

Anselm was very quiet at times, he actually never spoke. Although that was alright with Vafaren, he could talk for the both of them. Today was one of those days – as Vafaren stirred his tea, his left hand reached for a sugar packet. Setting his spoon down, he opened the sugar packet. Right before he poured it, his eyes raised upwards to meet with Anselm's, realizing he hadn't even touched his tea.

“Apologies,” he smiled softly, before pouring the sugar onto Anselm's tea, “I have forgotten that you like yours with lots of sugar.” So, he kept pouring, ripped another pack open, poured, and repeated the process half a dozen times before grabbing Anselm's spoon and stirring the sugar, the tea turning into a brighter orange colour, just how Anselm liked it. From the corner of his eye, he could see Anselm smiling, and that was enough for Vafaren to start drinking his own tea.

“I was thinking that we could go to the beach, actually.” Vafaren took a sip of his tea and raised his gaze towards Anselm. Two eyes that looked worrisome stared back at him. “Right... your skin is sensitive, isn't it? Alright, we can go on a picnic, I know you don't like the sun much either, makes you sweaty, makes you smell, so I'll get an umbrella. I'll even make your favourite chocolate fondue.” This time, Vafaren looked at Anselm with a look of doubt and anxiousness, raising his cup down, unsure of how he would react to this proposition.

To his relief, Anselm's soft gaze stared back at him, a small smile adorning his face. He could even call it a small nod of approval. Vafaren relaxed his muscles and sighed, “Alright, lovely.”

Reaching for his spoon, Vafaren dipped it into his pudding, eyes glancing to his right, then to his front, behind Anselm, where he could see other customers at the café and its workers glancing towards his direction at times. Surely it wasn't that weird for two guys to be on a date at this day and age, right? So what was their problem? A slight shuffle from Anselm disrupted his thought process.

“Oh, of course.” He took a spoonful of his pudding and raised the spoon towards Anselm's mouth, his unoccupied hand opting to rest on the side of Anselm's chin. The spoon entered his mouth and left it, empty. Vafaren looked at him for a few seconds, his hands moving back to their previous positions, waiting to see his reaction, whether or not he liked it. Anselm slowly swallowed down the food, and Vafaren could hear a low ‘mm’. Satisfied with Anselm's response, he dipped his spoon into the pudding once more, and took a taste.

It was cold, quite cold. Now he could understand why Anselm took a liking to it, he loved cold things.

No waiter served them or came over to their table to ask whether or not they liked the food. It was hard to grasp as to why this seemed to be the case for every restaurant or café they went to. Perhaps it was time they moved cities? After having to get up and pay for the bill at the front desk, Vafaren grabbed Anselm by the arm. Walking through the parking lot, the two men made towards Vafaren's car.

The drive back home was quiet, as it always is. Vafaren occasionally peered over to Anselm, who seemed to have opened the window, looking out at the scenery as they passed by.

The schedule of the night soon dawned upon the two as they made it back to their house, and the fragrant smell that Vafaren had gotten used to filled his nostrils. To him, home is what smelled like Anselm, and Anselm is what smelled like home. Vafaren helped Anselm get out of his jacket and the same smell that he so loves penetrated the air around him once more. He leaned against Anselm's neck, wrapping his arms around his lover's waist. Anselm's head responded by turning towards Vafaren's, resting his head on his. A small peck on the lips was exchanged between the two.

The ring of the phone, the only thing disrupting the moment. As Vafaren walked towards the telephone, Anselm followed, resting himself down on the couch as Vafaren grabbed the phone from the table next to the couch, standing.

His ears met with the voice of his mother. His face cringed.

"You are still with that thing! I get calls, Vafaren! Calls! I get calls from close friends, family members. Katharine called today, saying she saw you at the café with that freak. How do you think I explained that to her? Do you have a single clue how ashamed I am of you? Not only that, but your mentions of a proposal!" Vafaren walked away from the couch at that word, glancing back at Anselm, who stared at him, not hearing what his mother was shouting in his ear. "You could do so much better, dear. That's all I mean. Stop embarrassing not just your mother but yourself as well. I will come visit you at the garden the following morning, and we will have a talk face to face, alright?"

Vafaren dismissed his crazed mother's words. She doesn't get him; she doesn't get it. Even after all the good he has done for her, she doesn't get it.

"Mother," he spoke softly, his mother finally shutting up, "you haven't mistaken the cat food for your own, have you? Have you been changing the salt?" At his words, he could sense his mother's uncertainty.

"No, no. I fed the cats and I salted him. No, I don't think so. Vafaren, it smells."

"It doesn't."

"Your nose got used to it too much, of course it doesn't smell to you. It smells so bad here, after you left me to take care of him the smell got worse." Vafaren walked back towards the couch, his mother's voice getting quiet.

"I'll come over by tomorrow." At this, his mother protested, a sudden raise in her voice.

"No, no! You'll bring your freak boyfriend over, that freak enjoys the smell, I don't like him, Vafaren, he reminds me of--"

Vafaren set the phone down. Met with Anselm's questioning gaze, he instead offered him to stand.

"Nothing to fret over, just my mother." Vafaren heard Anselm chuckle at that, as the two made their way up to the bathroom.

"Sadly, we do have to visit her house tomorrow, she doesn't like you much, but you already know that. All I wish is that you do not worry over her words or glances, you know how she can be." Vafaren helped Anselm get out of his clothes, and also aided him in getting inside the bathtub. He instead chose to get a stool and sat beside the bathtub after turning on the water, watching it fill the tub. As the tub filled, Vafaren grabbed the bodywash, lavender scented, just how Anselm likes it. He shut the running water, poured some of the bodywash onto his hands, dipped it into the water, and rubbed it over Anselm's arms.

"Anselm, would you like to copulate with me tonight?" Vafaren smiled at himself and shuffled in his seat, although he didn't get a response back from Anselm.

"I had just been wondering since you, well, don't know how to put it into words. You know when animals go into heat, at times their sense of smell heightens? Or at times they may secrete a smell to potential mates to lure them to mate, well, ever since I have helped you, you have just smelled so, so attractive." Vafaren's hands rubbed up and down Anselm's arms, with no reply being heard from Anselm. "Do you not think that my mother would be even more ashamed in me for copulating with you? I know she'd know that we did it the night before. Her reaction would bring me a sick satisfaction, and don't get me wrong, as I do not mean for us to breed only because it would bring me pleasure, I mean for us to do so because you know I am quite mesmerized by you and-" A soft thud inside the tub interrupted Vafaren's sentence and prompted him to panic instead.

"Oh gods, not again." He reached for Anselm's right leg, which dissolved and split from his hip due to the heat of the water, which Vafaren forgot about, too busy voicing out his thoughts. His hand immediately darted to the drain stopper, plugging it out, letting the water go down the drain. He placed Anselm's leg back inside the bathtub, apologizing frequently, as he rummaged through the drawers. Upon finding a sewing kit, he leaned towards the bathtub and started stitching up his lover's leg.

Yesterday was his left arm, the day before was his ear. Perhaps Vafaren was treating his beloved too harshly. A million apologies left his mouth, all of which were met with silence.