

Heartsong

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Heartsong

by [MiraculousJessarose](#)

Summary

As our heroes begin to settle into their new relationships, an accidental encounter leads Chat Noir to believe Luka is cheating on Marinette with Ladybug. But are his feelings of anger only protective of his friend, or more akin to jealousy. She's just a friend, right?

Notes

Hi! I'm back for my second fanfiction! This one came to me in the middle of my work on "The Long Game", and got me so excited that I couldn't wait to begin. I'm still playing with the style of this piece, questioning if I want chapter titles or changing perspectives in chapters, etc, but I do know the whole plot. Now we just work to fill in the blanks. :)

THINGS TO NOTE:

- This story takes place beginning a week after the Season 3 Finale of Miracle Queen.
- For stories sake, I have to ignore ONE thing from the show: the reveal of other miraculous holders. I can't have Luka's identity a known factor, even if it's just to a few people who'd remember.
- I ultimately prefer Marichat over all other pairings, so this will be an experiment for me.

Otherwise, just enjoy the story as it unfolds! And if you want a completed work to binge, check out my other Fic!

First Dates

The night sky was stunning tonight. A full moon stood out with a background of twinkling iridescent stars. Was it always this beautiful? Maybe there were outside factors that made me feel this warm glow under the moonlight. I stood on my balcony, leaning on the railings as I admired the sight. My fingers absentmindedly twirled a pigtail. It was a chilly night too, but I just held the blue jacket closer and breathed in the lingering scent of its owner. He'd given it to me earlier that evening on our first official "date". It was everything a teenage girl could dream of; coffee and pastries in a cafe on open mic night. I couldn't contain the smile when they'd called his name and he winked slyly at me as he calmly strode to the stage. There's just something about a guy passionately playing guitar that drives me crazy. Especially when the song is for me.

I'd recognized the underlying tune immediately. He'd first played it for me on the banks of the Seine. The version he played in the cafe was more embellished and fleshed out, sounding like something you'd actually pay to hear. It was his dream, after all. My friend (boyfriend?) was going to be a famous musician someday, and I looked forward to seeing his songs take off.

The date ended about 30 minutes ago, when we rode home on his bike through the scenic route of Paris. I'd given a little shiver when we arrived at the bakery, so he didn't hesitate to take his jacket off and drape it over my shoulders. There, standing in my doorway, with his hands on my shoulders and a blush covering my face, he gave me a gentle smile and spoke four words that still echo in my mind. "Can I kiss you?"

His hand brushed my cheek while he'd looked at me tenderly. Those eyes suddenly had the ability to send my mind into overdrive. My thoughts had a hard time catching up to my body, because I nodded before I even registered if I wanted to. Our lips met in a chaste kiss that gave me butterflies. I'd only even felt this feeling once before...

I'd buried my face in his chest when my mind finally recognized where I'd felt it and sent a wave of guilt to drown me. Luka took that as me initiating a hug, so he wrapped his arms around my tiny frame and squeezed softly. I'd felt another kiss to the top of my head before he'd pulled away and said his goodbyes.

When he got home, he sent me a text.

Luka : I had a wonderful time tonight. You always radiate music to me. Until next time, here's something to remember our evening. Sweet Dreams, my Muse.

Attached was a recording of the song he'd played at the cafe. My song. It was even titled "Marinette's Heartsong". All negative feelings had vacated my mind after that, as I stargazed

and played the song on repeat. Yeah, it was definitely the elated feeling from the date that made the stars so beautiful tonight.

So intensely involved was I in the music that the soft landing behind me nearly went unnoticed. Instinct made me tense up and search for Tikki to make sure she was out of sight. Relief washed over me when I remembered she was down in my bedroom with a few of the other kwamis. Since I'd become the new guardian, she'd had more opportunities to spend with her friends. It was good having over a dozen miniature gods working together. They'd made it their mission to figure out the best method to defeat Hawkmoth once and for all. Usually I joined their brainstorming sessions, but tonight I needed a break. One can only take so many debunked plans before it becomes a little miserable.

Pausing the music, I turned to greet my unexpected visitor. "Good evening, Chat Noir. To what do I owe the pleasure of your company?" Usually he would've quipped back at my playfully sarcastic tone, but something else was on his mind. He was now beside me looking up at the stars with the same look I'd had only moments before. Curiosity got the better of me. "Is this stray cat feeling lovestruck tonight?"

A blush covered his cheeks beneath the mask. "M-maybe," he mumbled. "Not lovestruck yet. Just... happy?"

I already knew the answer, but secret identities made it so I had to ask. "Oh? Did Ladybug finally return your affections?"

His smile dropped a little, but he recomposed himself quickly. "No, my Lady is still against us. But I've come to terms with it. I guess you could say I 'changed targets' for my feelings." He gave a slight chuckle. "I remember talking to you the night Ladybug stood me up. It made me feel better, having a friend to confide in. So, life update, I guess?" Now his grin was nervous.

I returned his smile warmly. "I'm happy for you, Chat. She's a lucky girl." *And maybe you can finally stop flirting during battle.*

"Thank you, Princess. It's only been a week now, but we had our first date tonight and I'm optimistic for the future. Even if it's nearly impossible for us to get our parents to let us out to enjoy ourselves. I had to practically beg my father-" He snapped his mouth closed when he realized he might've given too much away. I narrowed my eyes at him, eliciting a blush from the black clad superhero. "I'm sorry, too much information. Gotta keep my secret identity a secret. My Lady would kill me if I let it slip." He's not wrong. Fortunately for him, he was talking to Marinette right now, as I forced myself to remember. His claws were scratching the back of his neck awkwardly, and the motion felt really familiar somehow. I don't remember Chat ever doing that before. He never seemed unsure of himself in battle. Interesting. After a pregnant silence, he cleared his throat and returned to smiling at me. "Any news on your end? I know we both had some trouble in the love department."

"Yeah, I had a date tonight as well," I sighed. "I think he can make me really happy."

Chat's eyebrows raised. It was his turn to be curious. "Oh? Is this the same boy that you were upset about that night?"

Our demeanors had swapped somehow. It was my smile this time that dropped as I felt that wave of guilt return. No, I won't let myself think of Adrien right now. He's happily with Kagami. I've moved on. I hugged Luka's jacket closer to reassure myself before I responded. "N-no. He'll never see me as more than a friend. And if that makes him happy, that's what I'll remain." Chat Noir's expression was unreadable; a strange mixture of confusion and concern. I continued quickly to alleviate his worries. "But it's okay, because there's this other guy who is just as incredible. He's liked me since day one. It's not complicated with him. I don't fumble my words and spazz out as much. He makes me comfortable." My mind started to wander back to the date with the blue-haired boy. My smile was back in full force.

A warm leather glove landed on my shoulder, and I turned to see my partner beaming. "He sounds like a great guy! You deserve someone that you can be yourself with. That other loser doesn't know what he's missing."

"Hey! The 'other loser' is still my friend, remember? No name calling, please."

His hands came up in surrender. "Sorry, Princess. I'm not wrong, though. I bet he'll see how happy you are with this new guy and feel intensely jealous and stupid."

I snorted and rolled my eyes. "In my dreams, maybe." The implications of that statement eluded me until it was too late to retract. My attempts at recovery were feeble. "O-of course, I'd t-turn him down if that h-happened." The guilt on my face was hard to hide, so I lowered my gaze to the phone in my hand. The worst part of all was that I wasn't even thoroughly convinced that I would turn down Adrien if he miraculously found feelings for me. That idea threatened to overtake me, so a new idea formed to change the subject. "Hey, wanna hear a song? Luka, the guy I'm seeing, wrote it for me. He says it's the melody of my heart." There was that warm happy feeling again. And the accompanying blush.

"Sure! I love music," the blonde chirped cheerfully. I rewound the audiotrack so he could hear it from the beginning. Once I pressed play, my eyes closed and I thought only of the way Luka had looked onstage. The stolen glances at me in calmer moments when he didn't need as much focus. The way his lips pursed in concentration. The way those lips felt on mine, brief as it was. A content sigh escaped my mouth. I opened my eyes to gauge Chat's thoughts on the music, and was surprised to find that his fingers were unconsciously tapping on the railing, like he was playing a piano. From what little I'd learned about music from Luka, it appeared the black cat was at least keeping the timing, and maybe even hunting for the right notes. I wonder if I placed a keyboard in front of him if he would be playing the song verbatim, albeit on piano versus guitar. He must've felt me staring, because his fingers stilled and his hands returned to his side.

The song was coming to an end anyway. "So? What did you think?" I know I shouldn't care so much, but I really valued his opinion.

Chat reached for his staff and leaned on it with a grin. "I think we're both incredibly lucky. Which is rare, for a black cat like me." His eyebrows wiggled at the joke, and I couldn't help but snicker.

"Okay Chat, it's about time you head home. We need our beauty sleep."

“You don’t need beauty sleep, Princess. You’re already beautiful enough.” His tone was playful, but his eyes were sincere.

I reached forward to swat his bell. “Watch it, Alley Cat. We’re both taken now. No flirting with random civilians.”

“You’re far from random, but you have a point. I’m still going to call you Purrincess, though.” I rolled my eyes but didn’t deny him that. Chat gave his signature bow. “Sweet Dreams, Marinette. I hope we meet again soon.”

A smirk and crossed arms accompanied my response. “You know where I live, Chaton, it’s not like I can keep you away.”

His chuckle faded into the night air as he vaulted over the rooftops.

Everyone's Invited!

Chapter Summary

Adrien worries about Marinette avoiding him, and makes a plan to correct the problem.

Chapter Notes

This story is slowly taking shape. I originally thought I'd jump right into the jealous Adrien/Chat Noir side of things, but I am kinda enjoying adding a little exposition. If you read *The Long Game*, you know I started out with a bang. This one might be a slow burn. But hey, who's complaining?

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

ADRIEN'S POINT OF VIEW

Fencing was thoroughly exhausting today, and I know for a fact that Kagami noticed. She's always been upfront about her observations. However, since we started dating a couple months ago, she's opened up on other fronts, like voicing her concern for my lack of focus lately. I groaned as my body flopped on my bed. I'll probably regret not showering first, but I just *need* to lay down. Every muscle aches and a few joints are throbbing from overuse. Truthfully, it wasn't just fencing that did this. Hawkmoth and Mayura have been utterly ruthless ever since Master Fu left. I'm not sure what has changed, but suddenly, practically every akuma they fight had an attached amokized object. Mayura has gotten stronger, and it was wreaking havoc on the citizens of Paris. Hell, it was wreaking havoc on the *heroes* of Paris too. Carapace and Rena Rouge were practically a part of every battle at this point, with a few other holders tossed into the mix whenever necessary. Viperion, Pegasus, King Monkey, Ryugi; all had been a more frequent addition. But no one took the brunt of the damage as much as Ladybug and I.

My Lady took the news of my relationship very well, which admittedly hurt a bit, but ever since then we've only gotten closer as friends. I guess without all my constant flirting, she was more willing to spend time with me. Unlike other people...

Marinette has been practically avoiding me for months. I don't know what caused it. A bitter voice in my head blames Luka for taking her away, but that's just ridiculous. Luka is my friend too. She's just spending more of her time with him and less with the friend group. Kagami gets along great with Nino and Alya, so they can still go out on double dates without issue. But the dynamic is different without the stuttering bluenette.

My loud sigh must've disturbed the little black creature beside me, because he chose that time to speak up. "Adrien," he whined, "just ask her out already."

"What?! I've got a girlfriend, Plagg! And Marinette is just a friend."

"Yeah, a friend that you spend most of your nights with. I don't get enough cheese for all the extra transformations you've used. Being me is exhausting." The kwami's stomach growled in agreement.

"That's different and you know it," I grumbled, exasperated by my kwami's antics. I somehow dragged myself to the minifridge by my bed to toss a wheel of camembert at him. "Marinette is just easy to talk to. She's comfortable around me as Chat Noir. I don't know why, but I really value that friendship. Mari's a great friend to have."

Plagg spoke with a full mouth. "Yeah, yeah, Kid, I've heard it all before. But that's not even what I meant. Just go up to the girl and ask her to join you and Kagami on a double date. You've done it before. I don't know what the hold up is."

The offensive smell of the cheese irritated my nose, even from this distance. But... Plagg was right. I often found myself visiting Marinette as my alter-ego. At least twice a week by this point. We'd play video games sometimes, or watch terrible movies to see who can keep a straight face the longest, or chase each other around the kitchen making a late night snack. The time was always filled with laughter and awful puns (mostly on her part, since my puns are puuurrfect) and it was a connection I desperately wished to have with her as my civilian self too. Besides Ladybug and Nino, I'd consider her one of my best friends. Even the simpler nights, when we'd just enjoy the company while Marinette worked on her latest designs, we're worth savoring.

We needed to hang out again as school friends. It was going to happen. I was determined to make it.

I didn't bother giving Plagg a response. He'd gotten my thanks already in the form of cheese, which by the looks of it, was already devoured. The rest of my evening was spent making arrangements with Nathalie and Kagami for a date and time that we'd be available, while also making time to do my schoolwork. By the time I settled into bed for good, I had a solid plan in mind. Now, all that was left was to ask.



"Marinette!" I shouted as I ran toward my friends. School hadn't started yet, and by some stroke of luck Marinette was actually early. She sat on a bench with Alya and Nino, showing them a few designs she'd been working on. I smirked as I noticed one on the page that my alter ego had offered input on. They must've been too involved to hear me, so once I got within distance, I slowed to a casual walk and spoke her name again. Her big blue eyes raised from the page and she stared at me like I was the last person she expected to see.

“Well hello to you too, Adrien. My morning has been great, thanks for asking.” I broke eye contact with Marinette to see Nino and Alya waving at me facetiously. A small embarrassed flush crossed my face. Nino’s eyebrow was raised, waiting for a response.

“Hey Nino. Hey Alya. Sorry, I just got a little distracted by my objective.” My arm was behind my head to scratch my neck. It was a nervous habit of mine. Why was I nervous?

“And that would be...?” Alya’s reporter instincts were showing.

“To ask Marinette on a date!” I blurted out a little too enthusiastically. Based on their reactions, my words weren’t thought out well enough. “A d-double date,” I fumbled over my words. “With Kagami and I.”

“What are we? Chopped liver?” Nino snickered at his girlfriend's remark.

“No, I just figured it would be fun to hang out with Marinette and Luka too.” Alya didn’t seem fully satisfied by my explanation, as evidenced by her eye roll and crossed arms. I turned my attention back to the girl in question. “So, what do you think?” Marinette’s eyes were practically bugging out of her head at this point, and her face was red. Great, I broke her. She just hates me. This was a bad idea. But damn if I wasn’t determined to see it through. “Kagami really misses hanging out with you.” I admitted. It wasn’t even a lie. My girlfriend had been asking about Marinette lately. I always just told her that she was busy with Luka or her schoolwork. That was the lie. While the bluenette always used those and various other excuses for avoiding group hangouts, a certain black cat hero, aka me, had managed to spend plenty of time with her those evenings. I hoped this time would be different, especially if it wasn’t just me wanting to hang out.

As my words registered, the girl shut her eyes and took a couple deep breaths. Her face returned to a nearly normal shade, with just a hint of pink remaining. The smile that spread across it seemed a little forced. “S-sure, Adrien. I’d love to see Kagami again.” My plan had worked! I broke out in a genuine smile and started delving into the details, but Marinette raised her hand to pause my words. “But if we’re doing a double date, why not go all out? Invite Alya and Nino too.”

Alya smiled at this. “Yeah, and maybe Mylene and Ivan!”

Nino tossed his hat into the ring. “Kim and Ondine were talking the other day about wanting more couples to hang out with.”

Marinette was practically buzzing with excitement. “Oooh, we could invite Rose and Juleka too! I think that’s all the couples in our class, right?”

At this point we might as well invite the whole class. I thought to myself, having an internal debate over how this had unraveled so quickly.

“That’s a great idea, Adrien!” Marinette’s words broke him out of his thoughts. Apparently, he’d spoken aloud. It was too late by this point. What was supposed to be a double date had now become a large group event. But Marinette had at least agreed to join them, unlike

previous times. This was progress. I could feel Plagg silently laughing in my shirt pocket. He won't let me live this down unless I give him *extra extra* cheese.

The school bell rang, saving me from complicating the conversation further. Alya was still giving me a side eye as we walked up the stairs to the classroom. I lagged behind the group to test a theory. Just like I expected, the girl slowed her pace to match mine. The investigative reporter glint was in her eyes. I'd seen it enough as Chat Noir to recognize it. But what could she be questioning?

"So, Agreste, how's your *girlfriend* doing lately?" She narrowed her eyes while awaiting his answer.

"Great, actually! She's been kicking my ass lately in fencing. Actually, next week she's going to an international competition in Beijing."

"Mhm, but doesn't that mean she should be spending all her free time practicing, instead of pointless group activities?" The way she was holding herself made it obvious that she'd be writing her observations if she had a pen and notepad.

I smirked at her question. "On the contrary, she needs a break to relieve stress. This will be the perfect way to have a little fun."

Her eyes narrowed again, but we had reached our destination and Madame Bustier was calling for the class to take their seats, so she ended her interview. I gladly slid into my seat next to Nino and let out a breath that I had been holding, along with all the tension I'd built up in my shoulders.

She'd said yes. I will finally have my friend back. That meant that the rest of the day would be wonderful no matter what happened.

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I was wrong. I was *very* wrong. We hadn't even reached lunchtime yet before an Akuma/Amok pairing started its attack. I watched as all my friends dispersed to their hiding places. Nino and Alya seemed to disappear into a supply closet, while Marinette ran into the girls bathroom. I took the boys side and quickly called upon my transformation before making my way out the window. Ladybug was already on a nearby rooftop surveying the enemy, with Rena Rouge and Carapace not too far behind. We crouched on the roof in a group huddle and talked strategy.

"So I don't see any large sentimonsters right now. Does anyone see an Amok?" Ladybug's hand was on her chin as she thought.

"Maybe we're lucky and it's just the Akuma this time?"

"I seriously doubt Hawkmoth has gotten lazy, Chat Noir. The amok might just not be immediately visible." My spotted partner dismissed my idea before turning to Rena. "Is the news saying anything?"

She checked the screen on her flute-phone. “Weirdly, nothing. It’s silent. Instead of Nadja Chamack, I just see a mirror and it’s reflection shows an empty studio. A few more scattered mirrors here and there, though. They were probably doing a news piece on that before the Akuma hit.”

I chimed in with what I thought would be helpful. “Maybe the Ladyblog has news? I know Aly- err, that reporter is never far from the action.”

Rena looked away and scanned the streets below. “Maybe she was attacked too. But there’s no time to think about that. We need to take action! Look!”

“What are you seeing, foxy?” Carapace joined Rena at the edge of the roof. In seconds, Ladybug and I were at their sides looking down on the damage.

“More mirrors, and stone statues. The faces look... startled. I don’t like the look of this.”

It wasn’t a pretty sight, but then again, akuma damage never is. Walking proudly among the mess was a girl with bright yellow hair. Her entire outfit was varying degrees of yellow, in fact. The honey of the dress stood out drastically against the lemon tights and dijon accessories. It was a look my father would hate. I found it unsettling. That might be the color theory I was encouraged to learn as a model. Yellow is for insecurity. Swirling around her were shards of glass.

“What do you think the glass is for?” The turtle hero asked, a moment too soon. We watched as an unsuspecting civilian ran around the corner and came face to face with the girl. His face morphed into disgust. A furious growl escaped the akuma before she sent the shards of glass flying at him. Where he once stood now was a mirror. “Well that answers that question...”

“I still don’t get the statues. But I don’t think we’re going to learn much more from up here. Are you all ready?” Ladybug looked determined. Once we all gave affirmative, she began giving out more instructions. I was just eager at this point to get the battle over with, so I leapt down into the street without a second thought, only vaguely hearing her warning behind me. “Proceed with caution. We still don’t have the full story. Wait, Chat Noir!”

I landed silently, but Ladybug’s shout drew the attention of the akuma. She turned to grimace at me. I shuddered upon seeing the extent of her face. Her eyes were a very light gray: another poor color choice. Gray means uncertain and anxious. A picture was beginning to shape in my head as to the girl behind the akuma, and the emotions that made her prey to our enemy. I tried to keep my face neutral to avoid any attack, but a blue mask highlighted her face as she was controlled. She raised her arms and flung the glass my way.

Carapace’s shield barely managed to intervene in time. I heard the dull sound as the shards embedded themselves in the shell. He looked at me incredulously. “What were you doing, dude?”

“I thought we needed more information. That’s what I’m here for.” Something from the encounter wasn’t adding up, but my brain was a little slow in processing it all. I heard the sounds of Ladybug and Rena Rouge landing behind me to remain in the protection of the

shield. All eyes were on me, waiting for whatever input I'd gained. "This doesn't feel right. I just can't put my finger on why..."

While I was processing the information, a noise came from behind our group. Rena turned to look right as I came to a realization.

Akuma's masks aren't blue.

And now Rena Rogue was a statue.

## Chapter End Notes

I finally have someone reading these chapters before they're posted, and that's my boyfriend. He's become enamored with the characters since I made him watch the show with me. His thoughts: "It hurts seeing Adrien worry about his friendship, but I know that's exactly what he would do. He's done it before. But ouch." Oh sweetie, you don't even know what I have planned...

Anyways, kinda curious to see who is here from my first work. I love comments to understand the reactions of the community. I write these fics for myself because it's a great distraction from my depression and makes me feel productive, but sharing them with you all makes them mean a little more in the long run.

# Reset

## Chapter Summary

What happens when we use Second Chance?

## Chapter Notes

Hey guys! Sorry I've been MIA for so long. I will be more active from now on. Also be on the lookout for edits to the formatting (chapter titles, tags, summaries, etc.) later this day. I need to make it all cohesive.

Also HUGE shoutout to my new friend and beta reader [AlderaanPrincess](#) and her wonderful support! Her story, Suspiciously Miraculous, is absolutely powerful and unique. Go check it out!

Enjoy!

## Ladybug's Point of View

I never expected Adrien Agreste to ask me out. I'd spent the past few months pouring myself into my designs and my relationship, avoiding him at all costs. So why now, after everything, did he ask me on a double date? He'd asked to hang out before, sure, but never bringing Kagami into the situation. Maybe that's what brought me to finally accept. If I saw him happy with her, it would be easier to be around him. Besides, it's been months. Luka and I are happy. I don't love Adrien anymore.

And I'm definitely not a bad liar.

But if that was something I hadn't expected, then seeing my best friend turn to stone in front of me was beyond shocking. I cursed myself silently, angry at the way I'd let myself get distracted by these thoughts of a blonde boy I'd vowed to forget. But my anger found an outlet in another blonde boy. As soon as I came to my senses, I grabbed my partner and swung to the nearest rooftop, with Carapace right on my heels. "Chat Noir! What the hell were you thinking?!" I'd turned on him, furious, letting my emotions get the better of me. He looked up at me with those big kitty-cat eyes and I couldn't stay angry. But the situation was still serious. "Okay, so what have we learned?"

“My girlfriend is a statue and I hate this Akuma,” Carapace gave his input.

“Fair observation, but not useful. Chat?”

“The yellow girl is the sentimonster. I saw the blue mask. The sentimonster is turning people into mirrors by throwing glass shards at them. I’m guessing the accompanying Akuma is the one turning people into stone, though I didn’t think I saw anything when Rena was turned. I think we need to know where we’re supposed to look before things happen.” My partner looked deadly serious. He never liked it when one of us got hurt, especially me. He’s the one who jumps in front of the attacks so we don’t take them. Not that I’d ever encourage that behavior. Chat seemed to come to a realization suddenly as his eyes widened. “We need Viperion.”

Damn. He was right.

Viperion would be the best choice right now, since we can use Rena’s mirage as a distraction while we weed out the Akuma. We need the ability to know what’s coming. We needed a second chance.

“Okay, Chat. I’ll go get him. While I’m gone, just try to keep things under control without getting involved directly, okay?” Two masked faces nodded at me, both with determined looks in their eyes, and both for different reasons. This could be trouble. I need to get Luka fast.

I matched my yo-yo onto a nearby rooftop and swung around a few more before landing on my own rooftop balcony. When I came down the ladder, Sass was already waiting with the bracelet. With a grateful smile I headed out to Luka’s school.

## **Luka’s Point of View**

When Ladybug showed up in the music classroom, where I’d taken refuge from the latest akuma, I knew it was time for me to help. The violence was nowhere near my school at this point. Most of my classmates had taken the attack as an excuse for an early lunch. My lunch was spent either with Marinette if I could make it, or working on my songs. Today, it was the music that satisfied my appetite.

I was so entranced in the melody that I gave no visceral reaction to the spotted heroine on her entrance. She paused in the doorframe and sighed. I might’ve blushed at her reaction, being that I had massive respect for Ladybug, but currently my girlfriend was the only one to make me blush. Marinette, with her gorgeous blue eyes and fierce loyalty to her friends and family. She would make an excellent superhero. I was chosen because Agreste couldn’t do it. So I’m not sure what qualities Ladybug looks for in a potential holder. But Marinette... she’s got everything. And her suit would most definitely be pink...

“Luka Coffaine,” a voice interrupted my musings. Ladybug was holding out the box that contained the snake miraculous. I didn’t even hear any further words before I carefully accepted and greeted Sass. This was a familiar drill. While I transformed, Ladybug gave me the rundown. “We have an Amok that is turning people into mirrors, and an unknown Akuma that turns them to stone. There’s no room for second chances once you’re hit. And considering we still don’t know how the Akuma works, we need you to give us those redos while we figure it out. Are you up for the challenge?”

“No challenge, Ladybug. I’ll be patient with it. We’ve technically got all the time in the world.”

“Well, you do. Just remember we don’t know what happens every time you use your power. So if something important happens, make sure to tell us.”

“You can trust me,” I gave her a soft smile with my words to assure her I was not trying to sound cocky, but rather optimistic. Cradling my lute, I gave it a light stroke for the sake of the music it output. When my eyes returned to Ladybug, there was an unmistakable red flush to her cheeks, just under the mask. Did I just make the Hero of Paris *blush*?

Our eyes met, and she looked away with a tiny yelp and went to the nearby open window. I followed, and soon we were heading into battle.

I hope Marinette is somewhere safe during this Akuma attack.

“Hey! Snake dude!” Carapace enthusiastically held out his fist for a bump when I landed on the rooftop with Ladybug.

“Ssssup Viperion?”

I chuckled as I greeted the two superheroes “Hey, nice pun, Chat.”

“Thanks,” he beamed and popped nonexistent suspenders, “been working on a few for you.”

“How kind.”

“That’s what friends are for! Puns and getting la-”

“Boys, can we have this discussion later? We’ve got a villain to fight, in case you’ve forgotten.” Ladybug interrupted them with an eye roll, though the hint of an amused smile betrayed her. “Why did it have to be Rena who got turned to stone? She’s much more bearable than you, Chat.”

Chat Noir wiggled his eyebrows at her. “Awe, I love you too Bugaboo! Now, you were saying? Akuma?”

“Right! Here’s the plan.” Ladybug launched into a series of ideas, all relying on my Second Chance ability bailing them out if it goes too far. We inserted our earbuds for communication

amongst the group. Then, upon locating the akuma (or amok? This one was confusing...), I slid the snake back on my wrist and nodded at the group.

“Attempt Number One.”

The first few attempts went about as well as could be expected, with what limited knowledge we had about the enemy. Carapace didn't shield in time. Reset. Chat made an awful pun. Reset. Ladybug tried to save a civilian and got turned into a mirror. Reset. Chat jumped in front of Ladybug, causing them both to get tangled in her yoyo. Reset.

“Attempt Number Five.”

“Dang, that was fast. I feel like I just blinked.”

