Guided Meditations

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by rosierevans

Summary

Alex Slater is having a hard time after being turned into a vampire. In his time of need, Armand shows up to help him.

Cross-posted from AO3.

Notes

This fic was written before TVL was completely out. Although this is tagged as Alex/Armand, I wouldn't say the romance is very outright. I have decided to keep it intact as it was orginally written, even though some things don't align with how the show actually panned out.

The strongest sensation was the thirst. Alex could feel it in the back of his throat, in the dry pasty feeling in his mouth, deep in his bones. It was a horrible, painful sensation which left him unable to do much of anything aside from thinking about the blood.

Tears—blood tears, which felt too thick compared to ordinary tears—pricked the edges of his eyes as his mind forced him to relive his worst memories again and again as he writhed in pain sprawled out on the bathroom floor. Horrible memories, embarrassing memories, and memories from nights he'd been black out drunk he now suddenly had too close access to. Alongside the memories of the bad days, there was one figure which sprung to mind constantly. Slim figure, curly hair and distinct bright orange eyes.
Arun.

Or was it Armand?

Alex could recall how it felt standing there on stage, listening to Lestat's coke-fuelled ramble, watching the crowd separate to reveal the "French-Bengali smoke show". The horrid sense of dread and nausea that had struck him when he saw his face—that familiar face, that beautiful face.

His mind had forced him back to those quiet moments in his apartment. Their long talks about everything and nothing. The times they did a little more than 'talk.' Alex remembered the feeling of ease he'd felt around Arun. How his body loosened, how his mind untangled and he felt completely at peace. How like drugs it felt—how splendid it was that he no longer needed chemical assistance to feel this way.

The realisation of who it was stung. Though what stung perhaps a bit more was how stupid he felt. Of course Arun was a vampire—of course "Arun" was actually Armand, Lestat's arch nemesis.
Alex had promised himself that he wouldn't reach out to Arun, no Armand, again. He didn't need him. Didn't need the trouble of two vampires in his life.

Yet now that he was a vampire himself, a miserable hungry vampire, all he could think about was picking up the phone and confessing everything to his god Armand.

Almost unconsciously, unwillingly, Alex found himself fishing his phone out of his pocket. He did as he had done so many times before and called Armand in a time of great need.

The sound of the phone ringing, once, twice, was almost unbearable. The painful, high pitched ringing sound made Alex want to crawl out of his own skin. Pick up…please.

Alex? His voice came before the sound of the ringing stopped, but it was quickly followed by the slightly concerned voice of Armand on the other side of the phone "Alex? What have they done to you?"

"Arun—Armand," Alex wheezed, then cringed, taken aback by the desperation in his voice. "I need you. I'm… kind of in a rough spot right now. I miss you,"

Who turned you?

“It was Lestat. It will help our music…apparently. The guy’s crazy, so is Sofia, they have weird ideas but—never mind, I can’t..I can’t think straight.” Alex paused, then asked “Will you do that thing again? That, um, rest thing. I liked it, and I’ve missed you. A lot.”

Armand was completely silent. The sounds of everything around Alex got much, much louder—he could hear the banging of pipes in the walls, the hearts of the humans passing by the building, the fabric of his clothes rubbing against itself.

“I don’t actually care if you’re…Arun, or Armand, or whatever it doesn’t matter.” Alex continued, sounding and feeling even more desperate.

Alex could faintly hear another voice on the other side of the phone, and then a horrible thought crossed his mind. Armand wasn’t alone. He’s already replaced me.

“I’ll meet you.” Armand said finally. “Don’t worry about being replaced.”

“Okay,” Alex said finally, not bothering to argue. “I’m uh—I’m at home,”

“I know.”

Of course Armand knew he was at home. Armand was a vampire-god—Jesus Christ of the modern times.
His mind spun back to Sunday service with his brother when they were still young. Larry sitting fidgeting impatiently with the sleeves of his sweater. Then he remembered the brief stint they’d had in a corny, Youth Worship Band before they’d both decided to leave religion behind.
Armand was the closest he’d come to religion since then.

It didn’t take long before Armand arrived. Alex felt his presence before he saw or heard him. There was something otherworldly, mystical—dare he say cool about Armand that even other vampires like Lestat, Daniel and now himself did not possess.

The door to the bathroom cracked open and the blinding yellow-ish light of the top brightly lit apartment outside the bathroom spilled inside of the bathroom. The sudden change made Alex hiss—hiss, that was something he found himself doing involuntarily nowadays.

