

ELEVEN-E: The Faithless

After so much deliberation on the stairs, Lukan has decided what to do about Klaus cheating on him. He decided that if Klaus truly loved him, Klaus would figure out on his own accord that what he was doing was wrong in every way conceivable. Lukan realized that this was probably the riskiest choice to make, especially now. Lukan knows firsthand inconceivable pain that could cloud someone's judgement. Klaus' own pain could do the same and seal Lukan's fate. But would acting at all be any better? Lukan remembered his past and whenever he merely lifted a toe off the ground, his whole world crashed and burned over and over. No matter how he looked at it, the situation looked badly. Lukan hoped the cat would give Klaus the good times he needed to recover enough of his mentality to realize he fucked up. Could that happen? Even if it could, what if Klaus legitimately fell in love with the cat? Klaus very clearly wasn't feeling love for anyone; his mind wouldn't allow it. ...Right? Lukan still did not know, but one thing was for certain. If he couldn't trust himself to act, then he had no other choice than to trust that Klaus will come round.

Lukan forced his arms to move in order to open the door to the hotel room. His mother was sitting in nearly the same position she was in when he left. It was as if she did not move an inch at all.

"Lukey!" she said, "You're back!" Excellent observation. "Where is Klaus?"

Lukan shrugged. "I'm sorry, I could not find him," he lied. "Besides, it really is too dark outside to keep looking. The streetlights out there in particular are not very bright out here..." he added. It felt like he was subconsciously trying to change the subject. Not only did he know that it was not going to work, but he did not even want to.

Lukan's mother sighed in both disappointment and sadness, causing Lukan to feel a twinge of guilt in his already ravaged heart. "Well, I just hope he's okay. I don't want to think what could happen to him in the dark."

Lukan could think of a number of things that are likely happening to him this second in the dark... It hurt him far more than what Lukan's mother thought about the pain Klaus may be enduring, but Lukan knows he wasn't. "He will be fine," he said certainly, trying not to speak the words through gritted teeth.

"I just can't help but worry!" she said defensively as though she thought Lukan was becoming hostile. Quite the contrary... Lukan gritted his teeth to attempt not bursting into tears. She mustn't know the depth of his despair lest he wanted to give it all away. It was not the goal of his endeavors for her to ever find out what's going on. Lukan felt he must copy Klaus and commit reticence. Now he understood why he did that as well. And Lukan hoped that he wouldn't let his own reticence fuck up anything like Klaus's did. He could only hope... Hope.

It was the only thing that Lukan had left. And he hasn't very much at all...

*ever loved you. I never wanted you as a boyfriend, but as a
art is a toy. A worthless toy to be played with by my own
n amusement. Your stories of a shitty life cannot sway
rs will ever be. I have known nothing but boundless
/ BENKAAAA--!!'*

Klaus spoke his declaration of

contempt in Lukan's dreams over and over on repeat for the whole night. To ignore this problem would only allow Klaus to continue in his avarice. Lukan knew that. Klaus was in too much pain before this. If the cat can provide for him the cure he needs to quell Klaus's pain, then Klaus would undoubtedly become untrustworthy. He wouldn't make rational decisions anymore. Lukan could feel it. And yet... Why? Why is he giving him a chance to come round and realize his wrongdoings? Lukan knew that something like a cure for pain can cloud someone's judgement. It was like a drug... It cannot be escaped once it captures someone. Can Klaus fight it and come to a realization? Lukan wasn't sure anymore. After all Lukan had been through, he was still able to muster up enough faith in yet another traitor to his life. How? Why? Why is he doing this? He knew he must intervene somehow... but he just couldn't. It was as if Lukan had become completely immobilized; physically unable to act any longer. It had come to a point where Lukan no longer gave a damn about what happened or his influence over it; it was always in vain, always. Lukan legitimately felt that it was about time to just give up. Oh that's right.. That promise he made to himself upon the next betrayal... That seemed like a viable option now...

No. Only if Klaus does NOT come round... then will Lukan consider the ultimate salvation...

The door to the hotel room opened. There was no doubt who it was. It was definitely not his mother. There was no reason for his mother to be outside this early in the morning. It was unmistakable, the stench of otter and cat blending together that suggested the two separate species had become one and the same in a way that Lukan was all too familiar with. No doubt. It was Klaus. The smell was what woke Lukan from his troubled slumber, not the door that opened. He kept his eyes firmly shut until he heard the otter sit down on the bed with a sigh. He sounded exhausted. Pulling an all-nighter and doing as he will with another guy would definitely cause him to feel as such. Too bad he won't be allowed sleep or be in peace of mind today. Hopefully the latter anyways.

Lukan's mother was in the shower at that moment. Lukan knew that because she would have screamed at Klaus the second he came in and she saw him. Klaus definitely

deserved it albeit for a different reason... Although, Lukan knew that he couldn't let Klaus know that he knew about his infidelity. "Morning Klaus," he said, tonelessly.