Ladybug narrowed her eyes at her partner's sarcastic joke. He'd said that every time, with this same reaction. Not that he knew that. I let it slide, instead focusing on our mission. “Carapace, have your shield ready on the right when you land. There's a civilian coming down the road to the north, but they will be smart enough to run. Chat Noir, save the jokes for a safer time. She doesn't like them. And remember you aren't immune to Ladybug's yoyo. Now go!”

They launched into battle again, almost immediately getting struck. I studied the scene before me and took a deep breath, preparing my next debriefing. This was going to be a long day, but I'm patient. I promised Ladybug she could trust me. I slid the snake back to the start.

Reset.

“Attempt Number Twelve.”

“Dang, that was fast. I feel like I just blinked.”

“Carapace, shield ready when land. Chat, no jokes, avoid yoyo. Ladybug, don't look in the mirrors. The civilian is fine. Now go!” I decided to shorten my vernacular to save time, and considering the looks of my comrades, they took it seriously. This time they got a little further than ever before, with my continued instructions in their ears. Ladybug expertly deflected a hailstorm of glass while Chat snuck up behind the yellow woman. A perfect throw from Carapace of his shell provided an excellent distraction. The spotted heroine just kept retreating north, up the street and to a clearer location with less mirrors. Things were looking really good. But I was still skeptical.

Miraculously, Chat managed to get the drop on their enemy, and she went down in a blur of mismatched color hues. “Get off me! I've been chosen to lead Hawkmoth to victory, and save France!”

Well that's new. This akuma's motives were more muddled than her outfit. Chat couldn't resist making a joke, despite my warnings. “Who do you think you are? Jaune of Ark?”



She growled in anger. “I am Mirrorbelle, and I won’t let you talk to me like that! Boys are always saying stupid things. For once, I’d like to hear what I want.” Her face morphed instead to a look of sadness and pain. There were tears in her eyes as she looked up at her captor. He still hovered over her form, using his staff to pin her arms down so she couldn’t fling glass. A hopeful pout contorted her expression as she gave her next plea. “Tell me I’m beautiful, Chat Noir. Just tell me that simple lie and then give me your miraculous. No one needs to get hurt.”

Chat looked genuinely taken aback by her words. Carapace had to be the one to break the silence. “Or you could just tell us where the cursed objects are. No one has to get hurt in that scenario either. Come on, dudette, it’s not like there’s much else you can do in your position.”

“Is that what you think?” The cheshire grin that spread on her face was the furthest thing from beautiful. From my vantage point I desperately searched the battlefield for what she was so maliciously confident in. No sign of the akuma. Only countless mirrors and stone statues. Statues that were looking directly into a mirror. The mirrors seemed to act as conduits to turn the beholders to stone as soon as they see themselves. I’d seen it happen already a few times to the three heroes below. But they always looked so surprised when they saw their reflection. Was it really their reflection staring back at them, or something... else?

I came to the epiphany seconds too late. As though to confirm my theory, gray hands reached *through* the mirror directly behind Ladybug, taking advantage of her downed guard and distraction. Chat saw too, and at the same time, we shouted her name. “Ladybug! Behind you!” The black cat hero was sprinting to his partner, but the warning came too late. A pink flash of light nearly obscured the hands as they disappeared back into the reflective abyss with the earrings in tow.

My hand instinctively reached to my wrist for another reset, but something stopped me. *Someone* stopped me. I effortlessly lept to the ground next to the group, staring ahead in shock. Guilt pumps through my veins. I know I’m invading her privacy, but my brain isn’t catching up. How could it, when I just discovered the heroine of Paris is none other than...

“Marinette?” Chat Noir broke the silence. The look on his face gave me a familiar feeling: jealousy. His eyes were blown wide with astonishment and joy. “After all this time, it’s been you. Of course. Nothing else would make sense.” The blonde broke into a gleeful smile before lunging forward and wrapping his arms around my girlfriend. *My* girlfriend. Not his. Who is he to hold her like that? How does he get to say her name with such familiarity? What gives him that right? After everything I went through with Agreste not returning her feelings, I was not going to let my chance with Marinette be ruined by a *mangy alley cat*. He pulled back to look in her eyes with unequivocal adoration. “Princess, I love-”

Reset.

“Attempt Number Thirteen,” I barely managed to croak out.

“Dang, that was fast. I feel like-”

“Do you ever shut up?” I growled, startling the rest of my teammates. “If you’re not going to take this seriously, then maybe someone else should take your place. Ladybug doesn’t need you. She has me. And I love her more than you ever could.” My fist closed around his bell as I held him close to shout in his face. I’d never felt this level of anger before, and it was honestly a little unsettling.

Ladybug approached cautiously. “Viperion, remember we don’t know what just happened before the second chance. So whatever Chat did-”

I shook my head in earnest. “No, I won’t let him take you from me. You suffered enough with that clueless idiot Agreste. If he’s too stupid to see you behind the mask and love you then, then he doesn’t deserve you.”

“Woah, what’s happening here?” Carapace piped up from the sidelines.

Ladybug ignored him and continued her approach, keeping eye contact with me. When she was close enough, her hand brushed my shoulder. “Luka... you’re not going to lose me.”

“Wait, whaaaaaaa?” The shocked exclamation by the turtle hero gave background noise to Chat’s realization. And there was that look all over again. Shock. Joy. Love. This is not happening again. I need to get control of myself.

Reset.

“Attempt Number Fourteen, I think?”

“Dang, that was- wait, are you okay dude?” My voice and general demeanor must’ve been a giveaway. But it was strange to have Chat Noir looking at me with the concern of a friend when moments ago we were almost at blows with each other.

“Yeah, this is a throw away attempt. I need to collect my thoughts.” And I did just that. No time to think through the intricacies of my discovery. So what if my girlfriend is a badass superhero whose partner is madly in love with her? We had a city to save. I could get out my aggressions and jealousy later. They just didn’t need to know about the past two attempts.

Take deep breaths.

Hum a comforting melody.

Prepare to do it all over again.

Reset.

“Attempt Number Fifteen.”

Ladybug gets turned to stone. No, *Marinette* gets turned to stone.

Reset.

“Attempt Number Nineteen.”

*Marinette* gets thrown into a mirror.

Reset.

“Attempt Number Twenty-Seven.”

*Marinette* tries to save the civilian again, because I forgot to tell her he’d be fine.

Reset.

“Attempt Number Fifty-Six.”

I gave up on my downward spiral. I was not going to let Chat Noir and his stupid jokes get into my head. This was a fight, a dance, something I needed to think of analytically, like writing a song. But without the emotion. A simple melody. A well placed punch here, a gliding dodge there. Aaaaand, we’ve hit yet another wrong note.

Reset.

“Attempt Number Sixty-Nine.”

Chat and Carapace snickered. Ladybug face palmed. I shut that cat up with my fist.

Maybe I wasn’t immune yet. Reset.

I lost count of the attempts after a certain point. All that mattered were the notes we played on the field. I’d memorized this song by now. At some point, Ladybug was able to use her lucky charm effectively, the red and black lasso dragging the mirror girl out of her hiding place. The stone and mirror combination that acted as the cursed objects crumpled to dust in Chat’s cataclysm. I realized our victory, and the sense of relief was so overwhelming that I joined my fellow heroes on autopilot. Chat and Carapace were already holding out their fists for the signature celebration, but my heart had other plans. As soon as my feet hit the ground, I grabbed Ladybug in a tight hug. No matter what else happened today, I almost lost my girlfriend countless times. She may be a kickass hero, but this battle reminded me that she wasn’t immune. It was going to be hard from now on to fight by her side knowing who was

behind the mask. But I'd rather be by her side as an ally than on the sidelines as a helpless civilian.

# Hungry Stray

## Chapter Summary

Marinette learns about the akuma's motivations.

## Chapter Notes

Hey y'all, I'm loving all the support! Hopefully I can do this right and give you all the story that's been in my head for so long. Thanks for reading!

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

## Ladybug's Point of View

I've grown very familiar to Luka's hugs. Being his girlfriend had a lot of perks, one of which being his amazing cuddles. If I had a rough day, being wrapped in his arms helped take away the stress and anxiety. He never knew the extent of them, and he knew better than to ask, but regardless, he held me like all my burdens were his now. His embrace was always gentle and secure. Those hugs were reserved for a special few; Juleka, his mom, and his girlfriend.

So why is he holding me tighter than ever before, when I'm not *actually* me, and he's not *actually* him? Viperion and Ladybug didn't hug like this. There was nothing intimate about the action, but it still felt strange. But also... so right.

I allowed myself to melt into his chest for a brief moment, enjoying the release from the stressful battle. Then, I extracted myself from his embrace and put my fist out to join the others. Carapace was smirking like he just saw something funny, so Alya was absolutely going to hear about this innocent hug later, but I fought to avoid Chat Noir's expression. He looked confused and a little concerned. I'd yet to tell Chat that I was in a relationship as myself, because part of me worried how he'd react. Would he still treat me the same? I didn't have time for those questions, so I turned away without meeting his eyes and summoned Viperion over with a head tilt. He shook himself out of whatever daze he was in and walked over with a smile, finally completing the grouping of hands.

"Pound it!" We all exclaim. A celebration of heroes, red meeting black, teal, green, and...

"Oh shit. Al-er-Rena is still a statue!" Carapace barely catches himself from an irreversible tongue slip.

I shake my head and retrieve the lucky charm from the now harmless girl who was previously our enemy. Chat follows me, no doubt intent on consoling the victim. He's always good like that, caring about the civilians while I take care of the press. Speaking of the press, once I fixed the city, we'd be swarmed instantly. While I was no stranger to a crowd, Viperion had yet to deal with a reporter eagerly asking questions. Lasso in hand, I walked to him. "If you want to avoid the crowds, now would be a good time to go. I'll retrieve the miraculous next time I see you. I trust you not to use it for your own purposes." As I speak I hear his bracelet beeping wrapping. He looks at it with surprise, but nods in acceptance before jogging away from soon-to-be prying eyes. My miraculous beeps for the second time, so I know we don't have a long window of opportunity. I throw my lucky charm into the air and utter the magic words. The surge of healing energy washes over me with a warm glow.

After a few moments of handling reporters, we all leave to return to school. Or, wherever Chat goes when he's not being Chat.

That night, I allowed myself to properly freak out.

"TIKKI! What am I going to do?!"

"Calm down Marinette! Adrien just wants to have you as a friend again."

"I know that, but how do you think Luka's going to feel? And how am I going to act normal when I've got two extremely attractive and sweet guys, one that I still angrily harbor feelings for, by my side?"

Tikki giggles at my dramatics. "To be fair, do you ever act normal?"

"...no," I groan. "It's just... he's just... and Luka... mmmph!" I scream into my cat pillow out of frustration, emphasizing my point with punches. My Kwami was used to the freak outs I have by now. After 2 years of my obsessive crush on Adrien, and now that I'm happy with Luka, the existential crisis of how to let go. I thought I was doing so well. Avoidance was an effective method. But, since the feelings still linger after all this time, maybe I need to face it head on instead. If I see how happy Kagami and Adrien are together, I can be free from my crush. That's how that works, right? I let loose another scream into my pillow.

A knock above me breaks me out of my borderline tantrum. Through the trapdoor that leads to my roof, I can see a worried face. "Princess? Are you okay? I heard a scream."

Just who I needed to see right now. "Chat, why are you here?" I grumpily grab the cat pillow and hug it to my chest.

He smirks, but his eyes are sincere. "Do you want a hug from a real cat?"

My eyes have never rolled more than when I am around him. By the end of the night I have a headache. I'd never admit it, but it was worth it. This dumb cat had wrangled his way into my heart. He was my best friend, both in and out of the mask. Being with him in such a domestic setting, without enemies or flirting, was sometimes the best part of my week. It was almost

like we weren't superheroes. Just a normal fashion obsessed teenage girl and a dork who fancied puns.

After accompanying my over exaggerated eye roll with a sigh, I drop the pillow to my side and open the rooftop hatch. He made a graceful landing on my bedroom floor and spread his arms wide for a hug. I chuckle fondly as I accept the embrace.

This was my second hug of the day from a boy. I was just as familiar with Chat's hugs as I was with my boyfriend's. Chat held me gently, like I was precious and fragile. His hands stayed on my upper back and traced small circles. I could sense an air of hesitation in his movements tonight though. Pulling back, I examined his face. "Chat Noir, why are you really here?"

Despite my gentle tone, he looked pained. "I told you, I heard a scream." I raised an eyebrow. "I wanted warm hugs?" I tilted my head and pursed my lips. "I felt like testing out some new puns?" When I finally crossed my arms, he threw up his hands in defeat. "Okay, okay, you win. I don't really know why I'm here. I just felt like I needed to see you, for some reason. I can't explain it. Forgive me?" He gave me the cutest kitten pout I'd ever seen.

I shook my head and smiled. "Of course, silly. Now that you're here, what do you want to do?"

A grin brighter than the sun lit up his face. He lunged forward and picked me up in a much tighter embrace, but one that I was also familiar with. The room spun with me, eliciting a squeal from my lips. "Put me down! Chat!" I gasped out through giggles. "I'm going to get dizzy!"

After one more spin, he allowed my feet to touch the ground again. Now stable, my hands rest on his chest while I caught my breath. In the silence, I both heard and *felt* a very recognizable action. Chat's ensuing blush was only worsened by the constant rumbling. I went back to raising my eyebrow at him. The blonde gave an embarrassed grimace. "I had to skip lunch today. Akuma battle. Sorry, Princess."

Again with the eye roll. I gave a light push to his chest and walked over towards my door. "I swear you only hang out with me for my parents' food."

He picked up on my teasing tone. "Didn't you know that cats love treats?"

"Yeah, but I should've remembered what else they say about cats." As I replied, I was opening the hatch to our downstairs.

"Oh? And what's that?"

I called my answer over my shoulder as I descended the stairs. "Never feed strays!"

Ten minutes later, armed with a tray of macaroons and two cups of tea precariously balanced, I ascend the stairs again. When my head comes above floor level into my room, I hear a

frantic rustle. “Oh, Princess! You could’ve asked for help!” A weight is lifted as he takes the tray from my hands and places it on my desk.

No longer burdened, I quicken my ascent. “Chat Noir, I am a strong, independent woman who can manage things just fine alone, thank you very mu-” My confident tease was cut short as my foot caught on the last step and I fell flat on my face. The distinctive snickering I heard across the room had me raising my head with a glare. The cat in question was doubled over in stifled laughter, trying not to choke on a half-eaten treat. “So much for my knight in shining armor.”

“Sorry Mari,” he worked to compose himself, which included brushing crumbs off the front of his suit. Then he held out his hand to help me to my feet. “Your grace is incomparable, Fair Lady.” He stepped back with a bow.

*Smug cat.* “Okay, enough with the formalities. I didn’t forget your odd reason for visiting. What happened today, Chat?”

He took a seat on my sofa while I sat at the desk. With dramatic throat clearing and posturing, he began his story. As expected, he recounted the Akuma/Amok battle from the day, to which I gave properly timed gasps. But then he went into the part I didn’t know. “The poor girl... she was so hurt still. I had to stay by her side to reassure her that not all guys were dumb or rude or oblivious.”

“What happened to her?”

His hands embraced the teacup tightly. “That’s just it; I’m not entirely sure. She said she went to school and in art class while working on sculptures, she was talking to her friends. One of them said something that I don’t understand why it upset her, but she left the room in a hurry and hid in the stairwell. She still had a lump of clay in her hand, and she pulled out her hand mirror to give herself a pep talk. It didn’t work. Next thing she remembered was talking to me. I wish I could fully understand the reasons for her akumatization. Maybe I just don’t understand because I’m a guy?”

I put down my teacup and walked towards him curiously. “What did her friend say?”

“Huh?”

“The friend, the one who upset her. What was it that they said?”

“Oh, that. Yeah, he said she was a very good friend. Harmless, right?”

I let out a very frustrated groan. “God, boys *are* oblivious.”

“Pardon?” The poor kitty looked so confused.

“The amount of times I almost got upset enough to get akumatized when I heard that exact same phrase is innumerable. And I doubt the boy in question even knows what he said wrong.” I pinched the bridge of my nose and shook my head. “Eventually, I realized that’s all he’d ever see me as. So I gave up on my romantic pursuits.” *Or at least, I’ve tried to.*



“...oh,” the usual cockiness was washed clear from Chat Noirs face, replaced with one of deep sadness. I couldn’t quite see what was behind that expression. Maybe he had a friend that he’d said that to, and I just opened his eyes. Whatever it was though, we sat in contemplative silence for a few minutes.

The silence was broken by the sound of the front door opening below us. I didn’t think much of it, expecting my parents to just be grabbing something quick before heading back down to the bakery, but then I heard the voice with it. “Marinette?”

“Oh shit,” I breathed in a panic. Chat had the nerve to look amused as I pushed him up to the rooftop exit.

“Marinette? Your parents said you were home, and I could let myself in. I wanted to see you.”

My cheeks were bright red from the exertion of shoving that dumb cat up my ladder. He turned back from the top and smirked at me. “Are you ashamed to be seen with me, Princess?”

“What?! No! Nothing like that. I just... no one besides my parents know that we’re friends, so it would be hard to explain. *Especially* to this person.” I grumbled the last part under my breath.

We heard footsteps on the staircase. “Mari? We need to talk. It’s important.”

“Get out of here! He can’t see you here!” I hissed at the black-clad superhero. Finally, he exited my bedroom and stood on the roof, giving me a two fingered salute before vaulting away. I could hear his laughter echoing off the rooftops. My balcony trapdoor slammed with a thud as I scrambled to open the bedroom one. My guest was right below waiting patiently. I took a deep breath and opened the latch to let him in.

## Chapter End Notes

Alright, I'm a MariChat stan. It's just too cute! But don't worry, this will be more of a Lukanette fic along the way. But I can sneak in the friendship between our favs when I want.

# Clueless

## Chapter Summary

We love our clueless boys. Even when they infuriate us.

## Chapter Notes

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

### Luka's Point of View

Marinette stood in her room before me, looking out of breath and embarrassed. I'd heard a lot of shuffling and hushed talk from her room before I came up. The second teacup was another giveaway. While she rocked on her feet, I investigated further. "Who was just here, Mari?"

"Huh?" She looked doe-eyed and startled by the question. "No one was here, Luka. Just me talking to myself." Her voice shook and she tucked a piece of hair behind her ear. Nervous habits I've come to be familiar with. She wasn't being honest.

I took a few steps closer and tilted her head up with one finger on her chin. "Marinette, I know you have secrets you need to keep, but please don't lie to me."

A shaky hand rose to grab mine, but our hands stayed between us, over her chest. "Luka..." she sighed. "It's hard to explain."

"If I don't need to know, you don't have to tell me. I respect your privacy. But there's a difference between secrets and lies. Don't dance on the line." I meant every word of what I said. I'm not wanting to be one of those controlling boyfriends who needs to know every detail of her day. I now know a huge secret of hers that I shouldn't know in the first place, but I won't hide that from her. My visit today is to give her my miraculous back and let her know that I know. The box weighed heavy in my pocket. But no matter what, we needed trust. Lies and an omission of truth are different too. One is a breach or trust. The other is a safety measure with a hint of honesty. "Nothing you can say would hurt me, Marinette."

She let out a small sigh of relief and gave me a smile that warmed my heart. "Thank you, Luka. I don't want to lie to you, and I'm sorry that I began to. My parents are in on this secret, so I see no reason why I should keep it from you. After all, you are my *very* handsome and sweet boyfriend." I leaned forward to give her forehead a kiss. She giggled. "It's silly of me anyway to try and hide it. Just promise me you won't tell Alya?"

"I promise. Your secrets are safe with me." *All of them.* I wanted to say that, but now was her turn to speak. Then I could say my piece and return my miraculous.

“So I know it’s strange for him to hang out with a random civilian like me, but ever since he saved me a few years ago, he’s been a dear friend. He drops by sometimes just to hang out or for advice.” The tension in me was already rising. Is she talking about who I think she is? “It’s Chat Noir.”

*Fuck.* No, this isn’t happening. My girlfriend knows and spends time with *Chat Noir*, who today tried to tell her he loved her. Before today if she’d told me this, I’d have no problem. But after seeing his face... “So that’s why he called you Princess.” I accidentally muttered under my breath.

She didn’t seem phased. “Heh, yeah. He’s been calling me that for so long now. He said he was going to be my knight in shining armor, so therefore I was his Princess. It’s ridiculous, I know, but it’s grown on me.” Marinette was smiling, but it vanished when she saw my expression. “Wait, when did you hear him call me that?” There was a cautious level of concern in her voice.

*Think Luka, think!* “Uhhh... I heard it once during an Akuma battle.” Truthful, but vague enough to avoid the whole truth.

It seemed she was accepting of my explanation. “I’m glad I was able to tell you. I feel such a sense of relief even though I wasn’t actually doing anything wrong. Well, aside from the initial lying.” Her face took a serious turn and she searched my eyes. I tried to hide the conflict that was going on in my brain. Marinette’s hand came up to play with the hair at the back of my neck while she said her oath. “I promise to never lie to you again. Can you promise me the same?”

I don’t remember when I started to hold my breath, but the sight of this girl would’ve left me breathless anyways. Here she was, this gorgeous, talented, trusting, brave, and sweet girl who I was head over heels for. And here I was, a simple guy with a big secret in my back pocket. How could one person be so lucky and unlucky at the same time? I finally got the girl, and now my jealousy was making a mockery of me. I needed to remember that she was mine. These beautiful blue eyes that stared expectantly into mine. This warm soft hand brushing my neck. Those plump and perfect lips, parted in a smile. All mine. Unable to resist, I leaned down and took a little of what was mine. Marinette happily leaned into the kiss, bringing her other arm up to loop around my neck in encouragement. After a few wonderful moments, I leaned back, sure of what I was going to say. “I promise.”

She hummed and pulled me tighter in a hug. “I’m glad we had this talk. Now, what did you come over for?”

The miraculous box felt even heavier than before in my back pocket. I can’t explain it. I wasn’t ready to give it back and give up the secret. I needed more time. So instead, I just grasped her chin gently in my hand and rested my forehead against hers. “This,” I said, and brought our lips together again.

I’m such a hypocrite.

## **Adrien's Point of View**

*Marinette: Nino, your girlfriend is interrogating me.*

*Marinette: Come take her!*

*Nino: Sorry dude! I'm already almost at Adrien's place.*

*Marinette: :(*

*Alya: You know you love me, girl!*

*Alya: oh, and Babe, we'll probably be about 20 minutes late. Rose's skirt ripped, so Marinette's having to do a quick repair!*

*Nino: Alright, we'll be meeting the rest of the guys out front in an hour.*

*Alya: Perfect!*

*Alya: Oh, and don't forget your end of the deal. ;)*

*Marinette: What deal?*

*Nino: I got you, Babe. <3*

*Marinette: WHAT DEAL?*

My phone blew up in a flurry of messages, but I was too distracted to reply. My input in the group chat wasn't needed anymore anyway. We'd finally worked out the details for the big group "date" and now was the big day. Most of the girls were getting ready at Marinette's place, while I was just waiting for Nino to arrive so we could go together and meet the rest of the guys, plus Kagami. Her mother insisted she take direct transportation there. But hey, a compromise is better than nothing. And I'd been looking forward to this all week.

"Plagg, what do you think I should wear? The blue cardigan or the green sweater?"

"I don't care, as long as it can store my precious camembert."

"Right. Why did I even think to ask?" I rolled my eyes at the cat Kwami while I slipped on the green sweater. He was lounging in the dirty laundry hamper (I guess the awful smell made him think of cheese?) and trying desperately to seem nonchalant. Or maybe he just was. Three years in, and I still struggle to understand the tiny god that lived in my pocket.

"Adrieeeee! I'm running low on cheese!" Plagg whined.

I snorted. "I'll get you more tomorrow. In the meantime, cut back on the snacking."

“I don’t snack!” My Kwami flew in my face and spoke with indignation. “I’ll have you know, I need my sweet, delicious cheese to restore my power whenever *you* use me.”

My eyes rolled. “I haven’t *used* you in battle for almost a week now. Not since Mirrorbelle.” I anticipated his next argument, so I jumped on the defense. “And before you say I have been visiting Marinette as Chat Noir and draining your energy, remember that I also haven’t been able to visit her since that day.” In anticipation of my night off, Father had scheduled a multitude of photoshoots every evening this past week. That also meant I couldn’t do patrol, so Rena and Carapace had to step in. By the end of this week, I was super excited to have the friend date, but also excited for my leather-clad freedom to return. There was a certain Ladybug who I needed to talk with.

After our last battle, Viperion had acted strangely. The way he hugged my partner so tight... something felt off. I was concerned he’d seen something during one of his second chances. Since I had no way of knowing what that could be, many thoughts have crossed my mind. Had he seen my identity? I’d have to keep a close eye on Luka tonight, just to clear him of suspicion. As Adrien, I know he’s Viperion, but as Chat I “don’t know” his identity. So maybe I could talk to him about it, saying I saw that on the news? This was a tricky and delicate business, knowing another holder's identity. I wonder how Ladybug manages it. One slip is all it would take to give everything away. Is that what Viperion saw?

“Stop it,” a smelly sock to my face accompanied the annoyed command. Upon removing the offending object, I glared at Plagg, still lounging in the laundry like nothing happened. He gave an exaggerated yawn and turned to me. “Kid, forget about the snake problem. Worrying about unknowns is sooooo stressful. Just eat cheese and be happy.”

“Says the glutton with bad luck.” I grumbled.

“Who’s a glutton?” The voice startled both Plagg and I. My Kwami buried himself in the hamper while I turned to greet my guest with wide eyes. “Oh, sorry bro. Nat let me in. You ready to go?”

“Hey Nino. Yeah, we can head out in a minute.” Thank god he wasn’t questioning me talking to myself any further. I think at this point, Nino is just used to my strangeness.

Finally ready, we went downstairs and climbed in the awaiting car, with Gorilla giving a grunt of affirmation. Nino fiddled with his headphones in his lap beside me. After a few false starts, he spoke. “So, dude, what’s going on with Marinette and you?”

Not what I expected him to say. “What do you mean?”

“Well, uhh...” he tried being nonchalant about it, but I noticed him scanning his phone screen beside his thigh. “Why did you want to hang out with her?”

“Oh,” I blinked. “Why wouldn’t I? She’s my friend. I feel like I haven’t been able to see her often lately, ever since we got busy with our relationships.”

“Do you know why that is?”

“No, I don’t have a clue. I don’t think she hates me again. That would be a nightmare.” I slouched in the seat sadly.

Nino waved his arms frantically. “No no no, dude! She, like, the opposite of hates you. I MEAN-” he frantically scrolled on his phone screen. “Marinette has been busy with... uh... her fashion things, and you’ve been busy with Kagami, so given that she doesn’t like to see you together-ER, I MEAN SHE’S HAPPY WITH LUKA SO JUST BE HAPPY FOR HER!” That last part was desperately read from the device in his hand. Once finished, he collapsed back into his seat and looked out the window while rubbing his temples. “How does Alya do this?” he muttered.

“Nino, what are you trying to say?”

My friend took a deep breath before stowing his phone in his pocket and turning to look at me. “Look Bro, just don’t worry about your friendship with Marinette. She still cares for you a lot. She just needs some space. Luka is making her happy right now, and while it’s not what we expected, Alya and I just want to protect Marinette from getting hurt. So just... trust me when I say she’s still your friend, but she needs to keep you at a distance, for Luka’s sake. Do you understand?” His eyes searched mine for understanding.

It clicked. Marinette is avoiding me because Luka doesn’t like me. I don’t know what I did to him, but I’ll make sure to fix whatever went wrong. Anything to keep my friendship alive. We pulled up in front of the venue, and I saw Luka casually leaning against the wall, talking to the rest of the guys. “I understand, Nino. Thanks for the warning.”

