

~~Beatrice~~

Jacob hadn't been in the cave when she came back with everyone. She was kinda thankful for that. Stressful conversations could wait until another time.

Waking up was a strange feeling, and the memories hit her hard. Angela, Jeremiah, Athalia, the fucking twisted curse Jack, the huge gargoyle Sándor, it all came back to her a little faster than she'd have liked. Joy, over knowing Angela was dead, and Jeremiah too. Sadness, about Athalia; not a lot, but enough to make things bittersweet. She felt real good that every one of her witches lived, and hell, she even felt good about Azamel living, too.

Sándor was a bit of an anomaly. While Jack's attack had gone freakishly well, to the point it hadn't really been a fight, but a slaughter, she did completely forget they weren't just killing some hunters. They were also freeing a slave. Christ, she'd completely forgotten that Jeremiah had a fucking monster as his slave, during that attack last night. All she knew, was she had a way to get past Elen's magic, and with Jack's curse, they could get revenge.

Revenge had. Now what? She wouldn't be surprised if they had to hunt down a few of the remaining hunters, but compared to the shit they'd been through for months now, it'd be a cakewalk. Maybe Athalia would try and kill her. Certainly possible. If Athalia wanted to kill her, well, let her come. But something told her that it wouldn't come to that, at least not yet, and not without at least one more conversation between them.

That meant she didn't have a good reason to get up tonight. If she wanted, she could just lie down, and sink into a hole of depression. Fuck, who'da thought achieving revenge would leave her so empty? At least when Angela was alive, she had something to distract herself, something to pour her efforts into. Now, she had nothing.

Not completely nothing. The damn Ventrue slut next to her was a reason. Stupid girl wouldn't let her drown in her pit of despair and self-loathing, and Triss knew that must have been hell for her. Triss was very much a 'let people who can't swim, drown' sort of person, or at least she was, in the past. If she'd known a woman who was drowning in sadness because her lover died, Triss wouldn't have helped her. You can't get stronger when other people save you from your struggles. Few things terrified her as much as the idea of a clingy person dragging her down, until she drowned with them.

She hadn't become clingy since Julias died, but she'd certainly been drowning. Jen helped her stay above water. Damn idiot.

Triss looked over at the stupid woman, who was sitting up with the vitae jolt that came with every completed sunset. Both were still clothed. Jen's clothes were in good condition, but Beatrice's looked like hell, and she smirked as she compared them.

"So, what now?" Jen said.

"Dunno. I suppose we talk to Jacob, next time that asshole shows his face." She had a sneaking suspicion the man had been involved last night, and she didn't know how. "And the Prince wanted to talk to us tonight. We should probably call Jack and see when she wants to do that."

With a heavy sigh, Jen nodded, and lay back on the furs in their alcove. "I'm... happy, that you got her."

"I am, too."

"You sure? You look torn about the whole thing."

Course Jen would be able to read her, considering how long they'd been friends. And Beatrice was dogshit at hiding her feelings about anything, anyway.

"Yeah, I am," she said. She whispered it, she realized, after she'd said it. Aaron and Othello were in the cave, and she didn't want them hearing. Her voice grew quieter again, and she scooted in closer to Jen. "You know what her last words were? 'Do it'. Christ, she was fucked up, Jen. Like, majorly fucked in the head, fucked up. She was happy to die."

"Yes, you told me last night, but it still sounds terrible. She must have had a horrible life."

"Athalia fucked her up pretty bad, judging from the... the last words they had. In the end, she just wanted to save her daughter, but her daughter wouldn't accept her help. It was... it was so fucked up." Triss pulled her knees up to her chest and hugged her legs close to her body. "I didn't get to kill an evil woman who ruined my life. I didn't get to beat some horrible bitch. I was just putting down some sort of injured, rabid animal." She was on repeat, saying the things she'd already told Jen, but her mind was stuck on it and couldn't work past it. Her vision of revenge had been ruined by the reality, and it fucking sucked.

Jen slipped in closer, hooked an arm around her, and hugged her tight. "Then, instead of being happy about revenge, be happy you did something good? You stopped her from killing more people, and it sounds like she was happy it was over. That's a lot of pain you helped stop. Maybe even Athalia will be able to move on now?"

Triss managed a small smile for her friend. There was truth in what she said, and hell, maybe Triss could even start thinking of it that way. “Yeah, but I don’t know about Athalia. She... really wanted to protect her daughter.”

“A wound can’t heal when the knife’s still jammed in there, Triss. Now that Angela’s gone, I think Athalia will... probably get worse, first, and then she’ll recover. It might take weeks, months, or years, but she’ll recover. No more false hope dragging her down.”

No more false hope. Painful truth. Triss didn’t like it, but truth was better than bullshit. This whole thing didn’t have the ending she’d been hoping for, but it was over. Time for people to heal, and move on.

“So,” Jen said, “that Sándor. Wow.”

Oh good god. “Jen, the dude was getting revenge for a dead wife and son. I think you can safely say he’s off the table.”

“For the moment.” She grinned, and tapped her fingertips together, classic evil villain style. “It was four years ago.”

“And if I didn’t know better, I’d say you were giving his monster form bedroom eyes.”

Jen giggled, a sultry and very feminine thing; undoubtedly a sound she’d practiced. “Well, you have to admit, it was gorgeous. He was utterly massive. Can you imagine, disappearing between those arms? Yum.”

