

THE DEVIL

Be greedy.

Remember what I've told you.

There is nothing greater than the pursuit of yourself.

This year alone, 591 anti-trans bills have been proposed in 49 states in the United States, according to translegislation.com. Compared to 2022's 174 bills, it is undeniable that trans people have become the latest marginalized community to be targeted as scapegoats. Furthermore, the Human Rights Campaign published a report for Trans Day of Remembrance 2023 (TDOR) that included an In Memoriam for the 33 trans individuals who lost their lives in acts of anti-trans violence between TDOR 2022 and TDOR 2023. As this very reading was rehearsed, the trial for the murder 16-year-old trans girl Brianna Ghey began in England, stirring up aggressively transphobic sentiments across social media platforms.

But *the devil & i* isn't about any of that. It's about a college student losing their found family. It's about the way we navigate the world, about whether we ever truly know one another. It's about trauma and how we carry it through our lives. It's about abuse and cycles of it.

It is also, among all of these themes, about a transmasculine college student named Kay. As such, one cannot examine Kay's world, the way that they move about the world, without being aware of how these facts would inform their life.

We find Kay at a deeply terrifying point in his life. After recently coming out as trans, he feels unsafe returning to his abusive family and has nowhere to go back to, except for his found family—a family with whom he has a complex, emotionally charged history. In this moment, we see Kay moving through the world, knowing he deserves better, but being unable to ask for it.

This is often the case for many marginalized communities. With political sentiments leaning towards “give them an inch, they'll take a mile”, marginalized groups are unable to ask for basic decency and equity without being accused of being ungrateful, or thinking themselves above another group. In the midst of nearly 600 anti-trans bills and rising anti-trans violence, many trans folks are left wondering if they're safe to even correct people on their pronouns—the bare minimum.

What *the devil & i* shows is that trans people are allowed to be angry. They are allowed to crave more, to fight for the respect they deserve. It shows you a complex, flawed, traumatized protagonist and says, “This is you. This is all of us.” It is a love letter to everyone who feels hopeless, selfish, and guilty.

Stay angry. Stay greedy. Keep fighting. Enjoy.