## Chapter End Notes

Thank you all for the support on this fic! I'm looking forward to kicking off the plot in the next couple chapters. Let me know if you have any advice! I love comments. <3

# Ship Names

## Chapter Summary

Our group date begins, with a plotting Alya, an angry Marinette, and a challenge.

## Chapter Notes

I got a lil carried away with this chapter and actually had to force myself to split the date into two chapters. So enjoy the longest chapter yet, and be on the lookout for the next chapter soon, because it's about 75% done.

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

### **Marinette's Point of View**

“Okay girl, repeat after me: I don’t like Adrien anymore.”

I rolled my eyes at my best friend, but mumbled my part while I hunched over the sewing machine. Rose’s pink skirt flowed elegantly over the side of my desk, but there was a tear the size of a fist in the side stitch. She waited patiently on the chaise with Juleka. I wonder how Juleka was reacting to this whole speech from Alya, considering I was dating her older brother.

Alya’s fingers snapped me back into attention. I turned to her with blank doe eyes, still not entirely invested in our conversation. “I’m sorry, what was that last one?”

The reporter crossed her arms and smirked. “I said, repeat: Luka is my boyfriend and I like only him.” I did as she asked. “I won’t embarrass myself in front of Adrien.” Again I repeated, but this time my attention had returned to the project in front of me. “Adrien is happy with Kagami.”

I was on autopilot now, repeating her prompts. Which is why the next one threw me when I began to repeat it. “I will not gag when I see Adrien kissing Ka- Hey! Alya, that was unnecessary!”

Alix chose that time to pipe in. “I thought it was pretty relevant.” She was sitting on my loft bed, with her feet dangling over the edge. Next to her was Mylene, who giggled at the comment.

Just in time, I finished the last stitch on the skirt and turned to its owner, whose girlfriend was looking down. "I'm so sorry about all this, Juleka. They don't mean any harm."

She looked up and caught my eyes from beneath her purple bangs. "It's okay, Marinette." Juleka mumbled. "I just don't want my brother to get hurt."

"I wouldn't dream of hurting h-" I began, but Rose stepped in to provide the words her girlfriend meant to express.

"What she means is we wouldn't want Luka to lose you, so if these measures are necessary, just go with it. We all know how long you've liked Adrien. I personally thought your love story would have movies written about it by the end." The petite blonde, now properly clad in her skirt, did a little twirl and clasped her hands by her face. "It was so romantic! The unfortunate introduction, followed by him apologizing in the rain, and then all the lengths you went to for his love..." Alya's hand on Rose's shoulder drew her out of her explosively dramatic fantasies. She looked around at the room and noticed everyone's uncomfortable expressions. I saw her visibly shrink before she met my gaze again. "Of course, that was before we saw you with Luka. And he looks at you in ways Adrien never could."

I smiled reassuringly at her and the silent girl beside her, still looking up to gauge my reactions. "I know what you mean, Rose. And I appreciate your concern. Juleka, I promise that Luka is the only one who has my heart now. Adrien is... well, he'll always hold a place in my heart, but letting him go is the best thing I've done, because it allowed me to see what was in front of me." I meant it, too. Tonight was going to be the perfect opportunity to prove, once and for all, that I am over Adrien Agreste.

Juleka surprised me by rising to her feet and grabbing me for a hug. After getting over the initial shock, I hugged her back. It was a brief exchange, but meaningful nonetheless. Once we pulled apart, Alya was holding up her phone. "The boys are waiting for us! Let's go!" I smiled at my friend group as they descended from my bedroom, closing the door behind me as I was the last to leave. I felt Tikki fly into my purse at the last second, content to rest amongst the multitude of cookies I had stashed for the night. Hopefully I wouldn't need her power.

### **Alya's Point of View**

*Nino: Babe I think I did pretty good. Our boy seems to get it.*

*Alya: So does Marinette. It's crazy that after all this time trying to get them together, now we're deliberately keeping them apart.*

*Nino: why are we again?*

*Alya: Because it isn't their time yet.*



*Nino: cant we make it their time?*

*Alya: Oh you sweet naive boy.*

*Alya: Just let me and my magic meddling work.*

*Nino: you terrify me sometimes, babe.*

*Alya: I know. ;\**

I knew perfectly well how scary I can be when I have my work going. Being an aspiring reporter has given me plenty of unexpected (but not unwelcome) skills. How to lock pick, how to read body language, how to utilize psychology to my benefit, etc. All talents I've acquired over the years. And being best friends with Marinette, I have to use them far too frequently.

It also came in handy when fighting crime as my foxy alter-ego.

So that's why, after years of Marinette hopelessly pining after Adrien and getting nowhere, I decided to be very observant of their new relationships. To me, Adrien and Kagami were a cute match, but both lead far too sheltered of a life so far to work out. They both need someone who can introduce them to the unknowns of the world. And they deserve it, honestly. Both are kindhearted individuals who should absolutely find love and joy. But this little toe dip into the dating pool isn't the full dive. Just testing the waters.

Meanwhile, Marinette and Luka are absolutely adorable and I can't find any issues with their relationship. Yet. I'd be thrilled beyond belief if it works out in the end, but my reporter's gut tells me it won't. It tells me there are factors yet to be discovered that'll complicate matters. Luka just seems too... perfect. Like he has expertly buried his secrets. But little does he know, I have a shovel and I will go digging to protect my best friend.

My OTP is still Marinette and Adrien. They are as destined as Ladybug and Chat Noir. Both are just preoccupied. But earlier this week, I got my first inkling of discord in the mix. Adrien somehow convinced Marinette to go on a double date with him. I wonder if he realizes why he misses her so much. Absence does make the heart grow fonder. So Nino and I will work to enforce the absence, while also letting Adrien see what he's missing out on.

I don't want to control my friends' choices. I just am looking out for their best interests. Any decisions they make are their own.

At least that's what I tell myself.

We finally round the corner to the new bowling alley. It had been Luka's suggestion, actually. Kitty Section sometimes performed gigs here on special event nights, so they had an abundance of free tickets. Out front we were flagged down by an enthusiastic Adrien. He was on the balls of his feet waving his hands in the air excitedly. "Hey! You made it!"

I looked over at Marinette to gauge her reaction. She wasn't even paying him attention. Instead, she walked straight to her boyfriend's outstretched arms. Luka pulled her into his side and kissed the top of her head. I could see a slight dim in Adrien's eyes before Kagami reached up to grab his hands. He turns and smiles at his girlfriend.

I can't deny it. These couples are cute. Everyone else pairs up with their romantic partner, with the exception of Alix and Max. With Nino by my side, I lead the herd. "Who's ready to bowl?!" There's an enthusiastic cheer from the crowd. "Awesome! So I propose a little challenge for us today." Here goes my plan. Hopefully it doesn't go horribly wrong. "How about we have a competition, in a bracket style, with an elimination system giving us the two best couples against each other. I've already laid out the starting lineup. All we have to do is get our lanes, shoes, balls, and bowl on! Who's down?" Another chorus of agreement surges towards me. Perfect.

Kim and Alix step forward simultaneously to ask the question. "What do the winners get?"

I smirked at the predictable nature of their competitiveness. But I'd prepared for this exactly. A reporter is always prepared. "Winning couple gets free dinner." Slightly disappointed groans let me know I'm losing their interest. *Think, Alya, think!* "Free dinner... with... Paris's superhero lovebirds!" I hear Nino beside me choke with surprise. Honestly, I surprised myself.

Alix pipes up alone this time. "LadyNoir isn't a thing, no matter how much you ship it."

"First off, ouch. And second, I don't mean them. I mean CaraRouge."

"I thought it was Renapace," Nino mutters beside me.

"Whatever, their ship name is a work in progress. But being a reporter gives me certain... connections. And even if it isn't our preferred ship," again, ouch, "it's still a double date with Superheroes. Does that sound good enough?" I see determination in every face of the crowd. Marinette seems particularly motivated, as expected. I know she always sings the praises of all the other heroes on the team, encouraging me to cover them more. Of course, coverage of *myself* is kind of hard to do, but maybe an offering like this would give Marinette something to satisfy her interest. I almost feel a hint of anger in her demeanor, but I shrug that off as just her drive to win.

Adrien seems excited, but this prize isn't designed for him. I know how fiery Marinette can get when she's chasing victory. Confident Mari comes out, with more snark and vibrancy than usual. It's a side that Adrien doesn't get to see often, because she's usually so flustered in his presence. This was the best way I could think of to pull it out.

And if everything worked out perfectly, Adrien would face off against her at her peak of confidence.

After a universal agreement, we all headed into the bowling alley. Nino pulled me back, waiting for enough distance from the group before he spoke. "What the hell, Alya? How are we supposed to win a date with *ourselves*? And what would Ladybug think of us using our Miraculous for something like this?" His eyes were blown wide in shock and slight fear.

I pat his shoulder comfortingly. “Relax, honey. Ladybug doesn’t need to find out. If you’re still super unsure about it all, we can always ‘cancel’ and just go as ourselves instead. I’m pretty sure it’s going to be Mari and Luka anyways.”

Now he raises one bushy eyebrow and grabs the rim of his ball cap. “Don’t be so quick to dismiss my bro. Adrien and Kagami are just as competitive, if not more.”

I roll my eyes affectionately, then gesture for him to follow as I move to rejoin the group. “Let’s go find out, shall we?”

## **Marinette’s Point of View**

### *1. Am. Furious.*

I cannot believe Alya would use her superhero identity so flippantly. If I didn’t already want to win naturally, I would be doing everything to win regardless so I could prevent them from possibly revealing their identities. I know from experience that being around civilians for a prolonged period gives heroes plenty of opportunity to slip up. If they didn’t know the civilians, it would be a different story. Like Chat Noir visiting me. I don’t know his civilian form, so there isn’t anything he could say that would make me suspicious. But every one of these couples know Alya and Nino. They’d be sure to notice the similarities. It was a very risky bet, and one that I couldn’t leave to anyone else.

*I’m not Ladybug right now, though. I’m Marinette. I can’t be angry outwardly or she’d be suspicious. God, secret identities are so frustrating!*

I had to have a mental check-in with myself, otherwise I’d slip entirely into rage.

I felt a warm hand slip into mine. Looking up, I found the azure eyes of Luka fixated on me. “Are you okay, my muse?”

Sighing, I squeezed his hand tightly. “Just getting into the spirit of the game.” We had just finished choosing our balls, and now our group of friends had control of 4 lanes. The first round put Luka and I against Rose and Juleka. Somehow, Rose had found the pinkest ball in the entire rink. Juleka’s was a swirl of purple and green, while her brother had an aquamarine color with white speckles. My competitive brain chose function over style (a completely insane notion) and so instead of matching the flowy lavender shirt I wore, I picked a ball blindly, basing solely on weight and comfort. By some irony, I ended up with a bright red ball spotted like a ladybug.

“I don’t think I’ve had the chance to say how beautiful you look tonight,” Luka spoke softly to me. I temporarily lost my resolve to be focused, and instead turned to look fully at him. “Of course, you look beautiful every night. I’m so lucky to have you.” His words brought flutters to my chest. Stretching up on the balls of my feet, I pulled him down for a gentle kiss.

“Aww, cute!!” Rose’s squeal broke us from the moment. Everyone else turned to the sound. My blushing face was hidden deep in the chest of my boyfriend.

Alya chose that moment to call the game into action. “Round one, begin!”

Cringing slightly, I pulled back from Luka’s warm embrace and looked up at him sheepishly. “I’m sorry.”

He tilted his head, bemused. “What are you sorry for?”

With confidence in every step, I walked over to grab my ball and get into place. Once in position, I turned to smile at him. “I’m sorry because we’re about to absolutely *destroy* your sister.” His laugh echoed in the background as I took my first turn. Being his girlfriend had many advantages; one of which being my newfound skill in bowling. It had become a regular pastime of mine when I came to support his gigs. After their performances, we would stick around to bowl a few rounds. That’s why I knew my roll would inevitably lead to a...  
“STRIKE!”

What followed was an enjoyable game with the Couffaine siblings and our pixie friend. Rose was surprisingly good at the game, despite her size, but Juleka struggled. To make her girlfriend feel better, Rose would play with silly flair, compromising her score for the benefit of Juleka’s smile. So overall I didn’t play to my full extent. It was a warm up round. In a twirl of pink, Rose danced to the lane and gently rolled her fluorescent ball towards the last pins of the game. She giggled and skipped over to accept a congratulatory kiss from her girlfriend, while the ball drifted into the gutter halfway down the lane. Game over.

Alya’s voice rose above the groups again to announce the winners of round one. “Okay everyone, for round two we have Marcanael vs. Adrigami, and Lukanette vs. Malix!”

Alix groaned before shouting “Don’t give us a ship name!”

Laughter resonated through the friends while we shuffled into our new positions. We condensed into three lanes now, with two being used for competition, and the third open for eliminated couples to still play and mess around. Two green balls, one bright and one dark, joined our pairing at the lane.

Max glanced up to see our scores from the previous game. Alix followed his eyes and nudged his side with an elbow. “What’s our chance?”

“By my calculations, based solely on scores from the first round, we have a 63% likelihood of winning this game.”

Curious, I snuck a look at their old scores too. It seemed like a brutal defeat, but I knew from experience that Alya could play way better than that. She must’ve deliberately tanked in order to sit back and observe. *What is she playing at?* I searched for the brunette in the crowd. When she met my suspicious gaze, she gave me a wide smile and thumbs up.

Luka came up beside me and handed me the ladybug ball. “Ready for your A-Game?”

I accepted with a grin. “They don’t know what their odds really are.”

“Let’s show them what Lukanette is capable of.”

### **Alya’s Point of View**

My plan was going perfectly.

After sacrificing the first round, I was able to sit back and watch the show. Luka and Marinette were being adorable, as expected. Halfway through round two and they were ahead of Malix by a decent margin. Meanwhile, Adrien and Kagami were obliterating Marc and Nathanael about as strongly as they faced off against Mylene and Ivan previously. I admittedly underestimated Kagami’s fierce need to win, but I still had full confidence in my girl Marinette pulling through with the victory.

Over at the third lane, everyone else was betting on the winners.

“Damn, Adrigami are crushing it! They’ve got my vote!”

“I don’t know about that, Kim. Lukanette seem to be more in sync with each-others play style.” Ondine was still new to the group, so her observations were interesting.

“My brother has a very relaxed style.”

“And Mari just makes it seem effortless,” Mylene piped up.

“I’m with Kim on this. My bro Adrien is incapable of losing.”

I crossed my arms at my boyfriend. “Your ‘bro’ lost to Marinette before, remember?”

“That was Mecha-Strike. In physical challenges, like fencing, Adrien remains the champ.”

“I thought Kagami beats Adrien at fencing all the time,” Rose asked innocently. Nino sputtered, unable to find a correct response. She grinned. “Regardless, bowling is a different game altogether. My vote is in with Lukanette.”

“It should be Adrinette,” A voice muttered, quiet enough that it wouldn’t have been noticeable had the music not faded at that exact moment, allowing a moment of silence between songs. All eyes turned to the hulking figure who spoke. Blushing, Ivan backpedaled. “I-I mean, as a team! Ya know, w-with their play styles.”

I knew exactly what he was initially thinking. Ivan was a romantic at heart. But I figured, for Juleka’s sake, I’d support his coverup. “Yeah, I can see that. Adrien’s playful focus with Marinette’s confident skill. It’s a pretty good duo.”

Ondine spoke up to help. “Kinda like Ladybug and Chat Noir. If both of them were serious all the time, it would be a lot harder to defeat the akumas. Sometimes it’s Chat’s silly banter that distracts the villain long enough for Ladybug’s attack to strike. Adrien and Marinette are pretty similar to them in personality.”

“Ha, Marinette’s definitely our everyday Ladybug.” I laughed, enjoying the crazy notion. “But Chat Noir is too wild to be Adrien.”

Kim put his arm around his girlfriend and put in his two cents. “I don’t know, I think Agreste would make a good Chat Noir. It’s Dupain-Cheng that’s way too klutzy to be Ladybug for real.” His statement earned a sharp elbow to the ribs from the redhead girl beside him.

We heard a cheer of celebration from the neighboring lanes. Marinette had just rolled the last strike of the game, cinching their victory over Max and Alix. The bluenette tried to run to her boyfriend for a hug, but forgot about the slick floor. She took a tumble and brought Luka down with her. They lay in a tangled mess on the ground, laughing adorably. The incident did nothing to disprove Kim’s claim.

One lane over, Kagami was shaking the hands of their opponents, thanking them for a good game. Always a traditionalist in victory.

I stepped forward to resume my duties as gamemaster. “Monsiurs and Mademoiselles, it has all come down to this! For our final round of competition, it’ll be Adrigami vs. Lukanette!” Exactly as I planned.

Nino came to my side while everyone reset for the last game and spoke under his breath. “You still terrify me, babe.”

I turned with a bright smile and kissed his cheek. “I know.”

## Chapter End Notes

As always, endless thanks to my beta reader and fandom friend, AlderaanPrincess, for always encouraging me. With how much I look up to and admire her, the fact that this fic is getting more kudos is absolutely nuts. Please, go support her unique take on our Miraculous world.

<https://archiveofourown.org/works/11472129/chapters/25723107>

Hope you're all enjoying! Please, comment below any ship names that you love! I know DJWifi is overall Alya and Nino's ship, but what about their superhero persona's? Another one I'm unsure of is Rose and Juleka's ship name. Discuss!

# Kwami Confessions

## Chapter Summary

Adrien, your Chat is showing... Also we all know Plagg secretly cares.

## Chapter Notes

Here it is! A little shorter than the last one, but that's setting up for a longer next chapter. Enjoy!

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

### Adrien's Point of View

Kagami was scary when the competitive fire was lit.

Dressed in a white sweater with a black vest, plaid skirt, and red tights that stopped halfway down her calf, from a distance she seemed like your average 16 year old. But once you saw the flames in her brown eyes, you'd get goosebumps. She was a force to be reckoned with.

Meanwhile, Marinette was a different kind of scary. She seemed innocent enough with her hair in two buns and the way her purple sweater was cut midway like a crop top, but only to display the lighter, translucent fabric that flowed around her hips. My father would approve of her design skills on that particular piece for sure. But underneath this cute exterior was a confidence that I rarely saw in her. Marinette in game-mode is cool, calm, and collected, because she knows she can win without too much effort. I've never heard her stutter when she plays video games or sports at school. So it's scary knowing what's under that surface. But also, kind of exhilarating.

"Adrien, focus!" Kagami snapped me out of my head and back into reality. She stood in front of me with her red ball under one arm, and mine under the other. I reached forward to accept mine, running my fingers over the lines. My ball was black, with a geometric pattern in silver and bright green. It reminded me of my alter-ego, and gave me a little boost of that carefree tenacity that I always get as Chat Noir.

"Round Three, begin!" Alya's voice rose above the music and ambient noise of the bowling alley. Kagami stepped forward without hesitation, readying herself to go first. Each team had

our own lane now, so the game could go by quicker. Marinette picked up her ball and had Luka kiss it for good luck.

I found myself a little envious of their sweet behavior. Kagami can be loving when she lets her guard down, but that isn't very frequent. Sometimes, I wish talking with her could be as easy and playful as my leather-clad conversations with Marinette. Of course, I am a lot different in and out of the mask. Kagami doesn't have the outlet and freedom that a miraculous provides. Maybe I could talk to Ladybug about choosing a new member for our team and giving her a miraculous of her own.

But that would be extremely suspicious if I asked Ladybug for a miraculous for my girlfriend, and would probably give away my identity, sooooo... nevermind.

The girls took position and exchanged pleasantries. I took this opportunity to sit down and check in with Luka. I had two goals: find out if he saw me during a second chance, and get him to like me. "Hey Luka, how's it going?"

He glanced at me briefly, not taking his eyes off the game for long. "Life's good, man. Can't complain. How about you, Agreste?"

So far so good. "Ready to win some free dinner."

"Sorry to break it to you, but I think we've got dibs."

"Not if Kagami has anything to say about that."

He chuckled. "You've got an interesting girl there, Adrien. She gives me the vibes like classical music. Watching her play is like listening to Ride of the Valkyries."

"Nice reference. Yeah, she can be pretty intimidating sometimes. But also beautiful, just like that piece." I smiled at him. This conversation was going better than expected. "Marinette's pretty unique too. You've won the lottery with her."

Suddenly his expression turned dark. "Yeah. I always saw her for the amazing person she is. It didn't take me years to know." Luka stood up abruptly and stepped forward, ready to take his turn. I hadn't even realized the girls had finished their first round, both with strikes. Getting to my feet far less gracefully, I stumbled onto the lane and took position.

The blue haired guitarist held his ball delicately and stared straight forward with a mostly blank expression, but I could see a small furrow between his eyebrows. We both took a few steps and released the balls, but my attention wasn't fully there. "Hey Luka," I began, unsure of how to read him. "Did I say something wrong?"

There was a cheer and an equally loud groan from behind us. "Adrien!" Kagami called, "pay attention to the game!" I looked down our lanes to see that Luka had managed a strike, whilst I only managed to get 7 out of 10 pins. Nothing I couldn't clean up into a spare, but not my best work. It gave Luka and Marinette an early lead.



I waited for my ball to return while Luka traded places with Marinette. I saw him and Kagami begin a polite conversation. Marinette reached for her spotted ball at the same time I went for mine, causing our hands to brush. She jerked away like she'd been hit by electricity. I laughed when I noticed the design of her ball. "As our everyday Ladybug, it's only right that your ball would be spotted."

She relaxed, crossing her arms and scoffing at my ball. "And what are you, some Chat Noir fan?"

"Actually, yes. I think he's pretty hot, don't you?" I followed my remark with a trademark wink, enjoying our usual banter. Surprisingly, her face lit up in a blush. Marinette never blushes when I make those kind of comments. She usually just calls me a mangy cat or- oh. I'm not my masked persona right now. *Adrien* doesn't talk like that. But screw it, maybe she'd be able to talk to me easier if I acted more like Chat. There must be some reason she puts up with me visiting her. So, I continued. "Ladybug will always be my favorite though. She's the best superhero in Paris, hands down."

At this, her blush increased, but she put her foot down stubbornly and reached for her ball again. "Chat is her equal. There's not one best superhero, because they'd be nothing without each other. Don't discount him."

I was a little taken about by her kind words towards my counterpart. She gave me no time to respond though, as she walked forward to line up her shot. I rushed to match her, taking my second shot while she went for her first. Choosing to not piss off my girlfriend further, I focused intently on knocking down the remaining pins in my lane. Both our rolls hit at the same time, though her second strike was far more impressive than my spare. We walked back to our seats, passing Kagami and Luka on the way.

Luka stopped Marinette, and I heard him ask her if she was okay under his breath. She nodded and kissed his cheek. Obviously, I'm missing something.

## **Plaggs Point of View**

While Adrien was having his disastrous conversation with Marinette, I figured I'd go see my sugarcube. She had to be around here somewhere, since her Ladybug was. It was tricky navigating through all the people in the room to find her. Luckily everyone was watching the game, and not their feet. When I got closer to the pedestal that held the computer for the scoreboard, I smelled the undeniable sweetness.

I phased through the side. The inside was an empty compartment with plenty of space for Kwami's to relax. Not the nicest digs, but it'll do. And just as I suspected, there was my bright red other half. "Sugarcube!"

She turned to see me, making a face of disgust. "Who invited the stinky sock?"

“You know you love me.” I shrugged off her words, knowing full well the affection she harbored for me. But it did give me a chance to look around, to find we were not alone. Not by a long shot. I could see familiar teal, green, and orange faces. “What’s happening here?”

“Plagg? How are you here?” Trixx was the only one besides me to look surprised. I saw the change in her eyes when she put the pieces together. “Oh, Adrien must be Chat Noir.”

“What makes you say that?” I asked defensively.

“He’s the only blonde in the friend group, and since you’re here I figure he’s a part of it. Plus, he looks almost identical. I don’t see how the humans can’t figure it out on their own.” Trixx shrugged.

Made sense. “By your logic, I’m assuming your humans are Alya and Nino?” Trixx and Wayzz looked at each other then nodded. “Dang, my boy is dumb. He can’t recognize his best friends are fighting alongside him.”

“Or that the girl he loves as Chat loves him as Adrien.” Tikki giggles.

“*Loved*, I should hope, for my Master’s sake.” Sass finally spoke up. He looked serious (though, he always does) so I’m guessing this meeting was called by him.

“Hey Sass, what’s up with Luka? My kid’s terrified that he saw him during a second chance.” I was being more vocal than usual, and I hadn’t even mentioned cheese in a while, so I could feel Tikki’s big curious eyes on me.

Sass took a deep breath and adopted his meditation pose. It was often a way he kept himself calm in tense situations. Once comfortable, he looked around the circle of kwamis before settling on me. “My Master did indeed see an identity during the last battle, but it was not Master Adrien.” Three kwami’s gasped while I sighed in momentary relief. Then I realized someone was still compromised. “There was a moment where the Akuma managed to take off Ladybug’s earrings. My Master did not intentionally wait to see her identity. However, once he saw, there were a few moments to process.”

Tikki’s eyes grew impossibly bigger at his confession. “I can’t believe him! He literally lectured Marinette about lying right after that. But he was lying right back at her!” Trixx flew to her spotted friends side and patted her shoulder comfortingly. The Kwami of Creation was known to be protective of her bugs.

“I have already told him how that was wrong. But it is what happened after the reveal that holds him back.” At this, Sass stared straight at me. “Chat Noir tried to declare his love for her.”

“Oh! How romantic!”

“That had to have been a disaster.”

“Please tell me he used a pun.”

“None of it matters.” Orange, green, then black creatures were all stopped by Red. “He doesn’t remember. None of them do, except Luka.” She looked disappointed at the thought of what could’ve been, but Tikki was always a stickler for safety. Identities are a big part of that. Though, there has never been a Guardian who is an active wielder, so rules were changing left and right. Technically, there was nothing against the Holders knowing their Guardian. Knowing each other is more of a situational factor. I’m torn on whether I want Adrien and Marinette to reveal themselves. Half of me wants my boy to shut up about how much he wants her all the time, but the other half gets daily amusement by the ironic love square. It’s a constant internal battle, truly.

Sass flew forward and bowed his head. “I am sincerely sorry for the actions of my Master, but please understand that it was not his intention to find out her identity. He does want to confess to her that he knows, but as he told me, finding out that Chat Noir visits Marinette stopped him. My Master tends to be on the jealous side of things. First it was only Adrien, though that doesn’t concern him much since he entered a relationship himself. But now he has a new contender in Chat Noir. It is a lot to process.”

“They’re the same person. He’s jealous of Adrien twice.” I interjected, again finding the ridiculous irony that came with these secrets.

“I know, Plagg. But *he* doesn’t. I don’t believe the guardian would want me revealing all the secrets.” Sass sighed, returning to his meditation pose.

If he intended to relax, it would be short lived, as they heard a loud explosion rip through the city, followed by panicked screaming in the bowling alley. Sugarcube and I exchanged startled looks. What fresh hell awaits us?

### **A few moments before, but from Marinette’s Perspective**

This is it. The moment I can finally speak what’s on my mind. Adrien’s green eyes bore into me, etched with reassurance and concern. He’d just asked why we don’t hang out anymore, and while I hadn’t expected him to be so blunt, maybe bluntness is what he needed. Kagami and Luka were focused on their rolls, and I had asked my boyfriend to distract her so I could have a moment with Adrien alone. Well, as alone as we could be, in a crowded bowling alley, with most of our friends mere feet away. I needed to get this off my mind, or we would never be able to be casual friends again. And I wanted that. I wanted more than anything for Adrien and I to spend time together happily without my gut twisting in guilt. In order to let go, I needed to voice the truth. What better time to do it than now? I was on a gaming high so my confidence was as high as could be. “A-Adrien, I…” *come on confidence, don’t fail me now!* “I just n-needed some time away to process everything.”

