

HIGHLIGHT TO SEE CONTENT WARNINGS:

NICHOLAS:

(as the intro plays) At the edge of Gilt City, worms carry out their vital work in earthy silence, and all await the arrival of the Night Post.

[FAST-APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS ON A TILE FLOOR.]

CLEMENTINE:

I'm not late, am I? I left on time, but then I got lost. I don't know how I could have missed an enormous glass building in the middle of the city like this.

WILL:

You're exactly on time. The Night Post should be pleased to have a courier as attractive and punctual as you are.

CLEMENTINE:

Oh! Thank you. I did try to put myself together. I promise I'm not always a sweaty pigeon in an old jumpsuit. You look incredible, very handsome. You'll have to tell me where you found your vest. I don't have anything that fits me that well. It's hard to find clothes that don't make me look like a strawless scarecrow wearing grandpappy's best dancin' trousers--

WILL:

(overlapping) C-CI-Clem--*Clementine*.

CLEMENTINE:

Ah, yes? *(slight laugh)*

WILL:

Don't be nervous.

CLEMENTINE:

Was I that obvious? I thought I was perfecting my self-assured, aloof persona. I'm sorry, I'm not used to second or third dates. I don't know how to act.

WILL:

Don't act like anything. Just try to relax. I'm happy to be here with you.

CLEMENTINE:

(exhale) Okay, you're right. I'm sorry--I can't believe I haven't scared you off yet.

WILL:

You'll have to work harder to scare me. Being cute and flustered just isn't working. Hold still, I, uh...brought you this for your lapel. *(jacket rustles)*

CLEMENTINE:

How'd you know I was gonna wear a blazer?

WILL:

Well, if you didn't, then I could've tucked it behind your ear--like...*this*. *(Will brushes a strand of hair behind Clementine's ear, but this is not audible because it's a podcast.)*

CLEMENTINE:

Oh! I brought you something, too. *(faint clink of glass as she rummages in her pockets)*

WILL:

Um...is this--dirt?

CLEMENTINE:

It's soil, because we have something worth tending to--the beginnings of a garden.

WILL:

That's--

CLEMENTINE:

It's probably stupid. You don't have to keep it. It *is* only dirt.

WILL:

No no no, it-it's sweet. No one's ever given me dirt before. Uh, come on, there's a lot to see. I picked up a map already. What do you want to see first?

[AMBIENT SOUNDS OF A CONSERVATORY: LIGHT BREEZE, RUSTLING LEAVES, OCCASIONAL BIRD CALLS.]

WILL:

(contented sigh) I love it here.

CLEMENTINE:

It's beautiful! I can't believe I've never been. I didn't know that they had an exhibit of flowers that only bloom at night. They've captured so many different colors of fireflies, but...how do they trick them into believing it's nighttime?

WILL:

I'm sure turning out the lights helps.

CLEMENTINE:

(short laugh) What does the guide say about this room? Are these all local plants? I recognize some of them, but I'm not an expert in identifying things on sight. I can do well enough not to poison myself, or hike through the wrong patch of grass.

WILL:

Well, admittedly, I'm not very knowledgeable about the flora and fauna. I can appreciate their beauty, but unless it's like a common garden flower, I probably couldn't tell you what it is.

CLEMENTINE:

I could teach you what I know. Do you see that blossoming vine growing up the glass? The white flowers are light and sweet, always peeking through the leaves towards the sun. They call it a heaven's kiss, but if you touch it, you break out in horrible boils.

WILL:

Yeesh. Nature is horrifying.

CLEMENTINE:

I learned my lesson about that one the hard way. I wasn't a very well supervised child.

WILL:

I think I can see that. *(slight laugh)* So, do you mind if we sit? I'd like to make some sketches, and we have plenty of time before our reservation. Um, tell me more. Which ones are your favorites?

CLEMENTINE:

That's a tricky question to answer. The Skelter has a lot of beautiful wildflowers, but your definition of flowers might vary. Some consider most of what grows natively ugly and unmanageable.

