

Poor Orpheus (don't look back)

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by [YoungDumbandFullofHeadcanons](#)

Summary

Felix drags himself from the dirt and shivers rack all the way down his spine. The low morning light makes the earth shimmer with little green shards of glass, and the sticky scent of champagne greets his churning stomach. He tumbles forward and retches whatever he had eaten the night before. Not much evidently, plenty of booze though. The smell is vile.

When he can lift his head again, he's kneeling at the feet of a minotaur, and everything comes rushing back.

You said you loved me-

The worst part is, Felix thought this was a love story (but maybe it still is)

The unanticipated sequel to *Icarus (and the sun)* in which Felix is alive and everything gets worse

How dare you think it's romantic (leaving me stranded)

Chapter one

The sun rises from a pale gray mist over the english countryside, and the shadows reach long and wanting toward the west. A castle crests the horizon, shining opulent ivory on one side, and cloaked in sleeping darkness at the other. In that darkness Felix's eyes open, and he feels dead.

The early chill of autumn has come on biting winds, soaking cold all the way to the bone. His hands shake and violet blue stains his fingertips. The rough ground below him has stolen any warmth, and the smell of wet dirt is clogging his head. His mouth is dry and his eyes feel so puffy and sore it hurts to keep them open.

There's a thunderous pulse in his head, like the worst hangover he's ever had. In harmony, there's a hollow clanging in his chest, where he knows *something* should be.

Felix drags himself from the dirt and shivers rack all the way down his spine. The low morning light makes the earth shimmer with little green shards of glass, and the sticky scent of champagne greets his churning stomach. He tumbles forward and retches whatever he had eaten the night before. Not much evidently, plenty of booze though. The smell is vile.

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You said you loved me-

Felix vomits again, empty gut heaving as bile and spit drip down his chin. His eyes sting but the tears don't come, they've run dry. He's cried enough in a day to last a lifetime.

The winding path of the hedge maze is a familiar journey, he hasn't gotten lost in it since he was a child. The brambles catch on his wings and after a halfhearted struggle he just shucks them off and leaves them there.

With every step the damp ground clings to his heels, and it feels like he's sinking. Like it would subsume him, if he stood in one place too long. Like the earth will open wide and swallow him whole. *Like a grave.*

The courtyard is still scattered with tattered decorations and empty cups, The gardeners will have their hands full with the mess. The maids too, when he finally takes an exhausted step into the manor. The stench of food and wine and body heat is stifling. A few hangers-on have stayed the night on the settees or parlor floor, and they'll be ushered out with the rest of the rubbish.

It's just barely dawn, a few glinting stars still holding out hope as the sun creeps up over the trees, and the earliest house staff will be up soon. Everything will be set back to order before breakfast is called.

Felix feels like a specter, passing through walls.

By the time he gets back to his bedroom, Felix is ready to sleep for another day, at least. He's cold and wet and sore, and just wants to lie down in his bed and never get back up. Wants to close his eyes and let it all drift away. Wants to crawl under the blankets and *curl up around a warm body and be held-*

No, he puts a stop to that thought before it can start, because he knows exactly who's warm skin and strong arms and tired smirk he's thinking about *and fuck he's thinking about him right now-*

Just go to sleep, he tells himself.

He wishes the earth really did swallow him, into somewhere dark and empty and silent. Somewhere he didn't have to think.

The bed is cold under him, and that disappointment is one more crack in his very fragile heart. His bottom lip wobbles and he really thought he was done crying? *How stupid could he be?*

Just as his heavy eyes close to probably cry himself to sleep for a few fitful hours, he sees something gold and shiny winking at him from his night stand. It takes him a moment to recognize it, which is ridiculous, since it's been in his family for like, ten generations.

It's his signet ring, just sitting there.

And his heart shatters into a thousand little pieces.