Adrien leaned toward me, trying to catch my eyes. I kept mine glued to the floor. So much for confident Marinette. “Process what?” He asked.

My fists clenched tightly in my lap. *You're almost 16, you shouldn't be this terrified to talk to a boy. Plus, you're Ladybug! She's never afraid!* The internal pep talk was enough. "I've liked you for a long time, practically ever since we met, so now that I'm with Luka I needed to reset those feelings." I said the words in a single breath, but surprisingly without stutters. By the end, I felt relief, and finally could look up into his eyes.

His confused eyes.

"I've always liked you too, Marinette! I don't see why our friendship needs to change."

If I wasn't so flabbergasted, I would've facepalmed. "No, we can still be friends, just like always. I just can't *like* you anymore."

He sat there, doe-eyed, for a moment, and I almost believed he'd finally understood. But then he stuttered out a question. "L-like me?"

I groaned and put my hands over my face. "This is why I can never talk to you properly!" The words were spoken into my palms, so I doubt he heard them. Even after I finally said what was needed, he still was too sweet, innocent, and friendly to understand. Slowly pulling my hands away, I looked straight into those puppy eyes and readied my next words. "Adrien, I-"

An explosion suddenly threw us to the side. Standing in the new hole in the wall was an Akuma victim and his Amok. So much for the competition...

## Chapter End Notes

Let's be honest here, I am Plagg.

# Bad Boyfriends

## Chapter Summary

Many revelations are made, and not all are good.

## Chapter Notes

It's here! I'm excited for this chapter, but that's just me. I hope you all enjoy! Part one of this work will be done soon, with an Epilogue I'll post tomorrow. Then on to Part Two!

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

## Marinette's Point of View

“I am Bowling Sparrow! I will prove that no one is better than me at this game! And in the process, I will get the Ladybug and Black Cat Miraculous!”

I rolled my eyes. “Well he didn’t wait long to make his intentions known.” *Unlike me*. But there wasn’t time to mull over my continued failure to get Adrien to understand.

The Akuma started making his way further into the building, turning anyone he saw into human-sized bowling pins. Following close behind was an enormous ball, just like the one affixed his hand, but 20 times the size. Overall he seemed like a very simple villain. I just needed to find some place to transform...

“Marinette! Come with me, I know a place we can hide!” Luka was by my side in an instant, pulling me to my feet without waiting for an answer. I vaguely saw Adrien dart in the opposite direction. Alya and Nino must’ve already found a place to transform. The remainder of our classmates were taking cover behind the snack bar. That just left Luka and I.

He brought me to a room full of technical equipment used for the audio and lighting in the alley. Perfectly secluded and nondescript for me to transform. Only one problem...

“Luka, I-“ I had begun running through my excuses in my head, finally settling on me having forgotten something out by the lanes, but my boyfriend’s next move caught me completely by surprise. He took off the bracelet that served as the snake miraculous and held it out to me, in offering. My eyes flickered back and forth between it and him, but all I saw was sincerity in his expression.

“Marinette, there’s not much time and I can explain it all later. But I wanted to know if you still needed me out there now. You never got the chance to take the bracelet back before, and I don’t want to just assume I can keep it and join whenever. So, yes or no?”

My words died in my throat. Did this mean what I thought? Where did I go wrong? “How did-“

His hands reached for my trembling ones, holding the bracelet between our unified palms. “You did nothing wrong. I found out by accident. But now that I know, I’m amazed I didn’t see it sooner.” Luka’s light blue eyes searched mine. They expressed genuine respect and fondness. No one has ever looked at me like that, like they know every side and they aren’t afraid. I felt bare under his stare, but it didn’t feel wrong. One of his hands separated from our union and cupped my cheek. “There is no one as wonderful, considerate, selfless, brave, or fearless as you, Marinette. You’ve always been Ladybug, even without the miraculous.”

Our lips met before I had even made the conscious decision to kiss him. I was hurt and confused and angry, but overwhelmingly I felt seen. Seen for who I truly am. Finally I have someone who I don’t have to hide from. He knows all the good and bad, and isn’t afraid. The very thought gave me butterflies, ones that lifted me to lean further into the kiss. Butterflies that had me grasping his shirt collar to pull him closer. Butterflies that... *oh no, the Akuma!*

I pulled myself away so I could breathe and think. Our faces were equally flushed. “Luka,” I began, cautious. “It’s probably best you don’t join this fight. But please, keep the bracelet. Return it to me tonight, at 10, on my balcony. You can explain then.” Smirking, I flicked his chest and dropped the snake miraculous into his palm. After taking a few steps back (not much room to step in what was practically a closet) I called upon my transformation. This was the first time someone else was watching, so I made sure to pay close attention to his expressions. Luka’s eyes were filled with shock and awe. When complete, I stood before him, in my ladybug suit, but feeling bare. I crossed my arms across my chest, feeling a little self conscious as he kept staring.

He reached forward and brushed a strand of hair behind my ear, kissing me on the forehead, and then pulled my arms away with a flourish to spin me into his chest. Nervous laughter filled the small room. Luka’s strong arms tightened and pulled me closer. “Be careful out there, My Muse.” With one more kiss into my hair, he released me so I could join the fight.

### **Chat Noir’s Point of View**

I forced back the conflicting thoughts as I burst from the restroom into the thick of battle. No sign of Ladybug yet, but Carapace was distracting the Akuma while Rena Rouge helped more people escape. Luka got Marinette away safely, which was reassuring. With her out of danger, I could think about strategy instead of her confession. Though, that will be hard.

Mere seconds after the akuma arrived, it all clicked in my head. Marinette *liked* me, in the same sense that she now liked Luka. She was incredible at hiding it. And here I was, thinking

she was just a really good friend, asking her for dating advice, bringing her on dates with Kagami and I, and just in general not considering how she felt about me. Oh god, what about-

“Hey Chat!” Carapace was in front of me in an instant, barely able to block a shot from Bowling Sparrow. “Are you here, man? You looked like you were spacing out.”

Shaking myself, I cleared the thoughts again. “Yeah, thanks Carapace. Just lost my mind in the gutter.” My Chat senses were returning, with the signature confidence and puns. And bowling puns are right up my alley.

Once the turtle hero was comfortable that I could handle myself again, he rushed back into the fight. Staff twirling as my own shield, I finally caught sight of a blur of red entering combat. As I made my way towards her, I expertly deflected a shot. “My Lady, looking striking as usual.” The flirt/pun combination came naturally after years of loving her. There was a time that I thought we could actually be together. But on that rose-covered rooftop, when she didn’t show, I felt broken. Marinette was also upset that night, though she never elaborated on why. That was the night we fought Glaciator. He was after Marinette for some reason.

Another realization, like a lightning bolt, struck me to my core. She was upset because of *me* that night. I cancelled plans with my friends so I could create this entire romantic atmosphere for Ladybug. The more I thought about it, the worse I felt. I’m pretty sure she said she’d had her heart broken. Broken by *me*. I’m an absolute idiot.

For the second time that night, I narrowly avoided becoming a pinhead thanks to the help of my teammates. Ladybug pushed me out of the way so she could reflect the beam with her yoyo. Maintaining the spin, she turned to look at my form on the ground with evident concern. “Are you okay, Kitty?”

“Yeah,” I said, though I wasn’t sure if it was the truth. Every moment with Marinette was playing like a movie in my head. When I still didn’t get to my feet, my partner grabbed my hand to drag me behind the snack counter.

She knelt in front of me with her hand on my shoulder. “Chaton, what’s going on?”

I stared deeply into her blue eyes, but I could only see Marinette staring back at me. Marinette helping me escape a hoard of fans. Marinette nearly kissing my “statue” at the museum. Marinette blushing every time I say she’s amazing, or our hands meet, or she sees me. Marinette kissing my cheek in front of our classmates on Heroes Day. God, all the pictures in her room that I no longer see when I visit as Chat. So many moments that should’ve been obvious, but I was too caught up in my love for Ladybug to notice. I prioritized one cerulean-eyed beauty over the other, and she deserved better than that. I needed to apologize, to do something, *try* anything to make up for my stupidity.

But what was there to do? She’s moved on. And Luka is a great guy. It made sense now why he was standoffish today, and why Nino tried to warn me. Luka saw what I failed to see, and now he’s holding on tightly to the perfect girl.

They're both my friends. They deserve to be happy. So I will do everything in my power to let that happen.

Even if that means I don't get to make Marinette smile and roll her eyes adorably anymore.

Ladybug shook my shoulder to wake me from my anxiety. "Chaton? Kitty, talk to me," she pleaded.

I gave my face a couple slaps to snap me out of the fixation and popped my knuckles. "I'm ready, LB. Let's go fight this thing."

She looked hesitant, but since I was already in motion and ready, the heroine chose instead to support me. "Alright, go and show me the real meaning of the phrase Alley Cat!"

My tail fell limp and my ears flattened against my blonde hair. "Marinette..." I whispered. That was something she'd say.

My pigtailed partner giggled nervously. "What? Noooo, it's just me! Your Lady! Ready for action!"

I turned to her with a slight smile on my face. "I know. I was just thinking of her. Come on, Bugaboo, they're waiting for us!" I jumped over the snack bar and joined the fight, now completely in the spirit of battle.

### **Marinette's Point of View**

A gentle knock sounded on the trapdoor that led to my roof. Right on time. I opened the hatch and was momentarily taken aback by the teal scales I saw, before I remembered it wasn't Chat visiting me. My boyfriend was crouched on the balcony in his superhero suit. And I had to admit: he looked pretty hot.

I moved to the side so he could slip into the room, though I left the trapdoor open to the night sky. The evening was cool, and a full moon illuminated the sky. Nights like these were my favorite to patrol on. Wind biting my cheeks as I ran across rooftops, never missing a step, and seeing the beautiful city of Paris in all its sleepy glory.

A bright flash of light drew my eyes away from the sky and over to the disheveled appearance of my company. He was now back in his normal clothes from the date, but I could tell that he was stressed out about something. His hair was ruffled more than usual and his lips were chapped from the winter air. As he worked to remove the bracelet I watched him bite his bottom lip, focusing his worry on the dried skin instead of the real issue at hand.

"Hey," I reached out to put my hand over his shaking one, stopping his futile efforts of taking off the snake miraculous. His eyes were wide when they met mine, with obvious confusion written clearly in them. I pulled him to sit next to me on the bed, leaning against the wall. My



hand shifted to intertwine our fingers, and I felt him relax by my side as he released the breath he'd been holding. "Luka, don't worry yourself over this. Just tell me what happened."

Luka let his head fall back so he could look at the stars above. He took a few more deep breaths before beginning his story. "That battle against Mirrorbelle. It was attempt Number Twelve. She came through the mirror behind you and stole the earrings before you had a chance to react. I swear, I tried to reset before I saw anything, but it was too late. And, I was in shock."

I leaned over to prop my head on his shoulder, nodding slightly at his statements. But I had questions. "Why didn't you tell me what you saw sooner?"

Tensing, he used his free hand to ruffle his hair further, a nervous habit I've picked up on. "Mari, I was going to. That's why I came over that afternoon. But for some reason, I chickened out."

Huh, I have a feeling I know why. "Luka, Chat may claim to love Ladybug, but he doesn't know I'm her. There's no reason to be jealous about him visiting."

He let out a curt scoff. "I knew he doesn't know."

Well *that* answer was suspicious. I sat up so I could look at him, but he avoided my eyes. "What is that supposed to mean?"

Luka groaned and hit his head against the wall with a dull thud. "His reaction when he saw you during the reset let me know he had no clue." He looked pained by the direction the conversation was taking.

"How did he react?" Luka cringed at my question. "Seriously, I want to know how my partner reacted to knowing my identity."

"No, you don't," he breathed.

"Yes, I do."

"Mari, you really don't want-or need-to know."

"Don't make that choice for me."

"Don't make me tell you-"

"You promised," I cut him off with the one thing I knew would catch his attention. My eyes finally caught his, and all I saw was hurt and shock in their azure abyss. Cursing myself silently for using this, I carried on. "No lies, no secrets. Please, Luka. I want to know."

He squeezed his eyes shut and pinched the bridge of his nose. After countless beats of silence, he finally spoke. "Okay. He was..." Pausing, Luka searched my eyes for any hesitation. There was none. So he pressed on. "He was... disappointed."

Ouch. I don't know why that hurt so much to know. Every bone in my body was screaming that it wasn't, couldn't possibly be true. But why would my boyfriend lie to me about that? It's not like that changes anything. So I masked the degrees of emotion ripping through me so I could smile weakly at him. "It doesn't matter. I don't intend on revealing my identity to him. And why should I care what he thinks of the girl behind the mask? He's just a friend, and that's all he will ever be. Unlike you. You like me for who I am on both sides of the spots."

His hand reached up to brush a salty tear from my cheek that I hadn't even noticed fall. "I do. I really do, Marinette."

I held his hand to my face and kissed his palm gently. "No more secrets, okay? For real this time."

Luka's eyes captured my gaze with sincerity while he leaned in. "For real." Our lips met in a chaste kiss that sent chills down my spine. *God, I am so lucky.*

Humming with bemusement, I returned my head to his shoulder. "Do you want to watch a movie or something?"

He nodded lightly. "I'd love that, Muse. Anything you have in mind?"

Grinning like the cheshire cat, I crawled over to move my laptop for optimal viewing. "I was thinking of a musical."

I could hear the smile in his voice. "You read my mind."

Five minutes later, we were cuddled up under a fuzzy blanket, enjoying a movie, but mostly enjoying the company.

## **Chat's Point of View**

My feet hit the rooftops at an exhilarating pace as I sprinted across Paris. After the Akuma battle, I fed Plagg and then immediately went for a run. The cold night air was exactly what I needed. A blissful warmth spread from my head to my toes as I thought about Marinette and all her adorable behaviors. How she rolls her eyes when I make her laugh. How she bites her tongue in concentration over a rough design. How her hair looks after a tickle fight leaves us both breathless...

I hadn't even realized the direction I was traveling until I landed on a nearby rooftop. All the better, I suppose. The bakery was closed up for the night, and Marinette's lights were off, but from this distance I could see that her roof hatch was open. It was time to talk.

There was an annoying part of me that didn't want to let her go. Plagg even insisted I hang on to "Pigtails" as a friend. But Nino was right. She needed space so her love with Luka could blossom and grow. Having me around, in either form, would be a distraction. Still, I wanted

more than anything for that not to be the case. I wish I could still spend every free moment getting my superhero ass handed to me on a silver platter by the MechaStrike champion.

Unfortunately, some things just aren't meant to be.

I dropped onto her rooftop with the silent grace of a cat and crawled to the open door. Maybe I could surprise her? I hoped she wasn't already asleep. There was a faint sound playing from below, which I assumed was a movie playing on her laptop. Did she start movie night without me? I don't smell any caramel popcorn...

When my eyes finally peered over the edge, I felt my stomach drop. Luka and Marinette were cuddled on her loft right beneath the roof opening. I could hear her tiny snores beginning, so I knew she'd passed out only recently. It usually took about 10 minutes before she started to snore loudly and without mercy, like a caterwauling kitten. It was a cute quality I'd gotten familiar with over the years. I never had it in my heart to wake her up. Everyone knows that girl loves her sleep.

The first loud snort shook her body and put a wide smile on my face. But I didn't get to listen to her long.

"Hey Mari," Luka spoke quietly while he rubbed her back. "Wake up, sleepyhead. You're snoring."

There was no way to explain the unexpected anger I felt bubbling inside me. But her next mumbled words poured water on my flames. "Shush, Kitty. You snore louder than me."

*No I don't. That's purrposterous.* I would've said, if it were me holding her. I would've tucked her into her bed carefully so as not to disturb her, and then taken my leave with a grin and full heart, knowing my friend was taken care of.

But it wasn't my arms she was in. "Marinette, it's me," Luka said, as he shook her awake. I tucked myself away, out of sight, but still within earshot. Was it wrong of me to spy on them? Probably. Was I inexplicably curious how he treated my princess? Most definitely. Would curiosity kill the cat? Yet to be determined.

The bluenette's speech was still riddled with sleep. "Oh, I'm so sorry Luka. I must have been more tired than I thought."

I heard a shuffle below as he pulled her in closer. "It's okay, my Muse. You've had a long and busy evening." My mouth went dry when I heard the unmistakable sound of a kiss. It lasted for an eternity. "I'll text you when I get home safe, okay?" She hummed in response. I could vividly picture the half-lidded expression on her face as she fought with the little energy to nod. He kissed her again, briefly. "You're adorable when you're sleepy."

"I'm always adorable to you."

"And that will never change."

I couldn't listen anymore. I needed to get out of there. The bitter cold numbed my cheeks as I raced home. Dropping into my empty bedroom didn't help thaw my brain. My transformation ended and Plagg zipped around me with concern. "Adrien?"

"Go away, Plagg. I just want to sleep." As I said it, I collapsed on my bed and closed my eyes.

It didn't take long for one fuzzy paw to raise my eyelid. "Sorry Kid, there's a couple things to take care of first."

I glared at him through one eye. "Cheese is in the minifridge, like always."

"One problem solved, but not the main point." Groaning, I sat up to listen to the annoying little flying cat. "First off, I decided to investigate while you were striking out with Pigtales earlier. I talked with Sass, since Luka being there meant he was."

Undeniably, I was interested to know what he said. But I didn't want him to know that. So I just nodded for him to continue.

"Good news is that he didn't see your identity."

"Is there bad news?"

"Yes, but it has nothing to do with Sass or Luka."

"Just spit it out already, Plagg. I'm not in the mood for games."

"Fine. Just check your phone before you go to sleep. But don't say I do nothing for you!" He shouted bitterly as he flew off to the depths of the fridge. My phone was still in the pocket of my jeans, so I mustered the strength to get up and change into sleepwear while I opened the messages.

As soon as my screen lit up, I saw the missed calls and barrage of text messages. "Fuck."

*Kagami: Adrien, where did you go?*

*Kagami: There's an Akuma attack going on and you choose now to disappear?*

Regrettably, I only now realized I didn't have any concern for where she went during the battle. Maybe it's because I know she can take care of herself? I scrolled further.

*Kagami: Adrien, the battle is over and you're still nowhere to be found. I know you're not still trapped. Ladybug's Miraculous fixed everything already. So where are you?*

*Kagami: We have a game to finish.*

I immediately left the bowling alley after the fight to go recharge Plagg and then take a run of Paris. My mind wasn't thinking about finishing the game.

I kept scrolling.

*Kagami: Are you with her?*

*Kagami: I deserve an answer, Adrien. This is not how you treat your girlfriend.*

*Kagami: We need to talk.*

**Her.** The word looked heavy. I know Kagami is still convinced I love Ladybug, and she's not entirely wrong, but it wasn't Ladybug that occupied my thoughts tonight. I was just concerned about my friend.

Still, she deserved an explanation. Now ready for bed, I fell back on the pillows and hit the button to call her.

I must be the worst boyfriend ever.

## Chapter End Notes

I loved my editors reactions to this chapter. To quote her - "I can't. I actually can't. Wtf Luka you're dead to me I swear."

PS. I'm not making Luka a bad guy. He just makes some bad choices.

# Part One Epilogue: Rhapsody

## Chapter Summary

Viperion makes a new friend on his way home.

## Chapter Notes

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

### Viperion's Point of View

Tonight went perfectly. I was honest with Marinette about knowing her secret, and she's okay with it! I'm running home as a superhero still, and my girlfriend is the best in all of France! It felt so good to get off my chest. Now our relationship could be stronger than ever.

Despite my little white lie.

If I was going to keep protecting her and making her happy, I needed to make sure she was all mine. So saying Chat Noir was disappointed about her identity was a necessary evil.

Letting out a whoop of joy, I launched myself high into the sky and landed on one of the taller buildings in Paris. The feeling of almost flying was exhilarating. There I stood, wind in my hair, smile on my face, with nothing but the sounds of the city and... crying?

Filtering everything else out, I listened keenly to what was undoubtedly a girl gently weeping. The rooftop I was on had a few different obstacles that hindered my view, so I relied on my miraculous advanced hearing to locate her. I finally turned a corner and saw the faint outline. She sat on the railing, wearing a black dress that flowed in the breeze, and despite the cold she did not shiver. Her light hair fell loosely around her near bare shoulders. Clutched in her hand was something I couldn't distinguish from the distance, but she was holding it as the tears fell. What was this girl doing all alone, at this time of night, in the freezing cold, on a rooftop? My mind could only come to one very dark conclusion.

When she shifted her weight, I took action. Within seconds I was by her side holding her wrist. "Don't jump."

She turned, startled, to look at me. The mascara ran in streams down her cheeks, but beneath it she was still beautiful. And she didn't deserve to die. Not like this.

But the look in her eyes was quickly replaced by a scornful one. "I'm not going to jump, you moron!" She ripped her wrist from my hand and smacked my shoulder. "How dare you sneak up on me like that! I could've fallen for real."

“I wouldn’t have let that happen.” This girl’s attitude was refreshing. She wasn’t putting on a show for me just because I’m a superhero. “So Ms. Not Jumping, what are you doing up here?”

She scoffed. “Am I not allowed to be on my own roof?”

“It’s not the location that concerns me, but rather the activity.” My words affected her. The blonde turned her face away and frantically wiped her face. I used this opportunity to sit next to her on the railing, pulling out my lute to play a soft melody for comfort. She hid the object she was holding in the folds of her dress. If she doesn’t want me to see, I’ll respect her privacy. But I didn’t fully believe her when she said she wasn’t thinking of jumping. “Do you want to talk about it?”

“No,” she said curtly, and I detected an air of snobbiness in her voice that didn’t seem natural. I raised my eyebrows at her and plucked a strong note. She glared at me. “What are you, some wannabe musician?”

“Musician, yes. Wannabe, no. I’ve had years of training and experience.” To emphasize my point, I played a short and playful tune.

“Showoff,” she sneered, but it didn’t seem like her heart was in it.

I smiled softly at the unique beauty before me. Usually, when I first meet someone, after a few words are exchanged I can hear their heartsong in my head, like an unmistakable melody serving as a roadmap to their personality. But this girl was a confusing concoction of notes and rhythms that didn’t seem to relate. The way she spoke put out a vibe of dissonance and unresolved chords. The way she cried gave me a tremolo feeling, with an adagio cadence. But her appearance, beneath the mascara and scowl, was like a lyrical aria. Altogether, the only way to describe her was a “Rhapsody!”

“Excuse you?”

“Your heartsong. It’s a Rhapsody.”

“My what?” The girl leaned away, in both confusion and mockery.

Instead of answering immediately, I did my best to translate the thoughts into tangible music. Concentrating, I closed my eyes and just let the notes flow. Only her soft sniffles broke me from my focus. My eyes darted open and I reached forward, abandoning my lyre to the side. “Hey, hey. Rhapsody, I didn’t mean to make you cry again.” She was covering her face with her hands and fully retreating into herself. Despite the fact that I just met this girl less than twenty minutes ago, I moved closer to hold her like I would hold my sister when she cried. We remained that way, with me rubbing soft circles on her back, for as long as it took to dry her tears.

Finally, she pulled away and looked at me with awe. “Why are you being so nice to me?”

The answer was easy. “Why not?”

“You don’t even know me.”

“Exactly. There’s no reason for me to dislike you.”

Rhapsody - because that nickname fit and I was going to stick with it - gave me a skeptical look. “Okay, freak. If I go inside will you leave me alone?”

“Of course.” I flipped my legs back to the safer side of the railing and offered my hand to her. She rolled her eyes but took it anyway. Once we both were properly standing, I walked her to the elevator that led to the roof. “I believe this is where I must take my leave.” Pushing the button, I bowed before her like a gentleman.

While I was down, I heard her softly ask a question, and in her voice I detected no trace of the earlier pretension. “Will I see you again?”

The question gave me pause, but I slowly raised back up to look into her eyes. She looked so vulnerable and lonely deep down, like she was asking me to give her something to hold on to. “Depends. Do you make a habit of spending your nights on the roof?” She gave a delicate giggle and shook her head yes. “Then I suppose I’ll see you soon.” The elevator dinged behind her and opened its doors for her to step back into. In the light, I at last saw her shiver in the cold. The bitter night air was beginning to get to me too. “Goodnight, Rhapsody.”

“Goodnight, Serpent.” She finally smiled just as the doors closed between us. As I finished my journey home that night, one thing was certain in my mind.

This was the beginning of a wonderful friendship.

## Chapter End Notes

Phew, lots of notes.

So this piece felt like it needed to be spaced out a little bit more. My last story took place over the course of a few days, while this one is over about a year. Having Parts just made the most sense. So this is the finale of Part One. I’ve already started on Part Two, which is the longest of the three parts.

I’m really glad y’all are enjoying this so far! I’ve got so much planned that I’m not even sharing with my fabulous Beta yet, but it’s all still so freeform that every comment helps drive the story. I appreciate every single one of you. <3

LASTLY, my wonderful friend wrote a one-shot and dedicated it to me. If you love Chat Blanc, jealous Luka and Adrien, and badass Marinette, please go give it some love. [Let's Fall In Love for the Night](#)

I hope to see you all in the next part, where we finally get the pivotal scene between Ladybug and Viperion that Chat sees, and the events that follow!





# Illicit Affairs

## Chapter Summary

"And that's the thing about illicit affairs and clandestine meetings and stolen stares..."

## Chapter Notes

We're back with Part Two! I'm halfway through the next chapter already and loving it so far. This one I struggled a little with, but Rhapsody and Viperion's friendship is giving me the life I need. Thank you all for your continued support! It means so much to me, you don't even know. <3

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

### Luka's Point of View

There was something so refreshing about being in a flower shop. Delicate petals that seem to be painted by the gods, sitting atop long stems in distinct bouquets, smelling like ambrosia. It was a peaceful setting. One that Marinette would love to design in.

I was looking for a very specific arrangement that fit my muse perfectly. Tonight I am going to take her to the dance, and I wanted the perfect corsage to present to her.

A collection of daisies caught my eyes, but not for Marinette. These reminded me more of Rhapsody. Plain and simple, but still beautiful. I quickly took a photo of the flowers and sent them her way.

*V: What do you think?*

*R: I think you're ridiculous.*

*V: ridiculous enough to be your best friend!*

*R: I never said that. You're making assumptions. And you know what they say about assumptions and an ass...*

*V: hey! Don't comment on my ass! I am a taken man.*

*R: and she is one lucky girl. I hope she appreciates all the work you're putting into this.*

This has become our daily routine. Texting through a non-traceable messaging app, so as to preserve my secret identity. Rhapsody was adamant about that. I didn't imagine Marinette would be too thrilled either if I told someone my secret. Not that she really knows about Rhapsody either...

There's no real reason why I've hidden our friendship from my girlfriend. After all, I've told Rhapsody all about Marinette, using the codename "Melody" to keep up secrecy. But I just think it's nice to have those moments for just us. Rhaps and Serpent, as she insists on calling me.

Plus, it's been six months now, so if I told Marinette she'd be suspicious.

The door chimes as another customer enters the flower shop, and with the door opening comes a wasp. It lands right on the daisy I was admiring. Amused, I sent another photo.

*V: I wanna touch it.*

*R: dont you dare!*

As I was chuckling at her response, someone called my name. I turned around and was surprised to see Adrien. "Hey, Luka! Long time no see!"

"Agreste? What are you doing here?" I wasn't expecting to see him. After all, he's kept his distance for months, ever since Marinette told him about her crush. I had to respect that he backed off. It was a noble move, to allow Mari and I to flourish.

"I'm assuming the same thing you're doing. By the way, I never pegged Marinette as a daisy girl." He said, pointing to the handful of flowers I held.

