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"Okay. Plan time," Jes said, and squatted down by the tree. Maybe perched was the better word, with how she put her hands down on the floor between her raptor feet, perched like a carved gargoyle hanging out on a stone wall. "Tacitus, a bailiff in Gazra Crag, wants Daoka back. It led to problems, since Daoka is my friend. Diogo found out, and questioned Leos, a friend of ours. The stupid bastard didn't say anything, so Diogo killed him."

"Stupid bastard? He--"

"He should have given us up, told Diogo where we'd been hiding." Jeskura slapped her tail against the floor and growled at him. It didn't sound human. "He knew Daoka and I could escape. He knew..."

Daoka clicked slowly, squatted down beside her lover, and nuzzled into her side, rubbing the sides of their horns together. Jeskura returned the kindness, and pat the satyr on the knee before looking back to David.

"I'm telling you this because I'm going to need your help. We need to trick Diogo, so you'll need to be able to think on your feet. I could leave you in the dark, but you seem like the nerdy type."

"Nerd?"

"What, you're not a nerd?"

He groaned and folded his arms across his chest. Apparently he was comfortable enough with his two demon rescuers to be grumpy.

"I am, but how do you know? How do you even know the word? And why do you talk like a human?"

"Oh, I get you. Right." Nodding, she got up and took him around the other curve of the cave wall. Three big alcoves then, one for the bed, one for the tree, and another for a big cup made of metal and stone.

It was innocent-looking enough, a big circular platform about three feet high and four feet wide, and on it was a cup, just as wide, and only a few inches deep. No bones or skulls or weird hellish designs. Just a big block of metal with a dark metal cup on it.

The surface inside was reflective, and apparently liquid. It shifted around slightly, like a breeze was hitting it despite the still air, and when he leaned over it, the reflected image twisted over the small waves in the liquid. It almost looked like mercury.

"This is a scrying pool. Tell it what you wanna watch, and it'll show you."

"Tell it?"

"Yes, dumbass. Speak. Use words." The gargoyle shrugged. "Too complicated?"

"No, I just..." He touched the edges of the cup with his hands. No reaction. He watched his reflection bounce around a bit more. "Can it show me my sister?"

"She's in Hell, right? Then no. It can only show you what's going on on the surface right now."

"Oh." Then what was the point of the bowl? What use was it to anyone if they couldn't use it to look around Hell?

"It's a torture device," Jes said. She smirked at him, probably reading the confusion on his face. "I can tell you're wondering what the fuck, right. It's a torture device. Scrying pools are pretty common, and fresh meat use them to look at the world they used to know. Nothing hurts quite like looking back at the things you used to have, right? Or all the things you could have had."

"That... is cruel." For most. What did he miss? His computer? The internet? Shit TV and only a handful of good books? The sex he never got to have? His dream of being a nerdy game developer, sitting in his room with his porn and sex toys, living a quiet life?

Damn, he really did have shitty dreams.

"Show me..." He tapped his chin. Show him what? Maybe he could catch up on some TV shows he'd never got around to watching? Nah. "Show me... the shower room, at my university dorm." He half expected the bowl to not respond at all, considering he hadn't specified where that was, just said 'my'. But the image changed, and sure enough, it showed him the shower room he'd peeped on a few times the first few days he'd been a ghost, from an overhead angle that let him see into the stalls.

Lucky day, there were a few people showering.

"Show me... Oh, that's Lindsay Leblanc. Show me her."

Without hesitation, the image moved into the girl's stall, and showed the beautiful woman showering. Tall and slender, she washed her long dark hair, humming quietly to herself. Damn, nothing sexual.

Wow, ten seconds with a magic mirror and he was using it to spy on someone again.

"I'm going to Hell for this," he said.

Daoka and Jeskura stared at him, looked at each other, and burst into laughter. Daoka clicked rapid fire until she had to grab the bowl for support, and Jeskura opened her wings to catch some air and so she didn't fall over. They laughed, and laughed, and laughed.

He laughed, too. Quietly, but he did.

"You are fucking weird!" Jeskura came up beside him, wrapped an arm around his neck and head, and gestured to the bowl with her other arm. He did his best to ignore her nudity; being surrounded by two hot naked demons had his mind on porn, evidently. "I mean, better that than looking at something that'd hurt. Some humans stare into this thing, watching the shit they don't have anymore, or the shit they never got, until they starve to death. And if you're not getting injured and burning essence to recover, starving to death takes fresh meat years."

Years, staring into a bowl that was nothing more than a window to the surface? Self inflicted torture. Fucked up, and understandable. He'd known people who put their whole identity on the things they owned, or the things they'd accomplished. None of that meant anything down here.

Daoka clicked a few times, gesturing to the bowl.

"She wants to know why you didn't look up something more personal. Fresh meat always does."

He shrugged, glancing between Dao and Jes before looking back down at the bowl again, and the beautiful woman showering.

"Nothing personal to look up. No family, no close friends, nothing like that."

Dao clicked softly as she stepped around the bowl, and she slipped an arm around him, replacing Jes.

"Dao, stop it. He's not actually a puppy, you know."

With a scrunched up nose, Dao frowned at Jes, before rubbing David's head with her other hand. He didn't mind.

"Anyway," Jeskura said, "scrying pools are how demons keep up with the surface. We watch them all the time."

Dao clicked enthusiastically, nodding a few times.

"Agreed. Demons were pretty surprised by the whole television invention. We watch movies, TV shows, everything."

"Demons watching movies is... difficult to wrap my mind around."

Dao and Jes laughed, before Dao nodded back toward the bed with a few clicks.

"Good idea," Jes said, and she wiped a hand through the silvery liquid. The image disappeared, and Dao guided David away back toward the red leathery blankets. She sat down with him, and Jes squatted in front of them, elbows on her knees. "The only reason Dao and I are telling you all this shit is because we need your help. Yeah, try and screw us and I'll make you suffer. But I'm not so stupid to think I can just bully you into doing what I want. You'd flip the moment you saw the opportunity."

Dao clicked a few times.

"Okay, maybe you wouldn't. Any other fresh meat would. So, the deal is, you help us, we help you. I mean originally I was just gonna throw you to Diogo and figure out a way to make it work. But it looks like you got a head on your shoulders, from the way you handled yourself at the river. And Daoka likes you. Do right by us and we'll try and make sure you don't die horribly."

He took a deep breath, and nodded.