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HAVEN MUSINGS

November 21, 2019

Why, hello, my darling...it's already Thursday...I've spent all week buried in the *ebb* finishing up the final edits of **FATE**, but I escaped to come sit with you for a bit.

So far, in these MUSINGS, I've revealed River's pain and anguish when she finally surrendered to her Goddess...along with Beth's deep hatred for River...to Angel's dead daughter, Faith, on display in her 2nd keepsake room.

For this one, we're going to stay with Angel.

If a human has a substance abuse or gambling problem, it's called an addiction. If you're a specie of the ebb, it's called a craving. They are one and the same.

This scene is violent, you have been warned.



MUSING IV

RIVER...book 1 of The Beginning of the End series.

Chapter 5

Angel

In the Palace, somewhere far, far away—where it was really fucking cold—unrelenting dubstep pounded from deep inside, trickling down through the rooms. The heavy beat drowned out the lust of the corrupt, the agony of the lost, and the whispers of the dead.

Bared to the waist, Wicked sparred with Rage, an enormous Demon Warrior.

When Rage rushed him, Wicked easily ducked, turning back on him. Wicked's hand was a blur as the sharp blade he held slashed across Rage's lower back, splitting through his ink-covered skin.

The cut immediately wept. Rage whirled around to face him, his anger evident, but he made no sound at his wound. A Demon was trained to show no pain when pain was given. Pain meant you were weak. In this clan, weakness meant your death.

“Come Rage, you are getting slow,” Wicked taunted him, then jumped back before the Demon could slice him across the belly.

Wicked, she comes... The whisper made him stiffen.

“Enough.” They both turned.

Angel stood at the door. Wicked expertly hid his emotions but could not help the familiar pulse of fear he always felt when he saw his mother.

Both Demons bowed their heads before standing at attention. She waved her hand, making the music fade.

“Leave us but, do not go far love. I have another need for you,” Angel commanded softly to Rage.

Rage turned to him. “Wicked,” he spoke with respect, but Wicked ignored him and followed Angel through the adjoining door that led to his own sitting room.

“I thirst, love,” she pouted on her way over to sit in one of the black porter chairs in front of the empty fireplace.

This was a ritual they had, a game she liked to play. He did it silently, without question.

He walked over to the blackened cabinet along the opposite wall, reaching for the Knight’s whiskey and a fragile crystal glass. As he poured her a generous amount, his pale eyes drifted up to the heavy, gilt-framed mirror above the cabinet. Ghost stared back at him from the other side.

Wicked turned away, carrying the drink to Angel before he sat in the chair to her left.

He waited for her to speak. It was the first lesson he had been taught, to never, ever speak before she did. She taught him and Ghost many things. He was not likely to forget them.

Careful, she will not take this lightly.

He ignored the whisper, for it was not his twin but Cecily, the cursed spirit that was always with him. The mad voice of reason against his darkness and simply another torment for him to endure.

Angel held up a small glass bottle with a jeweled lid. It held the golden essence of a spirit. “Look,” she finally spoke.

“Who?” he asked with interest.

She laughed, a pretty sound. “Your Ghost was looking after that silly Fair down in the kitchens. I guess he thought I would not notice,” she said, all innocent.

Wicked did not say anything to that, nor did she expect him to.

“Now, tell me, my Wicked, what happened? Ghost was unable to speak,” Angel ordered, an edge coming into her sweet voice.

He automatically tensed. His twin was still recovering from their mother’s

punishment. "I waited for the right time to present itself. When it did, I forced the portents open. However, Beth got in the way," he said, his voice tight.

Angel nodded, deep in thought, and unscrewed the little jeweled lid. She poured the shimmering gold into her glass. The essence hissed and bubbled when it met the whiskey. She took her time, deliberately swirling it around before taking a delicate sip, her cold eyes never leaving his.

