going to tease the first kiss scenes but that'll be coming eventually anyway so might as well make something entirely new. i have a lot of time to think about it anyway.

hope everyone is well and taking care of themselves !! <3

## stats.

459,394 words (+3529)

## sneak peek.

By the time I come back, [A] is snoring softly with a peaceful expression.

[Fool's Luck. \[Rylan Villanueva\]](#)

[Sep 27, 2023](#)

**Synopsis:** Rylan thinks about how lucky they are.

**note:** rated M for uh, reasons.

Rylan Villanueva is quite aware of their luck. Perhaps this is what the universe has been saving up to—every misfortune they've endured and stumbled upon in their youth has led up to this: a peaceful life with you at their side, with smile lines deepening and eyes continuously wrinkling at the corners.

You've had your ups and downs. You've had your fights, your petty arguments about washing dishes at the moment or washing them in the morning. You've done the silent treatment, made up countless times and apologized countless more.

There's nothing that could tear the two of you apart.

K commented on it once, when Rylan was moping about how they forgot to tell you they were coming back late. You welcomed them back with silence, proceeding not to talk to them until the morning and only because you needed to get past them.

("[They]'ll come around," K said.

Rylan sunk deeper into the couch. "That's not the problem. It's just a text. Why didn't I just send a text?"

"You forgot."

"That's a terrible excuse."

"It's not an excuse if that's what happened." K shifted in their seat, turning their full attention on Rylan. "You could've done much worse. [They're] only not talking to you because [they were] worried. As long as you apologize and promise not to do it again, you'll solve it easily."

Rylan merely groaned. "I'm so shitty."

"You made a mistake. If your relationship was any weaker, you wouldn't be in a fight about this." K placed a hand on the armrest of Rylan's chair, startling them enough that they straightened slightly, glancing up. "Trust me, the two of you are inseparable.")

Those were the words Rylan thought about when you forgave them later that night, and they were words that would come to them time and time again. Sometimes it was more metaphorical, other times more literal.

It was no secret that Rylan was a clingy lover. They held themselves back the first couple of months, worried their constant need for touch would scare you away.

("Is that really the only reason you've been acting strange?" you asked, laughter coming out in wheezes. "Oh my god, you had me thinking it was something bad."

"Don't mock me!"

"I'm not mocking you. Come here."

Rylan pouted but crawled closer, laughing happily when you swept them into your arms and squeezed them close. It remains one of their favourite memories of you two, though admittedly, they have a lot. Nearly all of them make this list.)

Now, they express their love for you freely. Their head will come and rest on you when you're washing dishes, hands wrapped around your waist. They'll tug you closer at the dinner table, insisting your chairs aren't close enough. They'll tackle you onto the bed and press kisses to every inch of exposed skin—and sometimes beyond.

Rylan adores the way they can swallow your gasps. All it takes for them to elicit a shiver is a trail of their fingers along the inner flesh of your thigh. They enjoy the way your hands grip their body when they're swiping their tongue inside your mouth, their hands braced above you and your pants only urging them on.

They're not sure if they enjoy it more when it's the other way around. When it's you dragging them into the living room to dance to music. When it's you pressing kisses to their face upon waking up, pulling their body closer blaming the morning chill.

Rylan gasps nearly as much as you. You know all the ways they like to be taken apart and put back together. You're aware of their sensitive spots, the way they enjoy feeling your hot breath fan over the curve of their ear. You take advantage of how kisses shut them up immediately, how they keen under praise and almost beg for more.

It's embarrassing, thinking about it afterwards but you always reassure them that there's nothing to be shy of.

("You're so pretty," you whispered.

Rylan's eyes were dilated. "Says you, you're—"

Your mouth latched onto theirs again, cutting them off effectively and causing them to suck in a sharp breath. They squirmed underneath you, unsure if they wanted more contact or less. Their chest felt like it was going to explode. They were bursting with love.

"I'm what, my love?" you asked, lips barely an inch above theirs. Rylan heard themselves whine as they chased your lips, only to be disappointed by you pulling away. "You're doing so well. You're so good to me, Rylan. You have no idea how much you mean to me.")

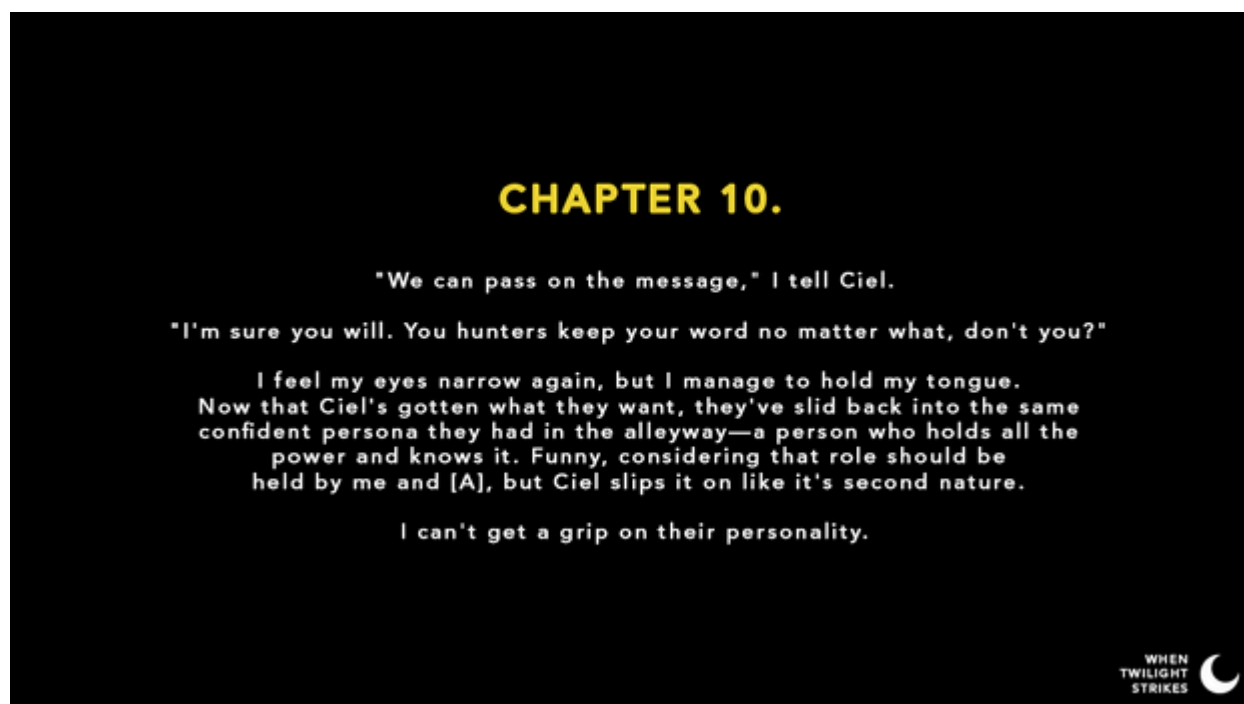
It's luck, really, that Rylan is here. As someone who doesn't believe in fate, they think about it often. How you and [A] were assigned their case—and then again when they crossed territories back into New York City. How you, however reluctantly, accepted their deal that they were sure you wouldn't. How the two of you got together despite months of dancing around each other's feelings.

But what's not luck is the work that came afterwards.

The way Rylan had to fight the urge not to run every time you told them how much you liked them. The way two of you had to fight off comments about the nature of your relationship. The way you only had four other people in your corner and how it felt like the rest of the world wanted to see you fail.

It's luck how you met, but it's not luck that the two of you are as strong as you are. That Rylan is an affectionate person is no secret—that they love you is even less. Somewhere along the way, they realized that as long as they have you, nothing else matters.

It remains true to this day.