Triss rolled her eyes, and looked around for some clothes. If she was going to the Elysium Tower, the least she could do was not wear clothes with giant tears cutting through it. The others would probably wear suits or something, but the witches would go casual. Casual didn’t mean with half her skin exposed.

She threw off her tank top, reached for another one, and before she could slip it on, Jen was on her. Hugging her from behind, she cupped Triss’s breasts, and pressed her chest into Triss’s back with a very obvious intent to squash her big tits into her. And to make matters worse, she hooked her chin over Triss’s shoulder, and set a small kiss on her temple.

“Jen. Seriously?”

“I know I know. Still too soon. But I think it’s good to remind you that, I’m perfectly willing to help you alleviate some of your stress.” And to make her point clear, her hands cupping Triss’s breasts

found her nipple piercings, and lightly teased, circling around her areola with her fingertips. God damn it. Even without the Blush of Life, it still felt damn good.

So, for a little while, Triss just sat there, before leaning back a little, and letting herself melt into Jen's body. Jen remained snug to her back, keeping her upright, and continued to gently massage her breasts. With slow, tender fingers, she circled Triss's nipples, and set slow kisses on her neck, more relaxing than anything. And of course, Jen knew just how to touch her, just how to gently caress her moderate breasts, and how to place delicious, tender squeezes on them that were half massage, half tease. God damn. If Triss blushed, her body would have lit up like the Fourth of July.

"Thanks, for putting up with this stick in the mud," she said.

"Ha, you are welcome." Jen got up, held out her hand, and Triss took it once she got the cleaner shirt. "Call me a strong believer in sexual healing."

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Standing in the office room of the top floor of the Elysium Tower was a strange feeling. Everything was so clean, pristine, and expensive. The black marble with white lightning lines, the lights built into the walls, the fucking chairs, it was all so god damn richy rich. It made her cringe. All that money, and this was how Antoinette spent it? Then again, this probably didn't scratch the surface of the money Antoinette had, and it was definitely a powerful symbol of her control.

Jennifer, Othello, and Aaron were all there with her, though each of them stood a little bit behind Beatrice, just enough so she would be the first others looked at. Kinda dumb, considering Jen was the one in a suit. She liked suits. Fucking Ventrue.

Clara was there too, dressed just like Triss, blue jeans and a tank top, white versus Triss's black. Damn she was an attractive woman, and she screamed confident. Except, some of that confidence looked damaged.

It was Jack. Jack was standing in front of the group of them, and Clara was a couple feet behind. Whenever her eyes went to the little guy, they fell after a few seconds, and it took a few seconds after that before she lifted her eyes again.

Yeah, understandable. They were all having trouble looking at Jack. Even Jennifer and Aaron, who'd missed half the party, weren't able to look at the kid's back for very long. It was massive, on

such a small body. The aura of his Beast was absurd, and dark, and being this close to him made her Beast reel in disgust and fear. Having a very real mental image and memory to attach to its horrid nature made it a thousand times worse.

Only Damien seemed to be ok with it. He stood beside Jack, in his suit and trench coat. No sword. Heh, maybe the broken thing was still in the dream? He didn't waver, didn't shake or quiver, didn't do anything but stand there beside the demon. Solid.

Fiona was there. Sándor was there as well. Both were giving Jack plenty of room, hanging out in the back of the office. Fiona was in her usual leather jacket, but Sándor was dressed a little more formally, some dark jeans with brown boots, black belt, and a blue, button shirt, undone a few buttons so the top half of his chest was visible. Where'd he get the clothes? Probably stole them just for this night, considering they didn't fit him very well, a bit tight on his frame.

Beatrice couldn't blame Jen for getting so flirtatious with him, attractive as he was. The buzz-length black hair, short dark gruff on his hard chin and lean face, along with his strangely dreamy blue eyes, made for a pleasing image. Deep-seated eyes, that held enough buried pain that the man just oozed tormented soul.

She hated that he reminded her of Julias. He helped kill Julias, against his will, but still, it made looking at him difficult. The fact that she recognized that morose look from Julias, back before she helped fix his life, made looking at Sándor beyond difficult. He was a sad soul, racked with pain, and guilt, all the things that screamed emo. Justifiably emo. And he was old enough that he didn't grow hair over one eye, put on mascara, and wear a black t-shirt with some vague anarchist expression on it. Emo on a guy like him was a darker thing, subtler, and a hell of a lot more serious.

If he'd started fake smiling, and suddenly being flirtatious and suave to cover his depression, it'd have been so Julias, she would have had no choice but to rip his fucking throat out. But he didn't. He just stood there, face solid stone like the gargoyle monster, once he'd merged with it. A cold face.

Maybe he'd start to heal. Maybe not.

"Everyone involved in your suicidal assault on the hunters is here, save for Athalia," Antoinette said. She was sitting behind a big desk, and leaning back in a black leather chair that may as well have been a throne. "I am sure you can understand why she is not."

No one said anything. Antoinette was giving some sort of speech, and the atmosphere was clear: let the boss woman talk.

“What you did was foolhardy,” she continued, “but ultimately, details of the circumstance were simply beyond my, or the Invictus’s, or Avery’s, or Jacob’s, or... the Sanctum’s ability to quantify or qualify. Jack and the curse that plagues him have proven a powerful tool, and he made a decision to use it, one that he knew the Primogen would not have agreed to.” She smiled at that, and Beatrice raised an eyebrow. Ok, not expecting the smile. “Better to ask for forgiveness than permission, Mister Terry?”

