

Switch

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by [the_deep_magic](#)

Summary

Vex straightens up and sets her hands on Percy's shoulders. "My brother seems to be having a difficult time adjusting to, shall we say, normal life. Without anything to kill or anything trying to kill him, I believe he has a hard time finding ways to atone for his guilt. I think that's something you might be able to provide for him. He would need from you... what you need from me, or something very close to it. Something heavier on the pain, I think, to bring him out of his head."

For a long moment, all Percy seems to be able to do is blink. "You do quite enjoy shocking my sensibilities, don't you?"

Notes

...and thus I emerge from my cave on this, the Day of Leaping, to post a fic that no one asked for. I shall return in another four years.

FYI, there's no incest (YKINMKBYKIO), just some good ol' fashioned sharing. Takes place during the skipped year, at some point before the Dalen's Closet vacation.

We all agree that fic is not a BDSM primer, yes? Yes. Enjoy.

Percy's fingers dig harder into the floor. He's trying to focus on the dull but increasing ache in his knees, bare against the cold stone. It's the only thing distracting him from his cock, hanging full and heavy between his legs, and the sounds that are making his whole body throb.

The bed frame beside him shudders as Vex moves. He can't see her, but she's not doing anything to muffle her voice as she touches herself. Percy can hear the obscene, wet sound of her fingers speeding up, then slowing down – she's taking her time while he burns with shame on the floor.

It's his own fault, of course. She'd made it perfectly clear on this particular occasion that he was not to touch himself as he pleased her with his mouth. Usually, he's the picture of restraint, but they'd been apart for most of the week, busy on different projects on opposite sides of Whitestone. It's necessary, enjoyable work, but it's been exhausting and occasionally frustrating. Earlier today, he cracked yet another lens on a pair of glasses that was nearly complete, and Vex found him so exasperated that she'd ordered him upstairs. Everything had gone well – he *is* good at following her instructions – until she'd gotten a hand fisted tight in his hair, making that sweet, breathy sound that meant she was close. Percy couldn't help himself, just snuck one hand down, and...

And now he's on his hands and knees on the floor, denied even the glorious sight of Vex getting herself off. It won't be much longer, though, given the rising pitch of her voice. He can picture her so clearly in his mind, hips starting to curl off the bed as she works her clit faster, nearing the point of no return. He can hear it when she peaks, can feel her legs shaking the bed as she comes, and a soft, desperate sound escapes his lips.

Percy hears her flop back on the bed, breathing hard, and after a moment, a hand drops into his field of vision. She's got one arm draped partially over the side of the bed, so close that he can see the wetness still shining on her fingers, so close he can smell her. It has to be deliberate, and he doesn't technically break any of her rules by leaning forward, hands and knees still in place, to close his mouth over the tips of her fingers to taste her.

She chuckles low in her chest, and Percy's heart stops for a moment, briefly afraid that he's earned himself a full night on the floor. But she pulls her hand free and runs it through his hair, then shifts around on the bed so she can see him. "Are you ready to be good for me, darling?"

"Yes," he says, his voice a rough croak. "Yes, my lady."

"Good. Come back up here." She smiles and pats the bed.

&&&

Keyleth and Vax are in Whitestone for a week or so, and Vex always tries to spend some one-on-one time with Keyleth when they're in town. Ostensibly, they're spending the afternoon training, but usually they mostly need to vent about the many idiots in Zephrah and Whitestone, respectively, and then go out for drinks afterward.

That is to say, things don't usually get this... explosive. After the fourth training dummy is showering down around them in pieces and the Spire is out of charges, Keyleth finally comes out with it. "He's brooding again."

"Who, Vax?" Vex asks, brushing straw out of her hair.

"Who else? I never expected him to be chipper, but even my father has commented on it."

Vex sighs. "Well, that's my brother."

"But it's gotten worse lately. Not like it was after he pledged himself to the Raven Queen. Different than that – more sullen than depressed, but you know how he starts to pull away."

"I do," Vex says, unstringing her bow. "Any idea what brought this on?"

"No. For a while he was really enjoying the complete lack of mortal peril, but maybe now he's getting restless. He's not going to go out looking for a fight like Grog does, but maybe he should. Maybe he's gone too long without getting beaten up." Keyleth huffs. "How do you deal with Percy when he gets like this?"

Vex's eyes go wide, though Keyleth seems too lost in thought to notice. Vex never would have thought of it – her brother's proclivities are his own business – but perhaps Keyleth has stumbled onto something. Perhaps Vax *is* a bit like Percy, and it has been too long since he's had a good beating, literally.

"Keyleth, dear," Vex says, a wicked grin starting to spread across her face. "I've just had the most marvelous idea."

&&&

Keyleth ends up being surprisingly open to her suggestion, but bringing it up with Percy is another matter entirely, as he can be surprisingly traditional at times. It helps that he seems to be in a good mood when they retire to their room for the evening. As Percy natters away about the upgrades he and Tary are making to Diplomacy, Vex hops up on the vanity table to wait him out. She needs his complete attention for this conversation.

Percy, for his part, soon picks up on the fact that Vex isn't the least bit interested in the finer points of capacitance matrices. "Am I boring you terribly?" he asks, sauntering toward her.

"I'm always happy to see you excited, darling, even if I don't comprehend the object of your enthusiasm." As soon as he gets close enough, she pulls him in for a light kiss and crosses her ankles behind him. "But there's something I need to discuss with you, and I'm afraid it doesn't have anything to do with electric current."

Percy's brow furrows slightly. "Should I be worried?"

"Not at all. Hmm, how to start," she muses, then decides it's best just to dive right in. "In the past, with other lovers, you've enjoyed being the dominant partner, yes? Giving commands, even doling out punishment on occasion?"

It really is quite endearing how flustered her darling Percival gets when talking about sex. He'll do all manner of filthy things without hesitation, but *talk* about them? That's just not what aristocracy *does*. So he stammers out a confused "I... What?"

"This isn't some kind of trap, dearest, I'm merely seeking information, and I know you had a sex life before I came along," she muses, idly tracing her thumb across her husband's lower lip. "Do you miss being in control?"

"Do I..." He pulls back from her a little, but her legs around his waist keep him from retreating entirely. "I feel like I'm missing some very important context for this conversation. Are you saying you want...?"

"Not me, darling, no. Just in general."

