

Addendum

So, now you know, or at least, you should. I suppose I was vague enough that you might not understand everything I did yet. Or perhaps you skipped through that last section, like I hoped. One can always dream, right?

Right now, you must be wondering why I consider this the worst evil I've ever committed. I've murdered plenty of people in my time, and some of my missions kept the atrocities in Ibis going for centuries. So, why such shame and self-loathing for this?

The answer for that is... complicated. The first reason for it is that I made those people feel safe. I used my past relationship with Calia to make her trust me. I even used my own daughter to tell the right tale, for Mother Time's sake! And then, I betrayed every single one of the people who were under my protection.

Also, what I'd done had reinforced something I'd already known: that Lutov and its many people would never tolerate someone from their society breaking away from it. Not only did I learn that the only way I could achieve my goal—freedom—would be through a pointless struggle, but I'd shown this fact to myself.

And lastly, unlike with every other awful thing I did with my life, I received no support afterward. Yes, Korix was there for me—he almost had to be, considering his own involvement in what had happened—but by that point, I'd almost taken his support for granted, something I've learned to greatly regret in the time since.

But the point is that *everyone else in my life*, even those closest to me, reacted with absolute disgust if they ever found out about this misdeed, out of all the other evils I'd committed. As much as that has affected me, it's also been the most blatant example I've found to show how the Lutovish care more about themselves than the children of Ibis or any other living being on the planet.

I don't know, Elliot. We humans are marvelous creatures, but we're also supremely strange. Objectively, this might not have been the worst thing I ever did, but it's definitely my most shameful secret, one that I still feel guilty about.

Because I got away with it. You'll read about that next. That and a long, sad story involving someone I loved very much.

But we're through the worst part, love. Many painful things are still to come, but the worst is over.

Before we can continue, though, we must finish this part of the story.