“Uh... in a sense, Prince,” the kid said.

She nodded, smile remaining. The whole tone of the conversation changed from the military whooping Triss expected, to something a lot more lighthearted. Was the Prince happy with them? It kinda seemed like she was. “The hunters are defeated. Jeremiah and Angela are dead. Three hunters have surrendered. Harcourt has already sent a message to his fellow hunters explaining what has happened, a message I helped craft. Jack, I ask that you Dominate the man later, to insure that he is truthful about his intentions.”

“Will do, Prince. It’s... difficult, to get past his barriers though, and with the curse, I could end up hurting him.”

“A risk worth taking.” She brushed a hand aside, dismissing the concern easily. Well, he was a hunter. No use crying over spilled milk in that regard, Triss supposed. “The remaining hunters in the city are considered a deadly threat, and are to be killed on sight unless they surrender first. I imagine they will flee, once receiving Harcourt’s message.”

“And... Harcourt, and his friends?” Jack asked. “I made them a promise.”

“We will see. You overstepped your power, Mister Terry. I do not need to honor your promise to them. Be thankful your promise was to kine, and not another Kindred, or they would have had claim to a dispute.”

Beatrice grinned a little at that. Well, at least Antoinette wasn’t playing favorites with her boy toy.

“Yes, yes you’re right. I apologize,” he said.

“Lying to the enemy is a part of warfare, Jack Terry. Do not apologize.” She shrugged, again dismissing Harcourt’s life value with a small gesture. “My point was that, were such a promise made to Kindred, and it became a part of the Danse Macabre, you would be... up shit creek, without a paddle, as it were. Be careful with such promises in the future.”

“Lesson learned, Prince.”

“I will be hosting a ball in several days. All Kindred are to attend. Defy me at your peril.” She offered each witch a harsh glare, before looking to the others. “Uratha and Begotten, you are invited, but your presence is optional. I would appreciate your attendance. I—” She stopped, and raised her hand to her ear for a moment. Oh, she was wearing an ear piece, a tiny thing Triss almost hadn’t noticed. And she was too good to poker player to do something as stupid as call attention to it by lifting a hand to her ear. So, if she was willing to let them know she was hearing something, then—

Everyone snapped to awareness, weight going onto the balls of their feet, as Daniel stepped out of the corner of the room, from behind them. Holy fucking shit, he’d been in the room all along, Cloaked, hidden, invisible. Everyone was caught by surprise, everyone except Jack.

A grunt came from Daniel’s direction, and that did draw Jack’s attention, as if he’d known about Daniel, but not who was going to make that noise. Everyone turned to watch the deadly fucker walk toward the center of the room, and they made way for him, and his prisoner.

“Mark?” Jack said. “You…”

The dude said nothing. In jeans and a hoodie, the man frowned up a storm as Daniel, with a sword drawn and pressed to the Begotten’s throat, escorted him to the big desk Antoinette sat behind.

“Mark.” Antoinette said. “You never gave me your last name.” The dude said nothing, but it was clear he hadn’t expected to be found doing whatever it was he was doing. “I suspected, based on my last conversation with Azamel, that she knew far too much, about a great many things. She hinted that you had helped her learn of Jeremiah’s defenses, and to extrapolate from that was not difficult.” She leaned forward, and glared ice into the monster. “I wondered why Azamel kept you close, Mark. You do not seem to possess combat prowess. What value would you have as bodyguard? It took time before I realized that you are not a sword, but eyes and ears. A rather devious set of eyes and ears.

“Unfortunately for you, your underestimated my sheriff’s ability.” She netted her fingers in front of her, elbows still on the desk, and she smiled a deadly smile. My god, she was enjoying this, indulging in catching the fucker who’d been spying on her. Dude had balls, Triss had to give him that, to spy on the fucking Prince.

Triss found her eyes drifting to Jack more than anyone. He hadn’t reacted to Daniel’s sudden appearance, while the rest of them had. But, he’d been surprised by Mark’s presence. Did he sense Daniel? Did he just assume the sheriff was always around, Cloaked? Either way, Mark had managed to surprise him. Hell, even Antoinette looked pleased that the fucker had been caught, as if she hadn’t been able to sense him either. Giant balls and insane sneaking skills.

“Release me,” he said eventually.

“Fiona.” Antoinette turned to look at the redhead, and the tiny girl stood up straight. Poor girl probably thought she’d be nothing but a sideler through all this, but Mark’s presence changed that. “Did you know of your colleague’s ambitious attempts at spying?”

“N-No! I didnae... know...” She couldn’t hold Antoinette’s gaze for long. After a few awkward moments, where Antoinette was obviously waiting for Fiona to fill in some blanks, the redhead lowered her eyes and glanced Mark’s way. “I only knew that he works close with Azamel, and he spies for her, and stuff.”

The Prince glared at Fiona for a few more seconds, and the room waited for something to happen. Fiona was innocent. No way that dumbass ditz was up to anything sinister; other than her usual Begotten stuff, hunting kine and feeding off their fear.