He blinks and tugs off his glasses, polishing them carefully on his shirt. Vax recognizes it as a tactic for allowing him time to think. "I'm not unhappy with our arrangement," he says slowly. "I don't feel that anything is missing between us."

"Is it something you'd care to pursue with others?"

"Others?"

"Hypothetically."

His eyes narrow. "And you're sure this isn't a trap?"

Vex rolls her eyes. "I'm not asking you for names; I just want to know if this is a practice that still interests you."

He lets out a sigh. "Hypothetically, yes."

She gives a small nod. "I'm going to make a suggestion, and I'm not sure how you'll take it. I want you know there is no right or wrong way – I just want an honest answer." He opens his mouth to say something, but she cuts him off. "No traps, on my honor as Baroness of the Third House of Whitestone, Grand Mistress of the Grey Hunt, et cetera."

"Very well."

Vex straightens up and sets her hands on Percy's shoulders. "My brother seems to be having a difficult time adjusting to, shall we say, normal life. Without anything to kill or anything trying to kill him, I believe he has a hard time finding ways to atone for his guilt. I think that's something you might be able to provide for him. He would need from you... what you need from me, or something very close to it. Something heavier on the pain, I think, to bring him out of his head."

For a long moment, all Percy seems to be able to do is blink. "You do quite enjoy shocking my sensibilities, don't you?"

"On this particular occasion, that wasn't my goal. Do you have any thoughts on the matter?"

“I— You’re—” he stammers, twisting out of her grip entirely. “You’re going to have to give me a minute on this one. You’re saying you want me to sexually dominate your *brother*?”

“Well, how sexual it is would be up to you. And him, obviously.”

“What about Keyleth? Have you mentioned this little plan to her?”

“I was talking to her today.”

“And?”

“And... she seemed receptive to the idea.” Vex frowns a little. “According to her, Vax is in a bit of a dark place right now. Keyleth loves him with all her heart, but there are things she just can’t do for him. Things that he doesn’t *want* her to do for him. You know Vax – he would think he’d... he’d damaged her if she even tried to suggest it.”

“So your next thought was *me*?”

“Is it that crazy of an idea? I know you care about him and find him attractive, and I certainly wouldn’t consider it infidelity on either of your parts.”

Percy takes a deep breath and looks her in the eye. “Is that an order, my lady?”

“What? No!” Vex lunges forward and takes his face in her hands. “Never, darling! I would never *order* you to do something like this. If you don’t want to do it, forget I even asked. Put it out of your mind immediately. It was just a thought.”

He’s quiet for a moment. “I didn’t say I didn’t want to.”

“It’s just that...” She strokes his face, trying to comfort him without seeming like she’s trying to manipulate him. “Well, you have experience with it, from both sides. And neither he nor Keyleth— gods, I never wanted to have to think about my brother’s sex life so much, but I don’t think he’s ever done anything like this. And Keyleth doesn’t have much experience in general, as far as I know, let alone with something like this. I never meant to imply that it’s something I expect you to do.”

He takes his glasses off again, rubs the bridge of his nose, and buries his face against her neck. “I love you,” he whispers into the skin of her throat. “I’m so hopelessly in love with you.”

“I know, sweetheart,” she says, threading her fingers through the pale strands of his hair and tugging his body against hers. “I love you, too, and I trust you. That’s the only reason I asked. That, and the fact that you’re so, so good to me.”

They stay like that, entwined and quiet for a long moment. Then, quietly, Percy speaks. “Would he even want me to?”

She has considered that. “I don’t know for certain. I think he would. I know he trusts you, and that he finds you desirable.”

He pulls back, frowning slightly. “Are you sure about that? I’m not convinced he even finds me *tolerable*.”

Vex frowns. “I always forget how oblivious you are to the fact that everyone wants to fuck you. Darling, you know he’s forgiven you accidentally getting me killed. He’s certainly mentioned how much he enjoyed punching you in your gorgeous face.”

“I never tire of you bringing that up, *darling*,” he groans.

She pulls him close again and kisses the tip of his nose. “My point was that you’re irresistible. I have a good sense for these things. I think even Grog would give you a chance, and I know Tary would.”

“I suppose Vax did kiss me once. Wait, how did you know that I find *him* desirable?”

Vex rolls her eyes. “You aren’t as subtle as you think you are.” Then she falls silent, to give him space to think. She leans forward to rest her chin atop his shoulder and listens to the steady pull of his breath.

“*If* I wanted to do this,” Percy says slowly, “how would we even arrange it?”

“I’d talk to Keyleth and Vax. If everyone was in agreement, we’d work everything out ahead of time.”

“What, all of us together?”

“Mm-hmm,” she says, sitting back up to look him in the eye. “I think we’d need to get everything out on the table.”

Percy sighs and squinches his eyes shut. “I cannot think of a conversation I’d less like to have.”

Vex has to agree with him on that count. “At least everything after that will seem easy, right?”

&&&

It is, indeed, the most painfully awkward conversation Percy’s ever been a part of, but it’s hard to complain when it ends, a few days later, in a lavishly appointed bedroom somewhere deep in the castle where even Percy hardly ever goes. It’s as close to neutral territory as they can get around here and still maintain privacy. Frankly, Percy’s amazed that Vax agreed to any of it, that he didn’t simply walk away from the conversation.

It’s hard for Percy to imagine that Vax is truly attracted to him. They’re friends, of course, and though Vax has never said it in so many words, Percy does know Vax has largely forgiven him for the... mishap with the Deathwalker’s Ward. If he hadn’t, he’d have murdered Percy, possibly more than once, upon learning of his intentions toward Vex.

Percy trusts Vax with his life, but the fact remains that Vax tends to be drawn to a different type of person. A better type of person. He and Keyleth are so good together that it remains a

little nauseating. This, on the other hand, feels a bit like two wrongs attempting to stumble around until they somehow make a right, but Percy can't forget Vex's words: *he needs from you what you need from me*. Perhaps they are two sides of the same dark mirror.

He can practically hear those words as he looks at Vax perched on the edge of the bed, every muscle vibrating with unease. Percy knows exactly what that feels like, and he approaches Vax slowly, trying not to think about cornered animals. "Before we start anything, I need to ask: do you understand what you're getting into here?"

"I think the precise details are up to us, but I'm broadly aware that you're going to hurt me until it unfucks my head," Vax quips in a reasonable imitation of casualness.

