

An abstract botanical illustration background featuring various green leaves and clusters of small purple flowers. The style is painterly and layered, with some elements appearing more prominent than others. The overall color palette is dominated by greens and purples on a light cream background.

rootbound

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1 Malice / Welcome

Something tangled in Apo's throat when they saw him. Annoyance, hatred, all of the above. His hand to take theirs when they fell, blond hair swept in a curtain of defiance.

Something gnarled in their throat, spikes of thorns down their esophagus and a phlegm-like film.

Afterwards, they coughed, hunched over themselves in their quarters, until blood came out.

Dotted all over petals out their lips.



2 Disguise / Reveal

Of course she hides it. *Has to*. Within these castle walls, feelings are an illness, and both are weakness.

That doesn't stop her from faltering with Martyn's hand on her back, though, him walking her through the castle.

"How long have you been on your own for?" Martyn asks, casual, and Apo flees.

A trail of flowers follows her, the pollen in her lungs and in her bloodstream.



3 Entwined / Shattered

Something in her fractures, day by day.

Martyn's fingers slotted between hers.

The vines make her gasp and cough and break apart, and Martyn still doesn't let go.

4 Shallow / Fathom

Sometimes, Apo thinks that, if she weren't full of plants and flowers, someone could sink their wrist into her soul and the palm would touch the other side.

Not even six inches, let alone six feet.

She used to think the same of Martyn, but his wide, citrine eyes, his soft concern at how her fits rattle her body; Apo can't comprehend it anymore.

5 Sunrise / Sunset

Warm rays across Apo's cheeks. *Morning.*
Flakes of obsidian weigh her down, flowers scattered across their bosom.

Apo's body withers as the flowers sprout, leaving her veins, sprouting alongside her fingers.

He does not come, and she—

The flowers, they, they make her wish he would.

6 Alternate / Canon

There's a world where there's a knock on the door, and another one where Martyn isn't deterred by no response, and comes in.

One where he looks at her, barely able to get upright, and he sees the state she's in, and he knows what's wrong.

And he says, "I'm so sorry, but I just don't—"

Free / Kept

But that's not what transpires.
"Apo," he sighs, like he already knows. But, if
he does, he should be running, right?
Why isn't he leaving, why is he drawing near—



"It was me after all, huh," he murmurs more to
himself, as if he cannot believe their misfortunes.
"Can I—I know there's only one way to fix this..."

Apo nods, parts her lips, feels like she's beg-
ging for arms wrapped tight to set her loose.

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#apotynshipweek2026