[power high.](#)

[Sep 30, 2023](#)

getting into really spoiler territory now so i can't show much but :))) it's also starting to get very fun

[update 82.](#)

[Oct 2, 2023](#)

## september 25th-october 1st.

home stretchhhh babyyyyyyyy. i know i said this last time but as i was writing this week, i really started to see the end of this chapter and jadjfsfskks. it's so exciting. of course, i have to preface this by saying that seeing the end doesn't mean i'm *at* the end, but the fact that i even can say this is such an accomplishment.

ciel's scene is getting really interesting. it's probably the most fun i've had writing a scene in a while just because they're so unhinged. that's genuinely the best way i can describe it. i'm really letting myself go all out with this scene, to the point that they're making comments that make even me go "woah, that was uncalled for." and it's just. ah. it feels so good. a lot of things are also starting to connect in this scene and it's so so fun to finally put these ideas out. half of it is just ciel spouting bullshit (that's their goal at the end of the day) and it's your job to figure out how much truth there is to their statements. you'll get to discuss some of this with the characters in chapter eleven (getting ahead of myself there haha) but i'm excited to see if anyone comes up with any theories on tumblr in the time in-between.

there's still one more (small) scene i have to write after ciel's (they're directly connected so i guess you could say it's still technically the same thing) that i will hopefully get around to by the end of this week? if not, then next week. but yeah. home stretch. after that it'll just be a lottt of editing and coding and then !! release !! i'll also be going through the current game and fixing known bugs during this process, so if anyone has a grammar mistake/coding error they're really bothered by now is the time to say it lol.

my goal for this month is to finish the writing process of chapter ten and get it somewhat ready, if not all the way, for release. i also hope to start teasing my second wip (some of you have already seen it; i had posts on here but deleted them lol) so if you're interested i'll post the new blog for that on my tumblr sometime later. it's very different from *when twilight strikes* so i'm a little nervous but also very excited. it's been really fun writing it in my free time so i hope everyone likes it too. hope you're all doing well <3

## stats.

462,205 words (+2811)

## sneak peek.

Ciel tilts their head, still smiling. "Look at that: you run away with your tail between your legs too."

## CHAPTER 10.

I crack a small smile. "Hey. Look who's out of the infirmary."

[A] sighs. "Don't remind me about that place. I'm still kind of limping. I swear it's because my leg was positioned so weirdly when I was stuck in bed but Gabriel refuses to fix it. Him and Quinn are double-teaming up against me."

"Let me guess, to try and keep you out of the training room?"

"If you're going to tell me it's for my own good, I've already heard it," they grumble, averting their gaze.

Sebastian doesn't comment on our interaction. He steps up to one of the employees behind the desk, who's monitoring the one-way glass room with a headset and a microphone.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[warlock double-team.](#)

[Oct 5, 2023](#)

[update 83.](#)

[Oct 9, 2023](#)

**october 2nd-8th.**

catching a cold is so humbling. it's all fun and games until you start sniffing and feeling like the only thing you can do is rot in bed all day. i'm bitter about it, truly, but there's no point in dwelling on that when i got shit to talk about.

so. progress. light at the end of the tunnel and all that. i don't want to jinx it, but i think i can finish chapter ten this week?? if i hadn't caught this cold, i'd be a little more certain. but still, i think i can try. if i'm as productive as i was this week, then i can definitely do it. the final pieces are coming together really well and much more smoothly than the beginning of the chapter, which explains why i suddenly was writing at double my normal speed this week. but yeah. (gosh, i think this cold has gotten to my head; i've repeated the same sentence five times). if things go according to plan, i have a tentative (very tentative) date for the release of this chapter that i'll share next week. i don't want to say it yet because

announcing this stuff puts pressure on me to get things out by the deadline (one that i set for myself, ridiculously enough) but very exciting stuff.

i don't know if i can say anything more about this chapter that i haven't already. it's always like this at the end. the updates get shorter and the anticipation of release gets stronger. so i'll tell you this: like chapter nine, chapter ten has a decent amount of plot, but it also has a lot more 'filler' (i'd rather call it character development, but i suppose filler isn't too inaccurate). the opening branches, as you may know, are an opportunity for you to bond with an ro of your choice (platonically or romantically). the second half is where the plot kicks in. it's not a fight scene like with altan, but a conversation that gets, in my opinion, quite insane. i was watching *'batman: the dark knight'* last week and honestly, i wouldn't say the behaviour of the joker is far off from some of the things i've written recently. it's just— it's a lot. i had to backspace on a lot of things because i was wondering if it was a little too much, but i'm forcing myself to keep the rest in because, well, it's fun. should be, at least.

i get nervous for all my releases but this is one i'm particularly anxious about, if only to see how that scene is perceived. everyone who found the drug dealer sexy might have their minds changed soon. or maybe not. some of you really do confuse me.

sorry for how boring this update is. i know it's very repetitive (and honestly, i blame my sick-addled brain for half of it); hopefully next week i have something new to talk about. take care of yourselves <3

#### **stats.**

466,833 words (+4628)

#### **sneak peek.**

"You just interpreted my words the way you wanted."

[A] looks stricken. Just for a second, their expression shuts down.

[On Eggshells. \[K de Vries\]](#)

[Oct 11, 2023](#)

**Synopsis:** Who knew that baking could be so domestic?

"Did you preheat the oven?" K calls.

"Hmm?" you poke your head out from where you were rummaging in K's cabinet. Why you can't find the extra baking powder is a wonder to them. Their cupboard isn't that deep and they're a fairly organized person. Unless Rylan got in there recently, it should be easy to spot.

"Preheat?"

"That's the first step when baking, you do realize."

You place a container on the counter and pull yourself up. "I wasn't aware we were baking."

"Very funny."

"I'm aware. By the way, you need to stop stuffing important things at the very back," you respond, sliding the baking powder over. K glances it over with a hum, barely managing to ignore the weight of your body beside theirs. "I could've preheated the oven by now."

"I rarely ever use baking powder."

"Which explains why you were wondering why I couldn't find it?"

K shoots you a look, which you avoid by skipping towards the oven. Already, they miss your presence beside them. "Forget about that. Do you want to crack the eggs or should I?"

"How many are there?"

"Three."

"Give me one." You circle around the other side of the counter. "I want to watch you crack the other two."

K has the vague feeling that they're being punished, though for what they're not sure. Or perhaps you're teasing them, denying their clear desire to be beside you. Whatever the case, K feels a flush of heat rush to their cheeks. They ignore it by cracking the first egg into the bowl.

K has never been a subtle person. They pride themselves on their honesty, their refusal to sugarcoat things and their advice. The first time they met you, they could tell it had gotten on your nerves. Their blunt tone often came off rude, their dismissals brash.

They'll admit they weren't trying to be nice that first encounter, nor the next few, really, but you never let that deter you. You stood your ground when K was being unreasonable, fought back when they said something that crossed a line. It was both admirable and infuriating, and, for a while, K leaned too far into the latter.

They hated that the first emotion even crossed their mind. They hated that they were starting to think you were pretty, more than in a conventional way. They hated that they wanted to reassure you when you were upset, that they prided themselves when you came to them first.

They noticed too many things. Freckles, moles. They could recognize you in a crowd of people based on how you walked. Imperfections on your skin, little habits you had sitting in K's loveseat. How to tell when you were angry or when you were pretending to be happy. The difference between forced smiles and real ones.

When their walls came tumbling down, there was no big confession. There wasn't a culmination of sexual tension where the two of you suddenly attacked each other's lips. It was quiet and direct, like K.

Kissing came later. Hugs were accepted with time.

For someone who's always been indifferent to touch, K was surprised to find how much they craved yours. They're not an easily distractable person, but God, do they lose track of time when they're with you.

That's another reason you hadn't preheated the oven. They get hot thinking about it now.

Their back pressed against the counter. Your lips against theirs, soft and slow-moving despite the position you were in. Your hands were firm against their hips, theirs at the back of your head, pulling you closer, more flush against them, until nothing was separating the both of you.

Your voice whispering in their ear. K's mouth trailing down your neck, peppering kisses on your jawline on the way down. The quiet pants that left their mouth, the same noises that left yours.

They wanted to move this elsewhere. The living room, the bedroom. Not to do anything sexual, necessarily, but to continue to be this close to you. To kiss kiss-swollen lips until they were bruised. But K had just enough self-restraint to eventually pull away and continue measuring the flour.

It's a miracle that it didn't get all over you two.

K cracks the second egg. "Good enough for you?"