"I... don't know if I would've phrased it like that, but you're not wrong. It doesn't have to be just pain or punishment, but that can be a part of it. I think you might be like me in that you... respond well to being told what to do. It can be wonderfully freeing, not having to make decisions for a little while. Just doing as you're told. Being good."

The last phrase gets a tight purse of Vax's lips. "I guess I'm supposed to have a word?"

Percy nods, stepping forward until there's only a foot of space between them. "Sometimes 'no' can slip out when it's not quite what you mean. Pick an unrelated, unambiguous word, and if you say it, everything stops."

"Well, I suppose I'm unlikely to scream out 'Trinket' when I'm being flogged, so let's go with that."

Vax sounds... resigned, and it makes Percy's heart drop. He sets down the small bag he brought with him on the nightstand and sits on the bed next to Vax, careful to give him his space and leave an unencumbered route to the door, just in case. "You don't have to be here, you know," he says quietly and without judgment. "You can leave right now. Don't stay because you think you have to, or because you think Keyleth or Vex or I expect you to. Stay because... because you want to try something new. Stay if you think you might enjoy it."

Percy forces himself to stop talking then and let Vax respond. He waits a long time, and he's half expecting Vax to leave until the latter finally says, "When Keyleth first told me about this, I thought she was about to suggest that I go to Grog for it."

Percy snorts out a laugh. "Can you imagine?"

"I can't, and that's what frightens me," Vax says with a chuckle. "I swear I can still feel what he did to my left nut. He might tie me down and take off half my skin as revenge for the beard."

"All I know is that you'd end up with a dick drawn on every part of your body. Including your dick."

Percy matches Vax's grin, and it feels good to laugh. Some of the tension eases, and Vax truly meets Percy's gaze for the first time this evening. Gods, Vax really is beautiful – his face has the same vibrant eyes and perfect bone structure as Vex, but less delicate, broader. Percy's

seen his body a fair few times, and he's felt Vax's wiry strength on many more occasions. Vax likes to joke about being weak, but that's only really in comparison to Grog (and Pike, of course). As a half-elf, he's stronger than Percy, so anything he submits to tonight is entirely by his choice.

It's been years since Percy's dominated anyone, but he starts to recall the taste of it, feel the thrill at his fingertips of molding raw material with limitless potential. His experience with it – which is not, perhaps, as extensive as Vex might think – has been mostly limited to strangers, men and women he met in dark taverns who knew nothing about him, about who he was or what he'd done. People he'd never see again.

Vax, though – Vax is part of his life. Perhaps it should make Percy nervous, but instead it's thrilling. Vax, who could put a dagger through his heart before he could even think of reaching for his gun, is *all Percy's* tonight.

So Percy takes the long first step, lifting his hand to Vax's smooth cheek. Vax doesn't flinch away, so that's something. "I know the other day, we'd talked about... well, hands only. But would you mind if I kissed you? Just the once, now, before we begin. You can, as always, say no."

This close, Percy can see Vax's eyelashes flutter lightly as he considers it. "I think that would be fine."

Percy closes the distance and kisses Vax as softly as he can manage. It feels enormously vulnerable to start this way, but it's with a purpose; he needs Vax to know that he's here because he wants to be. True, the thought would never have entered his mind had Vex not suggested – nay, engineered – the whole situation, but the idea of dominating Vax is arousing to Percy on a number of levels. It becomes even more so when Vax responds in kind. The kiss stays gentle and shallow, but the way Vax leans into him is distinctly promising. If there's one thing Vax isn't, it's indecisive.

Percy is loath to pull back, but he's also worried he'll get carried away if he doesn't. Before removing his hand from Vax's face, he says, "I will cause you pain, but I need you to know that I won't injure you. I'll also respect your ability to know what you can take."

"I appreciate it," Vax says, the corner of his mouth quirking up.

"Your word is your shield. There is no shame in using it, and there is no shame in remaining silent. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"Yes, *my lord*," Percy corrects him, standing and slipping into an aristocratic, holier-than-thou tone of voice as easily as breathing. The largely-unearned confidence comes with it.

For a fraction of a second, he's worried that Vax will simply laugh in his face. But he doesn't – instead, Vax repeats "Yes, my lord" quietly but firmly.

“Good boy,” Percy says, and from the expression of shock that flashes across Vax’s face, apparently even that simple phrase seems to have had quite an effect. “You may undress yourself and kneel on the bed now.”

Vax clearly cycles through several emotions in the space of a few seconds and, if Percy’s not mistaken, considers using his word and calling the whole thing off before it can begin. However, he eventually takes a deep breath, dips his eyes, and says, “Yes, my lord.”

Percy stands up and allows Vax some space. As Vax strips smoothly out of his trousers and shirt, Percy considers his own clothing. He removes his jacket and hangs it on the corner of the four-poster bed. His shirt and waistcoat can stay, but his sleeves need to be rolled up. The ascot, too, will probably just get in the way... but wadded up, it could make an excellent gag if the mood strikes, so Percy sets it on the table beside his bag.

By now, Vax has folded his clothes and set them at the foot of the bed. He kneels on the blanket, clearly pushing past a bit of reluctance. He looks at Percy and asks, “What now?”

“I’ll allow that question without punishment, but from now on, you will not speak unless asked a question. Is that clear, boy?”

Vax peers at him as though this is some sort of puzzle he has to figure out. “Yes.”

Percy takes two strides toward the bed and slaps Vax across the face, not anywhere near full strength, but hard enough to sting. “Yes, *what?*”

“Yes, *my lord*,” Vax grumbles, looking murderously at Percy.

“Thinking will not help you here. There are no right answers. You will simply do as I say, or you will be punished. Do you understand?”

“Yes, *my lord*.”

“Good. Now turn around and place your hands on the headboard. Remain on your knees.”

Again, Percy can practically see the process of Vax considering and then consciously choosing not to use his safe word. Instead, he spins and shuffles on his knees toward the head of the bed, still somehow managing to maintain enough half-elven grace that Percy is faintly jealous. Vax doesn’t just place his hands on the headboard; he grips it tightly and sets his shoulders, doing wonderful things to the muscle definition in his back. He’s slender, but it’s all lean strength, and Percy has to tamp down on the impulse to see how far he can sink his teeth into the rigid muscle at his shoulder.