“Needless to say, this damages my trust of Azamel.” Sighing, Antoinette got up, stepped around her desk, and looked down at Mark. Damn tall woman. “The only reason I do not kill you, is because—”

“Because you’re afraid of Azamel. I—”

Everyone took another quick step back from Mark and Daniel, when Antoinette snapped out her right hand, and wrapped her fingers around Mark’s throat. Her arm moved fast enough, Beatrice fucking heard it moving the air, long after the Prince’d already gotten her hand around the monster’s throat.

Like a queen of ice, the white-haired woman squeezed on Mark’s neck, silencing his grunts as she lifted him a foot into the air. With her arm outstretched and solid, she glared at the man, and Triss swore she could see literal blades of ice shooting out of her red eyes, and into the man’s body.

“I have been far too passive in this ridiculous game, but my patience has been stretched to its limit. You think I spare you for fear of your master? I could kill Azamel myself, worm, and I was capable of such a feat before her injury. She is injured now, weakened, and I could have her head on a platter if I so choose.” A quiet growl rumbled in her throat, and Triss gulped as she felt her Beast do its best to disappear into the environment. Mark, clutching her wrists, squirmed and wriggled, obviously unable to breathe, and the only reason he wasn’t kicking Antoinette, was probably because she’d literally squeeze until his head popped off if he did.

“The only reason you live,” she continued, “is because it brings me no pleasure to make enemies of fellow paranormals. The only reason you live, is because Azamel has never directly attempted to



harm me. The only reason you live, is because she proved true to her word last night. The only reason you live, is because I can understand the measures of an old, dying woman, doing her best to control her world.” She still wasn’t letting up her grip, and it was clear the man was beginning to feel the effects of asphyxiation. As fucked up weird the Begotten were, with strange powers, and Mark himself probably being immune to something like being choked to death when he was in his rot form, here in the real world, he was vulnerable.

“Hear me, filth,” Antoinette said, and she brought the man in close to her face. “You are not invited to my ball, and for this transgression, neither is Azamel. One more misstep from her, and I will have the Invictus detonate the explosives placed in the precious tunnels. Go back to the old crone, and give the shadow creature Athalia a message. If she behaves, she is invited, and will be safe under the protection I give all those who enter my walls.” After a quiet growl, Antoinette threw the man back, and everyone spread apart to let him crash into the office floor.

Mark got up, looked around, eyed the sheriff with what Triss could only guess was professional rivalry, before glaring at Antoinette again. But, he said nothing. He turned, and walked out of the room.

“Uh... you invited Athalia?” Triss said.

Antoinette snapped her a look, and she froze. Ok, yeah, talking without being asked to talk was not a good idea right now.

Once Antoinette calmed down in a second, she nodded. “Indeed. Samantha wishes to speak with her, or at least see her once for herself.”

Triss winced and looked to Jack. His mom wanted to see the mother of Angela. Fuck, what was that interaction going to be like? Hell, what would any interaction with Athalia be like, after the death of her daughter?

“Can Mo—Samantha be trusted with such a decision?” Jack said.

“Yes, she can.” Antoinette gave the small Ventrue a harsh glare not unlike the one she gave Triss, before she stepped around her desk to sit in her chair again. “We may discuss your mother later, Mister Terry. For now, understand that all are invited to my ball. All, except for that... thing”—she gestured to the door—“and his master. If last night had not gone as it did, if Azamel had lied to me, or deceived me, Mark would be dead, and I would personally see to killing Azamel myself.” As she said it, she looked to Fiona, as if daring the woman to challenge her.

Fiona did not. She put up her hands, an exaggerated surrender, before putting them down and doing her best to disappear by holding perfectly still.

“Miss Moreno,” Antoinette continued, looking to Clara, “I understand that Avery may disagree with your actions last night. Should I not mention you at the ball?”

“Um, the boss already knows, the sneaky bitch. So I guess it doesn’t matter. But, mention?”

“Oui. I will be making an announcement at the ball, of who defeated the hunters.” Her eyes fell to Sándor, and she looked at the quiet man for a little while, probably trying to gauge how the gargoyle would react. The problem was, the man barely reacted at all. His eyes were locked onto her, and the room as a whole, obviously paying attention, but Mark and Daniel’s sudden appearance, and Antoinette’s aggression toward his fellow Begotten had barely made him move. He just, stood there, like a gargoyle.

Which the Prince took as a silent yes, apparently.

“Excellent. Dolareido has come unto strange times, and I expect that, by explaining the different forces involved in this act, I can nurture an atmosphere of cooperation. The assault was a joint effort of many groups, after all.”

Ah, politics, the worst reason to do anything. But Antoinette was smart, and good at the Danse Macabre, better than Triss would ever be. Better to just do what she said. Not like Triss had a choice anyway, since only the Uratha and Begotten were optionals. Everyone else was just expected to do what Antoinette wanted them to, and they would, too, unless they wanted to get on her bad side. No one wanted that.

“Dress well. Suits, dresses, and do not be afraid to show some skin. Some, mind you.” Nodding, Antoinette waved a hand, a tiny gesture, motioning for them to go. “Jack, please explain the rules of my city to Sándor.”

“Me?”

“Oui. I trust you, and I am pressed for time.”

Jack nodded, and everyone left.

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“So, your mother is coming to the ball?” Jennifer said to Jack, in the elevator. In it were Triss, Jen, Jack, Clara, and Sándor. Othello, Aaron, Fiona, and Damien took another one, not wanting to crowd.

“Yes, she is,” Jack said, and he glared at Jen with a hard squint. “Please don’t wear what you wore last time.”