"Oh, these?" Carefully, I put them back where I found them. The wasp stayed put, surprisingly. "No, I was just looking at these for a friend." I scratched the back of my head nervously. Why was I nervous?

Adrien smirked and his eyes darted down to my other hand. "Might wanna answer that. Someone's blowing up your messages."

*Shit.* I quickly opened the texts from Rhapsody to see her responses had continued.

*R: hello??*

*R: you stupid snake, don't tell me you touched it!*

*R: how rude of you to die on me.*

*R: whose funeral am I supposed to crash?*

*R: . . .*

*R: Viperion?*

Oh crap, she used my actual name. That must mean she's really worried.

*V: Sorry Rhaps! I got caught up with an old friend.*

*V: I'll text when I find more flowers for you to scrutinize.*

Her response was almost immediate.

*R: oh my god, you're ridiculous.*

Chuckling under my breath, I slipped my phone back into my pocket. Adrien still stood before me, absentmindedly running his fingers along the petals to his side. I cleared my throat to signal I was done with my conversation. He looked up at me with a raised eyebrow. "Mari?"

I shook my head. "No, just Juleka freaking out about the dance and how she's going to ask Rose."

Adrien laughed. "I'm sure she'll figure something out. If not, Rose will probably ask her. She's pretty strong willed."

"Got that right," I snickered. This conversation was nice, and going considerably better than our last one. We'd both had time to mature and get comfortable in our relationships. There was no reason anymore for me to be jealous of the model, because I knew Marinette was mine. And Chat Noir had stopped visiting as well. My muse is pretty broken up about that one, but I've helped her through it. With the two blondes out of my hair I felt better than ever.

"Can I help you boys?" The Florist, a nice elderly woman, had come over to assist. She was smiling expectantly between us.

"Oh, uhh..." I already had a helper waiting in my texts, so I was pretty good.

“Some help would be great, Madame.” Adrien spoke up before I could say no. I looked at him with a raised eyebrow. “What? I’ve had bad luck with picking out flowers in the past.”

“Oh! I remember you, handsome boy!” The Florist pinched Adrien’s cheeks as she fawned over him. “You never told me how that night went!”

Adrien shuffled his feet nervously. “I’m sorry Madame, you must be mistaken-“

“No, I could never forget it! I must tell you,” she scooted closer to me to speak conspiratively while the blonde stuttered and blushed. “This boy came in one day, absolutely head over heels in love. He bought a whole bouquet of red roses for the girl, though he planned on spreading most of the petals along a rooftop with candles and presenting her with the lone rose left. It was so romantic!”

Adrien, fully red in the face now, was staring at the floor, so he didn’t see my smirk. “Wow, Agreste. Impressive. Is that how you asked out Kagami?”

“Oh, is that her name? The boy wouldn’t tell me, so tight lipped like it was a big secret. But he did tell me how beautiful she is. Hair like midnight, and eyes so blue you could swim in them. They make a perfect couple, don’t you agree?” The sweet old woman was looking at me expectantly, but I felt my heart in my throat. My fists tightened at my side.

“She sounds gorgeous,” I spoke through gritted teeth as I stared down at Adrien. “I’m sorry Madame, can you give us a moment?” Completely oblivious, the woman tittered about in a joyous haze rambling about young love, though she did give us space. “So, Agreste,” I spoke with venom. “I thought Kagami’s eyes were brown.”

He chuckled nervously. “They are brown. That whole thing was for someone else. Someone before Kagami.” Adrien still wouldn’t meet my eyes and his hair was quickly becoming a mess from his hand awkwardly grabbing it.

“Who?” I asked, already dreading the answer.

“I… I can’t tell you. It’s embarrassing. The whole thing didn’t work out in the end anyway. She loves someone else.”

“Yeah, me.”

My words shot out like a bullet, and Adrien looked like he was hit. His eyes grew wide and he sucked in a breath. “No, i-it’s not who you think.”

“Then tell me, Agreste. Who else do we know with black hair and blue eyes?” I stared him down while he stammered over his words trying to find an answer. I’d never seen Adrien this anxious before so I must be onto something. Thanks to my extra year over him, I had a height advantage, so I took that opportunity to lean over him with intimidation written on my face.

Finally his green eyes closed in resignation. He visibly shrunk and let out the breath he’d been holding. Adrien mumbled an answer, but since I couldn’t hear it, I cleared my throat. He repeated the confession. “It was Ladybug.”

“Huh,” I breathed. The air was heavy on my lungs. Then the irony struck me. All along, Adrien returned Marinette’s feelings, just in the wrong form. I couldn’t keep myself from laughing hysterically. He awkwardly laughed with me, probably assuming I was relieved beyond belief that it wasn’t Marinette. He could not be more wrong and I could not be more happy. *I’ve got the girl. Ladybug is mine. But he will never know.* My laughter subsided as I wiped a tear. “Oh, Agreste. You crack me up.”

“Uh, thanks?” He shuffled his feet awkwardly. “Anyways, I’m going to go find the florist to help me with the corsage. Good luck, Luka. See you at the dance.” Adrien retreated as quickly as a cat, leaving me with a satisfied smirk. My eyes had finally caught on an arrangement of sweet pea and soft pink zinnias that bloomed gracefully around some baby’s-breath. Match it with a silver ribbon and it would be almost perfect.

I sent a photo to Rhapsody for confirmation.

*R: Ooh, thats beautiful, Serpent!*

*R: way too pink for me, but Im not your girl, so...*

*R: I especially love the little charm. She is going to love it.*

Charm? I looked closer at the corsage and smiled wider, certain this was the one. Attached to a small wire so it jutted out elegantly, was a silver ladybug.

## **Ladybug’s Point of View**

I really should’ve expected this.

Of course, on the day of the dance, when everyone is getting ready and dressed to impress, there’s going to be one person who wakes up in a nightmare.

A beauty nightmare, that is.

So when I got the Akuma alert in the middle of sewing the finishing touches on my dress, I of course stabbed my finger with the needle in shock.

“Ouch!” I put the finger to my mouth to nurse the wound.

“No time for a bandaid, Marinette! Let’s go!” My Kwami flew circles around my head until I finally gave in and transformed.

An hour later, after defeating Promenaiden (a girl giving everyone the same zits and bed-head she woke up with), there remained three of us. I supposed Alya and Nino are too busy with dance preparations, so that just left Chat Noir, Viperion, and me. Not that this Akuma was particularly difficult.

“Pound it!” We all exclaimed as our fists collided.

Viperion's eyes were staring into mine with a hunger I'd never seen before. I got goosebumps imagining what that look meant. His hair was swept from the wind but still framed his face in the most handsome way. My eyes traveled along the rim of his mask before taking in his smirk, and then the singular fang that was biting his lip...

“Ahem, what a great fight, guys!” Chat Noir's voice cut through the tension, but didn't sever it. My eyes pulled away from the teal hero beside me, but the electricity still coursed between us. Hopefully my partner couldn't feel it, but from the way I was blushing, I'm sure he did. Unless he's totally oblivious, but only Adrien is that blind. “Anyway, this cat's gotta scurry. See you at Patrol tomorrow, My Lady?”

“Mhm,” I hummed in response. Viperion indicated with his head that I should follow him, so I willingly accepted. Once Chat disappeared over the rooftops, Viperion grabbed my hand and pulled me into a nearby alley.

Well, it wasn't an alley in the sense that it housed dumpsters and smelled like sewer water. It was the kind of alley with a little garden, tucked away and private, but not scary. And my boyfriend wanted to take full advantage of the privacy.

He swept me up in his arms and began kissing me ferociously. I could feel his hot lips crushing mine and his tongue begged for entrance. That was the trigger that snapped me out.

I pushed him off of me so I could take a breath and giggle. “Woah, Luka. What was that?”

His cocky smirk didn't diminish one bit. “I realized I've never kissed Ladybug.”

I raised an eyebrow, confused. “You've kissed me plenty of times.”

The snake hero approached me like I was prey, pulling my arms away from my body to let him in. “But not like this,” he said, as his hand traced the edge of my mask and he hovered centimeters from my face. Then, something in his expression changed. “It just struck me earlier today how unbelievably lucky I am. I get to date this adorably bubbly fashion designer, who also moonlights as the Heroine of Paris. I was reminded that I'm not the only one who sees your beauty and grace, but I am the only one who gets to admire it up close and personal. *You chose me.* Ladybug, who could have her pick of any guy in France, chose this aspiring musician. I just want to shoot it from the rooftops. But since I can't, at least let me secretly revel in the fact that you're mine. Both sides of you. Because I love all of you, my Muse.” He finally stopped speaking, but his forehead was now resting on mine as he looked deeply into my eyes. The fire had turned into a smolder.

Maybe it was the illusion of anonymity that pulled me forward. Maybe it was the risk of being seen that had me turning so I was in the shadows against the brick wall.

But the way we kissed? That was all from the look in his eyes.

### **Chat Noirs Point of View**

Spring was in the air and in my steps as I ran across the rooftops of Paris, getting out some spare energy from the Akuma battle. I also needed to make a loop so Ladybug didn't see the direction I truly was going, since it was so close to home. But I'd gotten familiar with a stretch I could follow absentmindedly while I breathed in the smells of sunshine and flowers in the breeze.

The sun was going to be setting soon, and I needed to hurry home to get ready for the dance. Kagami would kill me if I was late to pick her up. She'd barely even been given permission to go. Much like Cinderella, she had a curfew that was going to be strictly enforced, come hell or high water.

Acknowledging the time crunch, I extended my staff to its full height and perched atop it. This was my second favorite way to view Paris, besides sitting with Ladybug on the Eiffel Tower. It was serene and peaceful being so high up with no one around. Plus, I got a birds-eye-view of every little nook that was either full of life or teeming with trouble. I could see the Florist from earlier closing up for the evening. I saw into the courtyard of my school where the dance committee was running in circles getting the final decorations done. There was a dog dragging his owner down the street after a pigeon, while Mr. Ramier panicked. Out of the corner of my eye I could even see a pair of lovers sharing a heated kiss in a garden. Her hands were clenched in his blue-tipped hair, the red gloves being a stark contrast.

Wait.

Was that...?

Viperion and-

"Ladybug," I gasped, suddenly feeling weak. My balance was disrupted, but I didn't notice until it was too late. My eyes were glued to the illicit affair I was witnessing. The ground rose up to greet me without mercy.

### **Chapter End Notes**

#### **AND SO IT BEGINS!**

From this point on, things won't be the same. Adrien will be suspicious and jealous as hell. So, prepare yourselves for the ride.



Sneak Peak Line that my editor loved: "Luka was mere steps behind her, and smirked as he caught me looking his way. He casually brushed some of her lip gloss off his own lips with a thumb."

# Dancing With Our Hands Tied

## Chapter Summary

We never want to believe the worst, until it's staring us in the face.

## Chapter Notes

I'm back! So soon, and with a very long chapter. I took a road trip this weekend and had so much spare time to write on the drive. This felt ready to share! You all are being so wonderful with your comments and keeping me engaged with the story. I love it so much. <3 So, enjoy!

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

### Adrien's Point of View

The dance was gorgeous. Alya and Rose had gone out of their way to create a Shakespearean Wonderland that felt straight out of a Midsummer Night's Dream, which was the theme. Fairy lights danced in a canopy that hung over the dance floor, strung up across the second floor railings. The basketball hoop had been transformed into a waterfall made of shiny streamers that spilled down behind the stage. Nino was already working his DJ board, which was disguised in a paper mache rock. He was dressed in character as Puck, the mischievous jester. But as far as I could tell, he was the only one in costume.

Personally, I wore a dark blue dress shirt with a black bow tie. Kagami had chosen an indigo kimono-style dress, covered in a pattern of large black and white flowers, with a silvery-grey bodice wrap. She looked gorgeous, especially as she explored the room and greeted our friends. She had really improved over the last few months at opening up and allowing people in. It was a nice change to see. She glowed as she smiled, and even paused to wave at me while speaking to Kim and Ondine.

Unfortunately, that's not where my mind focused, even though I wanted desperately to forget everything else.

I couldn't get the image out of my head. Every time I closed my eyes, I saw them. Viperion, pressing Ladybug against the brick wall, their lips fighting for dominance. My mind filled in the blanks, tormenting me. I didn't want to believe it. Luka isn't that kind of guy, right? He couldn't cheat on Marinette.

Right?

I heard her giggle from across the gym as she finally entered the room on his arm. My heart leapt into my throat when I saw her. She was wearing a blush pink dress with teal spots like confetti getting denser and darker towards the bottom of her knee-length poofy skirt. Draping over her shoulders was a translucent fabric in the same teal, and it emphasized the sweetheart neckline atop the bodice. Ribbons flowed down her back from the corset holding it on, and the same turquoise ribbon held her hair in a half-updo. When she smiled, her lips shined with pink gloss.

Luka, to compliment her, wore a pink button-down with the sleeves rolled up and a teal tie hanging loosely around his neck. He held his arm firmly around her waist as she enthusiastically greeted her friends.

“Want to go say hi?” Kagami spoke beside me, startling me out of my thoughts. She had made her way all the way around the room and now stood just over my shoulder. Noticing my blank expression, she held out her hand. “Come on, I want to compliment her dress.”

I gave her a soft smile as she helped me out of the chair. The moment I put weight on my ankle, I hissed in pain. A sprained ankle, courtesy of my fall earlier as Chat Noir. As if I needed a physical reminder of the things I’d seen. But, just like with the memory, I forced a grin and carefully limped to my friends.

Marinette saw us coming and beamed widely, but once she noticed my altered gait, her eyes widened in concern. She rushed over to meet us halfway so I didn’t have to walk too far. “Ohmygosh Adrien are you okay??” Luka was mere steps behind her, and smirked as he caught me looking his way. He casually brushed some of her lip gloss off his own lips with a thumb. “Adrien?” I turned my gaze back to a nervous Marinette. The bluenette was worrying her bottom lip between her teeth.

I gave her a half-hearted smile. “I’m okay, Mari. Just a little sprain.”

She cringed and sucked air in through her teeth. “Oof, how mad is your dad?”

“He would be livid,” I laughed sarcastically, “if he knew.”

Marinette’s blue eyes turned to Kagami, who shrugged. “I tried telling him we should see a doctor, but he insists it’ll be fine.”

Luka came forward to clap a hand on my shoulder. “Well, let’s get you back to a seat. Wouldn’t want to ruin that model walk, now would we?”

I turned so he couldn’t see me roll my eyes, but the group escorted me back to the table I’d previously been sitting at. I’d barely touched the chair when I heard a squeal from behind me.

“MARINETTE! You look so hot!” Alya was spinning her best friend around excitedly. The reporter was dressed in a chartreuse empire waist dress with ruffles extending to just past her knees. It was simple enough, which is why she wore a flower crown and other accents of

greenery around her wrists. She looked like she could be a fairy herself, especially with the iridescent glitter that shone on her cheekbones. “Now I know why you kept this dress a secret! You’ve outdone yourself, girl!”

The girl in question held a hand to her blushing face. “Thanks Alya.”

While they gushed over each other, I saw Luka sitting next to me, smiling at his phone screen. He quickly typed out a response before placing the phone on the table beside him. Curious.

Nino’s voice came over the speakers at that moment, capturing the attention of the entire gym. “Alright alright, how are all my lovers and dreamers doing tonight?” He paused for a cheer, and then had to quiet the crowd halfheartedly. “I hear you! I’ve got some great songs lined up for the first 30 minutes here, and then I’ll be returning to the stage and taking requests. Until then, dance and be merry! And do be careful with the punch; I heard there are some fairies causing mischief in the crowd tonight.” Nino winked at the laughing crowd as he pressed play on a song and exited stage left.

Alya gasped when she recognized the music. “Ooh! This is one of my favorites!”

“I played it just for you,” Nino said, having made his way over to our group. He held out a hand to his eager girlfriend. “May I have this d-”

“YES!” She shouted, accepting his hand and dragging him to the dance floor. Marinette giggled adorably as she put her purse on the table beside me. Luka was also on his feet, holding his hand out for a dance. She placed her hand delicately in his, and then looked over to my girlfriend. “Kagami, want to join us?”

Her almond eyes looked down at me for an answer. I squeezed her hand reassuringly. “Go, have fun.”

And with that, the group dwindled from six to one. I was left alone at the table, icing my ankle with the bottom of my drink glass. A slight buzz caught my attention, so I looked over to see a notification had popped up on Luka’s screen.

Contemplating, I must’ve stared too long, because a voice came from inside my shirt pocket. “That’s a bad idea, kid.”

“Plagg!” I hissed through my teeth. “I wasn’t planning-”

“Stop. I could hear the gears in your head turning. But you don’t want to go down that road. *Trust me.*”

I groaned at his words. As much as I hated to admit it, he was right. I wanted to check. But what if I didn’t like what I saw? What if Ladybug isn’t everything I made her out to be? I wanted to believe the kiss was a mistake; that Luka wouldn’t cheat on Marinette on purpose. I wanted to trust that Ladybug would be an honest young woman and reject his advances since he’s taken. But my wants were overtaken by my *need* to know. So I turned to the table discretely and pulled the phone to my side. Deep Breath.

The message was sent on an app that deletes the chat history every hour, but I still scrolled as far back as I could. There, I found a photo of Luka from the nose down, already in his dance attire.

*V: Whatcha think?*

*R: Damn.*

*R: I mean...*

*R: You look hot.*

*V: Thanks, Rhaps!*

Off to a bad start. Things aren't looking good for Luka, since another girl is calling him hot. The name on the chat history is Rhapsody, but I can't think of anyone by that name.

*V: Wish you could come along...*

*R: And ruin your date? No, I don't think "Melody" would appreciate that.*

*R: but don't tempt me.*

*V: Please, I know it would take you forever to get ready.*

*R: Is that a challenge?*

*V: What if it is?*

I couldn't believe it. Luka was full on flirting with this girl. And she knew he had a girlfriend. Could this really be Ladybug?

*R: I could be there in 10 minutes if I wanted.*

The girl sent a photo with her response, that showed a bright red dress with delicate black detailing. It was draped over the back of a chair that sat in front of a makeup vanity. I recognized some of the products, and they were expensive. Tucked in the corner of the mirror was a picture of Viperion on a rooftop late at night, playing his lute. I couldn't distinguish much else of the room or the girl taking the photo.

*V: Risky. Wouldn't want anyone to find out we know each other, now would we?*

*R: Chicken.*

*V: Snake, actually.*

*R: Don't I know it...*

I felt like the room was spinning from the revelations I was making. This confirmed that they were meeting in secret, and this Rhapsody girl *knew* Luka was also Viperion. Did he reveal his identity to another civilian? Or, is it just because Ladybug already knows his identity?

*R: But you're right, I guess.*

*R: At least visit me after, and tell me all about it?*

*V: I'll think about it. I do have a date to attend to...*

*R: You idiot. I'll bring a bottle of wine to our usual spot. Maybe then you can spare me one dance?*

*V: Temptress.*

*R: ;\**

*R: See you later, Serpent!*

I threw the phone back on the table upon reading the end of the exchange. As much as I wanted to deny it, there was no way to anymore. Luka was cheating on Marinette with Ladybug. Pivoting in my seat, I saw him leading her around the dance floor, and they were laughing like nothing was wrong. To her, he was just a wonderful boyfriend. The song came to a close, and he dramatically dipped her for a kiss. That wonderful giggle traveled across the room to me and sent shivers down my spine.

One thing was for certain: I wasn't going to let him take advantage of my friend.

## **Plagg's Point of View**

“MAYDAY!!!”

“Oh no, what did you break this time, Stinky Sock?” Tikki looked at me scornfully when I barged into their meeting. This time, the active kwami’s were gathered behind the faux waterfall of the dance. I had to carefully skirt my way around the edges of the school to find them, but I’d at least been invited.

“Sugarcube, ye of little faith. I didn’t do the breaking this time.” My eyes drifted over to the snake kwami. “*He did.*”

“THAT’S a first.” Trixx gasped. Then, it dawned on her. “Wait, how?”

All my fur stood on end as I approached Sass. “Your Master couldn’t keep his hands to himself, and my Chat Noir saw!” I did the best I could to poke him in his chest, trying to be intimidating. Sass should really have a better handle over his kid by now. He should know better than to kiss Ladybug while transformed.

Tikki’s eyes grew impossibly wide as she realized what my words meant. Sass still didn’t seem to understand the severity of the situation. “What does it matter if your Chat is jealous? I can’t control teenagers and their hormones. It was perfectly natural, what they did.”

Groaning, I held my head in my paws and tensed up. “Sass, do you remember how Luka was chosen as your holder?”

“Oooh, a story!” Trixx did a little flip in the air.

The teal kwami seemed to be piecing the timeline of events together. “I first was given to Adrien, but he gave me up. Then I was placed with Master Luka.”

He missed the most important part, and I was tired of dragging this out. So, I shouted. “Upon the suggestion of my kid!”

There were several different reactions amongst the group. Trixx and Wayzz seemed like they understood, but didn’t fully grasp the austerity. Tikki flew to my side instantly, working to calm me down. And Sass, well, he went into a meditative pose. Maybe we all needed a minute to process.

Tikki’s big blue eyes were searching mine while she brushed the hair on my back down in a calming motion. “Are you okay, Plagg? I haven’t seen you this upset in millenia.”

I took several deep breaths, working the oxygen through my veins like a sedative. It got too exhausting to fly, so I floated slowly to the nearest bench. My other half was the only one to follow. Once settled, I cracked open my eyes to see her hovering a few inches away with the mother goose look in her eyes. As the Kwami of Creation, she hated to see one of her ducklings in distress. So, I gave her a half-hearted smile. “Sorry, Sugarcube. My boy is not okay, and I guess I’m picking up on it.”

“We all build an emotional connection to our holders, Plagg. It’s okay.”

“Yeah, but this feels beyond that,” I sighed. “This whole situation is so confusing. Chat Noir saw Viperion kissing Ladybug, and while he knows Viperion is Luka, he doesn’t know

Ladybug is Marinette, so now he feels so many different emotions. He's angry that Luka would cheat on Marinette, even though he isn't. He's grieving the loss of the Ladybug he thought she was, now that he believes she's a willing participant. He's protective of Marinette because she's a really good friend, but underneath it all he's jealous and he doesn't know why. Even though we know exactly why! Tikki, it's killing me inside. I just want to slap the kid in the face and yell 'They're the same person!' so he'd stop moping and being in pain. But. I. Can't." I was vibrating by the end of my rant. Part of me wanted to go destroy a mountain for the stress release, but the wiser side smelled creamy camembert goodness and knew it would numb my brain. Tikki had a slice of my favorite cheese held out for me. After eons by each-others sides, we knew how to take care of our partner. I cradled the gooey goodness as my breathing leveled out. "Thanks, Tikki."

In a blur of red, she flew to sit beside me on the bench. She laid back to stare up at the stars and nudged me to do the same. Once situated, she spoke. "I know how you feel, Plagg. But as much as we'd love our holders to finally unite, there is an enemy standing in the way. This will all work out in the end, I promise. Just, find a way to delay Adrien from confronting them. Point out the risks, and tell him he needs proof. I'll coach my bug to be more careful, and make sure Sass does the same. If we're lucky, this'll all be forgotten by next week."

"Unlikely."

"Please? Try?" Tikki looked at me with those big, beautiful, pleading cerulean eyes. How could I possibly say no to that?

## **Rhapsody's Point of View**

The candles were burning low, as the evening approached Midnight, and I still hadn't received my expected visitor. Nursing my glass of wine, I was startled to find it empty. I must have been out here longer than I thought.

I didn't want to pour another glass yet. It was meant for Viperion and I to share. I'd only allowed myself the one because the summer air was beginning to get to me, and I needed something to make it easier. A light buzz helped pass the time.

But a particular serpent was running late.

I know he's enjoying his time with Melody, but I've just been so lonely, and he's the first real friend I've made in a long time. Maybe I'm selfish to want him around so much. I see the look in his eyes when he talks about her. That's the way I wish someone would look at me. With such love and adoration.

But...I still don't deserve it.

There was a lot I needed to fix about myself. I needed to become a better person, someone worthy, selfless, and brave. Someone like Ladybug.



Ladybug was my hero, but more than just the way Paris sees her. She's everything I want to be.

Viperion came to me with no preconceived notions. He doesn't know the things I've done, or the people I've hurt. He doesn't know the *real* reason why I've completely isolated myself from the world. So, not knowing how messed up I am, just seeing a broken girl and offering metaphorical glue, he has become my new world. My best friend. He's patient with me, let's me rant and cry, and doesn't put up with my shit. If I falter, he's there to catch me and make sure I am more careful. He doesn't pry into my past, even though I know he's curious, if only to help more. He's so considerate that way.

I want to open up, tell him everything, my whole story. I think I'm ready for him to hear. Just need a little liquid courage. So, I pour myself another glass.

For the hundredth time that night, I checked my phone for any new messages. Still nothing new, but it had shown he'd seen my last responses. The chat history vanished hours ago by now. But I still remembered every message. Especially one.

*V: Wish you could come along...*

Every illogical bone in my body wanted to go. I would have scoured every school dance that was being held that night, just to find him. I'd hoped he'd actually challenge me. It's been so long since I got dolled up and socialized with a crowd. However, while putting on my makeup, I felt strange. This didn't feel like me anymore. *Ladybug* wasn't the type to care about appearances. The makeup felt fake, like a mask I shouldn't wear. I had this sinking feeling that if I went out tonight, I'd revert back to who I was before. I wasn't ready.

But maybe, Viperion could still appreciate the effort.

So, I'd carried on, giving myself a soft smoky eye, working with greys and silvers to compliment the dress, but not overstate it. My eyeliner grew to be bigger than planned since I was out of practice. Pulling my hair back into a high ponytail, I curled the ends and added a red rose clip. Once dressed, I finished off the look with black high heels and classic red lips. I felt like a million bucks. Now, I just needed to not *act* like a million bucks.

I was starting to think I was being stood up. Viperion never visited later than midnight. He still went to regular school, whereas I was homeschooled. And Sundays were for his music, so he needed sleep tonight. Since the clock now read half past midnight, there wasn't any more than a sliver of a chance he'd show anymore. I kicked off my heels while taking a large gulp of wine, before flopping back rather ungracefully onto a lounge chair that sat on my roof.

Closing my eyes, I imagined how his night had gone. He'd probably picked up his beautiful girlfriend and given her the corsage we picked out together. A perfect gentleman to her parents, he'd gladly let them take plenty of pictures. Then, a romantic stroll through the city

of love, proudly displaying her on his arm. He probably laughed with her friends and danced the night away. The image grew to near reality in my mind, though he wore his mask. Melody's appearance was based on how he described her to me, though I'm sure my imagination was far off from the real thing. She was smiling at him while they danced beneath the stars, with the moonlight shining off her deep indigo hair. His hands brought hers to his lips to graze them with affections, causing a demure blush to accompany her melodic giggle. My chest began to feel an uncomfortable pressure as the illusion Viperion reached for his Melody and pulled her in for a passionate kiss...

Nope. I'm not letting myself fall for him. His heart is not mine for the taking. I finished off my second glass of the night.

Fuck it. He's not coming. And he didn't even have the courtesy to let me know. I can try all I want not to be bitter, but that only gave me a headache.

As I poured another glass, a horrible idea came to my head. Something I would've never done a year ago. The thought seemed so ridiculously tempting. I'd ruin all the work I've done tonight, and probably make a mess getting back to my room. But the way the moon reflected on the smooth surface hypnotized me.

I got to my feet and took a few steps back in preparation. "This is going to be so stupid." Before I could talk myself out of it, I ran forward and jumped.

The cold water enveloped me. It was a shock at first, but eventually the feeling was pleasant as the alcohol induced warmth took effect. My dress fanned out on the water around me when I surfaced and began to float on my back.