Armand’s figure loomed larger than life over Alex. His dark curls were styled neatly and he wore finer clothes than Alex had ever seen him in before, like he’d just come from a formal occasion or a business meeting.
Alex’s face split open into a faint smile, “You came,”

“How long have you been laying on the floor?” Armand asked, a hint of amusement in his silky smooth voice.

Alex didn’t actually remember how long he’d been laying there. For a while at least—TC had mind-called him a few times, asking him to come eat ‘lunch’ with her but he’d turned her

down. Killing people didn’t magically become an option upon his transformation. He tried to mentally calculate how long ago that was. Two hours? Five? A day?

“Time is a little muddy right now. Everything is..uh…yeah I dunno, a little while. I guess,” Armand reached out his hand and Alex grabbed it. Armand helped Alex up with ease—like his body weighed nothing at all. You’re hungry, Armand’s voice sounded in his head, and exhausted. I can help.

Then, aloud he said: “Lestat did this to you?”

“Yeah—well, it was TC’s idea, she kind of got us all on board with it.”

That wasn’t the whole story, though Alex could sense that Armand knew that as well. If he cared, he did not say.

“He should take better care of his fledglings,” Armand said in a low voice, “letting you starve yourself…turning you in the first place.”

There was something in his voice that sounded eerily similar to regret. Or was it disappointment? Or grief? Alex could see a slight sadness in the vampire's eyes.

“You’ll take care of me though, won’t you?” Alex said, in a voice more meek sounding than he’d originally intended.

They were still holding hands, and Armand grip on his hand tightened slightly, “Yes. I’ll take care of you,”

In one swift movement they were on the couch, in that familiar position they’d found themselves in too many times to count—Alex sat opposite to Armand, Armand’s hand cupping Alex’s face as if he was going to kiss him. Even without the mind magic the position was enough to loosen some parts of him.

“I…um…I’m sorry if I…like if you were busy or something,”

“Don’t worry about it,” Armand’s hand brushed against his cheek, sending an involuntary shiver down his spine. “I was just reconnecting with an old friend, but you know I’ll always come when you call.”
Armand tilted his head slightly to the side, “Don’t think about it. He doesn’t matter,”

A wave of relief washed over Alex’s mind. All thoughts of this mystery friend disappeared in a moment's notice, so did the pounding intrusive memories and thoughts which had plagued him for hours.

Rest

The world seemed to narrow around them, and when Alex spoke his voice sounded slow and distorted in his own mind, “I’ve missed you a lot.”

Then, without really meaning to say it, he confessed; “I relapsed.”

“I know.” Armand said, then. “Rest.”

His entire body felt like mush, his mind melted like a block of butter. Alex collapsed into Armand’s body, face pressed against the other man’s chest.

“You’re hungry,”

Yes, Alex agreed hazily. I don’t want to kill people.

“No need to kill.” Armand said. “I can help you,”

Then he pushed Alex away. For a brief, horrible second he thought that Armand had decided that he was too much of a bother, but then he saw him digging his fangs into his wrist.

Blood dripped from his wrist. The sight of it stirred something within Alex.

Armand presented his wrist to him; “Drink.”

And he did. Alex wrapped his mouth around Armand’s wrist, lapping up the blood. It was warm and delicious, and once he’d started drinking he couldn’t stop.

This gesture, this generous, kind gesture—was more intimate than anything the two of them had done before. More intimate than what Alex had ever done in his entire life and afterlife.

He drank for what seemed like an eternity before Armand pulled his wrist away.

“Did that help?”

“Yeah,” Alex said, “Thanks…”

Armand still had a grip on his mind—not that Alex minded. He liked the feeling of total relief that Armand provided him.

The distance between them closed once again, Alex collapsing into Armand’s body. The feeling of his body against his, his arms around his body, hands reaching up to stroke his hair gently.

Rest.

Alex’s eyes fluttered shut.

“Lestat wronged you Alex,” Armand said in a low voice, “you should never have been turned. It was irresponsible of him to grant your wish. This life isn’t for you, your heart is too pure—your mind too weak.”

Alex twisted a little in Armand’s arms but didn’t attempt to escape. He resented the description.

“You’re fragile,” Armand went on. Curiously enough, his tone was not that of cruelty or malice—rather it sounded more like resigned empathy. “Lestat knows this. He’s too old not

to recognize it in you."
I can adjust. Alex thought, but there was little conviction behind it.

"…you won't." Armand said, then he said nothing more.

Alex's mind was too drowned in Armand's influence to give much thought to his words—his warning. He fell back into the comfort of the man's arms.
Whatever horrific fate that awaited him would have to wait.

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