Instead, he stands at the side of the bed, reaches, out and runs the tips of his fingers down Vax’s spine. Vax flinches at first, probably expecting another slap, but he relaxes after a moment. “Such a lovely boy,” Percy says quietly, half to himself.

Vax takes a deep breath, forcing his shoulders down a bit, and Percy spots something unusual. Vax has scars, of course, as they all do, but there are also two parallel lines on his back, one over the point of each shoulder blade. They don’t have the puckered appearance of

scar tissue, looking instead more like seams in the skin. They're nearly invisible in the candlelight.

"Are these..." Percy asks, touching the left one gently. "I thought the wings were part of the armor."

"I have to be wearing the Ward to bring them out, but they grow from my body," Vax says, hissing a little as Percy applies the faintest bit of pressure to tug at the skin.

His authoritarian persona momentarily forgotten, Percy takes a candle from the nightstand and peers closer at the creases. They aren't holes in the skin; it's not like he could poke his finger in and touch feathers. There is, however, something not quite natural about them. Even to his mundane sensibilities, there's something magical about these marks, like a thinning of the barrier between this plane and another one. There's the faintest buzz under his fingertip, like he's closed a tiny electrical circuit. "Are they sensitive?"

"A little," Vax says, shifting uncomfortably. However, Percy certainly doesn't get the sense that he's causing any pain. It's more like... *oh*. If they hadn't agreed to a hands-only rule, Percy would have bent his head and run his tongue along the line just to see what kind of sound it would draw out of Vax.

For a moment, Percy's tempted to command Vax to fetch the backplate of the Deathwalker's Ward and summon the wings. He's been silently desperate to touch them, to feel how the musculature works and see how they attach to Vax's body, but they usually only emerge under dire circumstances. Besides, Percy has finally remembered that he's supposed to be the one in control here, and even with Vax naked and on his knees, the wings would change the power dynamic immediately.

The candle, however, has presented him with an opportunity to improvise. Percy quickly tests the wax on the back of his own hand – the burn fades after only a moment, so he feels empowered to follow his instincts. "Vax'ildan," he says, smoothing a palm down Vax's back and looking for the perfect target. "I'm going to hurt you now. Do you have any objections?"

He can see Vax bracing himself again, but he hears, "No, my lord."

Percy drizzles out the small amount of molten wax cupped in the top of the candle, keeping it from puddling up where it might do real damage. Vax yelps when it hits his skin, probably expecting a slap or a pinch instead, and his whole body goes rigid. Percy quickly sets the candle back down and reaches to tilt Vax's face toward him. Vax's hair has fallen over his eyes, and brushing it out of his face feels almost as intimate as kissing him had.

Instead of anger, Percy finds a conflicted look on Vax's face. "How did that feel?" Percy asks softly.

"It *hurt*, my lord," Vax says in a tone so insubordinate that Percy should probably call him out on it, but Vax isn't making any move to stand up or otherwise move away from Percy. In fact, the set of his shoulders seems to have relaxed slightly.

“You took that so well,” Percy says. He steps back and brushes the drops of wax off of Vax’s body. “And your skin – it’s turned such a lovely shade of pink.” Vax shifts a little beneath his fingers, and Percy reads some impatience for him to do it again. “Shall we continue?”

“Yes, my lord.” Percy’s not imagining it – Vax’s voice is decidedly breathier than normal.

By now, the flame on the candle has melted more wax, and Percy drips it lower this time. Vax hisses, his back bowing slightly and hands tightening on the headboard. The drops of drying white wax spattered across his lower back suddenly remind Percy of a particular bodily fluid, and despite the situation he’s already in, he blushes furiously at the thought. *Besides*, he thinks to himself, *we’ve only just begun*.

This time, Percy holds the candle over Vax’s back as he removes the droplets of wax. The abused skin stands out as bright pink against Vax’s natural pallor. “Like paint on a canvas,” he muses, brushing his fingers against the largest of the spots. “Beautiful.”

Vax twitches slightly at the word, and Percy knows he’s hit more than one sore spot. “You *are* beautiful, my boy, no matter what you think. All this alabaster skin and fine muscle. Getting to mark you is a bit like desecrating a statue. A holy statue, come to think of it. Oh, I’m going to enjoy this immensely.”

He hears the creak of the headboard under Vax’s hands, but Vax remains firmly in position, face angled down, hair hiding his expression from Percy.

The time it takes for more wax to melt between each application turns out to be worth savoring. Vax has stopped voicing a sound when the liquid wax hits his skin, but his breathing goes hard and ragged every time, and he audibly fights to get it back under control. Percy happens to know that Vax has endured far worse pain with far less reaction, and finally Percy has to glance down to check – yes, Vax is getting hard without a touch to his cock.

Even as the candle shortens, Percy gets the sense that Vax wouldn’t grow tired of this for some time. Percy, however, has much more planned, and he can’t wait. As he sets the candle back on the nightstand and goes to dig through his bag, he affects the most casual tone he can muster. “I think we’ve nearly exhausted this activity. You may relax if you like while I prepare for the next one.”

Sure enough, Vax drops back on his heels and his hands fall to his sides. Well, one hand does – Percy happens to catch a quick blur of movement out of the corner of his eye as Vax reaches down to palm his cock. It’s only a single quick movement, done furtively and silently, but it heats Percy’s blood. It would perhaps be too much to command Vax to touch himself for Percy’s benefit, at least this early on, but it seems Vax couldn’t help a quick tug, could he? Percy intends to let him think he got away with it.

By the time Percy turns back to the bed, Vax is still, his hands resting lightly on his thighs, but despite his casual posture, he’s not quite meeting Percy’s eyes. It’s a first – all the party’s half-elves are enviably comfortable with their naked bodies – but it’s also true that Percy’s never seen Vax hard and adorned with candle wax.

But no matter, Percy has a new toy to try. Or rather, two: he makes a show of slipping each leather glove on his hands. They're a little too tight, which is why he rarely wears them, but they'll work fine for tonight's purposes. They're expensive, too – butter-soft calfskin that shines even in the candlelight. Percy's dick throbs against the seam of his trousers as he sees how wide Vax's eyes open.

“So many possibilities with these,” Percy muses, noting how Vax's eyes can't seem to leave his hands. He takes a chance, reaching out for Vax's face. “Where would you like to feel them?” Vax looks deeply uncertain, but when the leather touches his face, he seems unable to stop himself from pressing into the touch. His eyes even flutter closed.

