

turn your face to the sky, and watch the sun rise

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turn your face to the sky, and watch the sun rise

by [immolxtion_stxtion](#)

Summary

He's far from an angel—they both are. What angel sacrifices the person they love, leads them to an altar like a lamb to the slaughter? What angel looks at their own death, looks at the sacrifice to a false god, and doesn't fight it at all?

“We might not make it to the morning; so go on and tell me now.”

Bloody Knife | Sacrifice | “You'll have to go through me.”

Notes

I don't know exactly what happened when I wrote this: all I know was one second, I had a post-it note with the first sentence scrawled on it, and the next, I had 1k of me being completely normal about holiness and god. This is a sequel to day twenty-one: [you're just a number to them](#), and day thirty-one: [said you'd pray for me \(your hands around my neck\)](#)

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

The knife hovers above his chest, and it's all Ash can do to keep his eyes on Clown, standing above him like an avenging angel.

He's far from an angel—they both are. What angel sacrifices the person they love, leads them to an altar like a lamb to the slaughter? What angel looks at their own death, looks at the sacrifice to a false god, and doesn't fight it at all?

Ash is flat on his back, ropes wound around him like art, a piece that would belong in a museum if it weren't so tight he can barely breathe. His chest strains against them, desperate to get in full breaths of air, but he doesn't tug at the ones on his wrists, didn't kick out when his legs were free, in the process of being tied up.

He's the perfect victim, the perfect sacrifice.

He is not pure, but they will make him so.

This is for God, for the holiness kept within. It took Ash a long time to see it, but he sees it now, hears it with every word that pours from Clown's mouth in a language he was too ruined to be allowed to learn. He did not learn fast enough, was not holy enough.

His eyes track the knife as Clown moves it back and forth, douses it in oil with Ash's body as the catchment tray. This is holiness. This is salvation. This is him, finally willing in body and mind, watching the man he knows better than no other.

Clown is his equal, is his better, is the man who pulled him from the dirt and taught him the error of his ways, stuck by him through trial after trial, even as he broke his bones, cut his hands, lost his eye. He's doing this for Clown, to make him pure.

Purity is a gift for the chosen few, for the rare. Under the stars, Ash wishes he could be pure, could experience even a sliver of the holiness Clown has within him. If he could steal it, with his hands, with his lips, with his own knife, maybe he would. Maybe he craves the piety Clown has, gifted with his own mask, because he knows the way better than any other.

They are not angels, but Clown is holy, looking at him under the night sky, slowly creeping towards dawn. They both know how this works. Ash must be dead before sunrise, must ascend before the light turns to his body and sets him aflame.

Clown's eyes meet his own, barely visible through the slits in his mask, and then the knife plunges down.

He forces himself to breathe through the fire that licks through his hand, the first of many parts. Let the unclean deed of the hand be bleed out, let He Who Has Sinned become clean again.

Holiness is in the serrated blade of the knife as Clown drags it out of Ash's hand, looking at the blood on it like it is the closest to God he will ever get. He wipes it clean over Ash's chest, letting the blood sink into black linen before moving again.

The knife drives into Ash's foot, cutting a jagged path through until the pain joins that in his hand. Let the unfaithful journeys of life bleed away, let He Who Has Walked Away From God feel his old life leaving.

A new layer of blood on his chest, wiped clean in the same pattern. Clown still looks at him like he's holy.

Ash is not holy yet, but he will be. His other hand and other foot are given the same treatment, and he is in enough pain that it's getting harder to think. Thinking is not necessary, for his part in the ritual, but he will anyway, mapping out each step to his ascension.

Clown cleanses the knife again, washes Ash's blood off of steel and onto his chest with more oil that smells faintly of chapel. It clings to him, coats his skin in uncomfortable trails, but he can live with it.

He breathes in, and the knife is shoved into his thigh, cutting a clean line from knee to hip. Clown at least had the decency to push the linen of his slip out of the way, letting it pool between his legs. Let He Who Has Sinned learn what blood feels like running down to his knees. Penance for a life spent with not enough time spent on them.

Dizziness has settled into Ash's head by the time Clown has cut both of his legs open, wiping the blood off on linen and rope, folded over his chest into holy patterns that only the masters know how to create.

His biceps are ripped open next, a careful cut made through the diamonds framing them. Let He Who Has Sinned feel the weight of arms that have not served enough, not sacrificed enough.

It hurts. Ash knows this much.

He also knows the presence of Clown, always there, never leaving. Clown will make him holy. Clown will take He Who Has Sinned and make things right again, make him right for God.

Clown prays over his knife, douses it once more, and then sticks it into the abdomen of He Who Has Sinned, forceful and without hesitation. He wants to scream, but that would ruin the ritual, would ruin all of Clown's work and all of his holiness.

He Who Has Sinned stays silent.

He Who Has Sinned feels pain rippling through his body in waves, jolts of the unthinkable, the unendurable, flooding his system. Clown has made him this way, has taken his knife and pushed Purity down through Sin.

His chest is full of wounds when Clown stops, each breath rattling ragged in his throat. The final step approaches with no hesitation, and He Who Has Sinned feels no fear over it. He watches as Clown lays the knife down on his chest with reverence, feels the weight of steel and the drip of blood against his heart.

Clown presses his hands against his chest, and He Who Has Sinned watches serenity fall over him, followed by the final lines of prayer. Serenity falls over He Who Has Sinned as well, blanketing him in comfort despite the pain, reassuring him that holiness waits, holiness watches.

He rolls his head to the other side, watches how the horizon lights up with hints of orange, the sun just starting to poke through. He might not make it to the morning, but he will try regardless. Blood will roll down his body, fall into the gutters and the pockets of the altar, but He Who Has Sinned will stay alive regardless, watching the sun.

He Who Has Sinned takes shallow breaths, feels pain crawl through his body and pool behind his eyelids as the sun rises above, ready to burn his ashes to dust, bring him to god.

He Who Has Sinned knows what God feels like, what Holiness is. These are not new things to him, and he is ready to embrace him.

He Who Has Sinned looks back to Clown, the deliverer of his Salvation, the reaper of his Holiness.

Ash meets Clown's stare, and smiles softly at him as though his body were not in blinding pain, as though he were not bleeding out from Clown's own hands, and he waits for the sun to rise.

I've got one last work for this world queued up for day 30, and it sits chronologically right in the middle of today, and day 21. The writing and posting order of this has been absolutely atrocious, but my writing process itself is atrocious, so it works quite well.

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