

Into You

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Into You

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Summary

Since his interview with Cloudbank prestigious administrator, Asher can't get him out of his head.

Notes

for an anonymous request on tumblr with the prompt - *Surprise - one character discovering something surprising about the other*

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

Keyboards clicked, phones buzzed, and an overhead feed hummed across the office floor of the OVC. The occasional, idle chitchat of weekend highlights was shared over coffee and freshly baked pastries. And yet Asher sat at his desk, staring at nothing with a million thoughts screaming at him.

Most of his free time was spent basking in quiet bliss. His peers enjoyed frequenting clubs and bars while he stayed home and lost himself in a new book or wrote short stories to refresh his brain from the endless interviews he had been conducting as of late. Not that he despised more social settings, but those also required a Goldwalk Iced Tea in his system to get through the night. More often than not, said drink landed him in a stranger's bed. Neither here nor there, but not a gamble Asher felt like taking; as much as he wanted to catch up with friends, Asher couldn't pry himself away from what had happened Friday night.

While everyone else was sipping drinks, he ventured to the famous Bracket Towers to meet with Cloudbank's most accomplished administrator. No one believed it could be done; Grant was a busy man and elusive to boot. Setting the date was Asher's first success, though walking away with an actual interview to work into an article? It was in his best interest to inform Lillian when she was sitting down and halfway into her coffee, unless she wished to drop it on her designer dress.

And it was all there: the audio recording, Asher's notes, and Grant's business card. By lunch time, the article would be done and polished for publication come Tuesday morning. In theory, anyways. None of that blipped on his radar.

He remembered the doors opening with Grant greeting him on the other side. That posture, that smile. Grant radiated with a warmth Asher hadn't seen in anyone. He remembered his scent when they shook hands. He remembered the custom cuffs on his sleeves. He remembered the subtle jazz playing in the study—something far beyond Asher's time, yet familiar. As was everything else. A perfect haven to do his work in, to watch the world go by over fresh Assam tea, to drink in an older gentleman's profound wisdom and memorize it like a mantra.

No drink had ever intoxicated him the way Grant had. In a blink of an eye, the interview was over. If one even wished to call it that. Asher likened it more to a deep conversation. Grant asked as many questions as Asher had and at one point, Asher hesitated—was it even an interview anymore?

Four albums and two pots of tea later, the two shook hands again, expressed their thanks, and parted ways. Asher didn't know how he arrived home that night, let alone how he managed to sleep that weekend.

All he thought about was how much he didn't want their meeting to stop.

A weak chuckle fell from Asher's lips. He shook his head and ran fingers through his hair. *Get a hold of yourself. It was just an interview. You don't have the time to be mingling with administrators, of all people. He's probably like that with everyone. Just... finish your tea,*

write up the article, and be done with it. There's enough to worry about that doesn't involve... that.

Chugging down the rest of his now lukewarm tea, Asher focused on his terminal. He pushed away various, open tabs, keeping the live feed of his home visible in a corner. Horatio was napping on his favorite blanket, nothing but a puff of black fur all curled up. Asher cracked a smile before opening a new, blank page to begin his article.

The caret blinked and the empty document mocked him. His stomach hollowed and turned. His hands froze at the keyboard. Flicking his eyes about, licking his lips, Asher slumped into his chair.

He couldn't stop thinking about Grant.

The touch of his hand. The crack of his lips. The warmth in his eyes.

Sucking in a breath, Asher rattled a finger against a key. He fought with every ounce of logic screaming through his muddled thoughts. Despite all of it, he minimized the tab, opened an archive search, furiously typed in his desire, and began combing through everything he could find on Grant Kendrell.

Of course, he had researched Grant ahead of time. Any writer worth a damn knew the basics of preparation, but there was a difference between gathering key points to discuss in an interview and digging like a desperate, lovesick teenager for any indication if a certain someone was taken or even interested in dating. Much to Asher's conscious' dismay, he resorted to the latter.

Hidden behind all the administrative updates and posts detailing Grant's progress over the decades was a photo album from fifteen years ago. It was for a gala that Asher didn't bother to read about, too busy flipping through images until he spotted a familiar face, albeit a much younger version.

And handsome.

And beside a blond gentleman.

And holding hands.

Asher's eyes went wide as his face burned. *He... he likes—*

“What's this?”

With a small gasp, Asher jolted upright, knocked over his empty mug, and frantically minimized the seven, open tabs. Standing behind him was Lillian, donning a sleek, hunter green dress with matching earrings. One hand cradled her coffee and the other perched upon her hip.

While Asher struggled to recall words, Lillian cocked her head. “Thought you were busy working on an article?”

“I am,” he rushed out.

The arch of her eyebrow wasn’t a good sign. “Are you now?”

