



- G A T E K E E P -

“Goodnight, little akuma,” Ladybug said, capturing the small shadowfly and vanishing it into motes of purplish light. The damage it had done – every harm it had caused – vanished with it, leaving Paris whole once more.

“Should I walk you home, m'lady...?” Chat Noir asked, a sly grin creeping across his face. Ladybug rolled her eyes.

“I’ll see you tonight, kitty,” she said, smiling at his huff as she leapt up across the skyline.

*Five minutes until I transform back – where’s a good spot?*

She looked around, spotting a couple watching cameras hoping to get a glimpse at the woman behind the hero, but her ability to move quickly and quietly over Paris kept her from getting caught by the likes of them. Still, something about this wasn't sitting right with her. The akuma had been simple enough to defeat, more an ambient threat than anything targeted at her or the city. It had seemed confused as she fought it, the person it had possessed as lost as it had been. Defeating it had been a mercy for all involved.

The two had almost felt stitched together in a way she hadn't seen before, nothing like the elegance of Hawkmoth's pet monsters. She hauled herself between a narrow alley, almost flying, certain that whatever caused this latest problem would reveal itself in time. Before that, though, she had to wrap up this college semester and have her fashion display ready for Fashion Week.

*And mom wanted me to pick up some flour, she thought, and I should still have time to help her out in the kitchen before-*

Her thoughts were shattered when she was shoulderchecked from the rooftops, smacking into a wall before bouncing heavily off the streets below. She slammed into a car and rolled to a stop, body protected by magic but still aching as she pushed herself to her feet.

Catching sight of her attacker, she felt her jaw drop.

An actual knight riding a massive lion landed on the street in front of her. Up above on the building tops three more knights appeared, one riding a dragon, another a unicorn, and the last one, a massive coiling snake.

The Lion Knight drew a gleaming sword from his hilt and pointed it at her.

“Ladybug,” he declared. “I am Sir Michael Thatcher of the Table, and you will give your miraculous

to me!"

"The Table," Ladybug repeated, dropping her guard and looking at them, listening to their accents. *British? What is this? "Like... the Round Table?"*

"An abomination," Michael spat, stepping closer, his sword pointed at her. "There is only the Table, and we sit at the head."

"Dame Donna Knauss," slurred the one atop her dragon.

"Dame Bonnie Johnson," blurted the one on the unicorn.

"Dame Bobbi Peel," the snake knight hissed, leaning closer.

Ladybug snickered.

She couldn't help herself – the presentation, the audacity, the *merde* these people were spilling.

"How about no?" she said, dusting herself off, pulling out her yo-yo and staring the leader down. "You and your harem anime sit at the head? Really?"

"You would deny the heroes of a Kingdom United?" Michael asked, pushing his sword closer.

"Funny," Ladybug said, keeping an eye on all her adversaries, spinning her weapon as she took stock of them. "You all sound British to me."

"We speak for all," blurted Bonnie.

Marinette laughed again.

She couldn't help it.

"If you're heroes, I'd be willing to help you," Ladybug said, pushing the sword to one side with her finger. "It wouldn't be the first time I've helped heroes from other parts of the world-"

"Help? From a half-breed French girl?" Bobbi spat. "Why don't you do what comes naturally to your people, girl – surrender or lose."

"We don't care which," slurred the one riding the dragon. "It'll save you from a tremendous beating. Tremendous." Ladybug could not help but notice the slurred words, the tiny hands.

"Okay, well, you're sounding more like villains now, so," Ladybug backed away, giving herself distance and considering. *How much time do I have left...? Tikki?"*

*"Yes, Marinette?"*

*"Can they see you?"*

*"No. I think all their powers are stolen."*

*"Stolen? Is that possible?"*

*"I didn't think so..."*

"French girl!" Michael roared, brandishing his sword. "What is it to be? Surrender or defeat?"

"Neither," she said, jumping forward.

She was faster than him, stronger. He managed to block her foot with his face and was sent flying backwards, slamming into the car he'd knocked her into. His lion roared and pounced at her, but she rolled underneath it and used her yo-yo to bind its legs and snout, causing it to topple over.

*Can't use lucky charm and I don't know how much time I have left, she thought. Gonna have to make*

*this quick.*

She knocked the one off the unicorn first, took her to the ground and away from the others. Bonnie fumbled with her sword and Ladybug managed to tie the weapon into its sheath before shoving her away and binding her arms to her side, then knocking her over with a simple push.

"How dare you!" Bonnie seethed, but Ladybug was already moving on the dragon.

