**Chapter 4: Hidden gem**

"What did you say, Mikhail? It’s quite a lot to take in at this moment, please give me some room to breathe.” Blood Claw says exhaustingly as he returns the book and quill pen to the sub-space. The quill pen appears to be on its way apart, and the book has been pinched with his claw prints. Twist and bend so much yet they seem to be useable.

I don’t think this much would be surprising so much. I mean a normal angel wouldn’t have the strength to defy a whole army with that much confidence. The logical explanation would be assuming me to be somewhat higher in rank, would it not be?

In the situation of life and death, the contract is made by the unexpected trust of both parties. How sad does he have to know that I only used him as an excuse to escape? As the bane of my existence goes, this temporary alliance will soon fall apart.

I comply and step outside for a moment. So this is the scenery that surrounds the Garden of Promise. Hidden by the glass of the outside world, I have never such a phony landscape. Rows of mountains align themselves to a complete line, a valley at the tail end signified the start of the journey to the gate of the promised garden.

The unnatural landscape must be the result of pa's terraforming, not even a specter of life exists near the Garden of Promise. Even the yetis or snow spirits that normally inhabit such environments are absent.

Theoretically speaking it is pleasant to the eyes and makes a good makeshift story to tell, but the unnatural state shunned every of the least to the greatest of the immortal. Rendering it to a dead land with not a soul to inhabit. The weather is much more tolerable when compared to the lasting winter in the northern mountains.

I once experienced the harsh cold of the north mountain when Gabriel was able to bring back his trophies from those battles. Only the fifth archangel resided there, as have the beasts raised there solely for the purpose of being regarded as "mystical beasts" by mortals... For some unknown reasons, I don't hate or resent the fifth. The feeling is strangely empathetic toward the silent archangel.

Is it because he, too, lives in a cage as I do, or because he hasn't shown a harsh or distrustful attitude toward me when visiting my cage? Unlike the others, his cheerfulness was genuine, and he spared "teaching" me whenever possible.

His path to becoming an archangel was described as tragic by the eleventh. To quote from that giant “The fifth hasn’t been so decisive on the fate of his loved one until there was no choice left. Must he pray to this false paradise, for the power to repel the wickedness of the human world?”

I'd like to hear it someday, even if those beasts maul me for the reason of upsetting their master. The reason one became an archangel so unwillingly, the world isn’t so large now, is it?

Blood Claw has been composing himself so much of the simple fact that another dawn breaks when I look toward the drifting sky. Though the vessel can survive in multiple ways by not consuming earthy nutrition I still miss the warm meals each day passing from the lessons.

The thought of returning appears like a ticking bomb. The more I stay wavering here, the clearer the irrational ideal of returning seems to be. Would I get captured, the fate would be simple;

I am but an unsalvageable experiment so the place that worse than hell itself would be my resting place. With my soul rejoining pa and ma original part, may I ego and the final remaining erased completely from this world.

The stories from the head angel, as he has witnessed many of my failures to be disposed of, some were merciful to have a quick retaken without the knowing pain of having their egos ripped from their vessel.

However, the majority of them die as empty husks, tormented like mortals in paradise's version of purgatory. Having to be shattered millions of times in a space where time flies faster than here until their souls surrender themselves, may they be granted a merciful end of death.

The light of the fire is finally extinguished in the cave; his mind must have been made up. Blood Claw reverts to his refined self, dressed in a black suit over his red skin; the clothes must have come from the sub-space where they have been hiding. In the look of it, a proper invitation is what his master asked him to give to me.

The demon opens with formality to me, but he manages himself remembering how both of us reacted poorly just by the façade of something else than a comarade. Regardless of how he formally dresses or his mannerisms refine, he is still the demon who trusts me with his life and death, an irreplaceable piece for me to understand how to live freely instead of a marionette performance.

The blustered wounds, unremovable lines of scar beneath those fancy clothes; regardless of whether he is an "earl," "duke," or "lord." They matter not for the memories we share of our experience of a deathless execution.

When it comes to further negotiating the contract between me, his erroneous words about having a prince make him less than stellar of an invitation; having someone to how your partner’s chain means you too have also that chain.

Though the decision to accompany Blood Claw is set straight in my mind, some baloney battering would ease up the situation and they would be refreshing.

"Have you decided where you're going?" Blood Claw inquires. My refutation is what is visible as Blood Claw's wish. He wishes to be accompanied by someone from the race that has mercilessly slaughtered countless beings of his kind, doesn't he?

No matter how reliable a partner I am, his earnest displaying so frequently means the prince he served may hold him accountable to welcome me as a guest rather than a prisoner or refugee relying solely on him. A rather strange contract but I find it to be amusing enough to continue tangling on this strange hope.

But I can't shake the feeling that something bad happened to his homeland recently. The task does not matter here...only his acceptance may come as the only to me, whether it is an invasion or it slowly swallows itself whole. A dead land would ask for a miracle so much that they would shake hands with the enemies.

"I'm not going to put any pressure on you, Mikhail." Blood Claw continues. He writhes his claws like mortals struggling to await their verdict. When his claws aren't agitated by the fierce battle, they resemble those humans' fingers. It changes a few of my impressions of what consider to be demon and mortal, besides the obvious physical features.

Reminded of Gabriel’s first mistake and how I covered it with the responsibility of the older sibling of the twin, I have truly cared for my brother and that “family”. When I decided to flee, that door had already closed, like dust in the cold wind, my heart now only save for myself.

"When I made that offer to you, I was planning to go to where the human is," I explain. Being a knowledgeful one will provide me with an advantage to pass on as a wise hermit among them with spells and potions that may help me adjust to the normalcy of the human world. However, my petite appearance will raise some eyebrows among those around me. I just want to live a quiet life and not be ratted out by those I'm trying to help.

"I see… May your journey be safe..." He says in a sad tone. A genuine reaction from someone who genuinely cares. How adorable... Is this what they referred to as a "tease"? His demeanor turns into a sad puppy which is quite disturbing as only I can see beside the hardened expression of a tanarukk.

“However…” I say. Create unnecessary suspense once more...ah, I really want to see his sudden change of demeanor once more. It’s entertaining in a sickening way that I experience.

"However?" he asks cheerfully. How may I manipulate someone's heart by giving and taking words from my answers? This shall come in handy on a later day.

"I find myself in the presence of such a dependable source of protection; may I join you as your companion?" I suggest. He has a cheerful demeanor and grabs my hand to shake once more. In normal circumstances, wouldn't this be how they seal the deal?

After a few moments, his decision turns sour as regretful as it may become. Is it because of my origin? He appears to be a noble type of demon, so the life I may face is that of a captive marionette. I will have to constantly face endless suiter upon arrival for a “helping hand”.Demon society operates differently than angel society.

While current angels are granted status based on their merit or usefulness to ma and pa, demons live by the definition of "the strong swallow the weak," so nobility and status are based on one's power and influence over the whole. He mentioned his prince; must he then be an "earl"?

**The end**

**When calculations turn into a defined theorem.**

**When lines of poems weave into an odyssey**

**A revision is needed, right?**