

Take a cherry

(English)

Von Salai

Kapitel 2: An unexpected experience

"Where did you even get them?" The Inquisitor got closer, eyes fixed on the red orbs. Cherries were hard to come by. The trees had become rare during the course of the last hundred years. Maybe there was a connection to the blight, but nobody knew for sure. Now they only grew in Tevinter and further to the Nord, making them expensive delicacies, since they had to be imported and spoiled quickly.

"Josephine has connections most merchants would be jealous of", Dorian explained with a little grin and the elf reached out.

"Ah, ah, ah!", the mage tutted and swatted the Inquisitor's hand away, quickly covering the cherries with the piece of fabric. "You need more than fruit to sustain your spirits. Have some bread and cheese first", Dorian said, reaching to the bottom of the basket and pushed both in Fen's hands.

"I'm not a child, Dorian-", the elf protested weakly but sat down on his bed anyways, knowing Dorian well enough not to quarrel with him, lest he'd get none of the fruits. He wasn't in the mood to fight him.

"No, you're not. But sometimes you need to be reminded, that the only hope of this world is mortal and needs proper nutrition and sleep. The papers on your desk will still be there when your stomach is full and your mind rested, I promise."

The Inquisitor felt like he should be angry at the man, but a slight pinch in his stomach proved Dorian's point, so he simply murmured something about the mage being a terrible mother hen and, with a tired sigh, took a bite of his bread. The Tevinter's right eyebrow rose, but he let the remark slip.

Dorian took up some space at the foot of the Inquisitor's big poster bed and started reading to the elf from a book he had brought along, so Fen could learn about Teveen pronunciation by listening, since there was a lack of opportunities to overhear conversations at Skyhold. The side effect was, that it kept them from falling into an awkward silence.

The elf crossed his legs and rested comfortably against the headboard, chucking a pillow at Dorian, who shoot him a glance, nodded slightly as a 'thank you' and stuffed it behind his back, so he could lean more comfortably against the bedpost.

Fen finished his meal and took a sip from the cup Dorian had filled when he had picked up the book. The mage had emptied his own and bend to the side to set it down on the floor, too comfortable to get off the bed in order to put it on the table- and too cautious to let the basket between them unguarded for a moment. He had learned not to trust the rogue's innocent face... with the pointy end of a dagger at his

throat.

The Inquisitor brushed some crumbs of bread off his fingers and sat up straight, leaning a bit forward, gaze fixed on the basket for a moment before he shoot a quick glance at his companion, only to find grey eyes peaking over the pages of the book. Even with the lower part of Dorian's face hidden behind the rest of their leather bound entertainment, he could see his smile reflected in the mage's eyes.

"You look more relaxed", Dorian remarked as he let the book snap shut with one hand, placing it on the covers to his left, still smiling at the Inquisitor.

"I like it when someone reads to me. I guess I really needed a break from work", he admitted.

"Everyone does now and then."

Under the rogue's almost predatory look Dorian reached forward and pulled the fabric back before he pushed the basket further towards the elf, finally offering him the cherries.

"Careful. They have a hard seed sitting in their center", he warned when the Inquisitor snatched the basket off the sheets and set it down in his own lap, not risking to let the mage steal it back again to tease him more.

"They almost look like jewels", Fen said, picking a dark cherry up by its stem. Out of curiosity he turned towards his night stand, where a candle burned bright, and held the fruit against the light, as if he expected it to become translucent. It didn't, but the colour became more intense, reminding him of veins of red lyrium in a dark cave, that seemed to become brighter when the light of a torch hit it.

"They could be, considering prices at the moment", Dorian muttered under his moustache. He hadn't thought about that remark, but the Inquisitor froze for a moment, then he turned around, setting the cherry back on top of the others as if he had burned himself on the green stem. Dorian blinked in confusion, before he realized his mistake, slapping himself mentally.

"We should try to sell them, getting more gold for our cause. We could use the money to supply our forces further-", before the Inquisitor could continue, Dorian had crawled up the bed and picked back up the cherry Fen had dropped.

"We're not that desperate. Our alliances pay off well. I just meant to say, that it is a pity we won't get to have cherries as often as I would like." He grabbed Fen's hand and placed the fruit in his palm.

"But-"

The mage cut off his protest again, before the Inquisitor could even finish the sentence.

"No, no, no. Nothing of that. You wouldn't want to insult Josephine, now would you? She's been so proud after she had managed to finally lay hand on the cherries. I think she outdid herself. Also... I've made an arrangement with her and I would prefer not to pay for cherries that were meant for you, just to have you refuse a simple pleasure of life and-", this time it was the mage who was interrupted.

"Oh Dorian- don't tell me you've sold your soul for a basket full of fruit?" There it was again, that little pixie-grin that made Dorian secretly want to push the elf against the next wall and kiss him until it was gone and replaced by breathless gasps.