Percy takes him completely by surprise by sliding that same hand up into his hair and making a fist. “I asked you a question, boy.”

“Everywhere,” Vax says, seeming a little shocked at the sound of his own voice.
“Everywhere, my lord.”

It's too good an answer. Percy smiles as cruelly as he can. “We'll see. Perhaps... if you can be good for me. Can you do that?”

“Yes, my lord.”

“If you need to make noise, you will not attempt to muffle it. You still may not speak unless asked a question, but I want to hear how much you're enjoying this. Do you understand?”

“Yes, my lord.” Vax has his jaw set stubbornly again, but from the way his body's reacting to having his hair pulled, Percy imagines responsiveness isn't going to be a problem.

“Hands and knees, now.”

Vax obeys more quickly than even Percy would have predicted. He's not as tense this time, though he's still not quite prepared for Percy to start with a caress. Percy strokes down Vax's body from shoulder to ribs and down one thigh. Despite the hot wax, Vax hasn't started to sweat, so the leather glides smoothly over his skin. However, there's only so much Percy can reach from his position at the side of the bed.

He looks around to size up the situation, but there's really no way around it. Percy pockets a vial out of his bag and climbs up on the bed, kneeling over Vax's subjugated form. He pets Vax indulgently with long, soothing strokes, and Vax hangs his head and lets out a long sigh.

In fact, Vax looks like he's getting a little too comfortable, so Percy shifts to kneel behind him. This time, he starts with his hands just under Vax's armpits and drags his hands down Vax's sides. Vax lets out a low moan when Percy's hands reach his hips and continue back over his ass. Percy's doesn't consider himself a connoisseur in this area, but he has to admit that Vax has a gorgeous ass: delightfully round despite his lithe frame, firm under Percy's none-too-gentle hands.

He does it again, stroking Vax from shoulder to thighs, then once more. This time, when his hands hit Vax's hipbones, he acts on instinct and jerks back, pulling Vax's bare ass flush

against his crotch. Percy lets out a gasp to match Vax's, a bit stunned with himself for more or less simulating sex with his inexperienced sub. Even knowing that, he can't help but hold Vax steady and grind on him a little bit, just a quick, firm circle of his hips, something to ease the ache of Percy's untouched cock.

The upshot, of course, is that Vax can tell exactly how this is all affecting Percy, and Percy's worried he may have tipped his hand, no matter how raw the sound that just came out of Vax's throat was. He lets go of Vax's hips and shifts back until their thighs are no longer touching.

But Percy has no real desire to stop touching Vax, so he sets his left palm lightly on Vax's lower back. "As you're no doubt aware, Keyleth is unhappy with your behavior lately," Percy says, struggling to keep his tone even with the warmth of Vax's skin soaking through the leather to his palm. The candle had afforded him some detachment; the gloves decidedly do not.

"Yes, my lord," Vax manages after a moment, tensing up again under Percy's hand. Maybe it's not fair for Percy to bring Keyleth into this, but he never promised anything like fairness.

"She says you've been *brooding*. Now, why is that? We've defeated the Conclave. We've even taken care of Hotis. What do you have to brood about?"

"I don't know, my lord."

Percy brings his right hand down sharply against the fullest part of Vax's ass.

"I don't *know*," Vax yells, but Percy is too distracted by the rapidly-blushing skin on Vax's ass to call him out on the missing honorific. Instead, he puts a matching mark on the other cheek, and Vax lets out a wordless shout that turns into a low whine at the end. Ordinarily, it's Percy who can't stand not to have all the answers, but it would seem that Vax is frustrated with himself as well.

"Don't worry; I won't force you to talk about it," Percy says teasingly, rubbing over the skin he just abused. "But you don't get to walk away from me, either. Not until you've taken your punishment, you filthy little pig."

Vax grunts, squirming under Percy's hands, but he seems more relaxed now than he was a moment ago.

"How many strokes do you deserve?" Percy doesn't give him the chance to answer; truthfully, there's only so many he can give before his hand will start to go numb, even with the gloves, and he wants to feel every one. "I think seven should do it. Do you agree, boy?"

There's a tug on the fabric at Percy's knee; higher up on the bed, Vax is fisting his hands in the sheets. "Yes, my lord."

"You will count them aloud as we go. If you miss a number, you will receive two more in its place. Do you understand?"

“Yes, my lord.”

Vax braces himself, and Percy doesn't disappoint. With a grunt, Vax says, “*One.*”

Percy chuckles. “My dear boy, I was going to count the two you'd already gotten, but since you're so eager to start over at one, I'll allow it.”

Vax lets out a low growl, but he doesn't say anything that sounds like *Trinket*, so Percy spanks him again. “*Two.*”

Of course, Percy had no intention of counting the first two, and Vax probably knows it, but trying to call Percy on it will only earn him more strokes.

Though by the sound Vax makes before groaning “*three*” – right as Percy lands a particularly sharp smack at the crease where Vax's ass meets his inner thigh – Vax might not altogether mind a few extra. Percy pauses, eager to draw this out, and tenderly massages the spot.

“This is the sweet spot, you know. It shouldn't feel so good to get hit, to take abuse, and yet it does. Feels like a good, hard fuck, the kind that leaves you wrung out and gasping. Don't you agree?”

Silence. Percy gets his fingers around a bit of inner thigh and pinches.

“Yes,” Vax says through a gasp. “Yes, my lord.”

This time, he doesn't fight to control his ragged breathing, and Percy can actually *see* the moment when endurance turns into submission. The tension leaves Vax's spine and his head hangs loosely from his shoulders, like it weighs nothing. Like *he* weighs nothing. Vax isn't trying to hold himself together anymore, a feeling Percy knows deep in his bones, and to see it displayed so beautifully...

“Good,” Percy says, trying to keep his voice even. “Then I want to hear you.” Percy delivers four, five, and six in steady succession, starting up a rhythm and leaving Vax rocking back into nothing when he stops. “Only one more.”

He makes it a light one, swift and unsatisfying to the outside of Vax's right ass cheek. There's a pause, no sound except for Vax's slightly labored breathing. Percy waits for Vax's response. Then: “Six.”

That draws a real groan of pleasure out of Percy. “You greedy little thing. Not satisfied with what I've given you? You're lucky I'm in a good mood today – let's make it an even ten.”