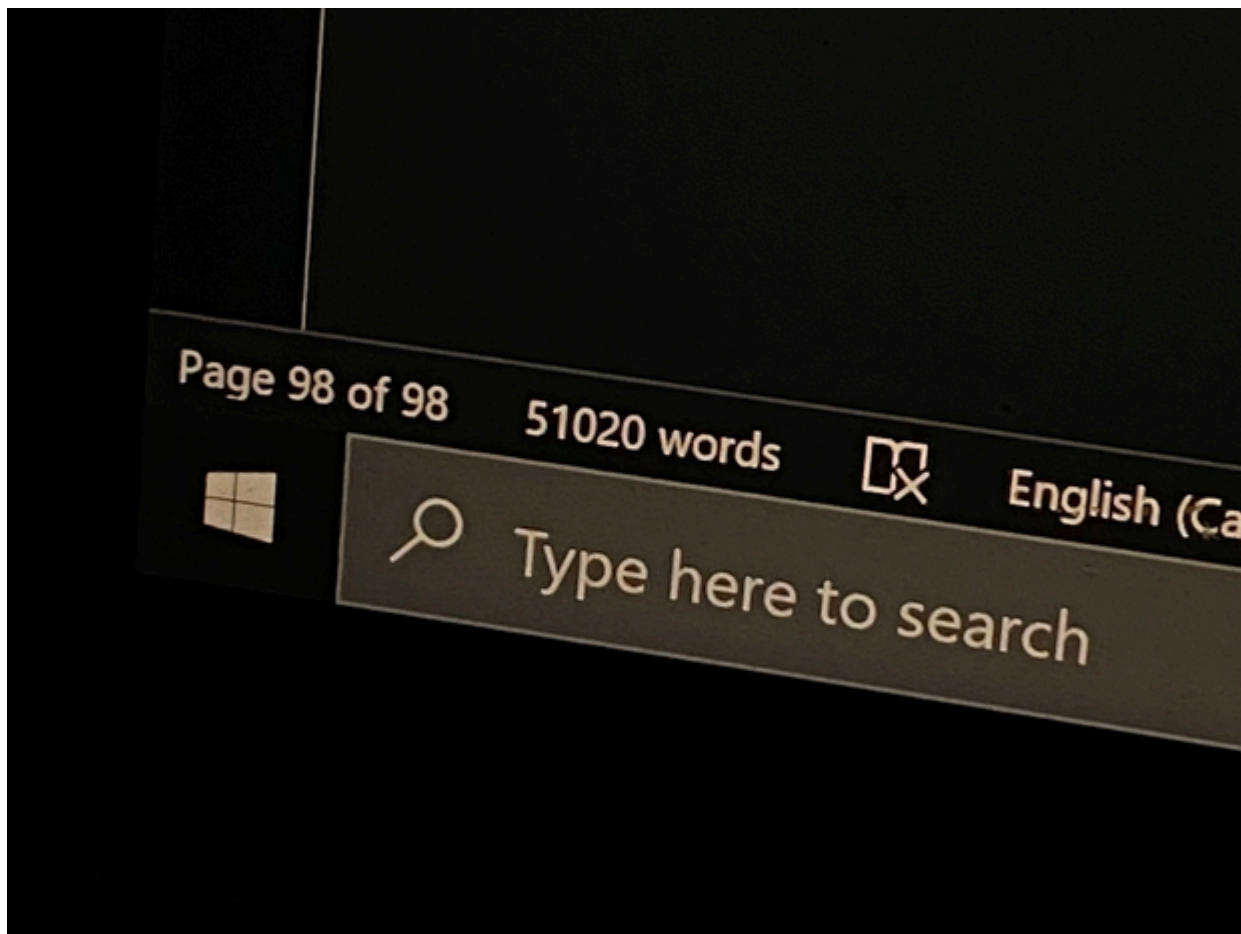
"I think I can do better." You lean forward, grabbing the remaining egg and cracking it on the side of the bowl. The two of you watch as a piece of shell falls into the mixture, small but evidently there. You grimace, staring down at it. "Or, I guess not."

K laughs. They don't remember the last time they laughed so hard, ribs hurting and lungs choking for air. You join in after a second, though they know you're more likely laughing at them than anything. It doesn't bother them.

Only when they calm down do you smile at them, the look in your eyes so fond that it would've sent K running a year ago. Now, they're sucked in by it.

"We should bake more often," you whisper.

K's heart swells with affection. "We should."



[update 83.5.](#)

[Oct 13, 2023](#)

writing is done. now time to edit :))

[update 84.](#)

[Oct 16, 2023](#)

**october 9th-15th.**

chapter ten. oh, chapter ten, what can say i about it at this point? it's been a headache, a real pain in my ass at points (when is a chapter not a pain in my ass, is the real question) but as always, so fun to write. this is usually the point where i start complaining about editing but for once, i don't have much to

complain about. surprising considering it's my least favourite part of the process. i mean, there have been points where i've gone '????' because of how little sense my sentences make, but overall, so far so good. maybe i was onto something when i was writing these scenes.

i'm going to leave this as a short update since we're nearly at the end. a tentative (but likely) release date for chapter ten will be saturday, october 28th. the twilight and midnight tiers get the chapter early, of course, so the first date it'll release on patreon is (potentially) the 23rd.

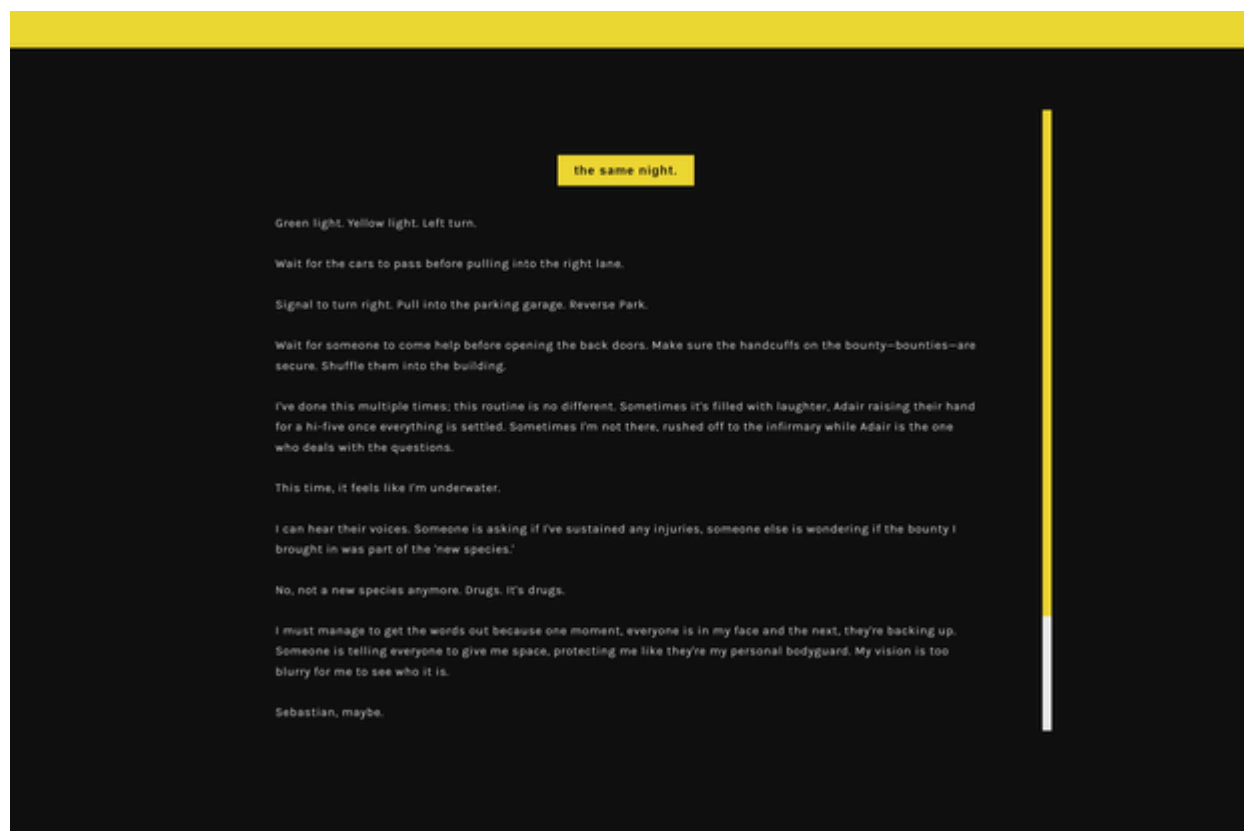
get excited :)

**stats.**

471,330 words (+4497)

**sneak peek.**

It's all for the greater good.



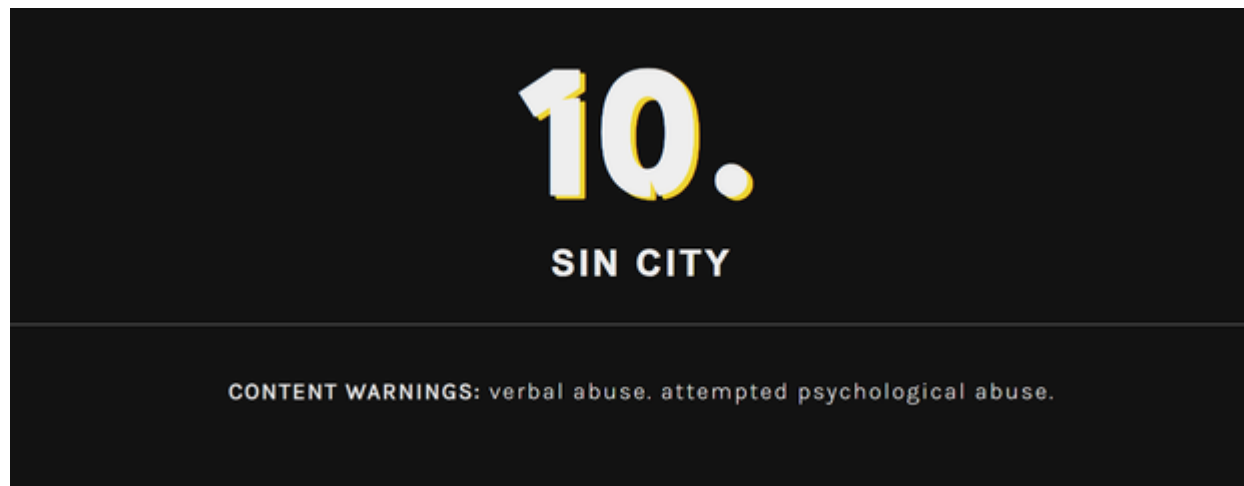
[monday.](#)

[Oct 20, 2023](#)

it's official.

chapter ten will be dropping on monday, october 23rd for the midnight tier and on wednesday, october 25th for the twilight tier, both at 10am EST. public release will be the 28th.

enjoy the first place while you wait :))



[chapter ten release!](#)

[Oct 23, 2023](#)

it's your time to shine. play [chapter ten](#) now with the password "alexaplaydaddyissues" (all lowercase, no spaces) and revisit the world of *the midnight hours*. oh, and try not to lose your mind too much, yeah?