In an instant he's on his feet again, with hot, raging sobs bubbling out of his chest. He slams the dressing room door open and goes stomping through their shared bathroom, ready to break the other fucking door down because he needs to talk to Oliver, *right fucking now-*

That fucking lying bastard thinks this is over? Thinks he doesn't owe Felix more than a drunken argument? Thinks he can just leave him like this-

Oliver's door isn't locked and Felix comes crashing into the room with such chaotic force that he almost bashes his skull open on the floor. He catches himself on the wardrobe, turns toward the bed to start shouting something angry and incomprehensible, but Oliver's not there.

The bed is empty and unmade, the costume from the night before tossed on the edge. There's no book or glasses case on the nightstand. No cheap trainers tucked neatly under the bed. Even the wardrobe is empty.

It takes a moment for him to understand.

"I think you need to leave tomorrow," he had said.

Felix puts his fist through the wall, because he doesn't know what to do with all the anger and regret and *hurt*. He's lucky it wasn't made of stone, but electric pain still shoots up his

arm and that makes him even angrier. He punches another hole through the wallpaper and this time he feels a sickening *crack*. He catches sight of his hideously red face in the mirror, wet with tears and snot and spit, and chucks a Tiffany lamp at it. There's a satisfying shatter and an awful, haunting silence after.

Clutching his bleeding hand to his chest, Felix sinks to the floor as his head falls back and he *screams*-

In the midst of his tantrum there's a polite knock at the door-

“*Fuck off!*” he shouts, and then cries harder at how bloody unhinged he sounds.

Duncan must linger for a second, but then he obeys and quiet steps disappear down the hall.

Felix feels incredibly rude and kicks the bedframe in frustration, *and fuck* it hurts, it's solid oak for god's sake. That hurts and his hand hurts and his head still hurts and his chest feels like *it's been ripped open*-

He grabs a pillow from the bed and buries his face in it to scream this time, which is much more considerate. The lush fabric smells like Oliver, and that only makes it worse.

This time there's a less polite knock at the door.

“*Please go away,*” he says this time, his voice gone all hoarse and tight. *It's stupid*, she won't listen, and the door isn't even locked.

“Felix? What is going on?” His mother comes striding into the room in her nightgown and dressing robe, hair ruffled and collagen patches under her eyes. Just from bed, obviously, told that there was *an emergency*-

Their eyes meet and Felix ducks his head down into the pillow again, racked with more sobs at the embarrassment.

“Oh, *sweetheart,*” she says, her tone going soft and sorry. Her dainty slippered feet pad across the floor and she crouches down beside him, a gentle hand on his back. “What's wrong?”

Felix whimpers and snuffles and tries to hold it together.

“Ollie left,” he mumbles, and then starts blubbering all over again.

“What?” she says, aghast. “When? *Why?*”

“Last night,” Felix says, trying to wipe away the tears *that just keep coming*- “I told him to.”

It's then that Elspeth seems to notice the holes in the wall and the broken glass on the floor, and the way Felix's aching hand is leaving blood stains on the pillow. She doesn't say anything at first, just sits down beside him on the floor and guides his head to her shoulder, her elegant fingers combing through his hair.

“Can you tell me what happened?” she asks after a moment, when he’s settled enough to speak.

“He-” Felix begins, chest hiccuping for gasps of air, and then doesn’t know what else to say.

He’s an arsehole who lied to me every day-

He went fucking crazy when I found out-

He left without even fucking talking to me-

He couldn’t just tell me the truth for one goddamn minute-

He was my best fucking friend-

I was in love with him, and he fucking lied to me-

I’m still so fucking in love with him and he just left-

His mother doesn’t press him to answer, just soothes him with her hands in his hair and shushes the worst of his sobbing.

“He just-” Felix says miserably, “He wasn’t who I thought he was.”

“Oh my darling,” Elspeth heaves a great sigh and tugs Felix closer, puts her arms around his shoulders and hugs him tight. Surely he’s ruining her favorite silk robe with all the tears.

“They never are,” she whispers in his ear, as if that might make him feel better.

Felix cries in his mother’s arms like a child until every tear has been wrung out of him, and he feels empty and filthy and useless. She ushers him off to bed then, *his own bed* she insists, but he takes Oliver’s pillow with him because he really doesn’t know what’s good for him.

Just as morning starts to settle into the sky, Felix falls into a dark, dreamless sleep, and wishes to never wake up again.