“Jack! A woman never wears the same dress twice. Not to a ball, at least.”

“You know what I mean. Can you cover up a bit? Mom’s been single since my dad died years ago, and now she’s getting hammered in all directions by”—Triss snorted on a laugh, and Jack glared at her as well—“by changes.”

“She’s Daeva!” Jen said. “Daeva love new experiences.”

Jack jammed a finger in the girl’s shoulder. “New experiences does not necessarily include an orgy buffet.”

Orgy buffet. Well, Daeva did have a habit of becoming addicted to sex, and lining up kine like a buffet to drink, and then fuck. Or fuck, then drink. Or drink fuck. Triss could understand Jack having trouble imagining his mom doing that, but then again, the kid basically got to do just that, frequently.

So, she elbowed him in the side a bit. Half of her said don’t do that, don’t touch the demon, but the other half won over. This wasn’t Jack the psycho. This was Jack, kid Jack, growing up far too fast but still her friend Jack. She could feel the curse, but it felt like it was asleep or something, or lurking under the surface. Strangely, she managed to relax around him, a little.

“Jack, come on, your mom’s an adult. If you can survive a foursome on the reg, I think your mom can, too.”

The kid cringed, and she laughed. Yeah, that was Jack, young Jack who could still get caught off guard by aspects of Kindred life he never predicted. Orgies and whatnot was one hurdle most Kindred dealt with; not her, considering she was Nosferatu and had a stick up her ass, but still. The hurdle of a family member also becoming Kindred, and then getting involved in their own orgies? It happened to a lot of Kindred, she supposed, those who got their family pulled into the Masquerade.

“Seriously Jack,” Jennifer added, “you let go of your issues with sex, didn’t you? That should extend to your mother, and I’m sure she’ll let go of hers, with a little incentive.” Smiling, Jen combed back her shoulder-length black hair over one ear, and took a step toward Sándor. “Mister Sándor, I… what is your last name, if I may ask?”

The man, who’d been watching them with an unreadable, muted expression, softened his stone gaze. Or at least, softened a little, as if he was making an effort.

“Pavel.”

“Mister Pavel! I know your life has been quite hectic as of late. You’ve only been a free man for a single night, and the ball is in several days. Would you like some help finding clothes?”

That sneaky, crafty bitch. She was roping him in, giving him reasons to want to lean on her, and trust her considering she’d given him the location of their base. Not that it was a secret base, but there were plenty of Kindred who didn’t know where it was; not exactly widely circulated info.

“I didn’t plan to go.” Again, deadpan face.

“You must come!” She came in closer again, until she was only a foot from him, fluttering her eyelashes up at the man. “Everyone will be there, and it will be the perfect opportunity for people to meet the Begotten who killed Jeremiah.”

Mentioning Jeremiah managed to get a reaction from the statue, but it passed quickly.

“I’m only here because I know Dolareido is a safe enough place for me to rest this body. Once I… feel well enough to move on, I probably will.”

Jennifer stood up straight, and frowned. “Move on? Why?”

“Because… this place is not my…” He didn’t need to say it, he’d said it before. His wife and son were dead, and they were his home. His human half had been a slave for four years, too, so if he went back to his old life, the result would be obvious. He’d be accused of killing his wife and son. Christ, that’d suck.

“Well,” Jennifer said, “I think Dolareido could be your new home. It’s a huge city, with endless indulgences and interesting distractions.”

“I don’t have—”

“If you need money, I’m sure Jack will help you. Invictus are all rich. And they can create a new identity for you.”

That earned a raised brow from the man, some of the largest expression Triss had seen from him yet. He looked to Jack, and the little guy nodded.

“Yeah, that’d be easy. There are Invictus in every branch of government, keeping information under control. It’s the least I could do. And money, too.”

Triss grinned at the Begotten, not having to say a word as the two Ventrue, predictably, handled the negotiations.

“Something tells me the Prince—”

“Nonsense,” Jen said. “The Prince will be glad to have you in the city. She... may not be happy about the Uratha and other Begotten, but you seem a good deal more civil. And it is civility that the Prince seeks in others.” She came in even closer, and held out a hand, just as the elevator door opened. Planned, no doubt. “Come, let us help build you a wardrobe.”

Stoic as all fuck, the monster looked down at her hand, back to her, all without moving his head, and stood there. But even as Jack, Clara, and Triss walked out of the elevator, Jen remained where she was, waiting, smile unwavering. Damn, she was relentless.

The man sighed, and nodded. “Very well.” He took her hand, and Triss watched him suppress a groan as Jennifer beamed.

“Excellent. Triss, coming?”

“Yeah sure.”

“But I don’t—”

Jennifer waved a hand, letting go of Sándor’s but obviously implying for him to keep following. “You’re in the company of vampires now, Mister Pavel. The city is our banquet to take from as we see fit. You won’t need any money tonight.”

Triss glanced to Jack. Yeah, he saw it too, that Jen was obviously manipulating the man because he’d be a powerful ally. But, she knew he knew, Jen was also earning the man’s trust because she was trying to get Triss to open up more, since Julias’s death, and she was going to use Sándor as catalyst. And Jen knew Triss knew, too, but she did it anyway, because she was a Ventrue, and that’s just how Ventrue rolled.