There's an ethereal silence that comes when your ears are underwater. But somehow, I still could hear music. It sounded like the melody Viperion had given me with my nickname. A wild rhapsody of notes and motifs that somehow made sense when he played it. Only he could see that depth of me. I'd held onto that song in my memory every since that night, replaying every note when I felt sad. But this version was slightly different. Almost like it was live...

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw a familiar teal, and lost all ability to float.

Stuttering, embarrassed, and soaping wet, I pulled myself to the edge of the pool. His hand was ready to effortlessly lift me out. While I worked to wring out my dress, Viperion ran over to the small utility closet in search of a towel. He was successful in his endeavor and I felt the soft fabric wrap around my shoulders. The thought was sweet and all, but he wasn't getting away with this that easily.

In response to my glare, he gave a nervous smile. "Hey Rhaps. You're looking lovely tonight."

"How long have you been here?" I asked, and the question was laced with accusations.

Viperion cringed. "Well, I agree this was very stupid. But totally worth it." I smacked his arm at his confession. He grabbed my hand before it could hit again. "I'm sorry, I should've

stopped you. But, you looked like you needed it.” A thumb grazed the damp skin beneath my eyes, coming away dark with mascara. There was an unspoken question in his expression.

I answered anyway. “I wanted to get ready for our own dance. So, I pulled out all the stops. Hair, makeup, an expensive dress that’s now *ruined*, thank you very much. I actually felt human tonight.”

“That’s not you.” His fingers kept carefully stroking my face, trying to clear the smeared makeup. I pouted while he worked and looked up to the sky, so I didn’t think about how close he was to me, and how gentle he was being. When he finished with the makeup removal, his hands took the tie from my hair and let it fall. Viperion pulled back with the rose hairpin in his hand and shook his head. He reached behind his back and produced singular daisy, which he tucked over my ear. Satisfied, he leaned back with a hum. “There’s the Rhapsody I know.”

In awe I reached for the flower in my hair and brushed its delicate petals. “You brought me a flower?”

He shrugged. “That’s why I was late. I forgot it at home.”

I rolled my eyes. “How dare you?”

Viperion laughed, and the weight finally lifted from my chest at the sound. Another idiotic urge came to mind, but I couldn’t let that happen. So instead, I gave a devilish grin as I walked to place him between myself and the water. He feigned ignorance. “That is a really pretty dress, though.”

“Yeah, you’ll be getting the cleaning bill.” I took a step forward as a taunt.

He mirrored my movement with a step back. “Didn’t you promise wine?”

I crossed my arms across my chest. “Uh huh. But you missed out on half the bottle.” Another step.

“Oh, a little tipsy now, are you? Are you sure you’d be able to dance?” He retreated further, but still nonchalantly.

“Is that a challenge?” I echoed my words from earlier with a raised eyebrow and larger step.

When he backed up this time, his heels kissed the edge of the pool. There was a slight widening of his eyes when he came to that realization. Finally, there was a crack in his armor. “You wouldn’t dare...”

My smile grew. “Come on, Serpent. I thought you knew me better by now.” I took another step forward and placed a hand on his chest. His heart beat rapidly beneath my palm. Innocently, I brought my arms to wrap around his neck. “Ready to dance?”

He visibly gulped. That was all I needed. With a sudden burst of strength, I spun us around to pull him into the pool with me.

## Chapter End Notes

We all needed some Rhaperion fluff to get us through the end of this chapter, especially since we won't see much Marichat fluff for a while. Plus, I needed a reminder that Luka isn't a bad guy. His priorities just aren't in order.

Coming soon: Some Chloe and Lila action to spice up the drama. ;)

# **Your Favorite Person**

## Chapter Summary

Who is best for scheming? Plagg or Lila?

## Chapter Notes

HELLO AGAIN!

Okay, I know I haven't post anything in a month. For that, I am truly sorry. I mentioned it in a comment, but the area I live was hit hard by a hurricane, and we were out of power for a week. Plus, where I work sells key hurricane relief supplies, so it's been insanity. Things are finally starting to calm down enough for my brain to register what has happened.

On that note, I can finally write again! I got over my block and am ready to continue this story. I hope there are still people eager to read what I've got planned. Hopefully, a new chapter will come within a week!

Enjoy!

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

## **Adrien's Point is View**

“What do you mean, I can't confront him?!”

It had nearly been 24 hours since that fateful moment, and my mind had been racing all day. Even though it was a Sunday, Father had scheduled several photo shoots and fittings for me, as well as an additional few lessons to make up for the lost time the day before, so I'd not gotten a moment to breathe and process. Now was this moment, and I couldn't believe what I was hearing from the miniature cat god before me.

My Kwami was trying to act casual, but I could see a small crease of worry between his eyes as he answered. “You need proof.”

My eyes were bugging out of my head with disbelief. I couldn't help but raise my voice. “I have all the proof I need! I saw it with my own eyes!”

“Correction: you saw it with Chat Noir’s eyes.”

“Yeah, so?”

“Chat Noir doesn’t know Viperions identity.”

“Oh,” I sighed and ruffled my hair in thought. A weak idea came to mind. “I could just say I saw it as Adrien?”

“Huh, a fashion model following two superheroes down a dark alleyway to watch their heated moments. Totally normal. Not at all suspicious.” Plagg tossed back a slice of Camembert to emphasize his point.

He had a point, and I hated it. “Then what do you suggest I do, Plagg? I can’t just sit back and let him walk all over my friend.”

Plagg rolled his eyes dramatically. “You humans are so complicated. Just let them sort out their own issues. She’s just a friend.”

“She’s more than just a friend!” I blurted out before I could even think. The cat Kwami wore a shit-eating grin. “I mean... she’s one of my best friends.” Why did that still not feel adequate to describe Marinette?

“Oookay, so you’ve got your own issues to sort out too, evidently. But regardless, before you tell Pigtails what you suspect, you need some solid proof. You could be wrong, after all...” He mumbled that last part.

“How could I be wrong? I literally saw Ladybug and Viperion making out, and then the texts spoke for themselves too!” I was getting so frustrated by this whole conversation that my voice was rising higher than intended. If I wasn’t careful, someone would be sent to check on me. So, I took a deep breath and sat down on my couch, holding my head in my hands, muttering through my palms. “I can’t see any other explanation...”

Plagg’s tone shifted, and he gently floated to sit on my knee. “Hey, Kid. Just talk to Ladybug about it, indirectly. I’m sure that’ll make you feel better.”

“Talk to... Ladybug... oh shit, Plagg! I’m late for patrol! Claws out!” I jumped to my feet and raced for the window, already planning and dreading what I was going to say to My Lady.

I regretted my haste as soon as I hit the ground running. My ankle had me scream out in agony. I’d gone this far hiding the pain, but one false move and it’s hurting all over again. Gritting my teeth, I waited for the ache to dull so I could continue my journey, albeit a lot more carefully.

I could practically hear Plagg snickering at my stupidity.

The closest monument, and easiest to climb in my state, was the Arc de Triomphe. So, I used my staff to pole-vault to the top, waving at some curious spectators around the base so as to

not raise suspicions. I couldn't have Hawk Moth know that I was hurt - that would be almost as bad as my Father finding out.

Before I put away my staff, I sent Ladybug a quick message to meet me here when she was done with her patrol. I needed the spare time to think, anyway. By the time she'd run her route, I would have a rough plan and an open mind. There was no reason to be angry at my partner yet. Not until I knew for sure she was a willing participant.

Still, my heart leapt into my throat when I saw her land on the monument.

"Hey, Chat Noir! What's up?" She smiled as she came up behind me, and I fought to resist those sparkling eyes. Ladybug must have noticed me look away suddenly, because she spoke up. "Are you okay? I didn't see you running your half of patrol."

"I'm fine," I grumbled, a little afraid to admit it. "I just got a sprained ankle during the last Akuma fight."

Her eyebrows furrowed under her mask. "My miraculous cure should've healed you." The statement had an underlying question.

"Well, I guess it doesn't fix everything like we thought."

"Huh," she sighed as she took a seat, dangling her legs over the side of the Arc. Ladybug absently fiddled with a pigtail as she got comfortable with the silence and the steadily warming night air. The motion reminded me of Marinette. She often does that when she's lost in thought.

Marinette... crap.

"So LB, I need to talk to you about something important. It has to do with the other miraculous holders."

"Oh! Of course, Chaton, you're absolutely right!" I gave a grimace and shot her a confused glance. She didn't catch it. "You can't patrol right now, so we need someone to fill your spot for the time being. It's actually something I've been wanting to talk about for a while now." Bug looked almost bashful as she talked, but her energy was excited. I nodded for her to continue. "Well, the way I see it, we've been only getting busier with our civilian lives, and it's hard to find time to dedicate to patrolling. But, we still have an obligation to keep the city safe. So I was thinking we could work out a schedule with all the current holders so no one is overburdened!"

Impressed, I could only agree. "Sounds like a brilliant plan, My Lady, as always." This did give me the opportunity to maybe work this schedule to my favor. "So, let's run down a list."

The bluenette grabbed a piece of paper and a pen from her infinite yo-yo purse, prepared as always. She began to write down all the names, muttering them as she went. "So we've got Rena, Carapace, Viperion, Ryuko, Pegasus, King Monkey--"

"Queen Bee?" I suggested.

“Never again,” was her quick response. “Of course, there’s also us. So that’s 8 people to split patrol between. I’ll check in with everyone soon to get a rough schedule worked out.”

Here was my in; the best way to bring up a conversation. “So, how do you pick the other holders, anyway?”

She looked genuinely started by my question, as evidenced by her blue eyes widening. “What do you mean?”

“Well,” I took a deep breath, “Master Fu entrusted you with the miraculous, to find a proper holder for each if needed. Obviously I don’t know any of their identities, but I’m curious as to why you pick them? What do you look for?”

“Oh,” she looked down and furrowed her eyebrows again. My partner didn’t speak for so long that I almost gave up on an answer, but then finally she broke the silence. “I guess I just look for anyone I know who are smart, brave, dependent, and good people. When I’m in a battle that needs help from a new hero, the right person always comes to mind. There’s only one person out there who can really wear each miraculous properly. I’ve made a mistake here and there,” she blushed and turned away, likely thinking of her mistake choosing me as Aspid, “but overall, I trust every holder with my life. I know they’re the best people for the job.” Ladybug finished with a whimsical smile. She looked so beautiful in the moonlight, radiating happiness. I hated to ruin it.

But some questions needed to be asked.

“You seem to be really good at reading people. Can I maybe ask for some advice?” I flashed a nervous smile.

Her wide blue eyes blinked at me in surprise before softening. “Of course, Kitty. How can I help?”

“Well, there’s this friend...” This wasn’t exactly how I was planning on approaching the subject, but I needed to skirt around the issue without becoming suspicious. At this point, I was winging it, and my stomach turned in knots as a consequence. Here goes nothing. “She’s a really great friend of mine, and I’d never want her to get hurt. But the guy she’s dating is being dishonest. I... I think he’s cheating on her. Actually, I know he is. I saw it. But it just doesn’t make any sense. I guess the question is: how do I tell her?”

Ladybug hummed and got into a thinking pose, like she was analyzing an Akuma in battle. She asked a couple questions while looking at me from the corner of her eyes. “How long have they been together?”

“Quite a few months.”

“Is he a good guy normally?”

“Yeah, this is totally out of character.”

“Do you have proof?”



“Uh...” And there’s the problem. I don’t. “Only what I saw. No one else saw anything.”

“Except the girl he’s cheating with. God, I wonder if she knows. That must be a terrible feeling.” She genuinely looked disturbed by that concept, which gave me pause. Maybe she really didn’t know? But then who was Rhapsody? “Well, if it was me, I’d want physical evidence before I told the friend. Just so there was no question. Maybe you could get the other girl in on it?”

“That’s... complicated. But I get what you’re saying. I just don’t know how I could find evidence.” At this point, I was past dismayed. Of course Ladybug wouldn’t have a bad bone in her body. She was a good person, through and through. Something else must be going on. But in order to find out, it would be difficult. A challenge. One that I needed to be ready for.

All it took for me to be sure this was the right thing to do was just to imagine Marinette’s smile. That gift should only go to those worthy of it. And currently, Luka was not.

“Thanks, LB. I’ll figure something out.” I got to my feet at this point, prepared to leap home, but of course I winced involuntarily when weight went on my ankle.

The spotted heroine took notice. “Kitty, I’m not letting you run around Paris like that. Let me at least bring you to the base of the Arc and call you a taxi.”

“I’m fine, really!” I protested, but the words fell on deaf ears as my partner wrapped her arm around my waist tightly and shot her yoyo to the nearest building. The wind was a shock on my face as we swung to the ground. She let me go only once I was holding on to the nearest lamp post. When she reached to dial on her yoyo, I noticed the hesitation in her eyes. After all, how was she going to call a taxi for an unknown occupant and address? “Don’t worry, My Lady, I’ll get home safely. I’ll call my own taxi or something like that. You’ve gotten me through the worst hurdle.” I gestured to the top of the monument to illustrate my point. “Besides, I’ve got some things to think about, thanks to your advice.”

Ladybug bit her lip while she deliberated, but my face was set and my mind made up. Finally, she turned to the side and readied her yoyo. Before she launched, those brilliant blue eyes settled on me once again. “Kitty, I-” Her eyes flickered away briefly as a rosy tint rose upon her cheeks. “I hope this girl knows how lucky she is to have a friend like you.” She looked away quickly and threw her yoyo off to a tall building nearby. “Bug out!”

### **Alya’s Point of View**

“Jesus, girl. Did you get any sleep?” I lightly touched my best friend’s arm to check for a pulse. As soon as she’d entered the classroom (somehow early for class), she collapsed onto our desk with a loud groan. When I prodded further, she absently swatted my hand away. “Alright, tell me what’s wrong.” Her response was a moan of displeasure. Oh Marinette, always the Morning Bird. I rolled my eyes.

“Is she okay?” Adrien asked from his seat. He was twisted around and looked genuinely worried. His green eyes were focused on Marinette, even though the question was directed at me. Is Model Boy starting to catch feelings?

All I could do was shrug in response. “You know our Mari. Always getting into late night shenanigans out on the town. Probably met a few hot boys and decided to go to a clu- hey!” Marinette had kicked me under the table in the shin. It was sure to leave a bruise. Snorting, I turned back to Adrien. “Yeah, she’s alive alright.”

My boyfriend laughed under his breath at my antics, but then he pulled the blonde into a conversation to distract him. I opened my phone to scroll the blogs before class began. A familiar face stared back at me from a post she’d made just a few minutes ago. She’d been out of town for a couple weeks now, and decided to announce her return to school with a selfie. The classroom was abuzz as more students caught on. Any minute now, she’d walk through the door. I nudged Marinette with my elbow. “Keep it together, girl. Your favorite person is back.”

Marinette raised her head slightly to look at me through blurry eyes, but before she could get the question out of her mouth, the door opened with a flourish.

“Hello, everyone! I’m back from New York! The orphans say ‘bonjour’, which was so cute to hear how well they caught on to my French lessons.” Lila Rossi spoke during her grand entrance. Amazing as always, she’d picked up a new style from her travels. Her purse mimicked the design of a New York subway wall, graffiti against the white tile.

I saw and felt Marinette tense up beside me with anger. She couldn’t stand the sight or mention of Lila, for whatever reason. I never let it get in the way of our friendship, but sometimes, her unwarranted fury makes me keep an eye out for akuma’s.

Lila walked flawlessly to the desk in front of us. “Adrien, did you miss me?” Though I couldn’t see his face, his body language was off. He turned ever so slightly to see her, but didn’t make a motion to return her greeting. She tried again. “There were so many little girls with your posters on their walls at the orphanage, and they were so amazed that I knew you. You should stop by next time you’re in the Big Apple!” The brunette leaned forward to leave a chaste kiss on his cheek. His fists clenched the paper in front of him. Weird.

Lila then went toward her desk across the aisle and took notice of the large presence still standing beside his girlfriend. “Oh! Ivan, I was hoping I’d see you! You wouldn’t believe my luck, but there was a famous record producer who came to adopt one of the children! I managed to pass off one of Kitty Section’s CD’s to him. Keep an eye out in case he contacts you all!”

“Bullshit,” Marinette muttered, barely audibly. No one else noticed except me.

The diplomat's daughter perched on the desk next to Sabrina. Ever since Chloe left, she’d taken the front seat, to help her astigmatism. Sabrina was thrilled to have a new friend. Chloe had really just abandoned her after the Battle of the Miraculous. Flew off to live with her mom, not wanting to face the consequences for her actions, typical Bourgeois style. In the rubble, Lila picked up Sabrina and brought her back to her normal self. Personally, I was

relieved. Sabrina deserved a better friend than Chloe, and Lila was perfect for the job. The two giggled to each other. I noticed Sabrina ask her a question that I couldn't hear, but Lila gasped like it was obvious she should've asked it sooner.

"Oh! Everyone, I forgot to mention! I saw your old Queen Bee in New York. Chloe seems so much happier over in America. She even gave me a message to pass along to everyone here. She says she genuinely regrets all the trouble she caused. Isn't that sweet?" The answering grumble from the classroom gave no clear consensus as to how we all felt. Personally, I was skeptical about how "genuine" Chloe was being. Would she still be that way if she ever returned? She might believe her, but Lila's still pretty naive when it comes to cruel people.

The bluenette beside me snorted in disbelief.

Lila turned towards the sound with wide, curious eyes. "Marinette! Are you okay, dear? You look like you could use some sleep." The concern in her voice was palpable.

And so was the anger in the returning glare. "Don't talk to me, Lila. I'm not in the mood."

"Mari," I gasped. Lila put her hand over her heart like she'd been struck. Before I could come to her defense, Madame Bustier made her way into the classroom and called for order. Everyone made their way into their proper seats and faced the front, eager for another day of learning.

With the exception of one particular blonde.

Adrien tried to do it inconspicuously, but he can't get anything past a reporter like myself. I watched as he pulled his phone out under the desk and typed a quick message.

*A: Hey Chlo, it's Adrien. I need your help with something. We need to talk, soon. Let me know what time works best for you.*

Curiouser and curiouser. What are you up to, Model Boy?

## Chapter End Notes

Why is Marinette so sleepy? What is Adrien's plan? Can we punch Lila in the face? All will be revealed soon.

# Losing Sleep

## Chapter Summary

What could possibly be bugging our protagonists?

## Chapter Notes

I loved all the comments on the last chapter, tysm! This chapter brings us closer to a part I'm super excited for, just because I love working with characters that have never met before canonically. So next update might be soon since I've been thinking about it for so long.

Anyways, y'all are awesome. Thanks for reading. <3

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

## Marinette's Point of View

Wind in my hair, shingles beneath my feet, and my lover by my side. This was a perfect way to spend an evening. Viperion chased me across the rooftops, occasionally catching me to steal a kiss before I ran away again. The thrill of our secret rendezvous before the dance had given us both an addiction we couldn't ignore. But we were safe to just be us, Ladybug and Viperion, having a superhero romance. What was the harm in that?

I landed in a crouch on the roof of Notre Dame and heard the whisper of his descent behind me. It sent goosebumps up my spine. No more running, I decided. It was time to take the plunge. One gloved hand brushed the stray hair from my neck while his lips traced my ear. I pulled his arms to wrap tighter around my torso and tilted my head to give more access. "You're so beautiful," he murmured into my neck. His fangs grazed my pulse point, encouraging me to wind my fingers in his hair. More words were whispered into my skin. "Isn't she beautiful?"

What? "Who are you talking to?" I murdered in a haze. My eyes were half-lidded and I don't think I cared too much to hear his answer.

There was another voice that responded, though it sounded like a mile away. "Princess?" The accompanying green eyes captured mine and I couldn't look away from the anguish in them.

“Marinette!” This voice was different, but still so similar. It sounded worried. Chat’s mouth was unmoving, stuck agape in shock at what he was seeing. So where was this new voice coming from?

Viperion’s kisses suddenly felt too possessive as his eyes watched Chat’s. It felt like he was claiming me. A low growl resonated from his throat.

Tears brimmed in Chat Noir’s eyes, and he looked utterly betrayed. “My Lady, how could you?” The sound of his voice breaking made me gasp for air.

“Marinette!” The voice was in my ear, but it wasn’t from my fanged companion. No, that voice was unmistakably Adrien Agreste. “Wake up!”

My head flew out of the comfort of my arms as I was suddenly back in the classroom at my desk. Sitting in front of me with a beet red face was a certain blonde model. I felt the marks on my skin from sleeping on my jacket for too long. A few months ago, having Adrien see me like this would’ve had me screaming in embarrassment. Now, all I could manage was a minor blush. “A-Adrien, what are you doing?” I noticed the rest of the classroom was mostly empty, save for a few stragglers in the back. But Adrien stayed in his seat and looked at me sheepishly.

“Sorry to wake you, Marinette. Alya and Nino said you had offered to help with my bag between classes.” My face was blank as I tried to register his meaning. Why would he need help getting between classes? I barely zoned back in to hear the last of his words. “-can’t have crutches, so to offer a helping hand is really generous of you.”

“Oh!” Oh. Of course. Alya volunteers me to help Adrien so I spend more time with him. No problem, I can absolutely walk my ex-crush between classes without issue. I stood up quickly and grabbed his bag from the ground, maybe a little rougher than intended. “Let’s head on to class before we’re late!”

He smiled widely at me, and I could swear his teeth sparkled. “Thanks Marinette. You’re awesome.” Adrien got to his feet slowly and took a hesitant step forward.

I could read the pain on his face plain as day. “Let me help you!” Slinging his bag over my shoulder, I put my arm around his waist without thinking. At that moment, I felt like Ladybug getting a citizen to safety. Not Marinette, with the arm over my shoulder for support coming from the boy I love - no, *loved*. I shook away that thought.

However, as I walked with Adrien between classes, an odd sense of deja vu hit. Chat Noir had gotten a sprained ankle around the same time as Adrien. I was pretty sure it was the same ankle too. How unfortunate. If I’m supposed to be this powerful superhero able to miraculously fix everything, why are the two blondes in my life struggling to walk? The thought brought a frown to my face.

Warm breath tickled my bangs as Adrien spoke down to me. “Mari, are you okay?”

Well *that’s* a loaded question. Am I okay? Frankly, no. My Kwami lectured me last night about being careful with my boyfriend because some people could get the wrong idea. Oh,

what's a Kwami? It's the little candy fiend that turns me into Ladybug. She's not too thrilled with my romantic rendezvous with my handsome also-superhero boyfriend when we're suited up. Says it's risky. Says other people might see us together. Other people like my leather clad partner, Chat Noir. But he's in a happy relationship, so he shouldn't care about my love life, right? So then why am I having nightmares of his betrayed eyes? It's not like he cares about betrayal anyways, since he hasn't come to see his "Princess" in months now, without any explanation. Why should I be worried about what he thinks when he's obviously not worried about me?

But my mind flashes back to last night, at the base of the Arc de Triomphe. He had told me his fears about a friend of his, and I felt the worry vibrating in his body. Seeing my kitty care so much about someone made my heart break. Maybe the reason he didn't come visit anymore was because I didn't seem to appreciate him. He's wrong, of course, I love my partner. But I hope this friend of his realizes how good she has it with him by her side.

Since I obviously can't tell Adrien any of that, I just give a tight lipped smile. "I'm fine," I say, failing to convince even myself.

His sudden stop almost made me fall, and the look on his face set my heart racing. "What's wrong? You're obviously upset, not sleeping, being unusually quiet. I swear I'll give Luka what--"

"It's not Luka," I breathed quickly, interrupting his ramble. "In fact, things with Luka are great. Better than ever. I just have a lot else on my mind right now. But nothing bad, don't worry. Thanks for caring, though!" Finishing my lie, I turned to give him a bright smile, closing my eyes so he couldn't see the truth in them.

Adrien put his foot down - literally - and grabbed my other shoulder so he could look into my eyes. The action was unnerving, but not in a bad way. His head leaned down to try and catch my gaze, but I was looking everywhere *but* at him. "Marinette," he spoke, and I felt a slender finger turn my head to him. The look in his eyes was one I'd never seen before. His green eyes were blooming with conflict, worry, and pain. But beneath the bad, there was another emotion I couldn't identify. Almost like he was holding himself back from doing or saying something. He took a deep breath before continuing. "You're an amazing person. You're so kind, and generous, and brave. You only deserve the best in life, because that's what you are. The one who gets to see that smile... he better be worthy of you. And as your friend, I will make sure of it." His eyes were now set with determination, though I still could feel him holding back.

I shivered from the electricity between us. This was so not happening. "Adrien..."

A text alert startled us both, nearly knocking us off unsteady feet. Adrien sheepishly pulled his phone from his pocket to check the message. I didn't mean to, but I found myself catching a glance.

*Chlo: Call me anytime after 9.*

The message was short and direct, without the usual Chloe flair. We both frowned at that, but it was a welcome distraction. When he went to pocket the phone again, he checked the time. “Oh crap, we’re going to be late to class!”

My eyes bugged out at the realization. “Let’s go!” We quickly resumed our original walking position, but this time, we moved much faster. Sliding into class with seconds to spare, we got seated and the conversation we’d been having felt over. But I was filled with so many more questions.

Great job, Hot Stuff. Just when I had enough problems with my boyfriend and partner, now you wanna be thrown back into the loop with sweet compliments and gentle touches? I’m a mess...

### **Adrien’s Point of View**

As I turn off my alarm, I stare at the ceiling above my bed, thinking how utterly pointless it was. On a normal night, I would certainly need an alarm to wake me up so early. But tonight, my mind was racing with plans and ideas. I’d gotten into bed a little before midnight. Yet here I lay, three hours later, still just as awake.

Time to enact part one of my plans.

I got to my feet so I could pace in front of my windows. There was no way I could stay still during the impending conversation. Asking Chloe for this kind of favor - or hell, a favor of any kind - was a stretch. But she’s the only person that could do the job.

It was three in the morning here, which meant it was nine at night in New York City. Pulling up her contact info, I went ahead and called my childhood friend. One ring. Two rings. Three - the line connected, but I didn’t hear anything on the other side. “Chloe? Are you there?”

There was a muffled sound that came through the speaker, followed by her groggy voice. “Adrikins? What are you doing calling me so early?”

“Early? I thought I got the time difference right.”

“Time... difference...”

“Between Paris and New York.”

“Oh! I came back to Paris to visit. Only arrived yesterday. I’d assumed you’d heard, and that was why you were reaching out.” Her voice was slowly coming back out of sleep, but it still sounded different somehow.

I chuckled bashfully. “Sorry to wake you. I hadn’t heard. Though, it is really convenient that you’re back.”

Now her voice took on a playful quality. “Oh? Did you miss me, Adrikins?”

There’s the Chloe I’m used to. “Of course I missed you. But on that note, we can catch up tomorrow over lunch. What I wanted to talk about can wait if you need your sleep.”

She scoffed. “You already ruined my beauty sleep, so we might as well talk now. Obviously it’s important if you were willing to lose sleep over it.”

No way was I going to admit to her that I hadn’t actually slept yet. That was just an invitation for way too many questions.

But how to approach this, now with the knowledge of her being in town? It certainly helped. If there was anyone I knew who was an expert at scheming, it was Chloe. When Lila mentioned her in class, it set lightbulbs off in my head. Chloe isn’t near the situation, and I really don’t have to tell her who is involved for her to care. In fact, if I told her it was Marinette I was trying to protect, she’d probably refuse to help.

I must’ve taken too long to answer, because Chloe called my name with a hint of worry. “Sorry Chlo, just thinking.”

She could hear the exasperation in my voice. “This is really bugging you, huh?”

*Bugging me.* Ironical. She has no idea how so. “I need your help, Chloe. There’s this friend of mine-”

“Anyone I know?”

“No, it’s a new student. But we’ve gotten close over the last few months.” I really hoped she couldn’t hear the sound of my lies.