"Now that you put it that way... if Josephine had started to laugh manically whilst rubbing her hands together it would have been more obvious, though." Their joined laughter filled the room for a while, easing all tension that had build up.

The Inquisitor lifted the cherry, holding it between his thumb and index finger this time, suddenly very aware of the closeness they shared, now that Dorian was leaning

against his headboard, too.

"I think we should share them with the inner circle. I'm sure they all could use something nice after all the effort we've gone through. Varric likes sweets, doesn't he? Cullen too and I'm sure Sera would also love them. It might even stop Vivienne from trying to talk me into buying those ugly and expensive curtains for the big hall, just because they are orlesian and would represent our... whatever. I'm not even sure what they would be good for, but she keeps insisting-" Dorian made a little noise, a crossover between a snort and a suppressed laugh, making the Inquisitor look at him with a puzzled expression on his face.

"I suggest you try them yourself first, before you so brotherly share them with the rest of us."

"I wonder if Solas has ever had any cherries."

The mage groaned, as if in pain. Dorian was almost starting to suspect Fen to drag it out, just to pay him back for the tease earlier, hadn't he known him well enough by now to know, that his will to share was genuine caring for all members of his party – even Vivienne, whose opinions he didn't exactly share.

"You can do with your cherries as you please, I promise. I just want to make sure you get some yourself, and if it's only a single one," with a sigh, the mage fetched a cherry from the basket and placed it against the elf's lips, effectively cutting off any further rambling.

Only the next second did he realize the boldness of his move, when green eyes caught his own. But it was too late to pull back without making the situation even more awkward for both of them and the elf gave in, after a few seconds of hesitation. Fen opened his mouth, tipped his head back slightly and moved forward to take the cherry in.

The view caught Dorian by surprise. The elf's parting lips, closing around the smooth, red fruit- the mage could feel his blood rush south as soft lips brushed against his fingertips. There was a pull, softly increasing, until the cherry separated from the stem he had held firmly between his fingers and the Inquisitor's lips closed, sucking in the fruit. Dorian was holding his breath, without even realizing it.

Fen didn't notice. His attention was focused on the cherry on his tongue. He slightly rolled it, sucking tentatively, furrowing his brows.

It... tasted of nothing.

Dorian noticed the concentrated, slightly disappointed and questioning frown as Fen started to wonder what the fuss was about. Just when Dorian intended to ask if the fruit wasn't to his taste, Fen bit down on it.

Instantly, a rich sweetness spread over his tongue and delicious juice filled his mouth as his teeth ripped through the thin skin, into soft flesh. It wasn't the heavy kind of sweet honey possessed. It was light, refreshing, a bit like peaches but not as sticky.

Almost shocked by the sudden intenseness of the fragrance, Fen flinched back, with a hand clamped over his mouth. Dorian caught a glimpse of dilating pupils shortly before Fen closed his eyes. The Inquisitor pressed the hard stone from the center against the roof of his mouth, rolling it with the tip of his tongue, separating the rest of the fruit from it and let out a pleased mewl, almost a quiet moan, as he let his fingertips rest against his lips.

Dorian was watching quietly, a little worried at first, but mostly taken by surprise at the expression of sheer bliss the elf showed. It was a display of sensuality he hadn't been expecting.

Watching the elf suddenly seemed very intrusive, forbidden even and the mage felt a

pang of something that could have been guilt in the pit of his stomach. Still, he felt unable to avert his eyes.

After a few, cautious chews, Fen swallowed the cherry and pushed the seed to his lips, taking it out with two fingers, sighing as he did so. When green eyes opened again, Dorian felt as if he had just witnessed the Inquisitor climax.

Realizing the mages quietness, Fen tipped his head to the side, smiling a little embarrassed at the serious, almost dark expression on the Tevinter's face. The eye contact brought Dorian back from the abyss that had opened inside his own mind.

Casually, Dorian took another cherry from the basket on Fen's lap, rolling it slightly between his fingers, distracting green eyes before the elf would notice his excitement.

"I take it you like cherries then?", he asked, his voice sounding too husky in his own ears. The elf followed the cherry in the man's hand with his eyes, biting his lower lip and nodding quietly, maybe having forgotten about the cherry in his own palm.

Dorian had been bold once and figured that a second time wouldn't tip the scale, so he lifted his hand in an offering gesture. This time he didn't let the fruit touch the Inquisitor's lips.

He didn't have to. The elf moved on his own accord when his hand stopped in mid air, meeting him half ways, opening his mouth almost obediently. The gesture of trust, almost submissive in its nature, awoke a longing within the mage.

It must have shown in his face, because he saw a quick flicker of insecurity cross green eyes and a light blush crept up the elf's cheeks, blood colouring the tips of his pointy ears, too.