

The Book of Hours Excerpt #3: When Doves Cry

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...sweat, elevated heartbeat, flushed face, tongues fully engaged, Marta straddling my lap, only removing our tops after a while and our pants not at all, the tingling in my hands as my blood is diverted away from my limbs, the long-lost thrill of discovery, of *clicking*. Sometimes holding her as she leans back, enjoying the feeling of the strength I've gained from working out. We're probably breaking every rule of consent and discussing things beforehand and signing everything in triplicate, instead figuring each other out as we go along, and for me that's the most fun, experimenting, discovering what your lover likes, what you can do to and for them or what you can let them do to and for you. We've already been observing each other very closely in the brief time that we've been dating, and it's sometimes eerie the little things she picks up on. Looking closely now at her blacklit face (strangely unreactive to the blacklight, actually—something about her skin tone?), nose to nose, my hand or ear to her heart, our foreheads nuzzling, our sweat mixing, deeply inhaling her scent (oh, I am *such* a pheromone junkie): this is real, this is happening. How long it lasts and how far we go is impossible to predict, but that doesn't matter. It simply *is*. That's what's important.

Occasionally hearing my cat Perdita scampering about elsewhere in the apartment makes me think of "When Doves Cry:" *animals strike curious poses, they feel the heat, the heat between me and you*. I briefly consider playing the song—on repeat, no less—except that would mean pulling myself away from Marta, and I'm not ready to do that. Not every moment needs a soundtrack. Besides, it's quiet upstairs, there's nothing to drown out, no loud footsteps or barking, no sound except for the ambient hum of my many electronic gadgets and the sound of Marta and I breathing, louder and heavier all the time, and perhaps the sound of my shiny black pants crinkling underneath us. But no, the atmosphere is perfect, with no light except the blacklights and the bluish glow of my DVD player's menu on the television (the credits on *Shaun of the Dead* had barely started to roll before we turned our attentions to each other), and when we move into the bedroom, I put on the blacklights in there and the lava lamp and the flashing xmas lights over my desk, but I don't turn on the heater. The environment that we've created, the heat between Marta and I, is perfect. This is so much what I'd been craving, what I'd been desperately lacking since long before the unfulfilled promises of Coma White or Devi, this sort of extremely intimate, one-on-one contact. And I know I'm finicky--even after this extended period of loneliness, there aren't many girls that I want to be this intimate with, and lordy, is Marta ever one.



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