**in this chapter.**

- learn a little more about what goes on in A's head
- experience an (almost entirely) nice Blane
- officially meet N's dog and get a glimpse of domestic life
- be pleasantly surprised by K's kindness
- question your relationship to Rylan
- perform an interrogation with Ciel, the drug dealer from chapter 9

**stats.**

- **word count.** 472,000 (+51.4k)

as usual, other various bugs from previous chapters have been fixed. you can also apply serif and the dyslexia-friendly font to nearly all of the text on the screen (previously it was just the passages).

i really hope everyone enjoys <3

[Like This. \[N Alves\]](#)

[Oct 25, 2023](#)

**Synopsis:** What it feels like to be in love for N.

**Note:** I used second person pov to describe N in some bits so it might get a little confusing differentiating when i'm talking about you (N) and you (Hunter). For that reason, any second pov pronouns in [square brackets] are referring to the Hunter.

Being in love goes a little like this.

It's Saturday morning and you wake up to another body in your bed. Your shared bed. You turn and smile at the scent of your lover's lotion in your sheets; no matter how many times you wash it out, it always comes back.

You press a kiss to their forehead before dragging yourself out of bed, stumbling to the washroom. You brush your teeth, trying not to smile at the sight of the second brush in the cup—you've seen it hundreds of times before, it shouldn't make you so happy.

You hum as you head for the kitchen, preparing a meal for two. You have different preferences in what you eat, but breakfast is something you manage to compromise on. Today, you make pancakes, decorating smiley faces with chocolate chips. Blueberry is an option, but you don't like them.

You brew coffee for yourself, needing the bitter taste of it this particular morning. You scroll on your phone, hearing the telltale signs of your lover waking up.

It's routine.

N's routine, to be exact. They don't know if they understood what it was like to be in love before they met [you]. They've loved people before, loved things and animals and shows they've binged in one night and cried over because they were so upset it was over—but being in love is different.

Their crush on you was ridiculous. They felt butterflies each time you so much as brushed against each other. They cherished every smile with their entire being, no matter how frequent or rare they were. When they'd come home, they'd have to resist the urge to fall onto their bed like a lovesick teenager. Radar witnessed this once, whining and pawing at their chest as N shut their eyes and relived everything that could have been taken as [you] reciprocating their feelings.

Blane was also subject to this.

More than once Blane had to sit through N rambling about not knowing what to say over text, had to listen to them worry about whether [you] liked N back and the insecurities that came with that if you did. More than once, Blane had to grip N by the shoulders and shake some sense into them.

Sometimes N wonders where they'd be if not for those conversations.

They'd still end up with you, they think, just in a different way. Your romance is far from a fairytale as it is.

After all, it involves three years of knowing each other but not truly *knowing* each other. Months of working side by side. Nights of anxiety seeing the other injured. Weeks of pining, dancing around each other, wondering if the other felt the same spark.

It was far from an easy journey, though that's never what N wanted. That's not to say they wanted the difficulties, but they like how natural things came together. Perhaps the two of you weren't tied by a string of fate, but you got together in the end.

That's all that matters.

N hears [your] footsteps shuffle down the hall and closer to the kitchen. They smile, having just finished washing the dishes for your meal, two empty plates placed beside each other with a mountain of pancakes on a third plate in front.

It goes like this.

You're greeted with a sleepy 'good morning' and a soft kiss on the cheek. You're cheeky and want more, so you wind your arms around your lover and tug them closer, kissing them with fervour. Your lover makes a small noise that you swallow, your tongue curling into their mouth as you deepen the kiss. The two of you pull away panting, but you're not mad, only wanting seconds after seeing your lover's spit-slick lips.

But you're denied with a laugh, given a peck instead as your lover heads for the pancakes. Maybe you should be upset, maybe you can go in for another kiss anyway, but you don't. All you do is smile and join your lover. You whisper against their ear that they owe you later, bumping into them with the expression of an angel. Though their intentions are pure, their words suggest otherwise, making you flush.

At that moment, they understand why the poets wrote so much about love.

## DELETED SCENE [07].

Rylan isn't paying attention when I step outside, their eyes glued to the front of the room. I know they register when I walk up beside them, but they keep their gaze on Mirai as she unplugs the music and announces: "Night's over. Everyone out."

Outside, the shouts are increasing, sounding more violent by the second. The sounds seem to concern Rylan, for they flick their gaze to mine with an arched eyebrow.

"You don't have anything to do with that, right?"

I give them a look. "Do you really think so?"

"No."

Rylan's gaze lands on the flask in my hand. "But I am curious about that. Spare some for me?"

I hesitate. "We'll talk about it later."

The room is clearing out around us. People are trickling out of the entrance like a leak, dwindling the numbers from fifty to thirty to a dozen—but Rylan and I stay where we are.

An idea plants itself in my head. A moment later, the gears are turning. Mirai admitted that K's spell didn't fail, so someone with a connection to Caine—whether that be him himself or his kidnapper—came here. I found little to no clues in the front, but there's also a chance that the person we're looking for didn't touch the main area.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[deleted scene \(chapter seven\).](#)

[Oct 28, 2023](#)

an alternative scene in chapter seven. this one gives less of a choice and forces you more on the path of staying in the vip room than checking out the commotion, which is why i scrapped it and wrote the current version. this is only Rylan's variant, but as you can tell, it sees the hunter going out to meet the ro/chosen partner rather than the other way around. the hunter is also the one who thinks about staying in the room in this version, which made it even more difficult for me to present the other choice.

of course, the other choice (checking out the commotion) wasn't actually planned at the time. chapter seven saw a huge writer's block for me (when do i not have it, let's be real) so i really struggled with branches and variations. i got there eventually though; that's all that matters.

[update 85.](#)

[Oct 31, 2023](#)

october 23rd-29th.

sorry for the late update :/ i caught another cold so i've been sleeping all day (just my luck). but i hope everyone is doing well otherwise !

i honestly don't have much to say because i haven't started writing chapter eleven yet. i thought i might give myself a bit of a break before starting up again—I've also been using this time to work on my side wip, which has been a good change for me. i'm super happy with how chapter ten was received, however. if you followed my updates, i'm sure you know i was struggling while writing (when am i not?) but to my relief, it turned out well. i was very happy with the final result and i'm glad that everyone else was too.

chapter eleven is looking to be a little more calm compared to previous chapters. chapter nine saw the fight with Altan and chapter ten the interrogation with Ciel so i thought i might tone it down a little. chapter twelve will amp things up again so i'm sort of preparing you for that. i don't have everything planned out for eleven but i do think it'll be more plot heavy.

content wise, i'm not exactly sure what eleven will hold. though i'd love to do more branches with the ros again, unfortunately, that would be repetitive, so you might not see another scene like that until twelve or thirteen. i know i'm the author and i can make the decision to include it if i really wanted, so it's not like i have the right to complain, but narrative-wise, it really doesn't make sense. you kind of have to have a balance of everything. for sure i'll sneak one more in before the romance lock (which is coming up !!) but chapter eleven will be devoid of that for now. i've been dependent on branches for a while so it'll be interesting (read: horrible) to see how the chapter shapes up without them. that doesn't mean the chapter will be boring or anything, just a little different from recent ones :))

#### **stats.**

472,000 words (=)

## CHAPTER ELEVEN:

- behind the veil
- Treasures uncovered
- to be discovered
- to be understood
- what it's worth / what is it worth?
- everything and nothing
- beyond what you know
- all that has changed
- "knowledge is power"
- kept in the dark
- brought to light

[chapter eleven titles.](#)