Chloe hummed in amusement. “Close enough to worry Kagami?”

“What? No! Kagami actually likes her too.” I heard a *hmpf* through the phone, but at least she seemed to believe me. “Anyway, she’s got a boyfriend. Which leads to this problem.”

“No, I won’t help you get rid of the boyfriend.”

“Not get rid of him. That’s...” Sighing, I pinched the bridge of my nose and began to pace. Chloe can be very quick to judge and make assumptions, which is a quality I hadn’t been used to since she was gone. “He’s cheating on her. But I need proof before I tell Ma-err, my friend.”

“Proof, huh? And how am I supposed to help?” There was a little bit of allegation in her question.

“With your classic Bourgeois scheming? You know I’m no good at this stuff. But back when we were kids, you always kept Felix on his toes with all your pranks. I need that brain to



figure this out.”

“Awe, Adrikins, you flatter me. Of course I’ll help.”

I let out a breath I was unaware I was holding. Chloe might have considerable flaws, but underneath it all, she was a great friend.

We spent almost an hour on the phone, making and remaking plans, working through all the kinks in the operation. I didn’t agree with everything she suggested morally, but I had to admit they were solid ideas. What Luka was doing wasn’t moral either. Fight fire with fire, right? What could go wrong?

When the sun threatened to rise, I knew I’d regret the lack of sleep, but it would be worth it if this worked.

Chloe yawned through the phone. “I need to rest up if we’re going to pull this off. Maybe I can squeeze in a couple hours of beauty sleep.”

Chuckling, I walked the distance to my bed. When I sunk down next to Plagg, he cracked a verdant eye and somehow communicated all his irritation through it. The hand that wasn’t holding the phone went to scratch behind his ears, which seemed to slightly appease the god of destruction. “You don’t need sleep to be beautiful, Chloe,” I spoke without thinking. She has been my friend since diapers. Practically my sister.

“Careful, Adrien. Wouldn’t want to give Kagami competition, now would we?” When I heard the blush in her voice, I mentally slapped myself for forgetting her feelings. Despite all this time, she still romanticized our friendship. I usually am better at not encouraging it, but again, it had been a while since we’d talked.

“Sorry, Chlo. I wasn’t thinking.”

Surprisingly, there was a lighthearted giggle from her. A giggle from Chloe? How much has New York changed her? “Don’t worry, Adrikins. You no longer monopolize my heart. That being said, I apparently have a type. Boys far out of my reach. Irony, huh?”

“Who could ever be out of your reach? Do I need to talk some sense into some American boy?”

“No,” her voice sounded different now, genuinely sad. “Sense won’t help. He’s... just don’t worry. I’ll still be my beautiful, flirty self tomorrow.” It was clear she didn’t want to talk about it. “Goodnight, Adrien.”

No matter how much I wanted to ask, I needed to respect her privacy. “I can’t wait to see you again. Goodnight, Chloe. Sweet dreams.”

There was the sound of a scoff before the line disconnected. While I should probably be worried and staying up thinking about it, my brain finally felt at peace with a solid plan in mind. I could feel the sleep overtaking me.

My eyes closed, and all I could see was Marinette. Her smile, her laugh, her freckles... I promise, I'll save you... Princess...

## Chapter End Notes

P.S. I forgot to talk about the New York special last time, but I loved it so much. Our cuties did good. (except with automatic doors...) I officially want Olympia and Barbara to be my lesbian parents. Also, I love having a miraculous character with my name! I'm only a small percentage of Native American. Do you think I can still cosplay Jess without being insensitive? Anyways, let me know your thoughts on the special? Any new ships you've discovered? I now ship Jess and Luka a bit (not as much as Rhaperion though) and though I haven't seen anyone else suggest this, I also ship Aeon with Max. Two techno cuties.

See ya next time!

# Wrong Perspectives

## Chapter Summary

Adrien and Chloe's plan unfold, with a special witness.

## Chapter Notes

A little shorter of a chapter, but life has been a bit rough. I still hope you'll enjoy this.

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

### Adrien's Point of View

“Wow Chloe, you haven't changed one bit.”

Why my comment brought a scowl from the blonde, I may never know. But after months of not seeing her, Chloé stood before me looking exactly the same. Same platinum hair pulled back into a high ponytail. Same blue eyeshadow and pale pink lip gloss. Same striped shirt and yellow blazer. All crowned by white sunglasses atop her head. I couldn't see a hint of Americanization on her. Not that I'm surprised. I know better than to take what Lila says at face value.

She bit her bottom lip and pointedly looked away from me. “Well, where is the target?”

Straight to business, I see. We stood on the banks of the Seine, just a short ways down from Luka's houseboat. I figured it would be a good way to ensure we get his attention. It was a Tuesday afternoon, and I knew he'd be coming home soon from his part time job. While it should feel wrong to use my knowledge of his schedule for such reasons, the end justifies the means.

I gave Chloé a Bluetooth earpiece and put a matching one in my own ear. These were more advanced versions of the ones Nino and I used on his date at the zoo with Marinette years ago. This way, we could hear each other perfectly without anything being too obvious. She positioned hers and we were ready.

“I'll go take my place. Just let me know when you see him coming.” Chloé graced me with a rare smile, which just reminded me how grateful I am for her help.

“Thank you so much Chloé. You don't know how much this means to me.”

At this, she scoffed, though I only heard it over the speaker at this point. “Yeah, yeah. You owe me one.” She pranced over to the waterline so she could stare absently into the water. If I didn’t know any better, I’d suspect she’s done this form of espionage before. She seemed so natural at it. Maybe Chloé has found her calling...

Within minutes, I spotted Luka’s signature blue hair sticking out from the yellow helmet he used when riding his bike. Stopping, he hopped off and removed the bright covering, holding it against his hip with one hand while he guided his bike to be locked up. I quickly concealed myself behind a concrete support against the wall, thankful that my ankle was feeling better. If I could see him, so could Chloé. “Target spotted. Guy with the bike. Do you see him?”

“Woah,” Chloé gasped, and when I looked at her face, it was slightly pink. “Your friend has good taste.”

“He’s a cheater, remember?”

“Right,” she sighed. “No ones perfect these days.” I waited for her to correct herself and say she was perfect, like she always would, but that was the end of her thought. Instead her eyes were focused on the lean musician as he descended the steps to the river bank. He wore a white shirt with a paint-splattered silhouette of Kitty Sections’ logo on the front, and paired it with black ripped jeans and purple high tops. It was a really good look on him. I wish I had more freedom over the way I dressed, like he did. His outfit said everything you needed to know about him. It didn’t look like he was hiding anything. Typical rock guitarist with a bad boy image. “Damn, he’s hot. Like, no offense Adrikins, because you’re still the cutest guy I’ve ever seen, but this guy is straight up *hot*.”

I tried not to take offense. “Still think you can do this?”

She didn’t even need to give me an answer. With sass and poise, Chloé walked over to Luka. After a moment, he noticed the blonde striding towards him. His face was unreadable. I tensed as the plan began to unfold.

“Oh my gosh, what are the odds?” Chloe began. “I was *just* listening to your latest demo. You’re Luka, from Kitty Section, right?” She was reading the script perfectly. It was amazing how much she’d grown in just the few short years since we tried filming our class movie. Back then, she refused to rehearse or take any outside input. Yet here she was, giving the dialogue her own flair of course, but sticking to the story.

And he looked like a deer in headlights. Would we catch him in our trap? “Uhh, yeah,” he cleared his throat awkwardly. “That’s me, alright. You a fan?”

“Only of you,” she purred, leaning into him. I recognized that move from the many models who had tried it on me. She had her shoulders back and neck up, exposing her cleavage to any innocent victim. From this angle, I couldn’t tell if it was effective. Her next move was using a delicate and manicured finger to pull on his bag strap for leverage. “I just love the way you play guitar. You’re clearly very talented with your hands.” The blonde winked, and I began to feel a little wrong seeing my childhood best friend flirt so brazenly.

“Hmm, thanks. We do it all for the love of music.” He was standing stiff as a board, which told me enough that he was fighting himself. Holding back, but from what?

“And love for the fans, right? I’m sure you have all kinds of fans throwing themselves at you.” She emphasized her words with similar actions, taking his arm in hers and pressing it between her cleavage. Damn, she was good. It’s like she went to every co-ed photoshoot I ever had and took notes of how the other models treated me. Every little flirt, pose, smile, was textbook.

Luka took a step away. “Actually, no. I’ve got a girlfriend, and most fans seem to understand that.”

“I bet she’s nowhere near as pretty as me.” Chloe pouted, but didn’t seem dissuaded. “My Daddy is the mayor, you know? I’m sure I could be an asset to you, with all that power and authority. Plus, can you imagine the publicity you could get, dating the one and only Chloe Bourgeois? Kitty Section would skyrocket in popula-”

“Why are you doing this?” He cut her off abruptly. Even from this distance, I noticed her grip on his arm slacken.

Chloe tried to recompose herself before carrying on. “Look, I see what I want and I get it. Fine if you don’t want your precious girlfriend to get hurt, she doesn’t need to know, but I’m giving you the opportunity of a lifetime here.”

I couldn’t see what was happening, as it was obscured by his tall figure. All I knew was that he brought his hand up to her face, at which point her breath hitched, and I heard a simple whisper. “This isn’t you...”

## **Lila’s Point of View**

It was pathetic watching Chloé throw herself at that boy, and that brought me great pleasure. There’s no telling when the trollop came back into town. All I know is I saw Adrien texting her about a secret meeting, so here I am. At first, I thought it was going to be them having a disgusting secret romance, but color me delighted. What do I find instead? A covert operation of seduction. My favorite type.

Masterfully disguised, I sat atop the wall bordering the bank where that obnoxiously colored houseboat was docked. From here, I had the perfect view of Chloe and her blonde partner. Adrien was below me and a little to the side, but I could still hear him perfectly. The poor boy thought he was hidden so well.

No no, sweetie. I know better.

What I didn’t know yet was why they were doing this charade. Back to observing, I suppose.

Chloe abruptly looked like she'd been struck by lightning. The guy had said something that greatly upset her, for sure. It took a moment, but Bourgeois surprised me with a sudden burst of speed as she sprinted away from him. His arm briefly reached for her before dropping at his side. The blue haired boy walked back to his houseboat with his head held low. Interesting...

"Chloe, what happened?" Adrien asked when she reached him. She frantically removed the earpiece and shoved it into his hand. My future husband looked floored by this development. "Chlo, talk to me!"

She glared at him through teary eyes. I smirked to myself, enjoying the sight of the once great Chloe Bourgeois trembling. "He's not cheating."

Adrien shook his head in disbelief. "What do you mean? Of course he is. I saw it with my own eyes."

Chloe crossed her arms over her chest, but more in an attempt to hold herself together. "What did you see?"

The model clenched his sculpted jaw as frustration began to build. "I saw him kissing someone else."

"You're wrong," the girl practically sobbed. "He wouldn't even consider cheating. Or else he would've taken my offer."

Realization showed on Adrien's face. "You know, the girl he's cheating with does look pretty similar to the one he's dating. Same hair and eye color. Maybe you're just not his type."

"Or maybe you're just not her type." The words cut the air between them like a knife. At this point, I was beyond interested. And I'd of course been slyly recording the whole conversation. This was the juicy bits. "Seriously, Adrien. Luka is a genuinely good guy. Obviously cares for his girlfriend a lot. You must have imagined what you saw."

"There's no way I—" Adrien's fists were so clenched that his knuckles were turning white. "I know what I saw. He had her pressed up against a wall in an alleyway and he was practically devouring her."

Chloé rolled her eyes and groaned. "See! It was in a dark alleyway! Same eyes, same hair, same girl! You just couldn't see because you didn't want to. You're just fishing for excuses because deep down, you want to break them up. That's the only reason you'd put me through this. Well, I won't help anymore. Some things are bigger than your own selfish desires. If they're your friends, you need to back off and accept reality. No matter how much your heart aches at the thought. No matter how often they enter your dreams and tell you they love you. No matter what they do or say that you could possibly misconstrue to fit your hopes. Let them be happy together."

Eyes wider than ever before, Adrien looked like a fish without water with how he stood, mouth agape, sputtering for words. "Wh-what are you saying? You think I like her?" Chloe just waited with a pained look on her face. "No, that's not true. I saw him in the alleyway."

He's cheating and it's only going to lead to him breaking her heart. I won't let that happen to my friend. That's all there is to it."

Chloé snorted, completely unladylike. "You're so in love you can't even see it."

Adrien broke. "Marinette is just a friend!"

I couldn't tell you whose eyes were wider between the three of us. Adrien's green eyes reflected a mistake in his wording that he only just caught. My eyes were raised in amusement because of course it's that bluenette brat. And Chloe's...

She looked furious. "DUPAIN-CHENG?! *That's* who this is all about?" When Adrien refused to answer and instead stared intently at the ground, Chloé wiped away newly burgeoning tears. "Goodbye, Adrien. Call me when you stop being so fucking blind." And with a dramatic swish of her blonde ponytail, she walked away and up the stairs to the awaiting car.

Adrien looked utterly devastated. I'd learned all I could, so I took my leave as well. Walking into an alcove, I dialed the one number I knew could help.

Ring...

Ring.....

Ring.....

"This better be important. What is it, Ms. Rossi?"

"Oh, Mr. Agreste, do I have some news for you." I smirked into the phone. This was going to be fun.

## Chapter End Notes

So, thoughts? What is Lila up to? Why is Chloe so upset? Will Adrien ever stop being so... damn... clueless??

More to come...

# Revelations, Good or Bad?

## Chapter Summary

How will Marinette feel about the events that transpired between Luka and Chloe? And what will all these Kwami Conventions lead to?

## Chapter Notes

Hi y'all! I know it's been a long while, and I have MANY reasons, but I'll have them at the end. For now, happy holidays to all my readers and let's look forward to a better year ahead. Oh, and I have the next chapter after this written already, so it'll be out in a couple days! I hope y'all are still reading this story, because it's about to get interesting!

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

## Marinette's Point of View

“So just to be absolutely clear, without any misunderstanding, what you’re saying to me is that Chloé Bourgeois, Bitch Queen of DuPont, who could have whatever she wanted from her Daddy, and who I believed to be in New York, *that* Chloé... just propositioned you?”

“Yeah, you heard right.”

I stared dumbfounded at my boyfriend. He seemed completely unfazed by the whole event. Meanwhile, I was livid. “Why?” I asked, with my arms crossed over my chest in anger. We were in my room hanging out a bit before patrol. Best part about having a superhero boyfriend: he can sneak in easily. Worst part: he’s hot. Well, that’s usually not a bad part, but when it comes to blonde witches, there’s a problem.

“I don’t think she meant it. She didn’t really seem like herself.” Luka sighed and looked away.

“Ohhh, and you’re a valid judge of Chloe’s usual character how? I didn’t think you even knew her!”

He flushed. “I don’t, but that’s not the point. Mari,” his manicured hand reached for mine. I reluctantly accepted. “You always say how good a judge of character I am. I didn’t need to know you in order to hear your Heartsong. It just flows. And her song felt very disjointed and off key. Like it wasn’t her pulling the strings.”



“How could you possibly sense that?” I pouted, but I could feel my anger melting away.

“Trust me, my Muse. That wasn’t Chloé talking.” Exhaling, I finally gave in and took my space beside him on the chaise. My body felt warm and protected as I leaned into him. Of course Luka would never hurt me. This was all her doing. I just needed to put it out of my mind and focus on the melodic presence of my boyfriend. “Plus, she had an earpiece in.”

Scratch that. “What?” I tried to pull away to look at him, but he held me tighter. “An earpiece? Like, someone was listening to you two talk?”

“I guess,” he shrugged. The nonchalant behavior was strong with him tonight.

“Did you see anyone else who might’ve been listening?”

“Marinette, I’m just as clueless as you are. But whatever she was doing, it seemed pretty important to her. The way she was presenting herself...” Luka raised a hand to ruffle his hair before letting out a breath. He didn’t continue that thought. “Anyway, we’ve just gotta be careful around people until we find out who she’s working with.”

I nodded into his shoulder. Then, a humorous thought hit me. “I want to say this is a new low for her, but I’d be lying,” I chuckled.

Suddenly, my comfortable alcove between Luka’s side and arm tensed up. “What did she do that was so bad?” Right, he didn’t remember what happened during the Miracle Queen battle. He was under her spell.

“I guess I should explain. That day, she almost uncovered every miraculous holder's identity. If Chat Noir and I hadn’t heard her call for them, we wouldn’t have been able to stop you. And the fact that we took time away to do damage control made their victory way too close. I fully blame her selfish actions for why Master Fu is no longer around.”

“Selfish? I thought she was under Hawkmoth's control.”

“Not as much as usual. Chloé has been jealous of rightly chosen holders since the beginning. She wanted the notoriety and power. I wouldn’t let her have the Bee miraculous again *because* she’d revealed her identity. It made her a liability and a target for the villains. So instead of accepting the consequences of her actions, she decided to reveal all the identities. Or at least she tried to.” I sighed, exhausted by the topic of our near defeat last year. Chloé hasn’t been on my radar in so many months now that I’d forgotten how much she could upset me. After everything, she comes back to town and has the gall to try and seduce *my* boyfriend. As if being in competition with her over Adrien wasn’t enough. I wanted to put her in the past. But this makes me think she’s finding a way into my future somehow. The idea made me sick.

“How did you win?” Luka asked, breaking me from my thoughts.

I snorted, picturing the ridiculous scene. “Chloé had adorned herself with every miraculous she could. FYI, she cannot rock a nose ring. But because she was trying to use them all for nefarious and selfish reasons, the kwami’s refused to help her. She got what she deserved.

Then Master Fu named me the new Guardian and the battle was over. Once she'd realized she lost, she went on some rant about going away to New York and not being my fan anymore while she threw every miraculous at my feet. That was the last I'd heard from her."

He was silent, which for some reason gave me worry. Worry that only increased when he pulled back to look at my face, putting distance between us and depriving me of my warmth. "But, she gave them back? Willingly?" I nodded, unsure where he was going with this. "You're telling me that she had the ability to run off with all of that power, and she didn't take it?"

"We would've stopped her."

"Again, not the point. That doesn't sound like someone selfish to me. Sounds like someone who might still have hope of redemption."

I burst out laughing. Tears streamed from my eyes as the giggles consumed me. One look into my boyfriend's eyes had me gasping for breath to try and restore some facade of calm. He looked disappointed at my reaction. Time to defend myself. "You met her today. She sounds like nothing has changed in the year she's been away."

His blue eyes were downcast. "Is there any chance she can change your mind?"

I fought back another snort. He looked deadly serious, and I was not in the mood to argue. So instead, I sighed heavily. "I can't rule out miracles, I guess. So there's a very minuscule chance, sure."

Suddenly, Luka's eyes lit up like he'd been given a challenge.

Shaking my head, I pulled out a notebook. "Can we focus on the schedule now?" Per my conversation with Chat the other day, I needed to make a new schedule for patrol that includes other miraculous users. Tonight we were going to pass out the schedules while on our routes. But currently, I was staring at a mostly blank page.

He smiled, and the sight warmed my heart. "Of course, my Muse." Slender arms pulled me closer to his body and he nuzzled my cheek with his nose. Now *this* was normal. I turned my face to give him a gentle kiss that ended up lasting far longer than it should've. But hey, we're teens in love.

### **Sass's Point of View**

While my Master has his moments with the Guardian, I take my refuge in the miracle box to join my fellow kwami's. Barkk stood watch in case an akuma were to attack. We learned our lesson on that with Sandboy. Giving them a slight nod of hello, I entered the box.

And was instantly met with chaos.

“What if we tried to reach out to Duusu?”

“No, she might be too emotional to help.”

“Plus, we wouldn’t want to accidentally reach Mayura and compromise the new Guardians location.”

“Ooh! Why don’t we just search every house in the city while the humans are asleep!”

“I know it’s been a while, Orikko, so I’ll just remind you that Paris has gotten a lot bigger since you last were out.”

“Have we tried following the purified akumas back to their origin?”

“They don’t return, as far as we can tell.”

“What if we triangulated their origin by notating every black butterfly spotting and backtracking to Hawkmoths location?”

“Wow, Kaalki, where’d you come up with that?”

“My holder is very intelligent.”

“Everyone!” Tikki finally called the crowd to attention. Being the goddess of creation, everyone listened when she spoke. Not that she ever abused that power. “We are not getting anywhere with these hypotheticals. It’s been months and we’re no closer to a solid plan to take down Hawkmoth. I think we’re missing something. That being said, Kaalki has a very good idea. I want you to talk it over with your boy tonight so he can begin creating it. But finding the enemy is only part of the solution.”

There were murmured agreements around the group, multicolored heads nodding acceptance. Tikki was right, after all. It had been a long time with no progress. There had to be something we were missing.

I had approached quietly, but now my presence was noticed. “Sass! What have you brought us?” Ziggy shouted, causing some heads to turn towards me.

Given that I arrived with my Master, I was unable to bring a gift. However... “I brought information.” Now I had all eyes staring at me with intrigue. “It has to do with one Chloé Bourgeois.”

“My Queen!” Pollen buzzed with excitement. “How is she?”

“Not well, I’m afraid. She’s mixed up in some kind of scam meant to sow seeds of distrust between my Master and the Guardian.”

“Ooh, gimme the dirt,” Daizzi squealed.

“I wish you hadn’t taught her that modern phrase,” Longg rolled his eyes while Xuppu gave Daizzi the kwami equivalent of a fist bump.

“She is troubled, My Queen, but she has a good heart.” Pollen flew solemnly to my side, her buzz now a light hum.

“Let’s hope you’re right, Pollen. Because right now, it doesn’t look too good for my master. We know Hawkmoth has been intent on akumatizing Marinette. I fear this is another plot in motion.” Collective gasps came from around me. We knew the risks of an akumatized guardian, especially one who is Tikki’s current bug.

There were other factors in play, of course, like the fact I could smell Camembert from where Plagg’s cat was hiding. But I didn’t know what to make of that yet.

We spoke at length about the possible outcomes. Our talk was nearly cut short by Barkk returning to the box and saying we were needed again. All the kwamis who were leaving the box said their goodbyes. And then, we returned to the world of Paris to put our countermeasures into action.

As unpredictable as we’ve known humans to be, this was going to be a wild journey.

We can only hope everyone makes it out the other side.

## **Ladybug’s Point of View**

While Viperion ran our patrol, I brought the miraculous and schedules to each recipient. Everyone seemed to be okay with the plan. First up on the schedule was me and Viperion, and then tomorrow it would be Carapace with Chat, followed by Rena and Ryuko. The list carried on, mixing the heroes with their availabilities so there wasn’t a single night with a lapse of coverage. Included was a link to a group chat for all of us to communicate securely, courtesy of Max. So if anyone had to miss their patrol, someone else could pick up the position.

It was all very complex to figure out, but now that it was over, I could finally breathe a sigh of relief. Racing across the rooftops with less weight on my shoulders, feeling like I could fly from the newly discovered freedom, I quickly found my boyfriend. “Hey, Handsome!” I shouted as I swung to his side. He was slipping his phone into his pocket (of course his suit came with pockets!) and then he turned to smile at me.

“Hello, my beautiful Muse,” he practically sang as he leaned into me. I momentarily lost awareness of where we were. All that mattered in that moment was his lips gently caressing mine.

Then, Tikki’s warning crept into my head.

“Viperion...” I spoke with a gentle caution as I pulled away, but not too far.

His eyes fell. "I know, I just couldn't resist. She'll forgive me." A soft smile played on his soft lips, and sent the butterflies in my stomach into motion. Regardless, he obliged and backed off, giving just enough distance between us that our fingertip could touch.

There was a calm air of silence between us. Paris stretched beneath our feet, but it felt like we were in our own little world. The rooftop we sat upon was nondescript, and yet from it we could still see everywhere important to us. My balcony was just visible in the distance. A few blocks over sat my school, and to our right, there were the distant lights of Luka's houseboat. I could even spot the Agreste mansion from here, not that it was hard. Mansions tend to stand out in a city. Part of me wondered what Adrien was doing at that moment. Is he looking out at the night sky with Kagami, as I am with Luka?

No, that's silly. I just saw Kagami when I brought her the dragon miraculous. Besides, I shouldn't bother myself thinking about Adrien. Or anyone else for that matter. I had a genuine, handsome, and loving man beside me. Luka earned my heart by giving me his trust.

It was late at night. No one could see us. So I leaned in against his shoulder and closed my eyes. I felt his warm chuckle on my forehead before he gently kissed the skin there. A smooth motion later, and he was playing his lute in a very familiar melody. Sinking deeper into his side, I let the tune send my heart soaring. He was playing my song.

My Heartsong.

### **Luka's Phone, Moments Before**

*V: Come on, Rhaps.*

*V: Please talk to me...*

*V: I'm worried about you.*

*R: Don't be.*

*V: You're my best friend. I have every right to worry.*

*R: Every right, but no reason.*

*R: Just...*

*R: Leave me alone.*

*V: Why? Did I do something wrong?*

*R: No. You're perfect.*

*V: I feel like I struck a chord there.*

*R: God, shut up with the music metaphors!*

*R: Look, just go back to your evening with Melody, okay? Enjoy her company. I don't want to know the details. I don't even want to talk about it.*

*V: Shit, Ladybug will be back soon. I don't want to end this conversation yet. You're confusing me.*

*R: I'M confusing YOU? I thought you were hanging out with your girlfriend tonight, but instead you're out with Ladybug? How many girls do you have?*

*R: Here I thought I was special.*

*V: You are special, Rhapsody.*

*V: Ladybug is Melody.*

*V: You two are the only important women in my life.*

*V: Besides my mom and sister.*

*R: Wait...*

*V: I need to go now. She's almost here. Can we please talk about this later?*

*R: Serpent...*

*V: Rhapsody, please? Just don't shut me out again.*

*R: Viperion...*

*V: We'll talk later.*

*R: .....Luka?*

## Chapter End Notes

Phew... so that's a thing...

Rhapsody knows a lot now. What will she do with this information? Wait and see!

Alright, now in case anyone wants a quick rundown of what's been going on these past two months that I've been absent, truly it's been chaos. I live in the US, which I wouldn't recommend. Early November, when I last posted, was right at the start of the election. I have severe anxiety, and I'm on the opposite side of the political spectrum than most of my family, so I genuinely lost myself for a little while there with fear that it could all explode. After that, I planned and held my sister's baby shower, then had a week of

overtime at work, followed by the week of Black Friday, which means SALES. But the day before Thanksgiving, we found a reason to be extremely thankful. My sister, who was 39 weeks pregnant, was in a driveby shooting. Her car just happened to be in the way between two others. This was MINUTES after we'd finished shopping together. I got the call and arrived before the police. My job was calming down my 2 year old niece so my sis could work on not going into labor. She didn't, thankfully, and had her healthy baby boy a week later. But the car was totaled, hit by at least 7 rifle shots. One penetrated the steering column, inches from her big baby bump. My niece still has nightmares. But on a brighter note, it made our family hold each other a little tighter. I took care of my niece while my sis was in the hospital post-birth, which if you've ever taken care of a two year old, you know it's impossible to get anything done. Then, it was the week of my vacation to celebrate my birthday and my boyfriend graduating college. Utterly amazing trip. Next, Christmas season of being busy in retail, and by this point I got worried about posting. I had been slowly writing little segments while on breaks at work, but I was beginning to fear that no one would read it anymore after so long. But several things happened to get me back on my feet. One: a new reader commented asking me to update, which inspired me. Two: my lovely Beta reader was there for me and never gave up. Three: I remembered why I started writing and posting these in the first place. I never intended for them to become widely read. They were meant to be a creative outlet for me, which I'd been lacking. The readers were bonuses, assuring me that my work actually wasn't terrible. Hell, maybe one day I'll be inspired enough to write my original works again.