“I’ll walk with you,” Jack said. “Gotta explain to Sándor about the rules, and... well, he probably knows most of them, and—” The other elevator opened, and Fiona came out, arm hooked with Damien’s. God damn it, she was so cute. And the way she clung to Emo Boy like he was her everything, was sickeningly adorable. “Damien, Fiona, wanna walk with me for a bit?”

Before Damien could say anything, Fiona threw up a hand, jumped once, and dragged Damien over to him. For a moment, Triss thought Jack might ask Clara to follow, but Clara had already started walking away.

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Fifteen minutes later, Sándor, Jen, and Triss were in a men's wear store. It was open, which was insane considering it was 3:00 AM, but hey, it was Dolareido, with a bustling nightlife that any smart company would take advantage of. Rich morons with cocaine in the blood did love to waste money on expensive suits, especially when they had a half naked gold digger to admire it, or mimbo dumbass on their arm to wear it.

Triss was getting better at Obfuscate, particularly Face in the Crowd. It no longer took as much effort to blend in, be unnoticed by the kine, and basically be a fly on the wall. She knew Sándor could tell what she was doing, so she didn't need to explain it to him. The man was a lot older than he looked, based on what he said, so he probably knew plenty about vampires anyway.

"May I help you?" the man behind the desk said.

"Yes you may," Jennifer said. "My friend here"—she gestured to Sándor—"needs a suit in two days."

"Two days?" The man, a tall, skinny fellow with a mouse face, squinted through his glasses at Sándor. "It cannot be done, Miss. Even minor alterations will require several days to move through our queue."

"Two days," she said, and she leaned over the glass counter at the man, over the various mens' jewelry. Her eyes met the man's, and his breathing stopped for a moment as Jennifer grabbed his mind. "We will try several suits tonight, black tie, and the alterations will be ready two days hence. Understood?" No theatrics, no explosive battle of wills, just a Ventrue dominating a simple, unsuspecting kine.

Deadpan, obviously brainwashed, the man slowly nodded. "Yes Miss. Come this way then, and I'll show you our selection." Not once did he glance Triss's way. Perfect.

Jennifer picked out three suits, each of them 'black tie' or whatever, lavish, practically tuxedos, with enough modern flair that they looked more like really nice lawyer suits. Sexy, the sort of suits Julius wore when he was feeling fancy. Triss frowned at Jen until she noticed, but Jen rolled her eyes, took the suits, handed them to Sándor, and took him to the changing room.

"Why are you doing this?" Sándor asked, eyes solid as he looked at the doting Ventrue.

"Beatrice told me what happened in the dream, about how you saved everyone."

"I didn't save everyone. I saved myself. Everyone else just happened to be there."

Jennifer grinned at the man as she leaned in toward his face. He didn't move. Hell, Jen probably could have kissed him and he wouldn't have moved, or blinked, or showed any expression.

"I don't believe you," she said. The Begotten raised a brow slightly before lowering it again. "And I heard about what happened to your family. Horrible. The least I can do is help you get adjusted to Dolareido." And, without asking, she started undoing his shirt buttons. So damn forward, but Sándor still didn't react.

"It's a city, like any other."

Triss snorted from her corner of the changing room. "Yeah, uh, no it ain't."

"Indeed," Jen said, smile growing wider. "The Prince and Jacob built this city to be a haven for vampires. I don't know how much you learned from Jeremiah, but paranormal beings are quite safe here, usually. The only problems we get are the ones we give each other." She slid him out of the blue shirt, and reached for one of the white ones she'd picked out for him.

"Yeah, Jack gave me the rundown on the way here," he said. A snarkier person would have said 'remember?' since Jen had been beside him the whole time while Jack explained. But Sándor didn't say it. He just stood there, and let the woman cross every personal boundary the man had. Yeesh. Either he just didn't mind, or was too broken to care. Maybe both.

God damn, that body. Yeah, those were muscles, lots of muscles on his slightly pale skin. He wasn't as big and bulky as some other guys, but shirtless, it was more obvious that half the reason for his leaner shape was he didn't have any fat on his body. Like, shredded, good lord. The fuck did this dude do in his human life to warrant a body like that? Or was it an effect from his Horror?

Heh, look at her, objectifying him based on his looks. Maybe Jen was right, and she was healing, sexually speaking.

Of course, Jen took his stoic attitude as a challenge. She started undoing his belt, while Sándor put on the white shirt.

"Jen, for the love of god, ease up."

"I'm just helping him undress. Calm down."

Triss wanted to say something, like 'good fucking god he just avenged his dead wife and son, leave him alone' but it'd have sounded dumb as fuck, especially coming from her. Besides, Sándor was an adult, and older than either of them. Dude must have had the balls to tell a pretty girl to back off if he wanted to.

He didn't say a thing, though he made sure to keep his eyes on Jen as she did her thing while he buttoned up his new shirt. "I'm not used to being... doted on."

"Well, get used to it," Jen said. "I did nothing last night but babysit a couple hunters, who'd surrendered already. You saved my girl's life breaking that ritual, and many of our friends' lives. I feel indebted, and a bit guilty for not participating." Nodding, she handed the man the black—charcoal, Jen had insisted—pants, and stepped back, watching.

"Be careful using words like doted," Triss said. "You're going to be famous after the ball, and I can guarantee a lot of girls, and a few guys, are going to want to fuck you. Hell, if you want to, just ask someone and they'll lend you their ghoul, or enthrall a few kine for the night for you."