WILL:

There's nothing wrong with being ugly and unmanageable. I was that way for most of my teenage years, but thankfully I grew out of it.

CLEMENTINE:

I doubt you were ever ugly. You shouldn't be cruel to young Will.

WILL:

My parents forced me to wear headgear for two years to fix my teeth. I looked like a chubby bird busting out of a metal cage.

CLEMENTINE:

At least you grew out of your awkward phase. I'm afraid I never will.

WILL:

You're not awkward, Clementine.

CLEMENTINE:

That's kind of you, but I'm well aware that I look like a plate of spaghetti leapt off a plate and started dressing like a scarecrow.

WILL:

Listen, I know I started it, but no more self deprecating jokes, please. You were telling me about your favorite weeds? Go on.

CLEMENTINE:

If I had to pick it would probably be...

[FOOTSTEPS ALONG A PAVED PATH. LEAVES RUSTLE AS CLEMENTINE PLUCKS A FLOWER.]

CLEMENTINE:

This one.

WILL:

(mock gasp) You troublemaker!

CLEMENTINE:

They won't miss it. Plus, these are common enough. There used to be a patch of them growing behind our house, and my father would dry them to put in tea.

WILL:

Well, what do they taste like? Are they supposed to *do* something?

CLEMENTINE:

They don't have any useful properties. They look pretty, but they taste like papery cantaloupe. He said it was something my mother used to do. He always liked to be reminded of her.

WILL:

That sounds romantic.

CLEMENTINE:

It was. He really loved her. He wrote to her every day until the day he died. I don't think he knew what else to do with all the love he had for her.

WILL:

(wistful) Imagine that, an excess of love. My parents wouldn't put that much effort into communicating, and they're both still alive.

CLEMENTINE:

Oh, my father never put that much effort into communicating with *me*. He hid so much from me that after he died, I felt like he could've been a stranger.

WILL:

Pigeons do like to keep their secrets, don't they?

CLEMENTINE:

I'm not sure I have any secrets. At least not any interesting ones. What about your parents? What are they like?

WILL:

Ugh. Well, they're insufferable, but generous. Whenever my mother critiques my waistline and sparks an argument, she always sends me a new garment I can't quite fit into as an apology. And my father stopped taking an interest in me as soon as my brothers were born, and nothing I can do pleases them anymore.

CLEMENTINE:

(exhale) I'm sorry. That sounds upsetting.

WILL:

Don't be. I've given up on trying to make them happy. And I wouldn't bring it up at all except that I just love getting into parental trauma on dates, don't you?

CLEMENTINE:

Why stop there? Do you want to talk about our exes?

WILL:

No. Call me superstitious, but speaking on evil forces just draws their attention to you.

CLEMENTINE:

(slight laugh) I think that's probably what my ex probably thinks about me.

WILL:

You can't possibly be an evil force. You're the least threatening person I think I've ever met.

CLEMENTINE:

Hey! I'm tougher than I look. *(pause)* May I see what you're working on? Oh, your sketches are so beautiful. I love your linework. It looks effortless, like the breeze.

WILL:

I appreciate that. I don't usually share my sketches with people, but I seem to feel really comfortable around you.

CLEMENTINE:

I'm glad. You're easy to talk to, you know? I feel like I'm babbling whenever I'm around you.

WILL:

Well, if it's babbling, then feel free to ramble on, 'cause I like listening to you.

CLEMENTINE:

You say that *now*. (*pause*) Shall we move on to the next exhibit? I want to see the meat-eaters.

WILL:

Eugh, not the blood-drinking monstrosities. Those are my father's favorites. You can imagine how apt the connection is between the two. My parents used to take me here all of the time when I was a little girl. It's a popular place to host extravagant events. I can't count the number of times I've been dragged here all dressed up, but there are plenty of places to hide if you're trying to avoid attention.

CLEMENTINE:

Aww, now I can't stop imagining a tiny Will in ribbons and bows, hiding out amongst the ferns.

