pink in the night

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by Anonymous

Summary

The hunter falls in love as his arrow pierces his target.

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deeply inspired by THEE yujicorn fanart by @racecariam on tiktok !

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

It is nearing dawn. Megumi's boots have sunk into the soil, deep enough that liquid has begun to leech through into the leather. He stays unmoved. The darkness, his domain, is fading. He will not have this chance again.

Dawn is near but the sun has not lit the world ablaze yet. Instead, the lake is illuminated by slivers of moonlight, pulling its tide in with shimmering ripples breaking in waves on the small rocky shore. A small grove of greens swallowed in shadow and a lake of blues turned as deep as the night sky they reflected. It felt like a place of magic the moment Megumi found it.

It fits. It is the natural resting place of a unicorn.

His fingers twitch at the thought. A unicorn, an ancient being. The last piece of a world long-gone. Now, merely the object of fairytales and folklore and greedy old men looking for a unique tablepiece to brag about in front of other old greedy men.

Megumi is a master of hunting the past and the interests of his clients matter nothing to him. Only the sharp slice of his arrow through the air and the payment that followed.

The clouds shift and the moonlight breaks across the shoreline and it glitters. That is the trail Megumi has followed, the star dust that the unicorn had left in its wake. Like a sudden crack of sunlight slipping too early into the world, forcing the grey rock and dark soil to sparkle in hues it could not have held before the light found it.

Megumi pulls himself away from the places which twinkle. The shadow greets him tenderly. He keeps his body tense. The time will come soon. He can feel it in his blood.

He wasn't often still as a child. Usually, it only came with complete submission to another world, unconscious and unalert. He was not the type to crave sleep. But it would creep into him in certain moments - his sister was best at capturing them. Her favourite configuration must have been when he'd let himself be trapped in her arms as she turned over pages of colourful illustrated folklore. It was between her fingers he first caught a glimpse of a unicorn. The mane broken into iridescence, the coat perfectly glowing, pencil strokes rushing over one another in a quest to capture something completely ephemeral within its shattered stone dust. His fingers had crept between hers before he'd lost his tether to the world they shared. He'd stroked the image without touching it and thought only, *how beautiful.* She must've agreed with him before she left him to sleep in the dark. He thought so because she did it so often. He regrets now that he never thought to ask.

It is then he hears it.

He feels it first. The ground beneath him shakes in anticipation, the leaves by his ears twist and shiver, a dance fashioned to call out. Then, his heartbeat slams into the same rhythm as the hoofs beating into the ground behind him and, despite himself, he looks.

It is barely a moment.

A unicorn’s gallop goes at such speed that to even glimpse it is miraculous.

Megumi knows he has glimpsed a miracle.

There is nothing to compare it to. The mane shimmers in hues Megumi cannot name, a halo of movement around the head, coated in pinks cleaved from the clouds in daylight and pearls glowing on the ocean floor and two hands held together all of which travelled all over the body, large and strong and resplendent. Megumi sees it all in a still image as if his mind cannot hold the full motion and he is fine with it because he is pulled so completely into the unicorn’s gaze that he fears drowning. The eyes shine like the sun is trapped within them and Megumi flees the heat there, the heat that burns through his blood to the marrow of his bone to the nerves in fingers stiff over bow and string, and he is chased to the horn, the thing songs had been sung for, the thing that made men fall to their knees with greed, the thing that civilisation could only cling to in the whispers that became fairytales murmured to children in the dark. His fingers tense and draw.

All of the light of the old world must be held within the unicorn’s horn. His heart beats so loudly that he cannot trust his ears past their cacophony, the rhythm of the unicorn has overtaken him fully, it is the unicorn that births blood from his bones, that forces that blood to his arteries, that summons sensation to his skin, that commands his heart to beat, bid his mind to think, wills his body to feel.

So, it is by the unicorn’s power that Megumi’s bow looses his arrow.

The night curves into its arc, filling the space with the certainty of shadow.

The moonlight holds the sparkling memory of the tail in the dust left glowing in the wake of fleeting, eternal life.

Megumi has never missed a target.

It comes in flashes.

