

Chapter 8

Blakely

"It's awfully unfair of you to ignore me, little wolf. I told you I had no idea you were locked in the basement until this morning. The moment I found out I rushed down there to spring you." Azrael pouted, his voice dripping with sincerity. One look at the tricky god and I could tell he was fighting a smile.

Hah, like I'd buy a single word of his crap. My ass was still sore despite the cushy bar stool I now sat on, and I was almost certain I now had a bruise in the shape of Draco's mouth.

I made a face, then turned to the feast spread out before me. The mansion did a hell of a job conjuring up every fruit known to man, both mortal and immortal, along with a side of yogurts, nuts, and other various toppings. Not trusting the strange food cultivated in the godly realm, I stuck to the basics and plopped a perfectly ripened strawberry into my mouth. A moan slid past my lips, which I muffled with a cough.

I wanted to devour everything in this kitchen. Including the god sitting just a few feet away, my inner hoe whispered.

"I'm not buying into this good cop, bad cop thing. You can act as charming as you'd like, but I'm here against my will. Nothing you say or do is going to change that."

Azrael's scent lingered in the air, thick like syrup. The notes of a crisp midnight breeze and vanilla bean were oddly paired well together. Beneath them I picked up hints of moonlight and sandalwood, both of which belonged to Draco. I was positive the wolf was lurking around here somewhere, but I had yet to see him in the lavish kitchen.

It wasn't much different than what you'd see in the mortal realm. There was a rustic looking stove topped with eight burners, a walk-in pantry, and a fridge big enough to hide in when Orion inevitably

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lost his temper again. I did notice there weren't any outlets. Maybe everything ran on magic?

A playful light danced in his eyes. "You think I'm charming?"

Of course that's all he got from that.

He sighed dramatically when I chose to ignore him and propped his arms on the large kitchen island that stretched between the two of us. With his head bowed, and ebony hair falling over his face, I took a second to scan the tattoos lining his muscular arms. The black tank-top he wore was rather ordinary. If only it did something to dim his otherworldly good looks.

Three wolves ran down his bicep, darting in between trees. Shadows clung to their fur, while their eyes glowed with the same strange light I'd seen in Azrael's a time or two. Before I could process the fact that I'd definitely seen one of the wolves move, his head popped up. There was a tilt to his lips that made my hands clammy.

"What would you say if I told you I had information about your family curse?"

I stopped mid-chew. What were the odds he'd actually tell me? Gods were tricky beings. Always playing games and fighting for the upper hand. No matter how much kindness was shown to me, I couldn't let myself forget that.

"I'd ask what you wanted in return." I replied carefully, reaching out to spoon a serving of yogurt into my bowl.

Azrael's hand moved at the same time, brushing against mine as he plucked a strawberry off the platter. My skin tingled where it met his, nerves jumping from just a taste of his powerful magic. For just a second there I swore I felt my heart stop.

He bit into the piece of fruit just as I reached for the honey. With every chew, his lips curved upwards. Almost as though they were tilted into a permanent smirk. Unruly hair hung down over his forehead. Juice clung to his full lower lip, seconds away from

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trickling down his chin.

I wonder what he'd do if I licked it off. Agh, down you thirsty bitch. Gorgeous or not, this man was a god and my captor.

"I want to know how you befriended the shadow demon." He purred, his tongue darting out to lap up the juice before it could fall. I shoved away the pang of disappointment in my chest and focused on shoveling food into my mouth while I could.

"Well, first I threatened to punch him in the face. He promised not to hurt me, and we went from there."

Azrael leaned in, one of his heavily arched brows lifting. "It's a he?"

"Sure is. It's a bit strange that a shadow demon can have a gender, but what do I know? We talked all night, which was a wonderful distraction from the fact that I was cold, starving, and exhausted, thank you very much. He did tell me a few interesting tidbits of information though."

I rested my elbows on the counter and hummed around a bite of fruit. Azrael's gaze slid up from my mouth, and back to my eyes. "Won't you share with me, little wolf?"

The innuendo smacked me upside the head so roughly that I choked. Sputtering and hacking, I snatched the glass of water out of Azrael's hand and downed it in one go. My voice was raspy when I croaked, "Not funny."

"I thought it was hilarious. Look how pink your cheeks are."

Flustered as all hell, I swatted his hand away from my face and pointed my spoon at him. "The shadow demon not only told me why you three have him imprisoned, but he also told me his name."

There was a split second where Azrael's shoulders stiffened. It was the only sign that my words had struck home. For whatever reason, a demon's name was sacred. Knowing it spelled all kinds of trouble for the demon. Azrael and his brothers had been trying to get Ozul's name out of him for years now. Apparently they thought he had information on something and refused to listen when he

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claimed otherwise.

Typical egotistical gods.

What I didn't mention to Azrael was that Ozul also happened to tell me how to free him. It had been a mixture of exhaustion and perhaps the start of a trauma bond that pushed me into promising I'd help him escape. I mean, how bad could the guy be? He didn't eat me, though I'm sure he could have. And it wasn't his fault he was born as a wispy, shadow demon.

Azrael leaned in further and fluttered those sooty lashes of his. Magic sparked in his eyes creating a heady cocktail that had my head swimming. "I don't suppose you'll tell me his name, little wolf." He purred.

Who's name? Where was I again?

I visibly shook the cobwebs from my head. "Not a chance. You'll have to torture it out of me."

Mischief tilted his lips, forming a jagged slash of a grin. For a split second, it almost looked like he might. Right now would be a good time to book it. Before I could stealthily slide off of the bar stool, Azrael plucked a fuzzy looking fruit from the platter and chuckled.

"I'll let you keep your secrets, but don't let Orion find out. Torture isn't my idea of foreplay, but it is his."

The fruit and yogurt I'd just eaten turned to lead in my stomach. Heat licked up my spine. I could no longer tell if I was terrified, on the verge of puking, or aroused.

With my luck, it was all three.

Needing something to quell the fire in my veins, I picked up the crystal goblet next to my plate and sniffed the clear liquid inside. Azrael continued molesting the piece of fruit with his lips and tongue, watching me as though I were the most interesting thing in the world. Spoiler alert, I was.

"That," he gestured to the goblet, "is an ancient beverage we

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