[Nov 1, 2023](#)

haven't yet decided on one but hopefully this gives you a hint as to what's to come :)

[update 86.](#)

[Nov 7, 2023](#)

october 30th-november 5th.

apologies for the bit of radio silence on my end. i really haven't been working much on *when twilight strikes*—school has been kicking my ass a bit and i'm still really drained from the release of chapter ten. that's entirely my fault. i gave myself a week to edit and code, when usually that'd take me two weeks. i really just wanted to get it out as quickly as i could and while i'm not unhappy with the result, it definitely took a toll. speaking of chapter ten, i'm hoping to get a bug update out for that in a few days, including fixing a description of Rylan that suggests they're a Pacific Islander (i've since learned that the Philippines don't fall under this category).

when it comes to chapter eleven, i'm afraid i've made little progress. i've struggled through three drafts of the opening scene so far so hopefully this third one is the one i keep. because i've written so little, however, i don't really have many sneak peeks to share. when i have time this week, i'm planning on doing my little mindmap/tree diagram of the chapter to spark some ideas. if that doesn't work, i might put the chapter on hold for a bit while i work on something else. i've been entertaining the idea of playable canon short stories lately so that might be fun.

even when i initially planned out my chapters two (three?) years ago, this section has always been a little bare. we're coming up on a pretty big event and i never figured out how to bridge the gap between Ciel's interrogation and *The Scene*. i told myself it was a problem for myself in the future and well, now that i'm here in the future, i'm kind of kicking myself in the shin. i have some ideas, of course, but i'm going to have to play around a bit to see if it works. if only school would let me do so... ugh.

hope you're all doing well ! take care <3

**stats.**

472,270 words (+270)

**sneak peek.**

A week ago, Blane would've rolled their eyes, vein in their jaw twitching from annoyance

[Smitten. \[A Devereux\]](#)

[Nov 8, 2023](#)

**Synopsis:** Everyone says [A] is smitten.

[A] is smitten and everyone knows it.

[A] is smitten in the sense that they're often compared to a lost puppy, trailing you around with a bounce in their step and smile so wide their dimples show. Smitten in that they'd fall over their feet trying to get the door for you. Smitten in that you're the only one who can cheer them up, even when they're insistent on being stubborn and sulking for at least one more hour.

They can't deny you. Never could, never will.

Even when their feelings were completely platonic (though completely might be a bit of a stretch; they're fairly certain some part of them has always liked you), people called them 'whipped.' They blushed at the time, heat racing straight to their cheeks as they argued they were only being a good friend, but no one ever believed them.

Did they believe themselves? They'd rather not answer that.

Later, when the two of you started dating, [A] was told that people expected them to act worse—worse being more smitten, in this case. That confused [A], who suddenly became worried about how they were expected to act in a relationship.

What would change, now that you two were together? They've known people whose relationship didn't change at all, aside from the addition of kissing and more intimate explorations. On the other hand, they've known others who did a complete 180, going from slightly distant to upon each other at all times.

Of course, these worries were nothing more than trivial anxieties. You soothed them over with a kiss and a smile, repeatedly stating that you liked [A] for [A] and was not expecting anything they couldn't handle or deliver.

Your presence has always had a calming effect on them, so it was no surprise that they melted into your reassurances immediately, head settling into your lap as their worries washed away. You stoked their hair, playing with the stray curls and [A] swears if they were a cat, they probably would be purring.

(They guess they understand where the whipped thing comes from now).

You found out early on that [A] enjoys when you play with their hair, which is why on a bad day, when they snuggle into you and ask for a cuddle, you pat your lap and beckon them to come closer.

Today was one of those days.

They did all the right things, still trailed you around like a lost puppy, fell over their feet trying to get the door and cheered up instantly after you consoled them over the department running out of their favourite coffee pod, but you know them better than anyone else.

To the naked eye, one could say they were as smitten as ever. To you, [A] was trying too hard to act normal.

"You know you can talk to me right?" you whisper. Your finger wraps around one of [A]'s curls, letting it go a moment later.

[A] feels their brows furrow. "I know. Nothing happened, I just had an off day."

"You're sure?"

"Yeah. I've been having them a lot lately."

You stop, shifting so you can look them in the eyes. "Anything I can do?"

[A] shakes their head. "No."

"You'll tell me if that changes though, right?"

"Of course." [A] pauses, cheeks starting to flush pink. "Actually, do you think I can have a kiss?"

You laugh, clearly having expected a more serious answer. "Just a kiss? You sure that'll make you feel better?"

"Always does."

The statement flusters you, [A] can tell, but you adjust yourself anyway and lean down for a kiss. [A] eagerly meets you halfway, melting into your touch and nearly sighing at the familiarity of your tongue. They suck at your bottom lip, earning a quiet moan before they tug you down further. Without the warning, you have no time to brace yourself and go falling, toppling on top of [A] who you'd been so carefully trying not to crush.

"What— A— [A]!"

[A] laughs, vibrations tumbling through their stomach. "Sorry, you weren't close enough."

"I was plenty close. You said one kiss."

[A] responds by leaning in again. With your closer position, they're able to slide a hand down your thigh and hold you in place. They can feel your heartbeat against their chest, your shaky sighs against their lips. They mourn the moment they break the kiss, but remind themselves why they chose to do so when they hear you mumble their name as they latch onto your neck. They don't want to leave a bruise, but if you go to the mirror in a few minutes and find a new hickey, well, they tried to practice self-restraint.

"Are you satisfied with one kiss though?" they whisper against your skin.

"I'm not complaining," you answer.

[A] grins. "That's what I thought."

Maybe it's not just them that's smitten.

[update 87.](#)

[Nov 14, 2023](#)

### **november 6th-12th.**

apologies for the late update, again. seasonal depression is hitting hard and daylight savings only screwed me up. i've also been hammered with homework lately and, ugh. the life of a university student. i can't wait until i graduate this year. with everything happening in my life i haven't found time to write. i think i wrote the entirety of this week's update in a day and the rest of the six days saw me just sleeping or doing assignments.

on the bright side, i've finally, finally figured out what i'm doing for this chapter and eek. whenever i sort things out, i get excited to write and regain my motivation all over again. it's just a matter of finding that time now but at least i'm not dreading opening my document now. unfortunately, this meant deleting the 200 words i wrote last week (such a loss, truly) but i'd rather that than not know what i'm doing.

since i don't have much to say, i'll reveal that once again, this chapter opens up with a branch. i actually had some hesitation against it at first because i thought perhaps my game had too many branches. i even did a little count of all the branches in my game to ease my anxieties—not that it really did much (almost every chapter branches out in some shape or form). after that, i kind of sat there and thought about it, thought about what i enjoy when i read an if and what i'd want to see if i was a player. i came to the conclusion that it was mostly just my mind being silly. we're at chapter eleven—it's kind of inevitable that things branch out. if they didn't, i think i'd actually be a little concerned. and many of the branches featured in my game are just chances for you to develop your relationship with an ro. it's not really a branch in the sense that you get the same information across all of them, regardless of who you choose. besides, i like that my game has so much customization. i don't want to assume, but i also think that's why many people like *wts* as well.

there are only two branches i'll be writing in chapter eleven, so it won't feel like a repeat of chapter ten either—another concern of mine. the closer we get to the end, the more excited i get but also, the more anxious i become. i don't feel restricted with what i can write not (quite the opposite, really) but i've found i need to be more cautious. still, i'm very excited to find some time to sit down and write. i hope things continue to live up to expectations.

**stats.**

472,712 words (+712)

sneak peek.

A week I'm hanging onto a thread, had barrelled forward with nothing but restlessness and determination—who am I to say it means something?

## CHAPTER 11.

It's so out of place that even my sleep-addled brain thinks it's strange.  
But while I frown and debate ignoring them until I go to work,  
I find myself searching for their contact anyway, pressing call before I can think twice.  
It rings a total of three times before it connects.

"When I said call me when you're awake, I didn't mean  
when you get up to use the washroom at four in the morning," Blane says.

"I didn't get up to use the washroom," I respond.

There's a sigh on the other end of the line. I can count the number of times  
I've called Blane on one hand—none of them occurred this late into the night.  
Their voice is still groggy with sleep, the edge of it rougher than usual.

[IF RIVALS TO LOVERS ROUTE]

I hate myself for thinking it's attractive.

[IF ROMANCE ROUTE]

I can't lie—it's attractive.