The unicorn stands at the water’s edge, still.
The arrow cuts through the last of the night’s air.
The unicorn’s form changes assuming that of a man.
He glows in pink.
The world changes colour.
The water does not ripple.
The unicorn falls, a crumbling statue, eternity ending.
The moonlight shies away from the unnatural.

Megumi comes in its absence.

The shadows follow him, still clinging to the cover of night to protect him from the ever-creeping day. But they are weak in the unicorn’s light. The black shadows that Megumi knows like a part of his own body change behind him, colour infecting them, brightness filling the space it should not know. His heart feels the same.

He goes to his knees by the unicorn's body. Still pink, but now drenched in the reds of the deepest part of a flame, the first cut through a child's skin and the fading warmth of a lover's last kiss. The grass outlines him in a colour that overflows, unsure if it is in the yellow of autumn or the almost blue-green of spring. Megumi finds he finally understands his client's desires. Just this is enough to light his gaze with greed.

But there is more.

The hair falls, soft and curling across the forehead. A halo of red stained-pink, framing a face carved from sunlight. The nose turns up at the tip, casting an orange shadow across the lips, wet enough to reflect the grass and the lake, a thin outline on those glistening lips, pink easing into red, the result of a pressure that Megumi suddenly craved. His fingers rise and trace the shape of them only close enough to capture the breath, warm and shimmering as light diffracts into a haze of colours, pink and yellow and orange and red, so red. The red clings to his skin, and Megumi finds the thin outlines of ancient scar tissue, one cutting through the parted lips, soft as a promise that lead his gaze up in clasped grip, past the bridge of the nose, interrupted right before the brow with another red-pink slice as if an old wound had suddenly filled with blood and his fingers move to find the shape right as Megumi falls into the trap again, captured in the blood heat of the sun gold eyes burning crimson. Completely fixed on him.

When millennia fall away, man fades with time. Never the unicorn.
Those eyes are created to see the end of all things.

The moonlight breaks through its cowardice and washes them in icy light.

Megumi's shadow eats the light, casting wide over the shoreline, swallowing the crashing waves. His pupils constrict.

The unicorn transmutes the moonlight into its own. The pinks shift and splinter into iridescence. All across the body, naked and glorious, colours spanning the entire turn of time shimmer across the sunlit skin, spreading over the artery in the neck, down to the collarbone colouring the muscle that made up one arm to the fingers, seeping red into the wet soil as the shifting tide reflected the colours back onto the luminescent skin. Back onto the ribs, covered in muscle, contoured in saturations of pink and green and slivers of blue creeping up to the chest, full and trembling as breaths pushed through the lungs beneath the ribcage beneath and forced more blood through the skin to the hole in the chest where Megumi's arrow has pierced through, black as the starless sky, straight as a rushing river.

His fingers hover over the place his arrow breaks the skin. Where the black tip has sunk past muscle, he sees the sharp tip of a clutched pencil cutting into the old world of fantasy and dragging the face of unreality into his material world of rock and stone and soil, scratched into a single image, captured in totality on paper.

His hands dip. At the wound the skin slants up, thin and stretched over the blade edge inside him. The skin is as red as the blood, darker than the flesh left exposed where the skin has ripped around the protrusion. His eyes lift to the face again. Pink lashes do not shift, pale enough to bring to mind snow, red stained where they frame the eyeline, where the eyes of the sun stay unmoved. Watching only Megumi.

He will be the last thing the unicorn ever sees.

His fingers press the small bulge, feeling the sharp edge beneath soft, hot skin, blazing wherever he touches. The blood sticks to the tip of his fingers, warm and thick and, Megumi is certain, sweet on the tongue. The golden gaze warms his face. The chest beneath his hands shudders as his hands don't lift, instead sinking into the muscle, deceptively soft and his shadows mix with the light where his fingers press, blood pushing down with gravity, spreading crimson further down. Megumi drags the colour over trembling nipples, down into the crevices of the abdomen, pooling into the belly button. Megumi thinks all of his blood, still trapped in his own body, has had to choose between his face and the place above his bent knees.

