**Chapter 8: Demon kingdom**

“How much have you heard?” Blood Claw. The perplexed expression on his face makes me want to delve into what he diverts my attention away from. Does the prince's previous comment about my appearance or my fascination with bards false tales?

Nonetheless, his expression is adorable for a bloodthirsty demon he appears on the massacre. Being in his presence has increased my fondness and curiosity about the current demon kind. It would answer unwritten historical transition that was unknown to me.

"Just enough, Eugen." Blood Claw recoils at the mention of his mortal name. His palm pushed toward asking me not to come here.

Blood Claw's frustrated face isn’t so different from his default besides the stream of hot air coming from the side of his ear; due to the reddish figment of his skin, I can’t predict Blood Claw's emotion through his body language.

"Not you, too." Blood Claw weeps in defeat. Exhausted from arguing not only from his prince’s constant teasing but also scrambling for words of explanation to mine.

"Your prince appears to be courteous toward me. Assessing from a strain of hair be one’s of a fair maiden." Earlier, the prince comments my presence behind the door is as pure as a maiden. My first guess of a flamboyant kind of demon.

As countless books once said, the sliver hair as clouds shelter mortal eyes the brilliant of the sun gives the world warmth. In truth, their whitening state is the result of being dyed with every aspect of mana.

Despite hating everything Pa has stood for, I at least commend his expertise in bodily engineering. Attempting to create an angel with golden eyes and sliver with the guidance of God, must have been a work of centuries.

Emegred from the experiment as a “success”, I was fortunate enough to retain memories from the previous “Mikhail”s. Gabriel is a byproduct of the process as Pa’s intention wasn’t to recreate the Sepharim of Strength because of blasphemy reasons…

Gabriel from the moment of birth, has such a distinct ego. That was neither obedience nor a fierce sense of duty that suit the sepharim. Something else was missing there for me not to find the missing link between his capacity with the sepharim of strength. But I do not find him to be subject to be studied, just my little brother for me to protect. The only twin archangel of the world, now torn apart. How saddening.

“Do forgive his playfulness, the prince is always like that. But I would praise for your gentleness if I was to speak.” Gentleness, he isn’t creative in that aspect. Or perhaps he was perplexed about my gender.

If then, it is a safe answer to deal with. Pa quickly discarded the whole assigning gender thing as he didn’t understand the undistinguished figure of what meant to be an angel so he just made every vessel later to be hermaphroditic.

“I am hermaphroditic so any praise would be fine. But as you said, I don’t very much like those that aim for my physical features.” I say while hiding many secrets of how this vessel was created. Spare the horrific details for a later day, Blood Claw is mentally exhausted at this point.

"Will he be here to escort us?" I ask. It would save us time and allow me to settle in better than simply having Blood Claw escort me as an important guest.

“The prince? While he was getting more and more impatient after you vowed to accompany us, I had to refuse. There are more important duties for him to fulfill than having to escort us as an excuse for goofing off.”

As of his mention, the prince is rarely seen at court performing his royal duties. This is most likely due to the retainers being hand-picked by the prince rather than their power or authority.

But how they clashed with the prince's personality. Blood Claw claims that he was chosen solely for his "efficiency" in battle, which is just another way of saying how the prince liked to battle by Blood Claw while the prince was concealing his identity.

“I'm afraid things will become difficult if we stray longer than necessary,” I explain how Gabriel won’t show mercy to those who are considered to be his enemies.

Dragging my corpse back with apologies as he awaits Pa to return me back to normal without knowing I would be replaced. It won’t be an end that satisfies anyone but Pa.

"Is he powerful enough to cause a commotion? Should you rely on me instead if you get tired of fighting?" Blood Claw completely avoids the subject, as if it were forbidden, or is he concerned that the prince will lose interest in employing me?

“He is my only true brother, so you must not hurt him. Out of necessity, I also find it unsuitable for us to meet on the battlefield so early.” Asking to face Gabriel like a death wish for someone like Blood Claw who was easily beaten to submission by Kushiel. I'm beginning to believe that prophecy isn't all that cryptic after all and that Blood Claw is actively diving into his doom out of loyalty.

“I have other reasons to meet with the prince. For that I need the trust of our companionship, won’t you reply to it?” Blood Claw sighs at the request as he has no use but to comply.