Of all the reactions she expected from the man, she didn't expect him to look at her with the most quiet, smidgen of a frown ever.

"No thanks." He finished with the pants, and reached for the jacket as Jen handed it to him.

"No?" the Ventrue said.

"No."

Jen persisted. "Not interested in sex?"

Triss almost jumped in. Yeah, Jen was crossing some lines. The man had had a wife and a son. The chances of him not being interested in sex were pretty small. Combined with the subtle odor of masculinity Triss could smell with her vampire nose, she doubted he had any biological issue, especially considering Begotten could heal from quite a bit. Maybe not as much as Uratha or Kindred, but far as she knew, their human bodies did heal better than kine.

Sándor's gaze hardened, but only for a moment. Triss recognized that face. She'd seen it in the mirror. Something had triggered a memory in the man, but he let it go, realizing it wasn't fair to hold onto it.

"I am. But not with strangers."

The Ventrue laughed, came up behind Sándor, and turned him to face the mirror. With roaming hands, she adjusted his suit for him, tugging on his shoulders and reaching around to help slide his shirt into the pants. He let her, face emotionless and looking into the mirror. The fact he was being so standoff-ish to Jen, instead of straight up telling her to back off, was probably triggering every instinct Jen had to try and break him. Poor guy, playing hard to get and not realizing it.



“Shoulders are a bit tight,” she said, “and you can’t trust a tailor to fix that, in my experience. Let’s find a size larger, and we’ll trim down on the waist. And the sleeves, of course.” Nodding, she grinned at Triss over her shoulder, before leaving to find the suit jacket in a larger size.

“Your friend is... indecent,” Sándor said, voice a touch quieter.

Triss snorted on a laugh, and shrugged. “She is, but she’s great. Her heart’s in the right place.”

“Is it?”

“You don’t think so?”

“I... no, that’s not what I meant. I’m just... not used to someone being so familiar with me.”

Triss nodded, walked over to the man, and stood beside him to look at them both in the mirror. “She’s the only reason I’m not in a cave somewhere, crying over Julias.”

“I see.”

“Plus, you said it’s been four years since your life was fucked? That’s a long time. Jen’s probably thinking you’re ready to move on, and get you some pussy. Because, well, Jen thinks that’s how you heal any man’s wounds. Good pussy.”

The word pussy earned the smallest twitch of one of his eyebrows, and she snorted on a laugh again. Ok, yeah, he was a perfect straight man, and it was just too damn fun to try and crack his shell. She owed Jen an apology.

“I don’t think I’ll be comfortable in this city,” he said. “I... I lived in a smaller city, miles from here, when Jeremiah came. A normal city.”

“You’re safer here. And your human half needs a place to go to eventually, right?”

“Yes.”

Shrugging, she sat down in one of the fancy chairs, because everything had to be extravagant in the overpriced store, and she gestured to the man in the mirror. “Stick around for a while, at least a few weeks. The vamps will take care of you, as thanks for what you did. Kick back, relax... grieve, you know?” Four years of being brainwashed probably meant he’d never had a proper opportunity to do that. “And, once you have, move on. It’s been four years. Have a little of Dolareido’s primary export.”

She knew she was really talking to herself, not him. Jen, you crafty slut.

His expression softened just a bit, and he looked at her through the mirror as well. “Which is?”

“Carnal indulgence.”

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~~Eric~~

“Man, looks like so much shit happened while we were getting shut down by Flow. Can’t believe we missed it.”

Eric raised a brow as he blinked at the woman. The two of them were in his apartment again, and Kat slept in the living room while they were in his bedroom. She was lying down on her stomach on his bed, and she had her laptop open and in front of him. It was clear she was working some slick software, typing in messages to various people, and speaking in code words Eric didn’t know. Well, that made sense. A secret organization of high tech vamps probably did all the crazy shit he’d seen in spy movies.

“Um, yeah. Think you can focus on—”

“Eric, I’m a little busy. Just keep doing what you’re doing. I’ll be with you in a minute, or ten.”

He frowned down at the naked woman underneath him, and gave her ass a rather harsh slap. The huge, firm mounds jiggled hypnotically, but she didn’t flinch or react otherwise. She laughed, grinned at him from over her shoulder, and got back to typing.

Rolling his eyes, he eased his hips back, sliding his shaft out of her several inches, before he slowly sank himself balls deep into her ass once again. She had several pillows under her hips, putting her ass up in the air for him, and she’d insisted he fuck her while she did some work. And, well, he was horny. Can’t blame a guy for fucking his girlfriend when she shakes her booty at him, right?

Somehow, despite the wholly unsexy situation, and despite having immediately jumped into anal sex with absolutely zero foreplay, he could feel some subtle wetness forming along the lips of her sex, as he ground himself into her ass until his hanging testicles nudged them. And that was strangely hot. She wasn’t paying him any mind, and was looking through what looked like financial reports from Xnomina, and updates from other Kindred about secret things. Despite that, with each gentle thrust of his length into her well-lubed butt, he could feel her body responding. A wet spot was growing on the pillow underneath her slit, where her pelvis rested.

