**Chapter 5: Outdated Truth**

"Quaestio": A lie detection spell. Quite a weak one that only activates when one answers the user’s questions. There are only two options truth and lie, whether one said any wrong it would be a lie, if all of their words are true it would be the truth. One may bypass it by hiding information and only answering to a certain extent. To counter this weakness the user should ask for clarification of the content. “Is that all?” is the most used one

"You do realize I'm not going to where those humans live, don't you?" Blood Claw's voice has softened from his previous excited tone. The problem stems from my origin as the third archangel, the myth of lord Lucifer falling must have been quite a disagreeing narrative for them to accept. None but the original 72 Ars Goetia demons can testify to my words.

"Fully, or are you disgusted with my company? After all, my form has limited me to do so much physical labor that it is almost embarrassing. For you, my existence only carries the weight of death until the avoidance of your timely execution"

These harsh words are difficult to say but to humiliate my power and make true of my current authority is a great wake-up call. True, his prince may shield me from rumors about my upbringing, but can he shield himself from the entirety of hell?

With my powers, I can protect him against the whole hell itself. But in the long run, my strength would weaken greatly so we would have such trouble. A dictator empire builds on a fearful power to influence them to become something more muddler than ever. Something like that wouldn’t sustainable to be written down in history.

“No…Mikhail. Do you really need to complicate things any further?" Blood Claw sighs. His goal is obviously to sway me to the side of his homeland. This means the demon has been adopting a more mild system of society rather than a food chain kind. Deflecting the blame, I may learn some knowledge from slip-ups about the current hell to plan for the future.

"But aren't you the one who initiates the suggestive gesture?" I refer back to his previous question. He must have regretted it to make such distrain expression to accumulate the same gesture of protection to be the opposite of disgust.

"Looking back, I have greatly disregarded your previous condition of living. For my homeland, something as cloudy as the ground and bountiful meals aren’t guaranteed. Each and everything want your existence to cease. That is the reasoning for my venturing." He describes how harsh life is in his homeland. I expected nothing less from the knowledge I was gaining from library books.

Barren wastelands and vast hostile enemies lurking at all hours of the day and night to deform you. Because the sovereign is still inexperienced and irresponsible, the law was followed loosely. So, as I suspected, the land is basically swallowing itself. He finishes the story with an expected coup because of neglect and his prince requires my assistance to subtle it.

"I was already aware of your duty and status when we were discussing my spell," I say. Some of his nonsense has become so far-fetched that plotholes still appear in his made-up story; even as lacking as I am in the real word knowledge, critical thinking is able to shoot through the makeshift story.

"Would you mind telling me what you've learned about me, Mikhail?" Blood Claw scoffs, he must have thought my thinking is based on his story, a sliver lining between those threads of deception.

"You must be capable of serving a prince in hell. From the look of it, you’re a personal retrainer of the prince, and for the rank, I assume you are a “marquises”." I point out and explain that many book records from before the structure of demon kinds.

Royalty is simply bloodline signatures of magic that are passed down only to those related to descendants. An example would be the house of Andromalius, of record it contains many poisonous abilities that are only inherited by those in the same bloodline. Whether he is one or rose from the depths of hell, both are reliable feats to count as a partner with some level of magic.

“…” His silence validates at least one of my many accusations. Words aren’t one of honesty when the intention of the speaker is hidden. So forgive me for doing this, but I need to fill the gaps of knowledge from your truth.

"Did my deduction prove correct, Blood Claw? Isn't that your real name?" I ask. "Quaestio," I silently cast, concerned that he might tone down or make up an elaborate story to distract me from knowing the truth. Baloneys and nonsense, this time I hope he would be more honest with me.

“No, I'm just perplexed as to how you imagine hell to be." Blood Claw laughs as he takes a handkerchief from the subspace before. "Yes, I am the prince's so-called retainer," he admits,

"But that is because most of his support has fled to a nearby kingdom," he explains, as the kingdom is currently on the verge of being overtaken by another nearby kingdom.

*[ Veritas ]*

"I must admit that I am close to being a duke, but his majesty always bothers me on doing the task, so I can't complete the way to get that kind of title." Blood Claw describes the prince as a slacker who is always going out of his way to have fun while ignoring his parents' kingdom civil disputes, forcing him and others to do the prince's duty.

Blood Claw observes how many of the subordinates are both dissatisfied and admiring of his ruling at the same time; does he have a pheromone similar to mine?

*[ Veritas ]*

He also says the prince is a generous person and a good one to amplify this nonsense of a story. “While he continued giving me headaches every time he went out for a few days, he is still my prince that has helped me while no one did.”

“Oh and for your information, he is an almost “king”, his power is far from what consider a “duke” but he is too carefree to focus on getting the “king” title may it be another century or two.” Sound irresponsible but somehow it emits hidden danger. Too carefree or manipulated, they are two sides of a dagger.

*[ Veritas ]*

"As for my name, being a human and all, I do have a name for my former self. But I rarely use it because it's considered unfit for a demon to continue using their mortal names.” Blood Claw continues to dwell on how society is maintained in the realm below or this time, the east of the world.

“Because of how frequently he uses my mortal name, the prince must still decide whether to give me a demon. But I don't want you to follow in his footsteps." Flustered, he looks to the other side.

*[ Veritas ]*

"In terms of hell's power structure, there are, as you mentioned, "earl," “marquises” "duke," and "king." However, there was something of a record of another higher-up that only the royal may be aware of because only those who are pure of demon manage to obtain that, as his majesty has stated to me."

*[ Veritas ]*

If what he was saying was true, I can hypnotize them to be the seven demons that originate the deadly sins that plague humanity. Pride, Lust, Greed, Envy, Sloth, Wrath, and lastly Gluttony.

"What about your human that you're so eager to discard?" Was it a taboo subject for some?" I ask. He must have done something terrible to deserve such power.

"It is simply a common practice in hell to remove their name as a reminder of the grief they have caused in their life." I simply follow that type of tradition. Don't give it much thought, Mikhail." While looking away from me, Blood Claw says.

*[ Falsetto ]*

"Isn't there something more to it?" I confront him about the lie he told, regardless of how painful or sensitive the subject is. I'm sick of all the lies at this point, so I need to press on the matter at hand.

"So you've figured it out. I truly believe you are the older person in our conversation." Laughing, he jokes.

"I don't want to remember my mortal life, and my human name is a bad omen wherever I step. When I was human, as a mercenary, I killed many people, even when they begged for mercy."Blood Claw reminds him of the sinful life he had.

I find it unnecessary to hold on to the past allegation of the human named Eugen who no longer existed. The weight of one’s name is what they carry out on this very day as they exist, but I can’t hold it against a former human when I was and won’t ever be.

*[ Veritas ]*

"Oh, and as for the name Blood Claw, it wasn't given to me by his majesty, but by those who rumored me to be. I was previously transformed into a demon in another land and served a different lord.”

Blood Claw was originally someone sinful of wrath yet he came to the current kingdom due to the collapse of the old. A wanderer…I wonder what life could have been

“Because His Majesty was thought to be my last master due to a prophecy, the fact that you have saved me makes you the owner of my life. A servant, however, can never serve two masters with opposing ideals. May you lend my prince your support?" On his knee, he asks.

*[ Veritas ]*

“ My answer as always is that you and I are partners. Following you in what certainly, even if our contract expired.” I end this long conversation with a confirmation, to follow him is what is best for my path to tread.

**The end.**

**Angels who betray their god**

**Striping their wing, darkening their clothing.**

**Into the fiery depth of hell, they went.**