On that note, I'm back. I intend to keep writing and maybe finish this story within the next couple months. There's just too much that I'm having to hold myself back from writing so I don't clutter up the storyline. But we're getting there.

If anyone wants, to make up for me being gone, I can post a chapter of one of my original works, written years ago, but still in my head. Maybe you'll all help inspire me to continue those, just like y'all have been here for Heartsong.

Again, thank you all for everything. <3

# Missing Princess

## Chapter Summary

Chat's missing his princess, but she's nowhere to be found.

## Chapter Notes

Season 4 hurts so far... especially this story. Stick with me, despite my making Luka kinda an asshole. More notes at the end.

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

## Chat Noir's Point of View

If I had any doubt that Luka was cheating with Ladybug, it was squashed the minute I saw them on the rooftop.

Wayzz, knowing my identity from the days when Master Fu wore his miraculous, was the one to bring me my patrol schedule. One glance told me that tonight was Viperion and Ladybug. Curious that they'd be put together. The green and black kwami's tried to talk me out of it, but there was no stopping me. I transformed and jumped into the night. Only a few blocks away, and I found them.

Ladybug had her head on his shoulder, which wasn't too strange by itself. Often she would get tired on our patrols and take a little catnap on me. She just worked herself too hard. So that wasn't the nail in Luka's coffin for me. It was the song.

I recognized that song the instant I heard it. There were many nights when Marinette would lose herself in a project and start humming it absentmindedly. He wrote it for her, after all. Said it was the song that radiated from her heart. Her Heartsong, and hers alone.

So then why was he playing it to Ladybug?

I needed to see Marinette. Screw this whole avoiding her business. We've been fine talking at school, so there is no reason I can't still be her friend at night as my stray self. Even thinking of her reaction to seeing me again made me smile. There's no denying I miss my Princess.

"Chat Noir!" Wayzz finally caught up to me and tried to continue his lecture. "You shouldn't spy on people. It's unbecoming of a hero. You need to return home and let Plagg and I talk



you through this.”

“Okay,” I shrugged. A small smile played on my lips, but I looked away from Wayzz so he couldn’t see. “I’ll go home. Meet you there?” Before I could get a response, I jumped to the next roof. Here’s hoping he won’t catch on to my plan. Because while I could easily go back to the cold and foreboding mansion I live in, there’s somewhere else that always felt more like home.

Less than five minutes later, I landed on the familiar balcony. The lights were on in her room, so she must be home. There’s no way to explain the sudden rush of nerves that came over me. This was just my Princess, after all.

During my internal argument I lost control of my movements. It wasn’t until a duo of gasps brought me back to my senses that I realized I’d opened the trapdoor and was peering into the room. Much to my surprise, I found the startled faces of Paris’s best bakers.

“Chat Noir?” Sabine Cheng broke the silence with her inquiry. She seemed like it was pleasant to see me, while Tom had a darker look in his eyes. Probably mad at me for ignoring his daughter. Weredad taught me enough about this man’s devotion to Mari’s happiness. His body stiffened and he moved to cover a large pile of assorted snacks. There was no rhyme or reason to the variety that I could tell. Honey drizzled crackers sat atop carrots and berries, which alone wouldn’t be too strange, if it weren’t for the cups of grass and what looked like hot sauce. There also were a few biscuits and pieces of toast to complete the collection.

I figured it wasn’t good to ask immediately, when *I’m* technically the intruder, so I focused on the task at hand. “Hello, Mr and Mrs Dupain-Cheng. I’m sorry to drop in so unexpectedly, but I was hoping I could speak to your daughter. Is she downstairs?”

Tom, with sweat on his brow, answered. “N-no, she’s... out with her boyfriend.”

Now *that’s* weird. “Are you expecting her home anytime soon?”

“I hope not,” Tom muttered.

Sabine coughed to cover him. “We’re not sure.”

“Oh,” I spoke, befuddled by this development. But that left another question burning in my curious cat-mind. “So, what are the snacks for?”

Tom and Sabine shared a look that almost seemed like panic. Then the shorter of the two spoke. “We... are... testing out new flavors for the bakery!” Her husband looked at her with fondness.

“Those are some unique flavors. Have you tried them yet?” I was sort of not buying their story, but genuinely no other explanation came to mind.

“Of course!” Tom grabbed a blackberry and dunked it in the hot sauce before swiftly popping the morsel in his mouth. After a few moments, his eyes widened. “That’s not bad at all!

Honey, try it!”

“No thank you, Dear.”

“So you’re testing flavors in Marinette’s room while she’s gone?”

The mother shrugged. “We forgot she was out. Now why don’t we go downstairs and talk while we wait on Marinette to return? You can try some of our normal flavors. If I remember correctly, you enjoy passion fruit, right?”

“Yes, I do.” I was filled with a sense of warmth at her remembering such a simple thing. As I let her lead me down to the living room, I mused over the care I’d missed these past few months. Care from Marinette’s parents, and care from the girl herself. They always had a way of making me feel like I was home. I took my spot on the couch while Sabine fussed over getting me a glass of water. Of course I would ask to help, if I hadn’t been turned down time and time again in the past. No, it was better to let her dote and be the wonderful mother I know her to be.

Thomas came down the stairs a couple minutes later, with the tray now empty of food. I’d given up on asking at this point.

“So, Chat Noir,” Sabine began as she placed a plate of macaroons in front of me. “It’s been a while since we’ve seen you.”

The dad sat across from me and stared intensely into my eyes with a glower. “Marinette was beside herself with concern. She’d thought you didn’t want to be her friend anymore.” Thomas leaned forward and his look became even darker somehow. “You made my baby girl cry.”

My gulp was hard to swallow. “I didn’t mean to hurt Mari, honest. I just... needed to give her space. It was better for the both of us, so we could focus on our relationships.” Again, the excuse sounded even more like bullshit the more I repeat it.

Tom nodded slowly, but kept his lock on my eyes. “I see. So then, why are you here tonight?”

Another gulp. What do I tell them? How can I explain any of this without revealing identities? Seriously, what did I even expect the outcome of my meeting with Marinette to be? *Think Kitty, think!* Her reassuring voice in my head made things easier.

But only slightly.

“I felt like she needed a friend again. Luka has been - uhh - busy with... other people! So I wanted to keep her company and -err - cheer her up with my charm!”

*Real smooth.* I could almost hear her saying. I grit my teeth from the nerves.

“Huh,” Sabine came around to sit beside me. “I’ve only ever seen Luka with her, at work, or at band practice. I thought their friends were all the same.”

“He’s got other hobbies too.” *Like reversing time in a skintight snake suit that is so much more flattering than mine...* “And those hobbies have friends.”

“I wonder what else we don’t know about him. Tom, dear, let’s invite him to dinner soon so we can learn about this new hobby. It’s been so long since we’ve spent quality time with him!” I fought the urge to groan at Sabine’s suggestion. Tom only nodded before taking a macaroon from my plate and biting into it as he leaned back in his seat, still never breaking eye contact. It’s wild how fun and boisterous this man can be when he’s not staring down at a stray cat who hurt his daughter.

Marinette really didn’t deserve me abandoning her like that. I remember the weeks following my departure, she was always so down in class. It looked like she’d been missing sleep. Some nights, when I’d pass by on patrol, I’d notice a plate of cookies left out on the balcony for any hungry kitties. I knew she cared. So why did I shut her out again? Because I was scared of her feelings? She didn’t love Chat Noir, she loved Adrien, and my model self hasn’t stopped being her friend. Because I wanted to focus on our relationships? Kagami has been away for most of this time at fencing competitions or family ceremonies, so I’ve hardly had time to see her. My lack of presence in Marinette’s life has made Luka’s infidelity possible. No guard cat for him to be wary of. No competition for his girl. No better option on the horizon. What the hell am I saying?

“...girlfriend?” I barely caught the end of Sabine’s question. She must have been talking the whole time while my mind ran circles.

“Sorry, what was that?”

“How is your girlfriend?”

“She’s fine,” I responded automatically, but the answer felt hollow. How really *was* Kagami doing? When was the last time we fenced together? I’ve been so distracted by fixing Marinette’s romantic life that I completely neglected mine. “Uhh, I should probably get going. Just remembered she was wanting to talk before bed tonight.” Not entirely a lie, since I intended to call her as soon as I detransformed in my bedroom. “Thank you again for your hospitality. Sorry for barging in on your flavor testing.” I got to my feet quickly and made my way for the staircase.

Sabine’s voice chased me. “What about Marinette?”

Pausing mid-step, I looked back down at them. “Uhh, don’t worry about it. I’ll come by some other time. In fact, don’t even tell her. I’ll make it a surprise!” I don’t know what had me so nervous around them suddenly. Maybe it’s that they’re the only genuine parental figures I have in my life, so lying is nearly impossible. Whatever it was though, I needed to *get out* before I slipped up and gave away all my secrets.

In my hurry to leave, I didn’t notice the dull thuds above me until after I opened the door and found my company. Marinette stood straight, mouth agape, her windswept hair clinging to her face from the sweaty heat outside. She was holding the hand of Viperion, who slowly rose from his landing crouch to tower over me. Time stopped as we all took in the situation.

Marinette recovered first, speaking while vigorously shaking Viperion's hand. "Thank you again for the trip home. It would've taken me forever to make it back on my own."

"No problem, Mademoiselle. Anything to help a damsel in distress." Viperion scratched the back of his neck nervously. "Make sure you get some ice on that..."

"Knee!" Marinette finished his sentence quickly, twinging at the pain in her right knee and leaning against her desk for balance. I made a mental note that the tray of food was devoid of its contents. The raven haired girl even seemed confused by its presence when her hand brushed it away from the edge of the desktop. But that was minor compared to everything else. She held a pained smile on her red face. I knew that look anywhere. She was panicking.

I finished my ascent of the stairs and quickly brought her desk chair closer so she could sit. "Here Princess. Let me see the damage."

A firm hand on my shoulder made my medical observation impossible. Viperion hovered over my kneeling figure with a powerful presence I've only ever seen from him onstage. "I've got this covered, Chat Noir."

I stood to face him, though he was still taller than me. "I can take care of her."

"Chat, you need to leave."

"If you're allowed to be here, so am I."

"You don't understand..."

"Don't understand what? I'm her friend too!"

"Then where have you been the past few months? Some 'friend' you are."

"Ohh, don't even go there. The things I could say--"

"Boys!" Marinette got to her feet and pushed us apart. She did not seem at all phased to act like this to superheroes. "I can take care of myself."

Both of us prepared to object, but the angry look in her eyes made me know better. Viperion, on the other hand...

"Mari, I can come right back after I see him off--"

"No. Right now, I'm exhausted, I'm annoyed, and most importantly, I'm strong enough to handle my own issues. So both of you need to leave. Now."

After a few moments of silence, we sheepishly made our way to the trapdoor. On the rooftop and with a breath of fresh air, I worked to calm my anger.

In the moonlight, I felt Viperion's eyes on me. I just frowned further. He sighed and rubbed the lower edge of his mask. "Look, Chat Noir. I know we both care about her safety."

“I know I do, at the very least.” I scoffed before he could finish talking.

“What is your problem with me?” He snapped. I was actually impressed by the show of emotion he displayed, right now and back in the room. Luka has always struck me as the kind of guy who held everything in so well. He only got angry when defending his friends or a justful cause. But this didn’t seem like either of those. It didn’t matter anyways, because he quickly regained his composure to continue speaking in a calmer tone. “Just a couple weeks ago we could speak without spite in our voices, but now it seems like I’ve wronged you. Please, enlighten me.”

*Enlighten you, huh?* Oh, I could enlighten you easily, but that would give away everything. Is my identity this important that I can’t call out a rotten cheater? Stupid question; Ladybug would kill me if I made such a rash error. Maybe I can get him to admit his crimes. Admit what I already know, but to this side of me. “Can I ask you a question and get your honest response?”

“Of course. I never lie.”

*Bet.* “Are you romantically involved with Ladybug?”

His eyes widened when I stared him down to ask the question. He was genuinely surprised. Good, that means I’ll get his honest answer. But just like before, he took a deep breath and pulled the emotionless mask across his face. “I see it now. You’re jealous.” His amused chuckle made me even angrier. My knuckles turned white around the balcony railing as I clenched tightly. *What a smug prick.* “I get it, trust me. Ladybug was head over heels for another guy before she settled on me. It’s hard to see the person you love with someone else. But I promise I won’t hurt her.”

There it was. The confirmation, in words, I needed that Luka was a cheating asshole. Finally, I had proof that I wasn’t just going crazy.

So why did I not feel better?

Was it because now something needed to be done, but I was afraid of the consequences? How does this look to an outsider? What about Marinette?”

Apparently, I voiced my last question. “Marinette is just a really good friend.” Viperion looked pained to say that. He turned away to shake off the feeling. “God, I sound like Adrien right now.”

*A really... good... friend...*

By the time Viperion turned back to continue our conversation, I was several rooftops away.

### **Viperion’s Point of View**

“What the hell was that?” I muttered as I watched the leather-clad hero vault away from me. His questions caught me completely off guard. Moments like this make me wish my power

was retroactive. Starting the five minute timer right now wasn't going to be any help to decipher his intentions.

The lights in the bedroom below me turned off for the night. Marinette could have overheard our conversation, but I hope she hadn't. While she loves spending time with me, *Ladybug* insists we keep the superhero side of our relationship a secret. But honestly, it couldn't hurt for her partner to know. In fact, it might help. Knowing Ladybug is taken might make our crime fighting more professional and less flirty.

Speaking of secrets and flirty, though...

I made the leaps without even watching where I was going, on autopilot after so many times visiting. The roof was empty when I landed, so I sent a text her way.

*V: Rhaps, I'm on the roof. Can we talk now?*

Almost immediately, I saw the message had been read. No follow up bubbles appeared.

The minutes passed, the moon disappeared behind clouds, and still no Rhapsody.

What had I done? I scrolled back through the chat history. It didn't take me long to find the problem.

She called me Luka.

I knew I hadn't been subtle, but her deductive skills were impressive nonetheless.

It had been 20 minutes now, longer than it's ever taken her even when I surprise visited. Since she knew I was coming, I figured something had happened. Plan B. Landing on her balcony, all the curtains were closed. I saw them moving gently where she had just been peering through.

*V: Come on out please. You promised you wouldn't shut me out again.*

Again with the "message seen" notification and no further response. She knew I was here. She just didn't want to see me.

With that knowledge in hand, and the moon dipping further in the sky towards dawn, I typed up a final message. It was more wishful than realistic. I read over it to make sure there weren't any mistakes before I sent it.

*V: Sweet Dreams, Rhapsody. I hope you can forgive me soon.*

One thing felt wrong. I erased the pet name I'd given her, and replaced it with her real name. That way she knew I was serious.

Seriously scared I was going to lose my best friend.

Before I could chicken out, I hit send and vaulted away, hoping she was watching me leave.

*V: Hey, me again. It's been a week now, so I figured I'd try again. This time I brought your favorite wine.*

*R: .... message seen*

*V: well at least I know you're alive.*

*V: I'll leave the wine for you.*

The next day...

*V: I can't make it out today, but I just wanted you to know I'm thinking of you. You're still my best friend, despite what I did. I wish you'd talk to me so I know where I went wrong.*

Two more days...

*V: Rhaps, please...*

*V: I miss you.*

Chapter End Notes

Hi...

I'm not going to come at y'all with a million excuses as to why I haven't updated. Main reason is writers block, plain and simple. Once season 4 started to come out, I felt like my story was just wrong. Luka was so wholesome in his breakup with Marinette, unlike my depiction where he's flat out lying to keep her. But this season is soooooo good so far and I want to finish this story before I lose it all.

Recently, my favorite person in the entire universe passed away. So I'm going back to my comfort world. I've written a whole chapter past this, and honestly, this chapter was written months ago, but never posted. I'm not going to hold it back anymore. Giving myself a deadline has always helped most.

Good news though that has kept me busy the past 9 months! I got a new job, moved into a new place, and got engaged! So I didn't vanish into a pit of depression. I'm climbing my way out of the writers pit though and pulling this story out with me. Hang on for the ride.

Thank you, beauties. Anyone who is still here from before, let me know how you've been! And to any newbies, welcome. Tell me your thoughts on this season so far!



# Picnic in the Park

## Chapter Summary

Just a simple lunch with our favorite classmates learning weird things. What could go wrong?

## Chapter Notes

Happy Halloween! I meant to post this a couple days ago, but I've been fighting off a head cold and losing the battle. But I am awake from my delirium to offer this treat.

Also, I love comments and interaction, it keeps me happy. Thank you to everyone who has voiced their excitement. :)

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

## Adrien's Point of View

It had been a week since Luka confirmed that he was cheating. Within that week, Ladybug and I faced several akuma's from the past that we'd become used to at this point, like Mr. Pigeon. Nearly every time, Viperion swooped in to help, and ruined our dynamic. I was getting tired, of the constant fighting and of seeing that liar. As if seeing him as Chat Noir wasn't bad enough, he also *miraculously* found extra time to spend with Marinette. Like now, at lunch, where they shared a bench across the park from me. The scorn was evident on my face.

"Woah, earth to Adrien here. What's with the daggers you're shooting at Marinette right now?" Kim, of all people, asked. The boys of our class were gathered to discuss some details for a project on gender studies. Because of all our busy schedules with various sports and jobs, lunch time was the best point to meet. Meanwhile, the girls were off in their own little group, talking about who knows what. The conversation looked serious, but most attention was focused on Lila, so she must've been telling an exaggerated fiction. But my attention was all on the "happy" couple having a picnic. I hadn't even heard the conversation about our group assignment, and Kim had to wave his hands in front of my face to get my attention. "Bro, what's happening?"

"Hmm?" I acknowledged his presence, but didn't tear my eyes away. Marinette gave Luka what looked like a passion fruit macaron, and he appeared to decline. My stomach growled

for me.

“I’d say based on the angle of his gaze and his body language, there’s a 90% chance Adrien is staring at Luka out of jealousy.” Max said matter-of-factly. Markov has been teaching him how to read body language and facial expressions. Seems like it was going to good use.

“Jealous? What could he be jealous about?” Kim seemed surprised.

“Maybe he finally realized his feelings for Marinette...” Ivan mumbled.

Nino did a spit take with how sudden he laughed. “Not in a million years. Boy is blind. Besides, he has Kagami.”

“Well the other 10% probability is that he’s constipated.” Max said, causing Markov to offer Adrien a prune from Nathanael’s lunch.

“Hey! My prune!” Nathanael reached for the flying robot, missing terribly and falling onto his boyfriend. Marc had better aim and retrieved the fruit. He spoke as he tossed it back to the redhead. “I think your first guess was better.”

I acknowledged their conversation, though they were mere flies buzzing around my head compared to the roar of anger that overpowered me when I saw Luka grab Marinette’s chin and pull her in for a deep kiss. I must’ve reacted physically, because the group of boys noticed.

“Holy hell, he *is* jealous! What, pretty boy? Would you rather be the one tongue fishing our resident bluenette?” Kim accentuated his words with a lewd action, which finally broke me from my focus.

“He’s cheating on her.”

My sudden admission had an immediate effect on the group. Kim slowly sat back down properly, while the others shared looks of disbelief and shock.

Nino was the first to speak. “Are you sure?”

“Yes, I’m sure. I saw it with my own eyes.”

“Woah,” Ivan breathed out.

“Big woah,” Kim spoke. Then, like a switch, big brother mode was turned on. “Well then, let’s kick his ass!”

Nino stopped the jock from getting up again. “Hang on. Do you have any proof, dude?”

Fuck. I really didn’t think before I spoke. *Adrien* had no proof. How to dig myself out of this hole? “Well, nothing solid...”

Nino sighed and held his forehead, mimicking an exasperated Alya. “Bro, you need proof before you start making accusations like that. Luka doesn’t seem like the kind of guy to keep

secrets like that.”

“Why are you defending him? Aren’t you supposed to be on my side?”

“I’m not on anyone’s side. If you’re right, then I support us going over there and teaching him a lesson before he breaks my girl’s best friends’ heart. But if you’re wrong, then imagine the damage that could do to not only their relationship, but also yours. My dude, you’re never like this. I’ve seen you ‘defensive’ of Marinette before, but not to this extent. The little green devil is getting to you. And I’m really not sure why you took so long to find your feelings, but it’s not time right now. You’re both happy. Leave it at that. If there’s one thing I learned from my reporter girlfriend, it’s that I’m not going to help you do anything crazy without undeniable evidence.”

“I saw him feeling another girl up in an alley! He admitted to me that he was cheating! Acted real brazen about it too. Filthy snake-“

“Okay dude, that sounds like proof!” Nino cut off my outburst. “Why’d you say you don’t have anything solid?”

*Because I got all of my information as my superhero persona. Not myself.* “I’ve said too much. Just forget it.” My shoulders slumped as I felt defeated. From across the courtyard, I could hear the beginning notes of Luka’s Heartsong to Marinette and Ladybug. The pit in my stomach grew deeper, and I got to my feet in a rush. I couldn’t be here right now, not surrounded by prying eyes and a fake lovesick couple. Every atom in me yelled to get out of there. “You know what guys? Max is right, I’m just constipated. I’ll hit the bathroom and then meet back up with you all in the classroom.” I stormed off, ignoring the choir of protests behind me. The only thing that made me pause was the way Kagami watched me go.

She looked equally upset.

### **A few minutes earlier, from Lila’s Point of View**

Time to enact my master plan.

This lunchtime was perfect. Marinette was off with her boyfriend and the boys were all separated. Although a couple of them were easy to manipulate, they were doing a much more important job of keeping Adrien busy. So, I put the wheels in motion.

Step One: Pick at my food like I’m upset, but not wanting to call attention to it. I kept my head down and stirred my ranch with a carrot. A couple small glances at Marinette and Adrien, followed by dramatic sighs and sad looks toward Kagami, and they’d be eating right out of my hands.

“Lila, is everything okay?” Mylène asked, observant as always.

I swallowed down my smile and replaced it with a concerned frown. “No, it’s not. But that’s not my secret to tell.” Gathering all the attention from the group, I leaned on my arm and took a bite of the carrot, letting the loud crunch accent the silence. Once I was sure all eyes were on me, I glanced over at the picnicking couple nearby and “winced” as I saw Adrien staring them down. *Perfect.*

Alya spoke next. “Is it about Marinette? Because if so, I have a right to know as her best friend.”

My face twisted into a pained expression. “No, it’s... it’s about Adrien.” When I said the last part, I stared directly at Kagami. She maintained a stoic expression.

“Sunshine boy? What could he possibly do wrong?”

“Besides being blind to Marinette...” Juleka muttered, quiet enough that only Rose and I heard since we were sitting beside her.

“I really shouldn’t be telling you this. It’s none of my business. But I’ve just been really concerned and as your friends, I feel you have the right to know. Especially you, Kagami.” I could tell based on the collective expressions of the group that they were captivated. Kagami even, who dislikes me for some absurd reason, seemed interested in what I had to say. After a moment, she nodded for me to continue my story. “Okay, so a few weeks ago, I came across a strange scene outside of your houseboat, Juleka. I saw Adrien talking to Chloe, which interested me since I didn’t know she was back in town yet. So I approached to say hello, but then I overheard their conversation by accident.” The practice I had done in front of the mirror was working. As any *good* liar knows, you should never give too many details.

The boys started becoming more animated in their circle, and it looked like Adrien was the focus. Max’s robot thing tried giving Adrien some fruit, but he ignored the offer. His eyes were still glued to Luka and Marinette. The girls followed my eyes to him, and then his eyes to them, just in time to see Adrien’s *very strong* reaction to a kiss from the couple.

I took that as my opportunity to resume my story. “I see the situation has not improved any...” I sighed.

Kagami spoke through gritted teeth. “What did you hear?”

“Well, I’m not 100% sure how everything started, but from what I observed, this is what happened. Adrien sent Chloe over to flirt with Luka, which she did unabashedly. He declined her advances and walked away, which had her returning to Adrien in tears. Apparently, Adrien thinks Luka is cheating on Marinette, so he was testing the theory. I don’t think there is any merit to it, considering the rest of what I heard. If I remember correctly, her exact words were: ‘You’re just fishing for excuses because deep down, you want to break them up.’”

“Why would he want to do that?” Rose gasped.

“Luka better not be cheating on my girl, or we’re gonna have some words.” Alya looked determined.

Meanwhile, Kagami looked resigned.

Across the way, Adrien jumped to his feet with a panicked look in his eyes. He raced away from the park back towards the school. Kagami followed shortly after. And soon...

“Oh no, I didn’t mean for anything to happen! I was just really worried about the whole thing!” I faked being upset at it, while internally I was smiling.

“You did nothing wrong,” Mylène tried to comfort me. The other girls followed suit, laying their hands on my arms in a gesture of support. All except Alya, who was staring at her best friend with many questions in her eyes.

In fact, the reporter was the next to get up, stating “I need to talk to Nino about this,” before walking away.

I broke from the girl's embrace gently. “I guess I should probably message Kagami to check in on her. Hopefully it was all a misunderstanding.” All the girls nodded approval, which gave me a chance to get out my phone and send a message to a different, more important someone.

*L: It is done.*

### **Marinette’s Point of View**

Of course, what could make this perfect lunch date better?

A little purple butterfly making its way toward the school.

*Wait. What?!*

Considering I had just seen Adrien and Kagami storm off in that direction, I figured it’s target was one of the two. Kagami has been akumatized enough that she might be able to resist at this point, but Adrien? Against all odds, he’s never fallen victim to an akuma. This could be very bad.

Luka felt me tense up on his side and immediately stopped playing my song. “My Muse, what’s wrong?”

I started thinking of a million different excuses in my mind for how I could sneak off. Emergency at the bakery? I forgot a project at home? Fire in the chemistry lab? No, none of these worked... My sweet boyfriend must’ve noticed my mind working, as he gently grabbed my shoulder to stop the gears spinning. I looked into his concerned blue eyes. “Is it a Ladybug thing?”

Oh. Duh. He knows my identity.

I sighed in relief. “Yes, it is. But I don’t think it’s necessary to bring in the team yet. Let me see if I can handle it before the problem gets out of control.” Luka nodded and went back to his guitar, allowing me the freedom I needed and the trust I could always rely on him to bestow in me. I let myself smile sweetly at him before heading in the direction I saw the akuma go.

Once out of sight, I called upon my transformation. Best case scenario, I can catch the offending insect before it causes any trouble. Worst case scenario... well, I’m just going to focus on the good option.

I heard an argument ahead of me. It appeared to be Kagami and Adrien. As much as I really didn’t want to eavesdrop, the akuma was still heading right for them. Wrapping my yoyo around the railings of the upper floor and carefully bringing myself to follow, I stuck to the shadows.

Kagami looked stiff and angry. If I called my lucky charm, would I get earplugs? This was clearly none of my business. Mentally, I was humming my own little tune to block out their conversation.

The akuma drew closer and closer. I could see Adrien’s fist tighten on something colorful, something familiar. The lucky charm I gave him? Kagami’s eyes tracked the movement of his hand. In a flash, she grabbed his wrist and pulled it up to examine. The akuma had its target, and it made a beeline for the bracelet between them.

What happened next can only be explained by one reason: I panicked.

With only a second to spare, my yoyo launched and captured the butterfly. I was hoping to be inconspicuous, but the couple froze at the realization of what almost happened. Adrien looked up at me in abject horror. Kagami dropped his wrist like it burned. And me?

I wore the biggest, most cringe smile, turning as red as my suit while I backed away waving my yoyo in my hand awkwardly.

Then the bell rang.

## Chapter End Notes

I kinda skipped ahead a few chapters in my writing and have written one of my favorites. Writing Rhapsody's perspective is so enjoyable. Thank you all for reading!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!