

I wasn't the perfect victim, I know that. In the same way that you weren't the perfect abuser. I fought back and yelled and debated with you about right and wrong, in the same way that you secretly had a soft spot for me, you knew about me enough to know I wouldn't let you grind me down without some sort of explanation. Nothing about that could have ever been expressed within the binaries of right and wrong. I don't seek out gods and heroes within the people I meet, and thank god for that alone, and if the world did work that way we would have never found each other, we would cease to even exist. Maybe for the best but I disagree. I read somewhere that to understand art you must indulge in it slowly to grasp its deeper meaning, but if I had taken you in slower doses I could have seen the way you only wanted me when I was at best sick, at worst truly needing to be carried out by a casket. It was better for you then that I hadn't yet gained an interest in understanding art and philosophy, at this time my knowledge of art ended in the performance category. My fragility was feminine and beautiful. And if my brain could have processed this faster than maybe I would have had a less agonizing year, but what story do I have to tell then? The problem with modern technology and human connection is that an opinion can be formed for you before you ever have a chance to encounter said thing for yourself. That's why when I met you I dedicated myself to a life of solitude, a life of analysis, a life of fighting my natural ability to be swayed. You identified this right away, notified your body that it was one of my weak spots and even if unintentional you chipped away at the trait until it was to be convinced or to be lovable. I'm still glad I chose the latter. Lucky for you by the end of this relationship I had already learned what it meant to be in great pain and what to do with it if you didn't want to weaponize it into a greater and deeper desire to punish the punisher. Unluckily for you, my limit had been reached and my nerves had been touched, infiltrated even. We started a war then at that moment. It was a dance in which neither of us could see the cause was our burning desire for each other. But now here I stand working my way through understanding that "we" statements are neither fitting nor appropriate for us anymore. And who am I to have thought after such a fight I could pick up a tool with no blood on it.

Years later I put my winter coat on and prepared myself for a new war. One that reminds me of the life I once led in a place that knew nothing but sunshine. There were no bloody battles to be had there, yet I still complained. I don't know when I'll run into you again but I know it will happen soon and I will come prepared with my best armor.

So I ask you if you have washed your hands of it. I tell you blood still stains mine and it won't ever be coming off. "I'm done trying", I say. "Me too", you respond. My bloody hand reaches for yours and I know then, in that moment, that I would do anything to stay there forever.