His own body is far from his mind. His eyes catch on the place just beneath the eyes where two twin slits glisten. Had they been there before? Had his eyes passed over them with a simple dismissal of more scar tissue? He must have been blind. Because now, the slits flutter and flit like a second set of eyes piercing into this world from somewhere else. The skin around the slits fills with a darker red, of spilled wine and car crashes and old wounds, slow to heal.

He drinks it in, longing for every blink.

Bloodstained fingers trail the cheekbone, just below the fluttering slit. The red sticks to the skin. His palm cups the cheek. Half of the face is cast in crimson. Those eyes burn through him, the brightest hottest part of the flame. It sings to him. He's pulled in, lets his knees sink further into the warm soil, bend forward, brings his face closer and closer until he can feel that shimmering breath push colour onto his pale lips. The golden eyes watch him, the slits below them finally still. A hand lifts into Megumi's periphery, the unicorn's fingers reach for Megumi's skin, just barely brushing over his skin in a warm caress. The eyes only dip then, to watch where the fingers almost touch and then, without prompting, they slip closed and the lips part, red stained where blood has dripped past. Megumi cannot move, despite the invitation.

"How beautiful," he thinks, and the words fall into a breath and sound, diffusing into the morning glow. He wonders if the unicorn thinks the same. He wishes he could ask.

But it is too late.

The moon has finally peeled away.

And with it, the unicorn's body flutters out of existence, starting with his legs, scattering into dust and memory, from toe to tail.

Megumi should not be surprised. So he isn't, although his heart pumps at rapid pace. It is only life that binds the unicorn to this world, its form could not sustain past death.

The horn is still the brightest part of the unicorn as it fades.

A blade rises into his hand and he lifts the unicorn by the chin and those eyes stay closed. He must work quickly. He pushes the hair around the horn's base apart and some strands stick to

his hand but others clump with blood as the blade makes the first cut.

The blade digs as it splits skin and flesh, he has to put more strength into his wrist as he cuts through bone but the blade is sharp and Megumi has forced his blade through worse, and he finds a pace out of tune with his heart, too long and lumbering, but enough for the work, as more blood spills over his blade and submerges his fingers in the only colour left in the world as the abdomen shivers into nothing and the arrow's tip sinks into the sodden soil as the chest dissipates out of Megumi's reality and the collarbone goes and the barely-there pressure on his cheek fades as the hand disperses into dust.

His grip tightens on the bloodstained face beneath his palms, because he needs to hold tight for the blade to cut, because he needs a steady grasp to - his arm tenses - *wrench* the horn from where the flesh has been gouged apart. The horn comes loose in hand. Blood drips sluggish from the wound, a gash of swirling reds, deep enough to invite shadow. Megumi's hand stays on his cheek. Warm still. The warmest person Megumi has ever held. The dust creeps steadily upwards. His eyelids do not shift. But his lips, still slightly parted, beckon Megumi with the edges quirking upwards, a tiny smile.

Megumi, obedient, bends forwards and shuts his eyes.

When he opens them, he sees only the dust left glimmering, mingling with the blood and the soil allowing its unnatural colours to be swallowed by the earth.

He lifts his face into the stinging light of the sun.

The horn throbs beneath his palm like a heart. It has all the colours of a first love.

The day has come.

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Megumi wakes in the dark. It is not yet dawn.

And yet, light of everchanging hues flickers across his face, flowing from the horn that sits resplendent by his bed.

Unbidden, his fingers rise to it, stopping just before they could brush the edges. The light warms his fingers and pushes colour into their shadows.

How beautiful, he thinks.

End Notes

AAAAA. love love looove this fanart i saw it and felt possessed and now I must share that with you all! sorry that this is so meg focused i fear im too meyu-pilled to live also sorry if this is kind of a crazy direction to take yuujicorn lol the edits r usually so cutesypie n i loves em but blame the latent halloween spirit, the red version literally has me by the throat i had to do something a lil wicked. hope u enjoyed !!! and please if u have any yujicorn hcs please do share i love love looooove this au esp w moduyuu which kinda infected this depiction too. aaaaaa!!! im so giddy rn lolol

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