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[late night calls? wait-](#)

[Nov 18, 2023](#)

[update 88.](#)

[Nov 20, 2023](#)

november 13th-19th.

happy monday (or tuesday most likely, depending on your timezone) everyone !! i'm still very much swamped with assignments right now so my motivation to write is pretty low (by the time i get around to it, all i want to do is rot in bed) but i'm really happy with how things are turning out already.

i feel like i'm always saying 'this chapter is super different from the ones i've put out before,' and honestly, i'm tempted to say it again, but it's kind of not true this time. chapter eleven, as little as i've written for it, is shaping out to be most similar to chapters one and two. i say this mostly because it's currently more plot-focused than relationship-focused. however, this doesn't mean the characters don't show up—you already know you have the chance to see/are seeing Blane. we're at a really crucial point before the romance lock so it would be pretty stupid if i didn't give you time to interact with the ros. then again, i can be pretty stupid sometimes... but not this time, i swear!

whereas in chapters one and two you were still getting a grasp of the world, chapter eleven is one where you're already (hopefully) accustomed to everything. the opening conversations in this chapter are building upon a topic that's been piling up for a while now: supernaturals. chapter one introduced you to Rylan and the concept of bounties and chapter two let you debrief that. chapter eleven gives you some of your final (if not final) choices to decide your stance on the supernatural world, therefore changing how you go about your work. of course, i'm still focusing on Caine in this chapter (he's kind of integral to the plot), but it's taking a bit of a backseat again for the drug issue discussed with Ciel in the last chapter. everything's going to tie together in the end anyway, so it's not like i'm neglecting that plot point. merely developing another one that has had less time so far.

for next week, i'm hoping to push through more of the scene i'm currently writing and kind of figure out my footing. i think i mentioned this last week, but chapter eleven opens up to two branches. the first involves Blane, as you can see by the sneak peeks and the second involves some ros i don't want to mention yet. as i also said last week, i figured out what i was doing for this chapter. despite that, however, this is still my least planned chapter so far, which is freeing and nerve-wracking at the same time. once i get in the groove of things though, i know it'll be fine.

hope everyone is doing well <3

## stats.

474,446 words (+1.7k)

## sneak peek.

[Blane] looks like they just rolled out of bed, hair messy and bags prominent under their eyes.

[Tropes. \[Blane Rekner\]](#)

[Nov 23, 2023](#)

**Trope:** Character A pins Character B against the floor or wall.

**Note:** I totally forgot to put a poll up for the next series of drabbles so I hope this is okay! It's going to feature a bunch of cliches and tropes that i think will be fun to explore <3

Blane needs to let off some steam. You want to practice sparring.

The easiest solution to that was to fight each other. Or, at least, that's what you said when you came up to them in the training room.

You'd made the smart choice of making sure Blane was on a break when you brought the question, still standing back a good couple of steps. Had they been in the middle of smacking the mannequin, they might've sent their pole flying into you by accident at how random the request was.

Blane Rekner and [the Hunter] did not associate with each other. It was an unspoken rule. When the two of you did, it was Blane hurling insults and hating themselves for it, and your partner, [A], stepping to your defence (though you were more than capable of fighting your own battles).

Blane was a menace. You were an angel.

They were always nothing more than second place. You earned the top spot with ease.

Why you wanted to spar with them was beyond Blane's comprehension, but they supposed you made a good point. Plus, the training room was practically empty right now, so it wasn't like you had many choices. Everyone else was either at lunch or stuck at their desks, trying to figure out various cases.

So they said yes. And of course, they hate themselves for that too.

With the disadvantage of being tired from their previous workout, Blane can already see themselves losing to you. They see this future just as they did when they first met Caine and saw the slight curl of the man's lip. From then on, they knew that they had no chance of ever winning his favour. And right now, they know they have no chance of smacking the stick out of your hand and earning a satisfying victory.

You sidestep their jab and retaliate with your own. Blane barely manages to block it and grits their teeth with frustration. You twirl your baton with ease and try for another hit, this time to the ribs rather than the chest. Blane answers it with another block and steps forward to move onto the offensive.

You're a good fighter. Blane has never denied this, though they're definitely loathe to admit it. What sucks is that you seem to be good off of pure talent, whereas Blane had to climb their way to get to where they are.

They have no idea of proving this right, of course, but that's what it feels like. It's what the thoughts in their head feed them when they're at their lowest and hating every piece of themselves. It's what helps fuel their hatred when they start doubting why they're acting so harshly.

With a burst of energy, Blane begins knocking you backwards, attempting to get you to step off the mat. It's a tactic you're used to, of course, but it seems to catch you off guard. You take two steps back before you manage to hold your ground again.

"Give up," Blane hisses.

"You wish."

The comment only makes Blane angry. So, instead of aiming for your body, they aim their next hit at your baton. It loosens in your grip and they take the time to hit it a second time, hearing it clatter against the floor.

Then it happens.

One moment the two of you are standing and the next, you're back is to the mat. Blane is hovered on top of you, baton pressed against your neck like a sword and chest heaving. They don't ever remember pushing you, but surely they must have done something, or else the two of you wouldn't be here.

Blane places on hand beside your head on the mat to balance themselves. Their knees are braced beside your hips.

"Yield," Blane states.

You glare at them. Some part of them thinks the expression is beautiful. The passion, the hatred burning in your eyes. It's a look they like to pull out of you when they can, if only because it helps justify their own emotions.

"Get off of me," you answer.

The problem with letting their feelings get the better of them is they don't realize things until too late. If anyone walked in on you two, they would probably think you're about to kiss. You're in the perfect position for it, of course. All Blane has to do is lean down and...

Their eyes flicker involuntarily to your lips. They're slightly cracked from lack of moisture and parted as you gasp for air, trying to catch your breath. Blane has never found mouth-breathing to be attractive and they surely don't now, but something...

Suddenly, Blane feels you everywhere. They're practically sitting on top of you. The hand that is holding the baton is brushing your throat, which they feel rise and fall with each breath. Your body is hot beneath them. Hot, like the bare skin against their—

Blane throws themselves off you. Without another word, they grab their things and head for the door.

After today, you'll never speak of this again. After today, they'll decline any offer of a spar they get with you, for fear of this ever happening again. After today, they'll avoid looking you in the eyes for at least a

week. Because they need to forget this happened. They need to go back to hating you just like they hate themselves.

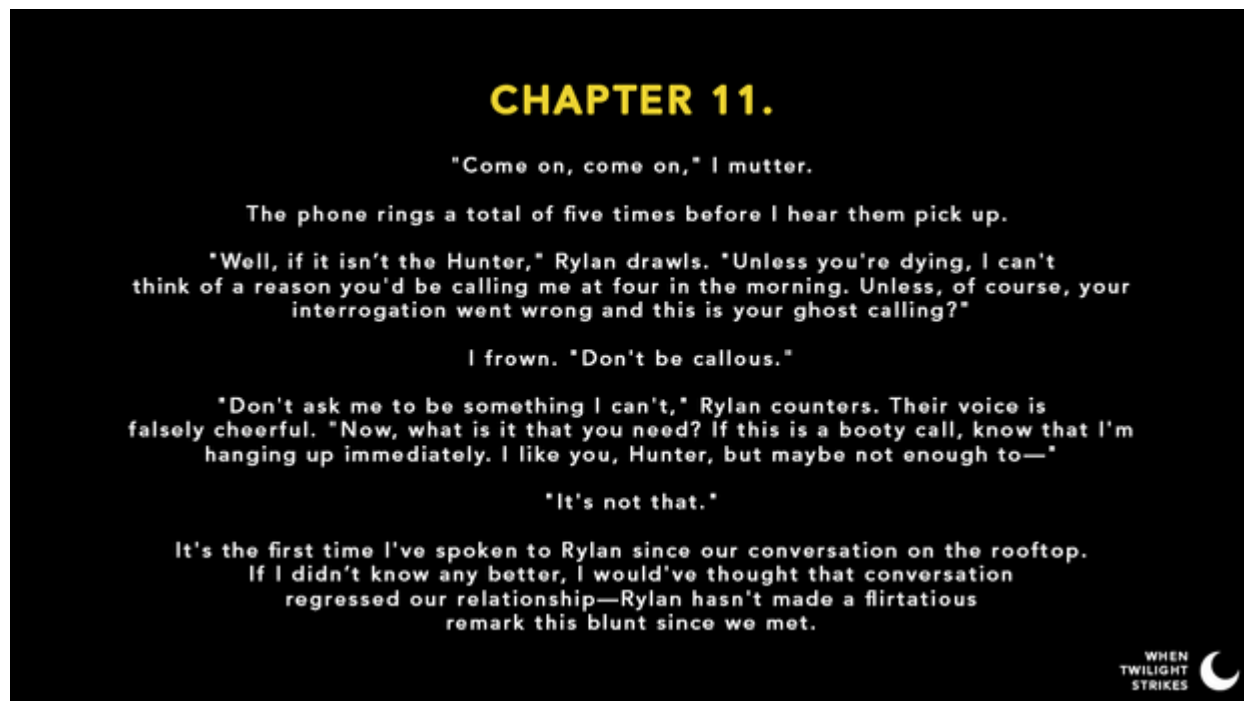
[update 89.](#)