So tell me everything is not about me (but what if it is)

Chapter two

A few hours later Felix wakes up curled around a pillow that smells like Oliver, and he feels dead. He stares at the ceiling until his eyes go blurry.

“Felix,” his mother calls from behind the door. She sounds well-rested, with that lovely posh *ting* in her voice. “Time to get up darling, it’s almost lunch.”

Felix doesn’t move.

“I’m not hungry,” he answers in a groggy croak, like his chest is filled with sludge.

He feels disgusting. He needs a bath. He doesn’t move.

“Now sweetheart, you can’t spend all day in bed,” She insists, all light and sweet and aloof. “Life is for the living of course.”

What a thing to say.

She doesn’t wait for him to answer, steps tip-tapping down the hall, leaving no room for argument. Felix thinks about putting up a fight, but he doesn’t really see the point.

Lunch is served in the family dining room, and Felix is sat facing the floor-to-ceiling windows, looking out over the courtyard garden and hedge maze. It’s a beautiful, sweeping landscape framed in red curtains, like a still frame from some artsy foreign film.

A plate of mince pie with buttered potatoes is placed in front of him, along with a glass of wine beside it.

Everyone is looking at him, he can feel it as their silverware clink on the fine china. Even Duncan is watching him from his post at the edge of the room.

They all know, Felix realizes. His mother never could keep anything to herself. And now he feels like he’s come to the table naked and they are all too polite to say so.

After a few agonizing minutes of silence his father clears his throat and says, “It was a wonderful time last night darling, you always plan the most impeccable events.”

“Oh thank you dear,” his mother preens. “I had always said we should do a midsummer celebration, in the classic fashion of course, but by the time the dates come around I grow so bored with city living and just want a quiet house. It was nice to have an occasion though.”

His father hums his agreement, and no one mentions what that occasion was.

Venetia is sitting to Felix's right side, which is unusual, because that's *where Ollie sits-*

Stop it, Felix grits his teeth. *Just stop thinking-*

There's a subtle nudge on his foot under the table and Felix jerks away from it. When he looks over his sister is making those eyes at him above her glass, trying to use their twin telepathy.

What happened? she asks between sips of wine.

Felix feels like he's swimming in quicksand. He must have that far-gone look on his face, because Venetia just blinks at him in silence until her glass is empty and she has to go back to nibbling at her lunch.

"That cake was amazing too," Farleigh chimes in when the conversation starts to taper off.

"Was it really? I never had the chance to sit the entire night," Elspeth says. "Isn't that the way it always goes though? I'm glad it was acceptable."

"Yeah," Farleigh grins at her in that classic kiss-up way of his. "So light, best chocolate cake I've ever had."

"Yes, they can be quite cloying," she agrees. "Felix you must have had some? It was your favorite of course."

Felix is watching a dreary grey cloud drift across the otherwise flawless blue sky. It takes an unfortunate amount of time to realize he's been spoken to.

"Uh- what?" he mumbles, and it sounds lifeless.

His mother stalls for a moment, considering her words carefully, and then waves the topic away.

"Nothing dear," she says, looking back down at her plate. "Do eat something though, it's getting cold."

Felix doesn't move, his hands lying limp and useless in his lap. This is the longest fucking lunch of his life. He glances at the grandfather clock, *it's been nine minutes*.

His chest hurts, like his lungs are filled with barbs and brambles. They're climbing up his throat and stinging in his eyes and ears. He tries to breathe less, like that might keep them contained.

"School is starting up soon, isn't it boys?" Sir James asks. "Two weeks or so?"

Felix is busy trying to count how many seconds he can go without air while also trying not to cry, so Farleigh answers for them both.

"Yeah, on the 25th."

Felix doesn't even know what today is, and then he does-

The day after Ollie's birthday-

Stop it stop it stop it-

"Well summer's end surely did creep up on us," his father nods. "Felix, who's your advisor this year?"

Say something, his tongue feels like a brick in his mouth.

"I- I don't know," he shrugs and wants to bash his head on the table.