He gritted his teeth but remained silent. When that seductive, honeyed-vanilla scent of the spirit reached him, his body jerked. His mouth watered as his sick craving wrapped around his throat. Angel did this to punish him. His violent need for the stolen spirit would cause him pain, but that was her craving. *Pain*. She also knew that eventually, he would not be able to fight it and would have to drag off some unsuspecting Fair to taste her, stealing her spirit. He had no power over it.

"Beth always gets in the way, does she not? What did you manage to learn before you failed me, Wicked?" she demanded, her voice mean now.

Dread filled him but the obsessive need in his body made him lose focus for a second. He swallowed thickly at the spit in his mouth. He needed to taste, needed to feel that forbidden rush of a spirit burning through his veins. It was both beautiful and terrible at the same time.

Just one fucking taste—

Wicked! Cecily's whispered shout made him grunt, abruptly bringing him back to the present.

Angel was watching him with a knowing smirk. Shaking, he cleared his throat. When he tasted blood, he realized that his fang had pierced his bottom lip. Licking at the annoying spot, he clenched his hands into fists, forcing his nails into his skin so he would not grab her glass.

"River has no idea what she holds in her, which is surprising given the bond—"

His mother's eyes pulsed once, and he stopped talking. She hated to be reminded of the bond. He still showed no outward reaction, but his hurting body was so tense his head hurt. His vision blurred, making him clear his throat again. Self-preservation warred with his violent lust to drain, heavily weighing him down. He forced himself to talk through it.

"When River saw me, her suppression started to fall. She knew I was not supposed to be there. I almost had her, but Beth...got her to the shield... before I could stop them," he mumbled, panting a little as he fought within himself.

He could smell his own sweat, his body begging for the essence. When Angel's eyes narrowed on him, he could only sit there with his heart racing, hoping she would take pity on him.

"Her spirit is powerful to recognize yours while being suppressed," Angel decided, distracted for the moment.

The relief he felt was short-lived because the rush of emotion threw his craving front and center, making his body shudder, his right boot tapping against the ground. The seductive urge to hurt his mother in order to get what he wanted was strong.

Knowing he was drowning in his rising need, Angel deliberately tapped a sharp fingernail against her glass, reminding him that what he wanted was right there.

He was shaking so badly, his teeth clattered together on the side. His burning eyes stayed on that glass.

"Please," he did not even know he had whispered it out loud until she laughed, the sweet sound obscene. "Do you really think I would let you have this, after you came home without her?" Angel purred, tilting her head, thoughtful as she studied him. "With River being suppressed for so long, her power has had to adapt and change, when it should have been allowed to grow to its full potential. I need to see her now, to see what she has become. She will do nicely in my keepsake room, do you not think, my beautiful Wicked?"

Something wet dripped out of his right nostril, sliding down to his lip. He licked at it. His eyes closed at the taste of his thick blood. When he opened them, he looked at his mother with both dread and anticipation.

She gave him a gentle smile and he knew what was coming next. He rose stiffly, moving over to kneel down in front of the empty fireplace where he laid his shaking, clammy hands on his thighs.

When his mother moved behind him, he heard the slap against her hand, making him brace automatically, his pounding heart speeding up.

"You deserve this because you failed me," she hissed.

When that first fiery lick split down his sweaty back, a painful ecstasy rushed through him, but he made no sound. He never did. He reveled in the pain she gave him; he could not help it. But he did not deserve it. No, he fucking *earned* it.

Angel craves pain, she's addicted to hurting people but she isn't your

stereotypical villain anymore than River is your stereotypical hero.

Angel's sadistic nature comes from the creature hiding inside her. In our 5th MUSING, I'll introduce you to the creepy little thing.

*If you'd like to read **RIVER**, she's free on Kindle Unlimited.*



What do you think of these MUSINGS?

Do you love them? Hate them? Are they confusing? Boring? Fascinating? Email me back, or DM me on twitter or IG. @ryen_lesli.

...but look for your Witch this night, sweetness, for I shall visit you in your dreams...until then, blessed be...

These MUSINGS are owned by blood-right and power of the Witch.



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