[Nov 28, 2023](#)

not really an update but i wanted to pop by and let you all know what's going on. i'm currently piled with assignments and with exams coming up, i've been taking a step back from *when twilight strikes* to focus on school. that being said, i opened the document once this entire week so there's not much to update on. i expect this to be the same for next week, but if anything changes, i'll post a proper progress report to talk about it.

a sneak peek will be coming later this week, as well as possibly another trope drabble. i usually publish these in alternating weeks but i figured with the lack of update, it is the least i can do. no promises though, but that's the goal.

hope you're all doing well <3



[\\*not\\* a booty call.](#)

[Nov 30, 2023](#)

[update 90.](#)

[Dec 4, 2023](#)

### **november 27th-december 3rd.**

slightly longer update this week because i actually have things to say this time haha. assignments and exams are still kicking my ass but i'm slowly working through them, so i've found some time to work on *when twilight strikes*. it's still not as much as i do usually, but i'm still happy i even got some words down. a win is a win.

before i start rambling, i realized that i've revealed little to nothing about this chapter, so i'll give some more context. (just because i'm nice). right now, the chapter opens to two branches: one with Blane and the other with K and Rylan. the second half is still undecided, but i'll tackle that task when the time comes. at the rate i'm writing, it'll be a while. as i've said in a previous update, these scenes are less about developing relationships and more focused on moving the plot forward. me being me, however, i can't *not* throw in some little tidbits. it's been super fun referencing various scenes the hunter shared with Blane, for example (chapters eight and ten are the first to come to mind). additionally, as the romance lock is on the horizon, i've also been dropping more blunt comments about romance (depending on whether you have points with the character). the hunter straight-up noting that Blane is attractive is so... fskjfkfskfskfk. i can't describe it any other way.

because i'm talking about supernaturals, it would make sense that i would pick the supernaturals ros. that's the only reason [A] and N aren't options for this opening scene. Blane hasn't talked much about their Fae background, but K and Rylan have brought it up often. K's being a warlock is a huge reason why they despise IAOS so much; Rylan's entire arc is based on their being framed (as they claim) for murder and their bounty. Blane's has mostly appeared in their fight with [A] over the Dark Fae, but if you choose their branch, you'll get a much closer look at *why* they were so upset. it's another layer to their character that i've been itching to explore for a while now and one that i'm super excited for.

of course, i'm excited for K's and Rylan's as well, but i haven't written much for their scene yet so i'll talk about that when the time comes. for now, the focus is on Blane and Blane only. a bit of a change from the usual with me jumping from scene to scene, but i think the singular focus will be good for me. especially now, i kind of need a grounding point.

as always, hope you're all doing well and taking care of yourselves. thank you endlessly for all your support and love <3

**stats.**

476,219 words (+1773)

sneak peek.

[Blane's] forehead is creased with harsh lines but their lips are tugged into a soft frown.

[Tropes. \[K de Vries\]](#)

[Dec 8, 2023](#)

**Trope:** A character realizes how much they care for someone after a near-death experience.

There's a panicked look in K's eyes when you emerge from the dust. You're covered in soot, face smeared with black substance and your clothes tattered. Your jacket is hanging on by a thread, your shirt managing to cover the necessities despite the three giant holes gaping in the fabric.

K sprints towards you. Later they'll be told they were limping, but at the moment, all they care about is you. They don't feel anything, can't hear anything but you.

*Name. Name, name, name.*

Your name is a chant in their head. It loops itself over and over, playing with the syllables and letters so sweet it sounds like a lullaby.

K never thought a name could sound so beautiful. Words are just words. The English language is merely something to communicate with. K adores writing, adores reading literature even more, but while they can appreciate the aesthetics of words, never have they heard it sound like this.

*Name. Name, name, name.*

"Are you— What's—"

K cuts themselves off, words failing them for the first time in their life. Their eyes sweep over your face, your own [coloured] eyes bright despite the state you're in. You smile at them, the expression shaky but genuine, a soft curve of your lips against a harsh background.

It's beautiful. You're so beautiful.

"You're okay," K breathes. Their own voice sounds like a stranger. Cracked, hoarse—a result of having screamed nonsense and curse words for the past hour.

"I'm okay," you agree. Your voice isn't much better, croaky from the ash and dust, but hearing it heals K almost instantly.

Without warning, K's hands come up to cup your face. Blood is smeared on their wrist from an earlier injury. If they were thinking straight, they would've considered how unsanitary that was. How the dirt from your face would've made its way into their cut; how their blood would have smudged your face and marred you further.

But that's the problem—they're not thinking straight.

Thumbs stroke your cheeks, K's eyes darting around again to double-check for injuries they missed the first time. You might have been spared from life-threatening injuries, but the small cuts on your face would need attending to. Other than the slice through your brow that might leave a scar, you'll walk out of this unmaimed.

You're warm.

K holds your face like they have the universe in their hands. They're aware that someone is speaking, but right now, it's just you and them. Them and you.

You're looking at K like they're the one who was injured.

K releases one of their hands to brush the dirt out of your hair. It sticks to their palms, darkening them further from the soot they took from your cheeks, but they don't care. You're not any cleaner than you were before, but the gesture makes K feel better, somehow.

Your breathing is shallow.

K moves their hand back to your cheek, holding you before them as they examine you one last time. In a spur-of-the-moment decision, they press you against their chest, holding you close to them. Their grip is tight, though far from suffocating. Never suffocating. You could push them away if you wanted to, but you don't.

Your knees buckle.

K catches you.

You collapse.

K falls to the ground with you.

"You're okay," K tells you. They're the one reassuring you now. They feel you crumble in their hands, not only physically but mentally, the events of the night finally taking their toll on you. "You're okay. I got you, darling. You're okay."

"K, I—"

"I got you, I got you."

K crushes you closer to their chest as you break into a ragged sob. They would tear the world apart for you, they find themselves thinking. They would hunt down whoever hurt you and make them suffer a thousand times more in order to get revenge.

And that scares them.

Never before have they felt so strongly about someone before. Never have they felt so angry on someone else's behalf. But while you're in their arms, shuddering but alive, they find that if it had to be anyone, it would make sense that it's you.

Always you.

[update 91.](#)

[Dec 11, 2023](#)

### **december 4th-10th.**

i genuinely thought i wrote no more than 100 words so it's a pleasant surprise to see i nearly crossed 1000 this week. i'll spare you the whole 'i have exams coming up and i have no time to write' spiel because i've done that for the past two weeks now and, well, i'm sure you got the idea. but this semester ends on the 19th for me so i'll (hopefully) get back to my regular schedule super soon.

this week i chipped away at more of Blane's scene. i kinda let my fingers take control and typed whatever came to mind—which is how i ended up exploring a concept i didn't think would happen this soon. i know i said this chapter will talk a lot more about supernaturals, and it will, but it's also becoming a discussion on the hunter's recent mental health journey.

from going to *Crimson*, to getting stabbed/injured/watching an ro get stabbed, to seeing Natalie and Anaya bleeding out on the floor, to Ciel's interrogation... i've put the hunter through the wringer. if the dreams in chapter nine are the beginning of this spiral, then chapter eleven is the cherry on top. if i had planned this arc out better, i would've added some more unease and/or fear in earlier chapters to better foreshadow things. depending on how things go, i might go and add some in a future bug update.

because the thing with the hunter is, well, they kinda haven't had the time to think about this stuff. chapter eleven is the first chapter in a long time where there isn't something to look forward to. from *Crimson* onward, it was always go go go. now that things are settling in, so are those fears and anxiety.

so, for now, i'm going to keep writing the scene as it is and see where it takes me. the hunter's mental health is something that will continue beyond this chapter, of course, especially into book two, but seeing as an opportunity has presented itself, i'm going to take the leap and allow myself to explore the topic now.

spontaneity.

hope you're all doing well ! 2024 is so close !! <3

**stats.**

477,119 words (+900)

**sneak peek.**

The silence is too much. Some part of me recognizes the espresso machine going in the background, but the quiet in front of me is overbearing.

## CHAPTER 11.

"I—" I shake my head, losing confidence by the second. "You'll think it's stupid."

The old Blane would've agreed. Never mind the fact that the old Blane wouldn't even be here in the first place, they would've shot me a condescending smirk and replied that everything I say or do is stupid. The old Blane, the Blane from three years ago, would've rather done ten hours overtime than sat here with me.

Blane doesn't do any of that. Instead, they surprise me.

"I wouldn't have called you here if I thought it was stupid," they state.

It's such a simple statement and yet, it's completely true. Still, my worries don't wash away.