"Of course, I'm sure you'll find out soon," his father says with a kind smile, but Felix can't look at him. "Second year though, that must be exciting-"

"I don't want to talk about school right now," Felix says in a big rush of air, and then he digs his knuckles into his eye sockets until he sees stars.

The headrush that follows is nice, quiet, empty, and then he blinks and he's right back at the table.

"Alright then," his father concedes and doesn't scold his rudeness. "Eat your lunch my boy, it'll make you feel better-"

Elspeth cuts him off with a terse *ahem* and does a very minute shake of her head. Venetia and Farleigh go still as their eyes dart back and forth across the table. Felix feels like he's watching a bad Ibsen production.

Everyone puts on a show for Felix-

His stomach twists. He's stopped fighting the quicksand, now he's just sinking.

"We should go on a holiday," Farleigh suggests.

"Oh yeah," Venetia tries to sound cheerful. "Felix, you said you wanted to go to Ibiza right?"

Felix doesn't answer her. His head feels like it's bound to explode.

"No doesn't that sound lovely dear, a holiday before school?"

"A couple days by the beach Felix?"

"Chat up some of the local girls maybe?"

"Yes, go have some fun, you're only young once."

"Felix, please eat something, there's no use in moping-"

Felix grabs his plate and chucks it at the wall. The delicate porcelain shatters and it leaves an ugly stain of peas and gravy on a Vermeer portrait.

Everyone falls silent all at once.

Felix wants to scream.

Elspeth is the first to speak, because she can't help but to *tsk* and mutter "this is your grandmother's china, now the set is incomplete."

Felix shoves his chair back and stalks away from the table before he really does scream.

Duncan has already dispatched a maid to clean up the mess.

That one dreary cloud from earlier has spread across the whole sky, and Felix sits on the rooftop smoking a whole pack of cigarettes in the pissing rain. It's *stupid*, and cold, but this is his sad artsy foreign film, and he'll sit in the rain if he wants to.

Everybody wants to make you happy-

Felix grinds a cig between his fingers until it falls apart. He feels so dumb, to just now see the fucking doll house he lives in. Everything that looked so pretty and real seems now like painted set pieces, gilded and over embellished. Every word is a fawning, cloying performance, written for an audience of one.

I'm sorry that I'm not a very good actor -

No, Felix wants to say. You were the best fucking fake of them all.

After a while he runs out of cigs, and the rain turns to just gentle pitter-patter.

Venetia comes up the stairwell and sits beside him at the edge of the patio, looking out over the drenched field of golden grass. She drinks straight from a bottle of wine and then passes it over to him. Felix takes a long pull from the bottleneck and it burns bitter all the way down his gullet.

"Good show at lunch," she says after a while. "I always wanted to do something like that."

Felix just shrugs and drinks more. His empty stomach threatens to revolt.

"Are you gonna tell me what happened?" she looks him in the eye this time. "Or are you going to keep shutting me out?"

And he wants to tell her. Wants to commiserate with his sister over a stupid boy who kicked him in the emotional teeth. Wants to spill every little deceitful story Oliver spun for him. Wants to hear her agree, *how fucking weird, who does that?* But Felix can't put the words together, he's too fucking angry.

He wants to cry again, but *fuck*, his ego can't take it.

"I don't know Vee," he grouses. "How's it feel from the other side?"

It's mean, he knows it. She flinches like she's been struck.

"Fine," she says biting, not looking at him anymore. She snatches the bottle out of his hand as she walks away, saying "Be pissy if you want."

A few meters away he can hear her hiss "*your turn*" before she goes stomping through the door.

Farleigh appears in her place, *waiting in the wings*, and goes sauntering over to Felix to offer him another cig. Felix takes it, because *why not?*

"So..." Farleigh starts, resting his chin in his palm.

"I don't want to talk about it," he butts in, and hopes that will be the end of it.

It's not, of course. But he tried to be nice.

"Oh c'mon Felix," Farleigh levels a sardonic look at him. "You gotta spill, I missed all the good shit."

