

Title: Tempest

Soundtrack link:

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUcYe9GU33RVRQteiRaPZlwQDXqeD4J3I>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4qZOFX3cmJkcjmbc0CVT5Q?si=f0fbddf0f3354c11>

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It came during the night. Only with such echoing silence could I hear the hurtling water through the streets. It flowed with little regard to the homes it would invade, carrying away the forgotten items that had once plagued the ground, to now swirl on the surface of nature's murky wrath. Clouds like chalk quickly polluted the skies, hiding any chance for view of the once star-dotted velvet before it. I wondered whether the flood would clean the dirt ridden streets we had roamed upon just the morning before. That the pavements would proudly boast their pale silver shine rather than the usual sombre grey.

My eyes lost focus slightly but remained on the glass of the window to catch a small glimpse of my reflection. I looked like a mess. And I didn't know which was worse. The fact that I looked so bad or that I'd already known but couldn't find the necessary strength to pull myself together.

Impulsively, I pulled at the sides of my waves bringing my hair back into an impressively neat bun and brought my arms gracefully down to my sides with a sigh of relief. I felt a small weight scratching at my fingers before my eyes strayed from the living room window and dropped towards it.

I realised that I'd fallen asleep with the note still gripped between my fingers. 'This is for the best', he'd said, 'Goodbye, Anita.' His words still stung like hell and being alone in the storm only encouraged inevitable tears to stream down my flushed cheeks, down the already paved paths from the sadness of last night, down as they rolled gently till they, too, left my touch. It's been a couple days since he left for the city and I hadn't heard from him since. I knew not where he went nor whether he was safe. I hadn't yet decided whether I was relieved or perhaps grieving the life we had. I only knew one thing for sure.

He was gone. Forever.

I allowed my eyelids to succumb to their natural fall before drifting back into a light sleep. Back to my mind, my thoughts...my memories. And soon enough, I found that I stood in our kitchen as he roared. His mouth moved to shape and accentuate his words of anger and yet I failed to make out even just one of them. I gripped my aching side, my bloodied nails digging into its skin in the hope that the agony would subside on its own and soon enough I was unable to move. Frozen. I watched the glints of anger rush from his eyes to his fists like streaks of lightning, only when he raised his arms they slowed in the air as though he faced a great surge of sudden wind. With this, my fear

slowed and my mind recognised a familiar voice in the distance, the images faded to my contentment and I focused on it more intensely.

“The latest flood report states 3 people have died and 4 people still missing” a poised young woman stated; on the solemn side of a monotonous tone. I woke up to the blaring plasma screen. News updates course like the muddied water, across the bottom of the screen, mimicking the very same words she had confidently carried a moment ago. Hazily, I turned, subtly alarmed as I stared at my vibrating phone, shuffling impatiently on the table. It was my neighbour; Faiyaz. The events of the next few hours had occurred so quickly, I felt as though I’d woken trapped in consecutive comic strips. She’d claimed that now the floods had calmed, the neighbours were helping to find the missing figures. It came as no surprise, it was neither the first nor the last time this had happened.

Of course, it was as the lady from the news announced. Only now there were 8 people, laid side by side - dead - on the pavement. A small crowd had formed around the unidentified eighth body at my arrival, radiating a united low hum of concern. It was the most people I’d seen in one place considering the few people populating the cursed town, only gathering in the event of tragedy.

Faiyaz leaned back hesitantly from the chorus to look over to me worryingly; her eyes beckoning me to join them before returning to her place. Her eyes had glazed over as she sighted me. It was someone we knew.

And as I walked to stand beside her before his feeble body, I only thought to myself how *he deserved much less than the sadness shared for the 7 bodies beside him.*

It was him, no doubt.

This time I allowed for all the thoughts to rush in swiftly so that I felt as though the water at our feet had swept across my mind, crashing at the walls which confined it. That night. I should have felt something towards my own husband, some form of remorse...but instead my body surged solely with an emptiness. In that moment I couldn’t stop the next images that flooded my mind.

Screaming.

Blood.

First mine, then his.

The drive.

Dirt.

A spade.

The note I'd placed.

He hurt me. It was only fair.

I'd forgotten my surroundings again.

It took me just one more moment to register how they each stared attentively, awaiting for the response of his sweet widow. Word got around in this place. They all knew that he should be far away from here by now, and their eyes alone asked far more questions than I had answers to. I stalled with a couple deep breaths contemplating how hurt I should seem at each slow exhale. My knees gave way and I sobbed silently into my hands. *My husband got caught in the storm*, of course, *I'd been worried sick*, I rehearsed. Soon, warmth stretched over my shoulder as I was irritatingly comforted by cotton fleece. I knew my act had won them over. It was done.