Asher swallowed. “Pulling together some last minute research.”

“Because all of last week wasn’t enough?”

“Because I want to be sure that if I am to go through with this, I want it to be perfect.”

Not exactly a lie, but hopefully Lillian would back off. He loved this side of her, just not when it was directed at him.

With an exhale, her shoulders slid away from her neck and her brow softened. “How was your Friday night, then?”

Asher bit back a wide grin. “Better than I expected.”

Lillian’s eyes widened ever so slightly. He swore those lips curled up before she sipped her coffee. “Good. Then I expect that what you have to say on the matter will be superb. I’d like a draft of this article before lunch.”

“O-of course, Lillian.”

She pivoted to head towards her office. “There better not be even a comma out of place.”

“There won’t be.”

Once he caught sight of her office door closing, Asher spun back to face his monitor. A near perfect article before lunch was his initial goal, but with his brain freezing up and his heart doing back flips? It would take more than luck to pull off.

He closed all the tabs he used to go about his juvenile stalking, a twinge of guilt piercing him with each one vanishing. Though he hesitated on the last one, the one of Grant and another man at a gala. Both were smiling. Both were comfortable with each other. What were they talking about then? Was it as decadent as his time with the man that past Friday?

But Asher shook his head and closed it. Now wasn’t the time or place for wasteful fantasies.

He fumbled with the words. With every two sentences written, one was deleted. Asher abandoned his desk to replenish his tea. A few more hiccups, then something clicked in his mind—his thoughts cleared and the words flowed.

And just as promised, Lillian had a polished copy of the article on her desk before the lunch rush.

Her eyes flicked over the words in silence, though it was the subtle smirk that left Asher hopeful. “This will go perfectly on the front page for tomorrow. Well done.”

As a reward, Asher opted to treat himself to a cup of designer tea down the street instead of the free, yet stale bags in the office. Stepping out of the building and onto the busy streets of Cloudbank, he shivered initially, then bundled into his scarf and thrust his hands into his coat pockets. The occasional breeze played with his hair as he wove through the thick crowd. All the while, his mind was elsewhere.

Having the article finished was a well-deserved accomplishment, but Grant continued to haunt his memories. It was rare for anyone to meet an administrator alone like that, let alone for an interview. *I should consider myself lucky.* Asher sighed. *Maybe this Friday, I can go out with friends and get lost in a drink instead of dwelling on things that will never happen.*

Two blocks down, someone called out his name, but it didn't jostle Asher from his thoughts. Once it crept closer to him, the sound clear through the sea of people, he slowed down to see who was there.

And found Grant Kendrell approaching him with a smile.

"Fancy meeting you here," Grant said.

Asher froze, eyes wide and throat dry.

"My apologies," Grant continued, "I was just talking with some associates of mine—" He gestured to the few men standing and watching in the distance. "—and caught sight of you." He chuckled. "Thought I'd say hello."

Asher fluttered his eyes and licked his lips. "H-hello."

"Didn't think we'd cross paths again, all things considered. Rather happy we did."

All Asher could do was blush and was prepared to blame it on the autumn chill if prompted about it.

"I quite enjoyed the interview you conducted Friday night. It was... well, informal isn't the right word, but—"

"Unconventional?"

Grant's eyes lit up. "Ah, much better! See? You have a way with words. It's beyond refreshing. I didn't want our time to end."

This... this is a dream, right? None of this is happening and I 'm asleep at my desk at the OVC and any minute now, I'll—

"Please forgive me if I'm being rude, but... I truly wanted to ask then if you would... be open to the idea of continuing our talk. Maybe over some coffee or tea or what not." Grant's expression dropped and waved a hand apologetically towards Asher. "I don't wish to intrude, though. You're a busy man and probably have your own plans right now—"

"Tea is perfect," Asher rushed out, then mentally kicked himself for sounding desperate. "I... talking over some tea would be lovely. I'm not opposed." He gingerly pushed hair out of his

eyes and averted his gaze. “I guess I’m free now, but I don’t want to hold you up from your....” And he gestured to the seemingly impatient associates.

Grant never acknowledged them. “We were wrapping up. No need to worry. So how about this—do you know of the cafe at the corner just a block from here?”

Asher glowed. “I was just heading there for lunch.”

And Grant grinned. “You have excellent taste! Perfect. If you want to go there, I can catch up with you in about five minutes or so.”

Over milk-steeped tea—which Grant insisted on paying for—they talked with each other by a window, never once unlocking gazes, even when their drinks depleted. It was all worth returning to the OVC late, for they already arranged a repeat meeting for the following day.

End Notes

I like to think Asher listens to [Ariana Grande](#) while walking home afterwards and grins the whole time, thinking of Grant. You know. Reasons.

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