It actually did breathe fire, the heat of it searing along her back as she dodged it, circled around a rooftop and backflipped up and over the beast, driving her heel into its head and into a building. It slammed into the rooftop and fell to the street below, unconscious, the rider abandoning her beast to seek cover far away.

"That was easier than I expected," Ladybug grinned, turning to face the last knight.

"Contagion," Dame Bobbi Peel, pointing her sword.

Marinette felt nothing.

"*Marinette-!*" Tikki screamed.

Ladybug flickered and ashed away, leaving Marinette to face down the snake knight on her own.

"Even your people deserve a better class of hero than you," Bobbi sneered, the snake surging forward.

"Tikki-" Marinette began, but the snake swallowed her kwami whole.

"Got it," Bobbi said.

Marinette turned – with her kwami gone and her powers dispersed, the other knights were free to move again, all of them surrounding her. She took a step back, feeling slivers creep along her spine, cold sweat and gooseflesh.

"I got her," Donna slurred, returning, holding her hands out to block any place Marinette might try to run to. "It was me that beat her, all by myself. I was tremendous." Bobbi glared but said nothing as Michael stalked forward and grabbed Marinette by the throat, lifting her easily off the ground.

"Where are going to run to, half-breed?" Michael sneered. "Going to run and get help from what, your society? Society doesn't exist. There's the family and there's us. We'll make you see."

"Careful," Bonnie blurted. "She's an oriental. She probably knows karate."

"I'm half Chinese!" Marinette said, failing to free herself. The four knights looked at her, not understanding. "If you're going to be racist, at least get your racism right!"

"I'm not racist," Donna slurred.

"I am," Bobbi hissed, walking up behind Marinette and grabbing her by the hips.

"I never met a racism or a classism I didn't like," Michael added. "If you have the proper breeding, you don't have to worry about such things. But look at you – a two-time eugenics loser, and then born poor in two worlds."

"No one is coming to help you, little girl," Bobbi hissed, raising her sword above her head. "But we're going to make an example of you by making you cum." Her sword gleamed, a slithering light moving to and through Marinette.

"A real hero would be able to resist this," Michael said, letting her go. She landed on her feet, staring up at them. There had to be a way to reclaim Tikki, some way to-

"Bow to your masters," Bobbi hissed.

Marinette tried to stand and couldn't. She found herself on her knees, her forehead pressed against cool cobblestones, her hands back at her sides. She struggled to rise, closing her eyes and focusing all her strength on simply standing up.

She heard a gasp as she rose slowly to her feet, her every muscle straining, but the gasps turned to laughter when her legs crossed and she dipped into a curtsy.

"I love it when they think they're winning," Bonnie tittered.

"If she were worth anything as a hero that wouldn't have worked," Bobbi smirked, ruling over Marinette with stolen power.

"It took four of you to ambush me after I'd taken out a villain already," Marinette seethed, managed to lift her head and meet Michael's eyes. "And if I had-"

"All you people do is whine," Michael said, stepping forward and slapping her across the face. She fell down to her knees so he slapped her again, knocking her to the streets, lording over her. "You poors are owed no entitlements, not milk or food or anything save that which we choose to give you. If you'd simply given us what should have been ours to begin with, you wouldn't be disappointed to lose what was yours until now."

He reached down, hand curling around the neckline of her shirt, and pulled.

The fabric came apart easily, slipping off her back.

"Take off the rest," Bobbi hissed in her ear.

Another slithering sense of power moving into her, controlling her hands, her hips. Her shoelaces were undone, socks and shoes left behind as she stood and stepped to one side. She unbuttoned her pants and pulled them down her thighs, her calves, past her ankles, stepped out of them, abandoned them. A simple shrug of her shoulders and her shirt followed.

"Please..." she said.

"Please, what?" Donna slurred, stepping forward, her hand dipping in Marinette's panties, her fingering curling inside the cleft of her. Marinette gasped as Donna pulled her forward as she stepped back, leading Marinette with a vicious intimacy. The bronzed dragon knight groped her, pulling her along by a nipple. "She's got no tits."

"You'd still fuck her." Bobbi's tone was accusatory.

"It's not like I'm gay," Donna slurred. "I'm not. It's just she's french, you know how they are."

"I look forward to finding out," Michael said, pulling Marinette away from Donna's fingers. Holding her by the throat with one hand, he pushed her down to the street with one hand, his other hand between his own legs as his eyes bore into hers. "I'm going to make an example out of this one."

He leaned down, kissed her.

Bobbi made her kiss him back.

He penetrated her, rode her, short thrusts for his pleasure with no thought for her.

Bobbi made her enjoy it anyway, made her gasp, made her moan, made her pant, made her beg.