Vax doesn't count this time, but it's only because he *wails* as Percy gives him the last three strokes as hard as he can, right on the same abused, red stretch of skin at the top of his thighs. He doesn't go quiet after Percy stops, either, whimpering softly on each exhale as his arms tremble from holding himself up.

Percy sits back on his heels to examine his work and makes a strangled sound when he sees that not only is Vax aching hard, but he's dripped all over the sheets. Percy wants nothing more than to push a gloved hand between Vax's thighs and make a fist around his cock. He's

willing to bet Vax wouldn't think twice about fucking into his hand until he came all over the leather. But, of course, that would put an early end to the fun, as well as ruin the gloves.

Frankly, Percy doesn't give a fuck about the gloves, but he does want to feel the heat of Vax's red, spanked ass against his bare skin, and he might as well give Vax a little bit of relief. He grabs a pillow and moves it under Vax's hips. "You may lie down now," Percy says, trying to get his own breathing under control.

Surprisingly, Vax's arms don't give out – he lowers himself to the bed with his characteristic grace, though he clearly can't stop himself from rocking his hips into the pillow once he gets there. He makes no motion to reach for his cock, and Percy would love to know if he's too embarrassed or just thinks Percy wouldn't tolerate it. He'd be right, though.

All Percy has to say is "*Vax'ildan*," and Vax's hips still. "You will *not* spend yourself on my sheets. Not until I'm finished with you, at least."

Percy only gets a soft, desperate groan in return, but he figures Vax is probably beyond words at this point. More specifically, it's Percy who's driven Vax beyond words, and Percy has to adjust himself in his trousers at the thought before he can continue. He removes the vial from his pocket and moves to straddle Vax's thighs before thinking better of it and pushing Vax's legs apart to kneel between them.

Vax gives no resistance to being manhandled, and Percy takes that as an encouraging sign. "You did so well," he says, removing his gloves and tossing them away. He uncorks the vial. "You took your punishment so beautifully. I think that deserves a reward."

Vax doesn't even flinch when the lightly scented oil touches his skin, but he does grind his hips into the bed when Percy starts to spread it across the abused skin of his ass and thighs. He's careful to keep a light touch, not using too much pressure. Percy didn't hit Vax sharply enough to bruise, but Vax will still feel this for a few days whenever he sits down.

What quickly becomes clear is how finally getting to touch Vax, skin to skin, is affecting Percy. He's been in a state of mostly low-grade arousal since they began, but now, with Vax naked and spread out before him, Percy *wants*. Vax's skin is so hot and smooth under his hands, one of which is still tingling from the force of the spanking. He grips Vax's ass a little harder and Vax groans.

When Percy's finished working the oil into Vax's skin, he picks up the vial again. What Percy desperately wants to do next won't technically cross any of the lines they'd discussed, but it's definitely plowing right over a different, more nebulous boundary. "*Vax'ildan*," he says sharply, trying to keep the tremor out of his voice. There's a soft grunt from further up the bed. Percy flicks Vax's thigh sharply. "*Vax*."

"Yes, my lord." It's so slurred into the bed sheets that Percy can barely hear it.

"You agreed to have my hands on you. What I need to know is whether there's anywhere... off-limits." So there's no mistaking his intentions, he shifts forward on his knees – pushing Vax's thighs farther apart – and drizzles oil down the cleft of his ass.

For a few seconds, there's nothing but silence, and Percy's worried that he's gone too far. But then there's a slow inhale and an unmistakable "No, my lord," and Percy's heart nearly jumps out of his chest.

He recorks the vial and sets it aside carefully, heart pounding. Vax spreads his legs a little wider, so Percy takes that as a sign that Vax understands what's coming and wants it. Still, Percy starts slowly, holding Vax's ass cheeks apart to watch the oil slide over Vax's hole and down to his balls. He traces the path of the oil with his thumb first, letting the tip catch lightly against puckered skin. Vax shifts under his hands, and Percy applies a little pressure, prying Vax the tiniest bit open. A small, stifled whimper comes from further up on the bed.

Percy takes his time, slowly working in the tip of his thumb. "That's it," he purrs as Vax relaxes under his hands. "Open up for me, sweetheart. You've taken your punishment; now it's time for a reward." Vax is so tight, but he's fighting to accept what Percy's trying to give him, and he moans in when Percy gets his thumb in past the knuckle.

"Ohh, yes, that's my good boy." At that, Vax squirms and tightens around Percy. "You like that, don't you? Such a good little slut. Don't worry, I won't leave you empty."

It's about as close to dirty talk as Percy can manage, and fortunately, Vax can't see the violent shade of red staining Percy's cheeks. He slowly works his thumb in and out, in and out, letting his other fingers play over the stretch of skin beneath. He pauses, his thumb all the way in, to rub his knuckles firmly at the space behind Vax's balls, and Vax *keens*. When Percy's hand finally pulls away, Vax makes a bitten off sound like he's in pain.

A little more oil down the cleft of Vax's ass and Percy's back, pressing two fingertips to Vax's hole. His fingers are slender, but he's not really preparing Vax for anything. He's not really even ready to admit to himself what his endgame is here; he just wants to hear the sound Vax makes when his fingers sink in.

It turns out to be a slow, rolling groan that ends in a choked gasp when Percy drags his fingers back out, crooking them to press against a specific bundle of nerves. He then purposefully avoids it for the next few slow thrusts of his fingers, twisting slightly every time his knuckles pass the rim of Vax's hole. Soon, Vax is shifting restlessly, trying to get the angle right, making sharp sounds of frustration when Percy stills him with a hand on his hip. "Be patient, my boy. We'll get there."

Vax goes completely quiet and still when Percy pulls his fingers free, and Percy can practically hear him trying to figure out what he did wrong. "I told you," Percy says teasingly, pressing his slick fingers to the spot behind Vax's balls again and rubbing firmly. "There are no right answers. But you've been so good, such a good boy for me. I'll give you what you need."

Vax makes a noise that's trying to sound affirmative, but it doesn't resemble a word in any of the languages Percy knows. It's enough of a struggle even for Percy to string words together. Vax is squirming now, working his hips against the bed where Percy imagines his cock is near bursting. His hands are fisted so tight in the sheets that he's pulled them untucked, and his face – what little Percy can see of it – is a rictus of need. His desperation makes him even more beautiful, his body straining for a peak just out of reach.