WILL:

No no no, absolutely not. Those things are crawling with insects. I spent a lot of time in a room full of gardening equipment, playing with the shears instead.

[A PAUSE, AND WILL LETS OUT A SMALL GASP.]

WILL:

(*hushed*) Oh, uh--uh, Clementine, don't look now, but--we gotta get out of here.

CLEMENTINE:

Is everything okay? Did you see something?

WILL:

(*groan*) *Someone*. Hurry, I don't want them to see us.

VERITY:

Is that Wilhelmina Prescott?

WILL, *hushed*:

(*hushed*) It's my friend, Verity. Don't look now, we'll just pretend we didn't see--

VERITY:

(*steps approaching*) Wilhelmina, wait up, darling. Don't make me run in these heels.

WILL:

(*unamused*) Oh, hello, Verity. I didn't see you there.

VERITY:

I don't know how you missed me when I'm dressed like *this*. This is my charming companion, Upton. Have you met? He does something with the Post, too. Something precious to do with cute little letters and stamps. And who is this? Hello, gorgeous.

CLEMENTINE:

Um...did you mean me?

WILL:

This is Clementine. She's my date. (*to Clementine*) You'll have to ignore them. Verity wants to be The Governor Themselves, but they have no subtlety or class.

UPTON:

This is your friend, Ver? She seems rude.

VERITY:

Of course, Wilhelmina and I have an illustrious history. We're bound to be friends until the earth overtakes our beautiful corpses. It isn't the poor thing's fault that working for the Night Post has robbed her of any social graces she might have possessed. (*to Upton*) No offense, sweetheart. You're perfectly charming.

WILL:

Um, Clementine's a pigeon too.

CLEMENTINE:

It's true, though, I'm not great at socializing. But I do my best. Sometimes they even let me out during the day.

UPTON:

Your name's Clementine? I think I've heard of you. Aren't you one of the pigeons who--

VERITY:

Please, your adorable little pigeon-talk will leave *me* feeling left out. We were about to get some tasty treats at the cafe. Won't you join us?

WILL:

We were kind of trying to have an intimate afternoon, *if you don't mind...*

VERITY:

(*leading the way in heels*) Come along, ladies. Their cute little hummingbird cakes are on me.

[SOUNDS OF A CAFE: OVERLAPPING VOICES, CLATTER OF DISHES, LIGHT INSTRUMENTAL BACKGROUND MUSIC.]

VERTIY:

(claps hands) We'll take a round of crushed iced watermelon daiquiris with extra watermelon chunks and sugar on the rim. *(pause)* Oh, and an iced water for this handsome specimen here. Thank you, darling.

WILL:

(long-suffering sigh) I'm sorry, Clementine. We'll have to continue our conversation over our *private* dinner reservation.

VERTIY:

Oh, don't hold back on our account. I love a sordid tale as much as the next person. As long as the next person *loves* a sordid tale. Don't you, Upton, darling?

UPTON:

(sullen) I prefer your stories.

VERTIY:

Don't be sour, sweetheart. We'll have plenty of time alone later, I promise. Now, Clementine, if you're my precious Wilhemnia's newest *paramour*, I absolutely must know every-single-thing about you.

CLEMENTINE:

Oh...I'm not very interesting. I wouldn't know where to start.

UPTON:

You could tell us how you and your friends allegedly broke into Gilt Tower.

CLEMENTINE:

How do you know about that?

UPTON:

Doesn't everyone know? I'm surprised you didn't receive a harsher reprimand than being left to rot at Station 103.

VERITY:

Now, *that* sounds intriguing, even if it is a story about the Night Post.

CLEMENTINE:

It--we didn't do it for fun. I don't know how much of the story is out there, but we only went to investigate Gilt Tower because Milo's husband was missing, and we couldn't find answers. *(growing increasingly upset)* After we finally found Ashley, there were attempts on our lives that

conveniently can't be explained, and now Milo's lost another person he's close to, and Val--
(*deep breath*) I'm sorry. If you'll excuse me, I think I need a moment.