Klaus jumped. "Oh! L-Lukan! Morning, my love!" he was jumpy, distracted, and not all there at all. The classic signs of hiding something. Though of course. He was hiding something Lukan already knew about.

"I'm glad you found your way back here, Klaus," Lukan replied, trying to sound either relieved or impressed, however he ended up sounding completely sarcastic. Oops. Slip ups were not affordable right now.

Though Klaus was too distracted to even notice that. "Oh yeah, I am too. Sorry for running off last night, though," he added. Lukan glowered slightly. That was NOT what Klaus needed to apologize for! He knew Klaus wouldn't even if he knew Lukan's knowledge already.

"So what did you do last night?" Lukan half taunted. He was genuinely and morbidly curious to hear what excuse the otter would conjure up here.

Klaus jumped noticeably. His eyes widened and he seemed to struggle for his words. "Um... I just took a walk around town," he said shakily.

"For eight hours straight?" Lukan scrunched up the mask on his face to look suspicious. It was working on Klaus. He wondered what would happen if Klaus were to spill the beans on him. Probably not too different from if Lukan told Klaus himself that he knew. Still, it felt satisfying intimidating his faithless lover like that. It was as if he had become the bully... getting back at someone who had wronged him so deeply that it was simply unforgivable!

"Y-yeah," Klaus replied warily. "Lukan, what's up? You're acting unusually mean today..." he added.

"Am I?" Lukan prompted. "Nah... I just don't like it when I'm worried sick over the well being of my boyfriend is all!" he exclaimed.

"Hey, I said I'm sorry alright!? Jeez!" Klaus was getting annoyed and indignant now. Which meant Lukan was done for now. Klaus just better decide where his loyalties lie...

"Alright, whatever. As long as you're back here safely," Lukan conceded.

"Hey if it will make you feel better, I won't pressure you to have sexual times with me for a while..." Klaus offered. And Lukan knew EXACTLY why Klaus could afford to hold off on THAT mentally! God damn it... it hurt Lukan so badly...

"Whatever..." Lukan stated too miserably to not be noticed.

Yet somehow the otter still failed to notice! "You're gonna be mad at me for a while aren't you...? Look I said I was sorry; what more do you want from me!?" Klaus demanded.

"For you to not go off without any warning like that is all," Lukan lied. He definitely wanted more, but dare he speak it...

"Fine," Klaus muttered. "You will know where I am every second of every day," he was pissed off now. It was rare to see the otter angry at all let alone this angry. Actually it was rare to see Lukan this angry with someone other than other people. Tension was rising, and yet Lukan did not know when to quit. But he knew he had to soon.

"That's not what I meant and you know it," he said hotly.

"I would not be surprised if it was!" Klaus replied with spice in his voice.

"Why would you think that!?" Lukan demanded, voice rising.

"Well you seem to be grilling me a lot this morning! What, you thought I did not notice?!" Klaus countered. Lukan was taken aback. So he had been paying attention. But why would he feign obliviousness? Was that a sign? It better not be! Lukan refused to believe it to be one!

"Well I'm sorry! How would you feel if your boyfriend just ran off to potentially get lost in the middle of somewhere you don't know?"

"Probably pretty shitty..." Klaus had conceded already. He started those three words pretty angrily, but finished them with a subdued sigh. "I'm sorry, alright?" he added more sincerely.

Lukan nodded. "I am too. I just... I worry about you and am so worried myself that..." Klaus stopped him with a kiss to the lips. Lukan, for some reason hated that, knowing where those lips were so recently.

"It's okay, I understand," Klaus interrupted. "I promise I will not do it again, okay? I will let you guys know whenever I leave from now on, okay?"

Lukan nodded briskly. "Okay." Lukan now knew when to expect Klaus to disappear with his new cat friend. Suddenly he did not know what was worse. In fact, he even implied to plan on going out to see him repeatedly throughout the next several days. That put another dent in Lukan's heart. This was not boding well...

It was difficult to focus on the situation at hand with everything that was going on in Lukan's mind as the day wore on. Lukan couldn't think about what to do about not having a job or a home to speak of in Salamanda because all he could think about was Klaus and what he's been up to lately. It distracted him. Kept his mind too busy to do anything other than think of that. He hoped Klaus felt the same way, despite their need to concentrate on something else. That way Lukan would know that Klaus was not adamantly in favor of the cat instead of the raccoon. But there was no way to know for sure. The otter, contrary to Lukan, looked focused. Or was this another facade? Klaus was truly excellent at reticence after all. Lukan glanced at the otter every couple of minutes as his mother drove them through town. Not once did his expression change for the entire journey. Lukan had not an inkling of what could be going on in his

mind during these moments, but Klaus only spoke when he needed to. Somehow he was still able to pay attention to what was going on. Just how does he do it...?