"Real heroes don't get raped," Michael said, raping her.

"Real heroes don't rape," Marinette gasped, being raped.

"A real woman wouldn't cum from being raped unless she was enjoying it," Michael said.

And then Bobbi made her cum, made her cum again, kept making her cum on her rapists cock, made her cum until she was trembling and aching and miserable, made her cum until she couldn't see straight, until she couldn't form words.

He pulled out of her, letting her seed drool out of her lips and onto the cobblestones.

She felt used, defiled, sticky, wretched.

"I think we should keep her," Bobbi hissed. "Haul her around like a trophy. Give us what we are owed or this will happen to you."

"That's a good plan," Michael said, cleaning himself off on the ruins of Marinette's clothing. "Here's what we're going to do. Are you listening, whatever your name is?" He tapped Marinette's cheek with his foot but she was unresponsive until Donna walked over and, pinching her nipples, pulled Marinette to her feet.

"Listen," Donna slurred, slapping Marinette and letting her go. The former hero staggered but managed to stay upright, glaring hatred at the knights surrounding her.

"Still have a little bit of fire, what? I like that," Michael said, tossing the cum rag he'd made of her shirt at her. "I'm going to drag you to your awful tower and hang you from it. I'm going to let everyone know who you were. I'm going to let whoever handles these things pull you down and clean you up, and then I'm going to come for you and cum in you again, and then I'm going to haul you around like a trophy. You were never a hero. You were just keeping your powers warm until someone worthy – us – could come and claim them."

"Fuck you," Marinette spat.

"I will," Michael laughed. "You know, if we had the proper sort of royals the Empire would not have ended. If you people had the right sort of royals, people might have not got it into their heads to start killing kings, but here we are. Here I am. Cleaning up your mess, French girl."

"Cataclysm."

"Cata-what?"

Chat Noir grabbed Bobbi's head.

Marinette knew that Adrien was terrified of Plagg's power. She had used it herself and understood why – the two of them were so careful whenever they used the sheer destruction that lived within the friendly black kwami. They were always so careful to use it on objects, on items, never on people.

Never until now.

Bobbi Peel crackled. She opened her mouth to scream and couldn't, torn apart from the inside, shattered along the outside, the blood that sprayed out ashing into nothing before it could even hit its apex. The snake she had been riding likewise flaked away to nothing at all.

Tikki was free.

"Tikki." The name was harshly spoken. "Spots on."

The transformation was quick. Michael was still drawing his sword when Marinette was finishing her transformation, and she kicked it aside and punched him as hard as she could. He staggered back and she kept hitting, kept hitting, kept hitting until the armor cracked, until his stolen

powers abandoned him, until he cried and begged for a mercy he had not offered her.

"Real heroes don't rape," she managed, kicking him to the ground.

"Real heroes don't take advantage of a fallen enemy," Michael said, glaring up at her, the hypocrisy of his words lost on him. She considered what he said for half a heartbeat and then punched him as hard as she could across his unarmored face.

His neck snapped, he not dead but certainly unconscious.

She looked down at him, panting, and wondered if she should beat him into paste.

*Tikki...?*

*He... he killed them, Marinette. He and his friends and his ancestors killed not-kwami but something like us to steal their powers. He would have done the same to me. He-*

She didn't think about it.

She stepped on his throat.

Then she huddled down and hugged herself, weeping.

"My lady," Chat Noir whispered, then "Marinette."

He wiped what was left of Donna off of him. His touch was gentle, seeking permission, and she clung to him. He held her, let her cry.

"It wasn't your fault."

"I know."

"I know, too." He paused, kissing her hair. "There's some people that would say you're partially to blame for that, but you aren't. What they did was on them. You're going to be okay."

"Okay."

She wasn't sure she believed him, but she loved him perfectly in that moment.

Chat Noir faded and Adrien held her, his arms a place of safety. Ladybug faded into Marinette and he helped her stand, started to lead her away when they noticed

"I didn't want it to happen, not really!" blurted Bonnie, sneaking onto her unicorn.

*"Didn't want it to happen?"*

The roar came from Marinette, the sound making even Adrien cringe.

"Didn't want it to happen? You made it happen! You helped!"

"But I didn't think it would-"

"You don't get to support something monstrous and then think you're not responsible," Marinette said, standing tall, proud.

"There's one more villain, m'lady."

"Are we up to the test, kitty?" Her voice broke as she spoke.

"You are the best person, and the best hero, I've ever known," Adrien whispered. "Don't let them ruin you."

"Tikki?"

*Yes, Marinette?*

“Spots on.”