

Those Post-Mortem Blues

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In hindsight, getting himself killed in an alleyway after blowing up at his family wasn't the best of his ideas.

The gravel that lays the ground hasn't gotten any more comfortable since Nikolai's last visit, the small stones poking at his back and biting his palms as he sat himself up. A bird called from the birdless sky, and the trees rustled without aid from the wind.

This wasn't even heaven, or hell, or anything that people came up with for the afterlife. It was awfully drab for what's supposed to be his haven after death, bleak and colorless (except the blood that dripped down the side of his head, the droplets twirling in air; vanishing before they could hit the ground that wasn't fully there).

Nikolai groaned, throwing his head back to watch the almost sky as the sound of wheels on cobble made itself known to him. "Y'know," he started, dropping his head back down, he avoided meeting Her eyes as She stared him down, Her gaze burning holes into his already less-than whole skull. "I'd like to have some more alone time, it really helps the mind. Especially now that there's no ghastly ghouls screaming at me all the time." He flicked his eyes up, peering at Her through his lashes "Nice and quiet."

The Little Girl raised a brow, mouth pressed into a thin line "I can't do that. I don't want you here longer than you need to be." Nikolai rolled his eyes, the absolute gall of Her—he just fucking *died*, have some respect for the recently deceased.

Or don't, not his problem if the ghoulies screech at the people who bad-mouth them whenever they pass.

"Surely just another hot second alone wouldn't hurt, you'd barely know I'm here!" He pushed himself to his feet, brushing a hand against the red on his face and noting with amusement the look of disgust She had on Her face as she observed the action. "I'm very good at being sneaky when I want to, once I even managed to throw a bucket of water on Fivel, didn't even get caught."

That was a lie, but the Little Girl didn't need to know that.

"Don't lie." Nikolai hummed, guess She did need to know that after all. "Your brother can teleport, no matter how fast you are I doubt even *yo u* could outrun him." A smile made its way onto his face, the one that was cold and sharp and tricked people into thinking it was warm.

"Are you complimenting me?"

"No."

Nikolai clicked his tongue, rocking back on his heels. "Oh." He looked over to the trees, scanning the forest line for the cabin that had been there during his first visit. "You redecorate around here or something? Cause' I must say, it's looking awfully plain."

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“You need to leave.” This again, he was already getting tired of *Her* getting tired of him, ‘all-loving God’ his ass. Why is She so insistent on him going back, he’s dead. There’s nothing for him there!

“And why’s that, dearie?”

“Don’t call me that-” She snapped, eyes flashing with nothing and something. Eyebrows drawn taught. Nikolai pressed his lips together, warmth bubbling in his throat, She and Five would get along just swell. “And I told you. I don’t like you. I don’t want you here.”

He looked around, tapping a pattern on his hand, “I can’t imagine why, I’m delightful company compared to total isolation.”

The Little Girl huffed an angry breath, “You need to leave.”

“I don’t want to.” Not until he could see Dave, even if it’s just to say sorry.

“I don’t want you here.” She said again, becoming awfully repetitive might he add. “You’re not supposed to exist, and that’s a fault of my brother’s. I did not create you, I do not want you.” Nikolai let out a breath, getting rejected by a god, a bit of a blow to the ego. “You have a job you need to do, anyway.”

“Says who.”

“Me.” She got back on her bike, ringing the bell as she began to pass him. “Now go away, I don’t like you.”

He looked back to the gravel, sighing softly and closing his eyes. No tearful reunions for him.



Nikolai woke up in an alley, blood coating the side of his head with a sharp pain to go with it. He looked around, trying to look past the already collecting mass of ghosts and their screeches.

He swallowed the lump in his throat, no sign of the living amongst the mutilated corpses.

He was alone.

What a fitting job.



It was nearing 3 in the morning when he finally convinced himself to drag himself off the cold ground (it was surprisingly difficult to take care of himself without Ben there to pester him about it). The blood had dried onto his face, leaving Nikolai with a crusty feeling face and a headache that refused to go away.

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Who would've thought that dying and coming back to life would hurt like a bitch? Well- he did, but he doesn't count because this was the hundredth time he kicked the bucket. Ben must be rolling in his non-existent grave right now.

He searched his pockets for a cigarette, wanting at least something to take his mind away from the pain in his skull, his darling siblings wouldn't be all too happy if they caught him taking painkillers.

Not like they seemed all too happy to be around him when he's sober, either. But, *c'est la vie* and what not, wasn't his problem if his siblings didn't pay attention to his efforts (*it was most definitely his problem, he was one more ghoulie away from overdosing on as much heroin as he could get his hands on*).

Nikolai turned to the Dave that wasn't there, the question on his tongue dying when he was met with nothing but empty air and the smell of rotting corpses. He tried to see Dave, he did, but the Little Girl wouldn't let him—all because She found him too *'annoying'*.

He was definitely tired of people saying that about him, would it kill them to try and say something nice for once? Maybe compliment his eyes, or wit? Maybe get his family to stop looking at him like he didn't deserve to be there?

Nikolai bit back a sigh, running his Hello hand through his hair, it was sticky with blood and brain matter, frustration bubbling up. He needed to stop thinking about things like that, ghosties already deprecate him enough without his own input.

He was lucky that there weren't many law-abiding citizens around this part of town during the early hours of the morning, saved him a good deal of worried stares and unwelcome questioning.

Sadly for him, all good things must come to an end (and if he was willing to ignore the fact that the only good things that happened to him are both dead - which he was, can't be traumatized if he refuses to acknowledge the trauma), and the rundown complex was staring him in the face.

Nikolai rocked back on his heels, sending a glance towards the sky and begged the Little Girl who didn't want him dead that his siblings would be asleep.