When Percy slips his fingers back inside and mercilessly rubs that sweet spot, Vax sobs, and the sound hits Percy deep in the gut. For the briefest moment, Percy's tempted to push right past the boundaries they'd agreed upon. It would be so easy to slip his own aching cock out of his breeches, hike Vax's hips up, and bury himself in Vax with little resistance. He's loose and wet enough for it now, and Vax is so close to coming that a few rough strokes at the right angle could send him over the edge. Percy could fuck him through a bone-wrenching climax and into writhing oversensitivity. Vax would look so pretty stuffed with cock and crying real tears.

But the moment passes, and Vax's struggle starts to look like agony. Percy does the most merciful think he can think of and presses his left hand down, palming Vax's balls to pick up some of the oil, and thrusts it under Vax's hips, cupping his cock as best Percy can.

Vax makes a sound loud enough to shake the walls. He pumps his hips fluidly half a dozen times before he seizes up and wet heat bursts over Percy's trapped hand. Percy gives in – just a little – to his fantasy and keeps working his fingers inside Vax until Vax yelps and starts to curl into himself.

After carefully withdrawing his hand, Percy is at a momentary loss, his goal accomplished. Vax is still lying face down, back heaving with breath, and it takes Percy a moment to realize that he's become so used to being the one taken care of in this situation that his aftercare instincts are a little rusty. Clearly he's not just going to leave Vax like this, but he hadn't thought through this part, which is probably terribly irresponsible of him.

First, though, there are practicalities to think of. Percy maintains physical contact with Vax as best he can as he reaches for his bag on the nightstand. It's awkward, and the shift of Percy's trousers over his erection is its own form of agony, but he retrieves the rag he thought to bring with him. He wipes his own hand quickly and folds it over to create a clean surface.

Slowly, Vax pushes up until he's lying on his side, facing away from Percy. It allows both of them a moment of privacy, and Percy reaches over to set the cloth in front of him. As Vax gingerly cleans himself, Percy lets the moment get away from him, and suddenly the full awkwardness of the situation – he's sitting next to his naked brother-in-law, whom he just brought to orgasm after a thorough spanking – hits him. It's enough to make him want to run, and maybe not stop running until he's out of the gates of Whitestone.

But it only takes a moment for his better nature – something that seems to have sprung into existence lately – to take over and make him remember that this, in all its awkward, fucked-out glory, is exactly what he signed up for.

So he stretches out behind Vax on the bed, molding up close to him without pressing his erection rudely into Vax's back. If there's one thing Percy's good at, it's denying himself, so he focuses entirely on Vax, running a hand tenderly down his side. He's never felt good at this part, not with anyone, and he'd doubt anyone would ever describe him as comforting. But Vax is so pliant under his touch, nearly boneless as he comes back to his body, so Percy closes his eyes and does what he does best: talk.

“You did beautifully, Vax’ildan. You were so good for me. I know the prevailing opinion is that I’m allergic to sincerity, but since you’ve just gone and laid yourself open for me, I

figured I owe you the truth. I'm still in shock that you would do this with me, that you would trust me enough for this. I think I'm meant to be murmuring platitudes about what a good boy you are, but that hardly covers it. I... *needed* this. I didn't realize... We have control over absolutely nothing in this world. Nothing at all. And we've seen so much horror, so much death, so much *pain*. I shouldn't want to cause any more pain, especially not to you, not to someone who's suffered and given as much of himself as you have. But I do, and I did, and I feel... cleaner now. Cleaner than I have in a long time, and—"

"Freddy?"

"Hmm?"

"I love you, too."

Percy pauses; leave it to Vax to go right for the heart. "Yes, I suppose that was what— Yes." He takes a deep breath, shifting closer now that it doesn't feel like he's grinding pruriently against the sated body in front of him but still mindful of Vax's raw skin. "How do you feel? Does anything hurt more than it should?"

"I don't think so. It wasn't as bad as I thought it would be."

"Um... thank you?"

"No, I mean," Vax says as he turns over to face Percy. If Vax was attractive before, tense and aroused, he's *devastating* now, peaceful and clearly still floating down from his earlier high. "The pain. I didn't really understand how it could work. How it could... take me out of my head for a moment. Or maybe just remove my head from my ass." He smiles wryly, and Percy can't help but return it.

Nor can he help reaching out to brush Vax's hair out of his face. "It's remarkably good for that. I won't insult you by asking you whether you enjoyed it."

"If I'm honest, I was... not anticipating that particular ending to the evening." His skin flushes, and he looks away.

"Was that..." Percy swallows hard. "Did I overstep—?"

"No. Uh, no. I just... next time." He takes a deep breath in though his nose, his eyes closing. "Next time, you don't have to let me, uh, make a mess on your sheets, you know? I wouldn't mind if you told me not to."

Percy's suddenly grateful that Vax can't see what Percy's face does at the words *next time*. "So, you'd be... amenable to doing this again."

Vax's eyes pop open. "Yes. Did you not mean—?"

"No. I mean, yes. Yes, I want to do this again. Very much."

Vax smiles lazily. "Good. That's... good."

“There are some things we need to talk about, before we do this again.”

“Mm-hmm,” says Vax. “Later.”

&&&

Vex has long ago abandoned the pretense that she’s too busy fletching arrows to think about what’s presently going on between Percy and Vax. Well, the specifics remain purposefully fuzzy, as she’s trying not to use too much imagination there, but she can’t help but wonder what the emotional tenor is like between them. Has she done the right thing in suggesting this? Or has she just created another clusterfuck for the group to overcome? She definitely doesn’t want to have to explain to the rest of them if, for example, Vax and Percy refuse to be in the same room together ever again.

She’s in her bedroom in the Third House of Whitestone – she wanted to give the boys plenty of space, and she didn’t want to feel like she was hovering – practicing throwing daggers at the wooden door. She’s not that good at it when she *is* focusing all of her attention on it, so now she’s probably getting one in every ten to stick. She pitches one that thumps hilt-first against the door and then clatters noisily to the ground. Another nearly hits true but has too much torque to pierce the wood grain. She sighs and tries to focus, slowly letting out a breath as she flicks her wrist, the dagger spinning gracefully through the air and sinking into the door’s surface with a satisfying thunk.

