

Rys & Coffee Shop

Notes: ending-agnostic, but it's set long enough after Noblesse Oblige for Rys and the MC to be very close with each other.

Male Rys

The city of Remihez is a whirlwind of activity, and Rys has been on high alert all day. Oh, he's perfectly thoughtful and polite with the staff on the little ferryboats you use to make your way across the city, and when you stop for a snack at one of the dockside market stalls, he charms a couple of free croissants out of the stallholder—but there's that carefulness you recognise now after knowing him so long, that faint tension around his eyes.

You turn down a narrow side-alley and Rys says, "I'm known as a different name here. They're nice—I promised I'd drop in."

As you've learned, Rys has a great many names. It was a jolt at first, but you've grown used to it. He's always Rys to you, and there's something warm and pleasing about knowing that you're one of the few people who know him with that name—that know him at all.

The bell tinkles as you step across the threshold. The shop is small and snug, full of chattering people; it smells delicious, of cinnamon and cocoa, and of course, coffee. A trio of middle-aged people cry out a name you do not know and emerge from the bar to surround Rys, giving him hugs and patting his shoulders, then turning to greet and admire you, talking over each other so quickly that Rys, laughing, asks them to slow down.

"This is my partner," Rys says, which provokes a flurry of excitement and questions and demands to know how you met and how long you've been travelling, and Rys deflects them all with pretty stories until one of them, the eldest man with a heavy beard, holds up his hand.

"So when are you getting married?" he says.

Rys smiles and starts to say something, then glances at you and stumbles to a halt. The trio laugh and tease and nudge one another, and Rys says, "Let's have a table, then, shall we?"

His friends retreat to the bar before one of them brings you both gigantic cups of coffee and a cake stand heaped with slices of cake and pastries. Rys is quiet as he sips her coffee, watching you over the rim with his beautiful, almost-black, eyes. There's that tension again, that uncertainty, that he shows you and no one else.

"Remihez always feels strange. I never bring people here," she says softly, then lowers her voice further, leaning close. "Frantisek and I used to come here on day trips."

Your heart thumps. "So the name they said—"

"My original one. Yes." He sips his coffee again, quickly, as though embarrassed. "But I like when you call me Rys. It feels right."

"Then I'll keep calling you that," you say, and you reach forward to brush the back of your hand against his cheek.

He closes his eyes for a moment, leaning into your touch, and when he opens them, the tension from earlier has faded.

"Let's try the pistachios," he says, and kisses your hand before you both tuck in.

Female Rys

The city of Remihez is a whirlwind of activity, and Rys has been on high alert all day. Oh, she's perfectly thoughtful and polite with the staff on the little ferryboats you use to make your way across the city, and when you stop for a snack at one of the dockside market stalls, she charms a couple of free croissants out of the stallholder—but there's that carefulness you recognise now after knowing her so long, that faint tension around her eyes.

You turn down a narrow side-alley and Rys says, "I'm known as a different name here. They're nice—I promised I'd drop in."

As you've learned, Rys has a great many names. It was a jolt at first, but you've grown used to it. She's always Rys to you, and there's something warm and pleasing about knowing that you're one of the few people who know her with that name—that know her at all.

The bell tinkles as you step across the threshold. The shop is small and snug, full of chattering people; it smells delicious, of cinnamon and cocoa, and of course, coffee. A trio of middle-aged people cry out a name you do not know and emerge from the bar to surround Rys, giving her hugs and patting her shoulders, then turning to greet and admire you, talking over each other so quickly that Rys, laughing, asks them to slow down.

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"So when are you getting married?" he says.

Rys smiles and starts to say something, then glances at you and stumbles to a halt. The trio laugh and tease and nudge one another, and Rys says, "Let's have a table, then, shall we?"

Her friends retreat to the bar before one of them brings you both gigantic cups of coffee and a cake stand heaped with slices of cake and pastries. Rys is quiet as she sips her coffee, watching you over the rim with her beautiful, almost-black, eyes. There's that tension again, that uncertainty, that she shows you and no one else.

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Your heart thumps. "So the name they said—"

"My original one. Yes." She sips her coffee again, quickly, as though embarrassed. "But I like when you call me Rys. It feels right."

"Then I'll keep calling you that," you say, and you reach forward to brush the back of your hand against her cheek.

She closes her eyes for a moment, leaning into your touch, and when she opens them, the tension from earlier has faded.

"Let's try the pistachios," she says, and kisses your hand before you both tuck in.

Nonbinary Rys

The city of Remihez is a whirlwind of activity, and Rys has been on high alert all day. Oh, they're perfectly thoughtful and polite with the staff on the little ferryboats you use to make your way across the city, and when you stop for a snack at one of the dockside market stalls, they charm a couple of free croissants out of the stallholder—but there's that carefulness you recognise now after knowing them so long, that faint tension around their eyes.

You turn down a narrow side-alley and Rys says, "I'm known as a different name here. They're nice—I promised I'd drop in."

As you've learned, Rys has a great many names. It was a jolt at first, but you've grown used to it. They're always Rys to you, and there's something warm and pleasing about knowing that you're one of the few people who know them with that name—that know them at all.

The bell tinkles as you step across the threshold. The shop is small and snug, full of chattering people; it smells delicious, of cinnamon and cocoa, and of course, coffee. A trio of middle-aged people cry out a name you do not know and emerge from the bar to surround Rys, giving them hugs and patting their shoulders, then turning to greet and admire you, talking over each other so quickly that Rys, laughing, asks them to slow down.

"This is my partner," Rys says, which provokes a flurry of excitement and questions and demands to know how you met and how long you've been travelling, and Rys deflects them all with pretty stories until one of them, the eldest man with a heavy beard, holds up his hand.

"So when are you getting married?" he says.

Rys smiles and starts to say something, then glances at you and stumbles to a halt. The trio laugh and tease and nudge one another, and Rys says, "Let's have a table, then, shall we?"

Their friends retreat to the bar before one of them brings you both gigantic cups of coffee and a cake stand heaped with slices of cake and pastries. Rys is quiet as they sip her coffee, watching you over the rim with their beautiful, almost-black, eyes. There's that tension again, that uncertainty, that they show you and no one else.

"Remihez always feels strange. I never bring people here," she says softly, then lowers her voice further, leaning close. "Frantisek and I used to come here on day trips."

Your heart thumps. "So the name they said—"

"My original one. Yes." They sip their coffee again, quickly, as though embarrassed. "But I like when you call me Rys. It feels right."

"Then I'll keep calling you that," you say, and you reach forward to brush the back of your hand against their cheek.

They close their eyes for a moment, leaning into your touch, and when they open them, the tension from earlier has faded.

"Let's try the pistachios," they say, and kiss your hand before you both tuck in.