Felix remembers just then that Farleigh had been kicked out just a few days ago, but today it's like it never happened. How often does that happen? Something unpleasant swept under the rug, Felix none the wiser, entertained by some shiny distraction. He flicks the burnt end of his cig off the roof.

"Fuck off," he mutters, crossing his arms on the ledge and resting his heavy head there. He never should have gotten out of bed.

"Jeez, you are pissy," Farleigh tries to laugh it off. "C'mon, cough up. Vee said you and the parasite went for a drive yesterday, and then you came back all mopey and started binge drinking. Like, what the fuck?"

Instead of answering, Felix looks out over the misty horizon and sees a perfectly lovely brick row house, with flowers and fucking garden gnomes. And then he sees Oliver beside him in the car, shaking, crying, *terrified*, begging Felix not to go inside.

Felix wishes he didn't.

Farleigh heaves a put-upon sigh and changes tactics.

"Listen, I know you two had some weird fucking psycho-sexual thing going on. It happens to the best of us—"

Felix does not dignify that with a response.

"But what kind of asshole would ditch you like this? Like, you're a fucking catch Felix, and he's a nobody—"

"Shut up," Felix grumbles, but there's no heat in it. He's a cigarette, smoked down to stubbed out smudge.

“And right after your Mom throws him this epic party, how ungrateful can you be-”

Felix has to laugh, “That’s rich coming from you.”

That makes Farleigh falter, just for a beat, but he takes it on the chin and then keeps talking.

“Hey, you see this,” he taps his lip and Felix sees the gnarly split running down the middle, scabbed over and swollen. It looks like it hurts. “That’s what your little boyfriend did when he found out I was coming back. Punched me in the mouth, fucking psychotic right? I would’ve beat his ass but then he ran off. Can you believe that little shit-”

“Yeah,” Felix cuts in. He can picture it now. “You probably deserved it.”

Farleigh’s jaw hangs open and then he turns toward the door and calls “Venetia, he’s still being bitchy. I’m tagging out.”

Felix looks over his shoulder and sees her there, a nearly empty wine bottle in her hand.

Fuck this, he’s not a child for them to entertain.

In a huff Felix stands and ducks past her toward the door.

“Where are you going?” Venetia makes a move to follow, but he stops her with an icy glare.

“Bed,” he says, but sounds more like *leave me the fuck alone*.

“Fine,” she sneers, but he can tell she’s hurt, he just doesn’t care right now.

“Have fun Sunshine,” Farleigh calls after him, rolling his eyes.

Felix slams the door behind him.

In his room the bed has already been made up with new sheets and pillows. Everything smells like lilacs and fresh linens now. He cries about that and it’s just getting fucking embarrassing.

The ring is still sitting on his night stand and he can’t look at it without a lump in his throat, so he hastily swipes it into his desk drawer.

The adjoining guest room has been cleaned as well. He ducks his head in out of morbid curiosity, and finds the holes in the walls gone, perfectly smoothed over and repainted within a few hours. The mirror has been replaced and there’s an identical Tiffany lamp in the corner. The bed looks as if no one’s ever even slept on it.

There’s not even a dent left in the wall, no mark of Felix rage. There’s no consequences, never has been. When he was sixteen he crashed his dad’s Bentley into a streetlamp and besides a stern talking to, Felix never heard about it again. They just got another Bentley. It makes him feel sort of disgusted with himself, and he can’t really place why.

He wants to leave marks. He wants to make someone mad. He wants *something* that's not so sweet and placating.

He wants Ollie. Even if they fight. Even if it hurts.

He deserves a some fucking answers .

Before he can talk himself out of it, Felix pulls out his cellphone. There's some messages from his school mates. Some desperate late night texts from India and Annabelle. Nothing from Oliver. He opens their text messages and finds that the thread has been silent for the whole summer. *Obviously*, why would they text each other when they basically shared the same skin for three months.

Felix types out a few messages with varying levels of outrage but deletes them all.

Fuck it, he's already at a new low.

He dials up Oliver's number and waits for the ring, and it never comes. There's an odd tone and then silence as the call cuts. No voice mail either.

Oliver blocked him.

Felix's phone *snaps* in his hand.

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