As if on cue, the door comes hurtling open, and Percy’s just lucky that she happens to be all out of daggers. She hasn’t recovered from the shock of his unannounced entrance as he propels her backwards by the shoulders, eyes wild, until her back is pressed up against the cold stone of the wall. Then, before she can ask him what the hell is going on, he’s kissing her deeply and hungrily.

Over the past months, as they’ve negotiated through the beginning stages of their relationship, Vex has encouraged Percy to initiate more often. He’s always responded that, unlike him, she always knows what she wants, and he’s been more than happy to go along with it. It’s how their arrangement came into being in the first place: Percy unreservedly gets off on pleasing Vex. That’s not to say she *always* bosses him around during sex, just that she usually takes the lead, even if he’s not kneeling at her feet.

So it’s a surprising, though not unwelcome, change of pace to have Percy pressing her against a wall and kissing her like he wants to devour her. His whole body is pressed hard into hers, and she can already feel his erection grinding into her belly. He has her face trapped between his palms, and she has to fist her hands in the lapels of his waistcoat to have any leverage at all. But it hardly matters when he anchors his arm around the small of her back, nearly lifting her off the floor in an effort to press them even closer together.

It’s all she can do to get air in her lungs as Percy plunders her mouth, and despite the breakneck speed with which she’s gone from halfheartedly throwing daggers to... *this*, she feels her body responding at a similar pace. She means to ask for some kind of context when Percy finally releases her mouth, but all the air she manages to breathe in comes right back out in a shocked moan when Percy kisses his way down her neck to bite at her shoulder.

Suddenly, her feet hit the ground again as he lets go of her and drops to his knees. His eyes seem dazed, and he's got that far away, desperate look that he tends to get when she teases him too long. She's about to call a pause on this until he tells her where all of this came from, but his hands land gently on her hips and he blinks a few times, vision clearing. It's like he's finally seeing her.

"I want—" he gasps, breath coming in hard. "Let me taste you."

He's not asking, exactly, except that he clearly is, and Vex knows he'd stop right now and answer any of her questions if that's what she wanted.

It's not.

"Yeah," she breathes out. "Yes." Thank Pelor she wore a lightweight skirt today instead of leggings or riding breeches so she can easily tug it up to her waist. He tears away her smallclothes and buries his face between her legs before she can even gasp. By the third long, flat lick that ends in a quick spiral around her clit, her body has started to light up like a torch.

He's not wasting any time, using every trick he knows to make her melt. He slips one of her legs over his shoulder to change the angle, get his tongue deeper, and her upper body curls over him until she can brace her hand on his shoulder. He's so, so good at this, thanks to a combination of taking direction well and being dedicated to practicing new skills, and her toes are curling within minutes.

His tongue darts back and forth over her most sensitive flesh as his thumb works her clit, and she's certain he means to bring her off as fast as humanly possible – until he pulls back entirely. She lets out an undignified whine – she was *this* close – until she sees he's getting to his feet and working open his belt. Uncharacteristically, his fingers are fumbling, so she makes quick work of the buckle and lacing.

He looks her right in the eye, an unspoken question, and she lifts a leg up around his hip by way of answer. Wet as she is from his talented tongue, he slides into her easily in one long thrust. The noise he makes when he's buried to the hilt is entirely animal, and he ruts into her with little finesse, but as far gone as she is, it feels perfect. Her darling Percival finally seems to have set aside any façade of politeness as he fucks her roughly into the wall, and she grunts with pleasure at each stroke.

The friction between their bodies has her right on the knife edge again, but it's not quite enough to send her over. She needs both arms to brace against the wall and hold on to Percy, respectively, so she can't spare a hand for herself. She squirms in his grasp, trying to get the angle right, but she doesn't have the leverage. "Percy," she groans. "Percy, touch me, *now*."

At that, he shifts her weight in his arms and pushes a hand between them, thumb rough against her clit, which is all she needs to fly. Her climax hits hard, starting where their bodies are joined and radiating outward. Distantly, she feels Percy's rhythm break down, feels his thrusts go uneven until he shouts wordlessly and goes still, holding her so tight to him that she has trouble drawing a full breath.

That only lasts a moment, though. His arms loosen a little and he lets the wall take more of their weight. His body still shivering with aftershock, he buries his face in her shoulder. “Vex,” he moans softly into her skin. “Vex’ahlia.”

“I hope you weren’t expecting someone else, darling,” she says, her mind still reeling on the sudden rush of endorphins.

“I didn’t hurt you, did I?” he asks, pulling back slowly to look at her. He looks so hesitant that it breaks her heart a little.

“No. I mean, I probably shouldn’t ride my broom tomorrow, but trust me when I say that was *entirely* worth it.”

He sighs with relief and tips his head forward until their foreheads and noses are touching. “Good. I didn’t want— I was just so—”

She cuts him off with a kiss, gentle but firm, to let him know his fears are entirely unfounded. “You’ve never treated me like I’m made of glass. Don’t start now.”

He nods, setting her feet back down on the floor. His arms feel shaky around her as he leads her toward the bed. Wordlessly, she stretches out on her back and motions for him to join her. They find a familiar position, his head resting on her chest as she strokes his gleaming white hair, now damp with sweat. “I take it things went well?” she asks.

“Yes. Very well. Better than I even—” He lifts his head to be able to look her in the eye. “Vax and I, we both needed that. How did you know?”

She’s tempted to play it off as a grand compliment, but instead she truthfully says, “I didn’t. Not for sure.” She carefully takes his glasses off and sets them to the side. “You always seemed like two sides of the same coin. Something about you two fits together, like you and I fit together. Like Keyleth and Vax fit together. I didn’t know this is what it would look like, but here we are.”

“I still love you.”

“I’d expect nothing less,” she says, running her thumb across one of his eyebrows.

“I still want to spend the rest of my life with you and raise a family.”

“Of course, darling. Whatever this is between you and Vax, it doesn’t take away what’s between you and me. I’m thrilled he has a place in your heart, even if you’d prefer to deny it a little while longer.”

He looks momentarily sheepish. “So you’d be agreeable if today... if it weren’t a one-time experiment?”

“I think you both should follow where this leads you. I just need you to promise me one thing, darling.” She puts her hands on his cheeks and makes sure they’re face to face.

“Whatever you two did that got you so worked up before you came in here? *Never tell me about it.*”

His eyebrows shoot up, but he nods solemnly. “It’s a deal.”

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