WILL:
Clementine, please--

[CLEMENTINE'S CHAIR SCRAPES THE FLOOR AS SHE STANDS AND RUSHES OFF.]

UPTON:
That's all very well, but that's not what I heard. You know how pigeons get when they've been with the Post for too long. Perhaps she's...a bit touched.

WILL:
Do not talk about her like that. Who are you, anyway? I haven't ever seen you at Gilt Tower, so you can't be as important as you think you are.

UPTON:
(*offended gasp*) I happen to manage one of the sorting rooms that handles some of the highest priority parcels in all of Gilt City, and I'm up for a promotion that would--

VERITY:
Oh, stop, you two! I can't stand to hear such cattiness without a drink in my hand. Will, I think she's wonderful. I absolutely love when women are a little...how do I put this? *Unhinged*. Now, while we wait for our delicacies, let's talk about something truly fascinating--*me!* Last week, I was at the most enchanting gardening party. Of course, Mrs. Helga Branch was there and we are mortal enemies, but I--

[CLEMENTINE'S FOOTSTEPS RETURN, SLOWLY THIS TIME.]

VERITY:
Yoohoo, we're over here. Oh, poor dear, she looks lost.

WILL:
Clementine?

UPTON:
What is she doing?

WILL:
If you want some flowers, I can just buy you some from the gift shop. You-you don't have to steal any more.

UPTON:
She's acting strangely, but I don't know why'd you expect anything different.

VERITY:

Don't be unkind, my little cornstalk. It looks like she's just admiring the table settings, but if she doesn't hurry back the ice in her daquiri will have all melted.

[A GLASS OBJECT IS SMASHED ON THE GROUND. UPTON EXCLAIMS.]

VERITY:

Do stop that. I know, they aren't the most tasteful centerpieces, but that's not necessarily a reason to cause a scene.

[CLEMENTINE RETURNS AND PULLS OUT HER CHAIR TO SIT.]

WILL:

(nervous laugh) Uh, are these for me? You, you can't keep stealing flowers. S-someone's gonna have to sweep up all this glass.

UPTON:

Was breaking all that glass worth a few withering blooms? You could've just lifted the flowers from the top of the vase, like anyone else would.

VERITY:

What an outrageous display! Shall I break my one, too? Do you want some flowers, my downy chicken wing?

UPTON:

No, I'm fine with enjoying your company without stirring up more of a commotion. *(pointed)* Everyone's already staring at our table.

VERITY:

(dramatic sigh) Alright, if you're sure. I love it when people break things to get my attention. It's so charming.

UPTON:

(desperate to impress) I-I-I could break something, if you wanted me to. I don't know what, but--whatever you want smashed, I'll do it.

VERITY:

No, no, the moment's passed. It has to feel organic.

WILL:

Is everything alright, Clementine? You're staring. I mean, I normally wouldn't mind, but the unblinking gaze is pretty unnerving.

VERITY:

I apologize if recounting your tale was upsetting. We won't speak another word on it, hm?
(*pause*) Upton, would you like to recite the phenomenal story of how we first met, or shall I?

UPTON:

Oh, well, uh--you're a much better narrator than I am.

VERITY:

Correct! But I love to hear you tell it. Or, maybe Wilhemina or Clementine would like to share how they met? I still haven't heard enough about Wilhemina's newest peach. Look, their honeydew spritzers sound divine. Should we order some?

WILL:

No more for me. We should probably leave soon. I don't think Clementine's feeling very well.

UPTON:

She won't stop staring at you.

VERITY:

(*scoffs*) You don't have to be shy. We're *all* friends here. (*pause*) Aren't we?

WILL:

Clementine, your hands are *freezing*.

VERITY:

Oho, how lovely. Here, Upton love, take my hand as well. What a handsome group we are. It's a shame there isn't anyone around to photograph us--or me--for the newspaper.

WILL:

(*quietly, to Clementine*) Are...are you sure everything's alright? Why are you giving me the silent treatment all of a sudden?

