

Blue Matter

Adapted from *Getting To Know Grace* by Hilde & Mockma

Written by Melissa Chew

FADE IN:

INT. ANDREW'S ROOM - NOON - MID SHOT

TWO SHOT of **ANDREW** and **HERTA** sitting across from each other at a small table embellished with teaware. Andrew sips her tea while Herta's cup remains full.

HERTA

The mistress sent a comm to Norton.

ANDREW

Really? Then just accept it and end this.
What can you do? You've been acting like a noble this whole time.

Andrew takes another sip as Herta twiddles with her teacup.

HERTA

Does she not know I'm from the colonies?

Andrew's eyes widen and slowly puts her cup down on the saucer.

HERTA (CONT'D)

If she knew, she wouldn't make the son of an Earth-born noble kiss my feet.

ANDREW

(amused)

I don't know if you're simply quick-witted or if Lilith is made up of fools. But like I told you before, don't think about it. Whether or not she knows who you are, she only serves to play the role.

HERTA

Miss, what if--

ANDREW

Herta, you shouldn't mind these things. It'll only complicate manners. So don't worry. Forget about it. Just pay attention to me.

HERTA

After I cared for you for over ten years, you don't tell me a single thing. Yet you scheme a murder with that woman who you've never--

ANDREW

(locks eyes with Herta)
Did I not just tell you to pay attention only
to me?

HERTA

Your father will find out sooner or later.

Andrew monotonously shoves her cup off the table. The cup breaks as it hits the floor, spraying tea across the ground. The liquid heater from the inner cup seeps out, burning the marble floor. Herta looks at the mess and sighs.

ANDREW

It seems you've forgotten our little
contract. Since you're not holding up your
end of the agreement, it will be... difficult
to have you meet her.

Herta shivers and averts her eyes from Andrew's.

ANDREW

On the night of the party, you received an ID
to leave the Zone, right? What do you think
that meant?

Herta's eyes widen in realisation.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Throw it away, it's worthless now.

HERTA

Miss!--

ANDREW

I hear Mrs Richter's condition has worsened,
but why should that matter to me?

CLOSE-UP DUTCH ANGLE of Herta standing abruptly, clattering the teaware with tea spilling on her sleeve.

HERTA

Mother... Mother is sick? Has it gotten
worse? Father told me... the General...
wouldn't let mother die...

Andrew looks down at Herta's stained sleeve.

HERTA

Sh-She's receiving proper treatment, isn't she?

ANDREW

Are you scared? That your mother will die? It's strange. Doesn't not seeing someone for years make your feelings fade, even if it is your own mother? You've spent more days apart from her than with her. Isn't she more of a stranger to you now? (hollow laugh) What do I know? I wouldn't understand those feelings- I'm the one who killed my own mother.

HERTA

(pause)

Miss, I'm in the wrong. I shouldn't have said anything. I won't ask any more questions. You and you alone are my priority.

Andrew looks down in silence. She faces away from Herta.

ANDREW

(standing up)

Return to your room. I want to be alone.

HERTA

Miss, please. P-Please, forgive me. I--

ANDREW

I said leave!

Herta retracts. Stifling silence suffocates the room. Herta kneels and looks up at Andrew, catching her attention.

HERTA

I was wrong.

ANDREW

(frustratingly)

Get up. I don't like seeing you like this.

Andrew turns away from Herta. Herta looks at the broken shards beside her and after a pause reaches toward them.

HERTA

I should be punished for my mistakes.

ANDREW
(turning around)
What--

Herta calmly holds the leaking shard and brands it on her wrist, raw flesh peeking through her skin.

ANDREW
Herta!

Andrew grabs Herta's right wrist, releasing the shard from her hand and dragging her up to her.

ANDREW
What do you think you're doing?!

HERTA
(spitefully)
I have no choice. If you won't forgive me, I can be punished in other ways.

Andrew looks into Herta's eyes, remorsefully. She releases Herta.

ANDREW
...I get it, so stop. Just sit down, I'll get something for that burn.

HERTA
I'm fine.

ANDREW
No, you're not. It'll burn through. Sit down.

Andrew turns to dig into her cabinet.

HERTA
Miss, I'll deal with it my-

ANDREW
I'll take care of it.

HERTA
Miss, seriously-

Andrew slams a gauze and cooling liquid on the table.

ANDREW
(painfully)

Herta! Please! For the love of God- just give me your hand! (pause) Sit down!

Herta sits on her chair, watching as Andrew leans over to clumsily patch up her wound. Andrew faces down to Herta's wrist.

HERTA

Miss... Miss, I'm sorry.

Andrew doesn't respond. Herta caresses Andrew's wrist and looks up, but cannot see Andrew's emotion.

HERTA

How many times do I have to apologize, Andy?

Herta stands up to kiss Andrew, lingering before retreating. Herta looks at Andrew's face and is troubled to see Andrew's eyes welling up.

ANDREW

(tearfully)

I'm the one who should apologise, Herta. Here I am getting so shaken up every time you get hurt. I feel my flesh tearing apart every time you're beaten. Yet when I told you I was sick, your eyes were uncaring... like you didn't care if I died. And I wish I could destroy everything that would hurt you. But the fact is I can't do anything. No matter what I do to protect you... it's never enough. And the person who's hurt you the most... is me.

Andrew averts her eyes from Herta.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

How could I use your poor mother, trapped in that prison, as leverage for your attention, and even be jealous of her? If anyone had ever loved me, would I not have been so fucked in the head? My existence killed my mother! My birth is a curse!

HERTA's POV SHOT shows Andrew closing her eyes, afraid to see Herta's face. Andrew's tears river down as she holds Herta's injured hand to her cheek. Andrew kneels down in tears.

ANDREW

Herta... I'm so selfish... I'm so sorry...
I'm so sorry, Herta...

Andrew's tears caress Herta's palm. In a second of sympathy, Herta looks away, conflicted. Andrew retracts her hand from Herta's as she coughs violently, covering her mouth. Herta freezes.

HERTA
Miss Grace...?!

Blood seeps through Andrew's fingers.

CUT TO BLACK.