"Just for a chat, I hope there isn't too much disagreement between you two to break our agreement." Blood Claw retrieves the communicator from his pocket dimension, this time in the form of a crystal ball. Unrecognized character bestowing mana on it “α ω δ”

"Nuntium" the crystal ball shines as the character “α” lights up this time as the character “δ” lights up. The illusion of a dark chamber lights up, but there is no one on the other side except for a voice.

"Eugen, it's only been a minute and you've missed me that much?" An incubus appears before the crystal ball's screen; however, the enchantment on the crystal ball is so weak that it only displays a faint illusion of the true image.

"Mikhail wants to meet you personally; I was initially opposed, but they insisted on meeting you." Blood Claw wiggles his brow.

"All right, our little friends can meet me if they want." The prince scoffs.

The image becomes increasingly clear. The incubus appears before the scenes, with fine short golden hair, eyes that shine like living rubies split between goat pupils, and two small horns on the forehead. He is sitting on a bed's red velvet mattress. Is this a seductive act?

"Your Majesty, good evening." I hold up the white robe to make a bow like a lady would with a dress. Blood Claw notices my sudden change in demeanor, while the prince looks amusingly. His goat-like eyes on me are distinctive from before.

"Eugen, you have found yourself a fair maiden. Tell me your name, girl; be courteous in front of me, and I will grant you the greatest pleasure that can be found nowhere else." The prince is truly lustful, with no redeeming qualities. Blood Claw looks away, knowing better than to try to calm my rage at this time.

"I am not here to be anyone's concubine, Your Majesty. Mikhail, the third archangel, is my name. I hope to serve under you for more than just a pleasure." The prince recoils at my words, possibly because Blood Claw told him about them. It says a lot about how much should he respect me. Or, at the very least, not seeing me as a mere harlot is a better place to start.

"Oh, you're the friend mentioned by Blood Claw. I am ashamed of my previous behavior. Please forgive my instinct, but only those who are so beautiful that I can't help but praise them." The prince apologized with a smile, as someone who teases Blood Claw to that extent should not be ashamed. He deserves to bring this much wilfully jesting because he is a prince, a "duke" to that extent.

"I see something more than a simple praise but covet my eyes of such, I would like, but that is most undesirable in our current terms." Both Blood Claw and the prince have curious expressions on their faces when I express my thoughts on the matter. Is it some kind of a fallen myth?

"So what should I own the pleasure of meeting you before your official court appearance?" The prince inquires, his finger pressed against one of his fangs.

"I'd like to request a huge favor from your Majesty. If you find it absurd, you can decline." An opening like this should result in a significant disadvantage in the negotiation, but we're talking about Blood Claw's safety here.

When Gabriel sees Blood Claw walking beside me, he will not hesitate to maul him; mercy is not something I would consider when it comes to my twin brother.

"That depends on whether it piques my interest or not. Speak up, little friend." The prince began with an agreement, implying that this matter is not out of the question.

"I request that your Majesty come to this location and teleport me and Blood Claw to your kingdom." When I said that, Blood Claw immediately protested, but the prince intervened.

Those goat eyes are on me; would something like that harm the prince's pride? According to Blood Claw's stories, the prince would have been careless for the attention of his court, much less want to do his duty.

"Our little friend doesn't want to take the long route back? Why should I do that? Teleportation would cost me a lot of mana, so how will you make up for it?" The prince grins. It is true that accepting this request from me would be pointless because Blood Claw will deliver me regardless. However, there is something that neither of them can provide that I can.

"I've heard you don't want to do boring things like paperwork and court appearances." Would you allow me to remove it completely in less than a week?" After reading as many as a thousand books between dawn and dusk, tasks like paperwork and court records seem like child's play.

"Deal, you've got me at paperwork." I can't have as much fun with those around me. I'll draft the contract and arrive at high noon. "Archangel, remember what you said." As the character “ω” lit up, the prince closed the communication completely.

This is going much better than I expected. It's three o'clock at night, and Blood Claw has been using his mana to continue this telegraph conversation between me and the prince. I, too, should rest because tomorrow will bring more than just exhaustion.

**The end**

**Strolling through the street of mortals.**

**Whereas those lurking in the shadow.**

**Somehow are nowhere to be seen.**