UPTON:

No offense, but your pet pigeon's acting awfully strange.

VERITY:

Just because it's true, doesn't mean you have to say it. Should we give you two some privacy?

[THE REAL CLEMENTINE RETURNS.]

CLEMENTINE:

What are you doing?

WILL:

Clementine?

UPTON:

There are *two* of you?

VERITY:

Ah, how splendid! A surprise twin--*that's* quite the plot twist.

CLEMENTINE:

She isn't my twin. Will, I'm sorry. I can explain.

WILL:

(struggling to keep her composure) She tried to kiss me! She held my hand, and-and she looks just like you. What's going on here?

CLEMENTINE:

I don't know. I'm not sure what she is, she just shows up places. She's mostly harmless, but she shows up at the worst possible times. *(to her double)* Do you mind? Will you get out of here? *Now?*

UPTON:

At least it listened to her.

VERITY:

Tsk, what a shame. Perhaps, next time we all meet, you can bring your shadow self with you.

UPTON:

(quiet, through gritted teeth) Does there have to be a next time?

CLEMENTINE:

Will, I'm so sorry. I had no clue she was going to show up like that. I wouldn't have--I at least could've warned you, but it's...a lot, I know, and I wasn't sure you'd even believe me.

WILL:

How long has that thing been following you around?

CLEMENTINE:

Not long. I think she might show up whenever I'm stressed or in trouble. She saved my life once.

WILL:

Oh, then...I guess she can't be that bad.

CLEMENTINE:

You aren't scared off by that? If you want to run away and never speak to me again. I would understand.

WILL:

The mysterious, alternate version of you that somehow exists showed up on our date, and the first thing she tried to do was give me flowers and hold my hand. I mean, it's bizarre, but...still kind of sweet.

CLEMENTINE:

Again, I'm sorry. If I'd known, if I had any idea--

WILL:

Don't be sorry. It'll be an amusing story to tell, if I could convince anyone it was true. But next time I think I'm going to double-check that it's actually you before I try to kiss you.

NICHOLAS:

(as the outro plays) Thank you for joining us on tonight's route. You can find the couriers of Station 103 at nightpostpod.com or on Twitter [@nightpostpod](https://twitter.com/nightpostpod). If you're satisfied with your postal service, please rate and review us, or consider supporting us on Patreon. Send a letter to the bestie you avoid in public, and tell them about *The Night Post*.

Promo for *Patient 33*:

[HONKING, THEME MUSIC PLAYING, TRAFFIC AND SIRENS IN THE BACKGROUND THROUGHOUT.]

NURSE JENNIE:

We need an operating room. We're running a code and we got head trauma.

DR. TERRIER:

I need 4 CC's of pentobarbital, stat!

DR. WHY:

So you're the new admit I've been hearing about?

DR. TERRIER:

I swear, Fisher, I'm gonna have you fired for this.

DR. BLUE:

What's got Terrier in such a mood?

DR. HOMELY:

Staffing problems

DR. WHY:
Mr. M 33 John Doe?

DR. HOMELY:
We can't talk about it here. This guy might wake up.

JANITOR FISHER:
Ha! This guy's not waking up anytime soon. He's in a coma!

NURSE JENNIE:
No! How many times do I have to tell you no, I won't do it!

DR. CARTWRIGHT:
I don't know, and I don't care.

DR. WHY:
I know this is the forever ward, but I sometimes think I'm the only one with hope!

DR. TERRIER:
Any sign of bruising?

DR. WHY:
Oooh pants! A clue!

[OVERLAPPING UNINTELLIGIBLE CONVERSATION]

DR. CARTWRIGHT:
Okay, so, he's definitely in a coma.

NURSE MARGIE:
Ugh, what's the coma patient doing out here?

VOICEOVER:
Patient 33 is available on all podcatchers today. Visit patient33.com for transcripts and more information.

NURSE JENNIE:
Patient 33, welcome to the hospital.