One order of business was acquainting themselves with the town they arrived in. But Lukan couldn't be bothered to study its layout; at that moment in time he hardly even cared. He barely even cared about the other issue, which was the jobless and homeless cycle that they needed to break. He knew he needed to, but he just. Couldn't. Lukan was thoroughly convinced that all of his willpower had gone forever... And as the day wore on, he felt worse and worse. He desperately hoped that Klaus would come round soon... but for some morbid reason, he knew it was going to be a long shot. He considered over and over if he should double back and tell him how he felt. Maybe there was a time and place for him to let Klaus know, because he knew as much as anyone else would that ignoring the problem will never solve the problem. In the end, Lukan decided that he should tell Klaus that he knew, or else the problem would get even worse. But when would be the right time? That he did not know... That was the biggest problem now.

Upon returning to the hotel, Lukan kept repeating in his mind that he should find and take the first opportunity possible. It was bad enough he waited so long and bad enough he chose this option in the first place. Whether he was too mentally immobilized to speak his mind or not, he knew he absolutely had to, no matter what. This was a matter that could not be ignored at all.

"Well today was a waste," his mother said gruffly, intervening in his thoughts. "What's going on with the two of you? You've both have been acting really strangely today," she continued.

"Well, Lukan and I had a fight earlier, Mrs. Benka..." the otter started. "And you also grilled me on leaving last night so..."

"Well what do you expect? I can't stay quiet when that sort of thing happens! You're a part of this family now, so of course I care about you too much to not care if you're lost or not," she said calmly.

"I guess so..." Klaus sighed. "I was just so upset last night, you know...?"

"By the way, you never actually told me why that was," Lukan's mother said.

Lukan flinched. This was private information that he did not want her to know.

"It's... personal relationship problems," he said awkwardly.

"You said you were going to tell Klaus that you'd be willing to get together more often, but when you came back, you said he'd run off," she pointed out.

"That's true but--!" Lukan started. "He got offended and ran off!" he was trying not to say that. But he did anyways. Damn it, he hated himself...

"I wasn't 'offended'," Klaus replied coolly. "I just wanted to know what your sudden change of heart was all about and it just spiraled from there!"

"My change of heart was because I loved you Klaus!" Lukan exclaimed indignantly. "I felt like I needed to change in order to make you happy!"

"I'm sorry, did you say "LOVED" me? So you don't anymore?" Klaus demanded.

"I-I--" Lukan stuttered. That was not what he meant at all!

Klaus glared at him. "I thought so."

Lukan's mother gave an exasperated growl. "Would you two boys just stop it? What matters is the fact that Lukan is going through great lengths to make you happy Klaus. And Lukan? I understand how you feel, but I do wish you two could have worked out a better compromise."

"Were you serious when you said you would try to help me last night Lukan?" Klaus asked in a hard voice.

Lukan nodded. "Absolutely," he said plainly. A moment of hope flared in Lukan's chest when he saw uncertainty cloud Klaus's eyes, as if he was wondering if he was in the right for running off and refusing to listen to Lukan's proposal. "Klaus, I was wrong to ignore your problems as much as I have, but you ignoring my offers to help now can only make it worse. You know that, right?"

Klaus sighed ruefully. "Yeah you're right, Lukan. I'm sorry, okay?"

"Me too Klaus," Lukan replied sincerely.

Lukan's mother nodded. "Now hug and kiss it out, alright?"

Lukan flinched again. He loved getting kisses and hugs from his boyfriend, but under the current circumstances, he hesitated to do so anymore. He wanted to know that Klaus was going to be his and his alone before he did anything of the sort. Klaus looked the same way as he shifted uncomfortably on his paws. They stared at each other awkwardly, Lukan knowing why there was not advancement and Klaus likely not knowing why.

"What's wrong you too? Still angry at each other or...?" Lukan's mother seemed genuinely confused.

"To be honest with you, Mrs. Benka," Klaus began. "I have no idea anymore."

"A-about being boyfriends with my son?" she asked worriedly.

This time, Klaus noticeably flinched. That was exactly it and both he and Lukan knew that. "Well, no," he lied awkwardly. "It's just..." he sighed. "Everything it seems."

"Everything?" she echoed. "What do you mean by everything?"

"I-I don't know, Mrs. Benka," Klaus replied sadly. "I need some air." He suddenly walked to the door and left the hotel room swiftly. A cool breeze drifted in. It wasn't cold and yet it chilled Lukan to the bone.

"Has he run off again?" Lukan's mother fretted. "Well, at least he is much less likely to get lost tonight so..." she conceded. She looked to Lukan. "It's obvious there is something bothering the two of you, him in particular. Lukan, I hope you'll both be okay."

Lukan felt anxiety surge through his fur. "Believe me when I say, mom, that I don't think we will be. But I will try to make it okay again." Just as he always hoped he would. But it was an outlandish hope and he knew it. He just had to make Klaus see what he was doing was wrong.

Lukan didn't even bother following Klaus out. He knew exactly where the otter was headed. And that scared Lukan deeply. Klaus may seem less certain of his choices now, but the fact that he continues to see that cat makes it all the more apparent to Lukan that he was losing his boyfriend and all hope for their future together. If this was how it was going to be, then Lukan saw no more point in anything anymore. Oh Klaus... please just make the right choices that Lukan could never do.