"I don't know. The more I think about it, the more—"

"You can tell me, [lastname]," Blane interrupts. Their forehead is creased with harsh lines but their lips are tugged into a soft frown. "I won't—I know my word doesn't mean much, but I promise I won't judge you."

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[we've come a long way.](#)

[Dec 13, 2023](#)

sorry for slacking on the sneak peek front recently! with not much writing going on, i'm starting to run out of scenes i can post oops. rest assured you'll get your 3 sneak peeks by the end of the month though <3

[update 92.](#)

[Dec 19, 2023](#)

i was waiting until i finished my final exam to write this but i'm finally free ! i'll write a proper update next week when i actually have things to say about what i wrote (because, like last week, i didn't manage to write much again), but i wanted to check in with everyone in the meantime.

a quick rundown of the schedule for the rest of the year:

- tomorrow i'll be travelling back home for the holidays, which means a new drabble will be up by thursday at latest. i'll likely write it on the bus/train ride. thinking of doing A this time around
- 2 more sneak peeks from chapter 11 will be posted, one probably this weekend and another towards the last days of the year
- i'm aiming to get 15,000 words written for chapter 11 done by the end of my winter break. i have about 6000 and something right now, so is it doable? yes. is it possible? we'll see
- i'm also going to start brainstorming for my anniversary special (3 years !!) while i have the time. i have an idea of what i want to do so far but my only concern is i won't have it done in time (for reference, my (our?) anniversary is on february 24th)

those are all the writing related tasks i've assigned myself for this break, aside from doing the obvious (taking a big breather for finishing my second last ever semester). otherwise, i hope to catch up on some asks and comments on my itch.io page (i always say this and never do it, oops).

as always, i hope everyone is doing well <3

[Tropes. \[A Devereux\]](#)

[Dec 21, 2023](#)

**Trope:** Character A presses Character B's forehead against theirs.

**Content Warning:** Panic attacks

It's funny how things work. One moment, you're running down the hall, feet skidding against the marble flooring as you curse under your breath, and the next, you're being pulled into a dark hallway, stumbling into a soft body before being told to hush.

[A] has never been a quiet person, but they know right now that it's life or death.

The vampire chasing the two of you slows, footsteps getting closer as they sniff the air. [A] isn't so sure why you think this will work. Sure, vampires aren't as well known for their sense of smell like werewolves, but that doesn't mean their noses are entirely useless. They're better than yours or [A]'s, that's for sure.

You've been doing this for two years now. Surely you realize this. Surely you have a plan for when the vampire steps in front of the hallway and peers behind whatever the hell you're hiding behind.

A radiator? A giant metal box? A conveniently placed object that the vampire put in this hallway on purpose to trap unsuspecting hunters?

The longer [A] thinks about it, the longer they're convinced that standing here isn't going to work.

Your hand is hovering between your bodies, ready to cover [A]'s mouth if they make a noise. The air around them is suddenly hot. Perhaps the box is a radiator after all. Their chest feels tight, their mouth dry. Their breathing is laboured, though they're not sure if it's because of panic or fear.

Maybe both.

If you're the hunters, why are you hiding? If you're the ones with the advantage, how did you fall into a trap? Being hunters means you win. Why are you bleeding at the forehead? Why is [A] still limping at the blow that sent them flying into a window?

One bounty is manageable. A bounty with a gang of support is questionable.

The vampire must move on, because your posture relaxes and the hand between your bodies drops. [A] watches as you adjust your position, letting the legs that had been holding you up relax as you sit on the floor. You press your back against the wall, sighing slightly.

[A] attempts to mimic you, but they're still too alert. Still too nervous that one wrong move might be the end of you both. Their chest, their mouth—their breathing. It's all too much. Still all too much. You're there in front of them. You're bleeding. [A]'s limping.

It hurts. Everything hurts.

Will this be your first failed hunt? Will you finally come back to IAOS without smiles on your faces?

The room is spinning. They feel inexperienced. Who were they kidding when they said they could do this? Two years into the job and they're panicking while on the field. What a joke. They're a joke. How—

"...[A]!"

[A] startles at the sound of their name. Since when were your faces so close? Since when were you kneeling in front of them, eyebrows knitted with concern? Was [A] being too loud? They've been told they think loudly before, even if that isn't physically possible. But they thought you'd warmed up to them? Are they scaring you away now? Two years later? Oh no, oh—

"[A]. Hey, [A]." Your eyes dart over their face, eyes soft. It's all [A] can think about before you're pressing your forehead to theirs. Your breath mingles together, hot air bringing [A] back down from their panicked thoughts like some sort of anchor. "Hey, breathe with me, okay? Just breathe."

"I— Wait—"

"Shh. Close your eyes. Breathe with me."

[A] doesn't know how you could tell their eyes were still open, but they do as they're told. They focus on the steady pace of your heartbeat, having calmed down after all the running you just endured, willing theirs to match your speed. One, two, three.

You whisper encouraging words to them under their breath. They don't catch them all, barely even realize what you're saying at times, but it's helpful. Their chest doesn't hurt so much anymore. Their mouth and throat have regained some moisture.

They can breathe.

But even long after it's clear [A] has calmed down, you don't let go. Your foreheads are still flush together, your lips dangerously close. Had [A] not been on the verge of a panic attack a moment ago, they might have realized this sooner and jumped away due to surprise.

Later, when you catch the bounty you were instructed to get and incapacitate his friends, [A] will think about this moment. How you knew exactly what to do to calm them down will never not astound them.

Little do they know, this will become a staple part of your relationship. Each time [A] is overwhelmed, you'll bring them close to you and hold them against your forehead. And each time, without fail, it works. Works to bring them back down to earth, but also to make them fall even harder for you.

## CHAPTER 11.

I was doing fine before. Am doing fine, I think. Dreams are dreams, sleepless nights are only temporary. Mirai was a once in a lifetime meeting; Natalia's and Anaya's failure should haunt them, not me; and Ciel is gone. All of my problems shouldn't bother me anymore.

I have no problems.

[...]

The mystery of the bounties is being solved. No one is severely injured.  
No one is currently dying. No one is in pain or screaming out for help.  
No one is on their knees begging for my help.

I feel a headache forming in my temples. The more I recite this to myself, the less I believe it. Isn't that the opposite of how it's supposed to work? Aren't you supposed to sound more convincing each time you repeat something? Why does my head hurt?

Blane's face comes into view. Their eyebrows are knitted together. "[surname]? Are you alright?"

WHEN  
TWILIGHT  
STRIKES 

[headaches and migraines.](#)

[Dec 24, 2023](#)

[update 93.](#)

[Dec 27, 2023](#)

**december 11-25th.**

hi. it's been a while since i've done a true and proper update, hasn't it? i hope everyone's been well and has been enjoying the holidays/break before the end of the year. for me, since my last exam, i went back to my hometown and have been spending a lot of time gaming. just mindnumbing stuff to soothe the pain of getting my grades back haha.

i feel like i've been saying this a lot throughout the months of november and december, but writing-wise, i haven't really done much. and now that i'm finally home, i think i can admit that i'm (that i've *been*) taking a break. it's not that i've lost interest or anything, more just the exhaustion of the year catching up to me. it also doesn't help that chapter eleven is not thoroughly planned out. of course, the spontaneity is great, but it also means i have to use a lot of brain power to figure out what to write and that's simply

something i don't have right now. so yeah. a break. seeing as it's already been going on for a while, i'll extend it until the end of this month and see if the new year refreshes my motivation.

that said, i have written a bit in the last two weeks, so i'll take the chance to talk about it now. it's not any different from what i've already said but to reiterate, i'm currently chipping away at Blane's scene. i've left a lot of choices blank so recently, i've been (begrudgingly) filling them in, just so i don't have to worry about it later. it's both a good and bad activity for me now. good because it's just repeating old choices and coming up with new dialogue, so it's not much work. but also, bad because it's well, boring.

as of a couple of days ago though, i hit a part where i finally get to push the narrative to discuss supernaturals, so at least i have that going for me. previously, i was touching upon the hunter's mental state: something i talked more in-depth about in late november or early december, i believe. the combination of these two topics in one chapter is definitely heavier than i initially intended, but i'm liking the flow of it so far. my goal is that when i get back, i'll have a fresh viewpoint on all of it and will continue to improve what's written.

one last thing before i go: the anniversary special is decided. i just need to figure out a format, so i might post a poll on tumblr in the next coming days. on one hand, while i do want to make it interactive and post it on *the midnight hours: shorts*, a small part of me is debating just leaving them as mini stories. so, we'll see.

take care everyone <3

**stats.**

478,842 words (+1723)

**sneak peek.**

"I know, I meant..." [Blane] pauses, then shakes their head. "Actually, let me ask you this: how do you feel about supernaturals?"