She had her legs almost completely together, and his were outside them, weight on his knees, so she was lying, and he was basically sitting on his knees and her thighs. A very casual, leisurely way to

fuck. It was especially nice for him, cause with her ass in the air from the pillows, and him sitting around her legs, he barely had to do anything. With his hands on her hips, all it took was a little thrust, and he was treated to the most amazing sight in the world: a fit woman's large ass wrapping his length, jiggling with the soft impact, and pressing toward her back as he pushed his pelvis forward. Hell, several times he simply buried himself inside her, and ground into her, just to watch her ass and how its mounds pushed toward her lower back.

He sank his fingers into the meat of her ass, and massaged, working the muscles in with his thumbs, and earning a small groan from Jessy. Bingo. She squeezed her ass together, and he shivered as the ring of muscle around the base of his length gripped tight, before she released her grip on him.

"Jeeze, these reports are so dull. Jack and friends got to have all the fun. Everyone else in the city was quiet, except for a scuffle between Joe and Hella. Fucking Gangrels."

Eric laughed. This woman, good god. "You're a Gangrel."

"No shit! And I make my boss's life hell all the time. Now my Gangrel subordinates are making my life hell."

"She's your subordinate?"

"Eh, not exactly. I'm a Right Hand, so I have access to all the data the rest of the Invictus puts out. When someone does something super dumb, I might have to clean up the mess. So, subordinate, no, but I'll break her god damn skull if she stirs up more trouble with Joe."

He leaned down over her, and set a kiss on the back of her neck. Instant shivers. "We were causing trouble with Joe not long ago." More than trouble. Eric had transformed, Caleb had transformed, and the two of them had practically destroyed a building, until her sire interfered.

She swatted at him, wearing a comedic and exaggerated frown before she looked back to her laptop. "They started it, that time."

"But not this time?"

"No. Hella wanted some revenge, apparently."

"I see." Right, revenge. He was tempted to bring up Julias, about how Jack had killed Angela and had gotten his revenge, and see how Jessy reacted to it. Then again, maybe it was time he start putting his boyfriend knowledge to use, and see if he could read her.

What did Jessy do when she was feeling sad? The sadder she felt, the more outgoing she was, the harder she tried to be sexual, to be social, to distract herself. The last thing Jessy liked doing was

thinking about things, and when Julias died, she'd tried extra hard to get Eric to come to the club with her, dance with her, and after the initial shock, fuck her. She was smarter than she let on, wiser, but she hated contemplating things. If she was contemplating, she probably had some unconscious tick telling her she was wasting her energy, when she could be having fun.

Now, she'd literally just lain on his bed naked, and told him to fuck her, cause she was busy and had to take care of some work stuff. Of course he'd suggested they have sex later, but she told him that, after getting shutdown by Flowing Sanctuary, the least she could do to make it up to him was let him fuck her ass while she did some work. She'd even said don't worry about making her orgasm, cause she had to get her work done asap. Well, he'd make sure to surprise her.

So, boyfriend detective work completed, he came to a conclusion: she was happier. Not completely happy, and probably still grieving, but happier than she'd been, after learning that Jack had gotten revenge and killed Julias's killer. And that made him happy. God, that was a nice feeling, just feeling better because she was feeling better. It'd been forever since he felt that way.

"So there's a party, in a few days I think. A ball. You weren't at the last one, right? Should be a lot of fun. Wanna be my date?"

"A ball?"

"Mhmm. Shit load of vamps will be there, probably a bunch of the werewolves, and maybe even some of the monsters. I doubt Athalia will be there, but Fiona probably will be." She grinned over her shoulder at him again, and bounced her ass up and down for him a few times. The way it rippled was beyond hypnotizing. "Remember her? God damn, she was hot. Huge tits that shook like jelly."

"She has a boyfriend." Though, Jessy was right, Fiona had been terribly attractive, in that cute and curvy sorta way. Twice he'd almost had sex with her, and he was glad he didn't. Too young, emotionally speaking.

"Yeah, I know. She got her hands on Emo Boy." Laughing, she shrugged and got back to work. "Though Damien is pretty hot, I admit. That half buzzed head look, long black hair on the other side? Plus, I've seen him changing gear at the HQ, and he's built like a fucking ninja. Skinnier than you, but damn, those abs."

Eric rolled his eyes, and looked down at his own body. His muscles had grown a little since his awakening, and his body fat percentage had dropped a little as well, turning his abs into a rather chiseled washboard. No wonder everyone in Avery's pack were so fit. They were all on natural steroids, and now he was too. He'd always been a fairly lean fighter, but he'd gone up a weight class in the past

year, despite having apparently lost a few pounds of fat. All muscle. He kinda liked it, and he could tell Jessy liked it as well; considering the size of her ghouls, it made sense.

“So it’s a ball for paranormals?” A quiet groan escaped him, and he stopped his gentle thrusting as he felt the first tingles of a rising orgasm. Warmth grew between his legs underneath his testicles, and he breathed deep to calm his body. Eventually, the heat settled, and his glans no longer sent tingling sparks down his length. A couple moments after that, he was able to start thrusting again, nice and slow, each to the base so he could see the glorious sight of her ass pushing toward her lower back each time.

“Dude, just cum. You’re a fucking werewolf, you can go like twice more.”

“Doesn’t mean I don’t want to make each one last.”

Chuckling, she tapped on her keys a few times, and used the track pad to bring up a picture of a building. “The Black Hall. The Prince’s favorite building for hosting balls. No one outside can see inside, so it’s a great place for Kindred to really indulge in what we do, you know? Last time, there must have been a hundred thralls or ghouls, probably more, being shared around. And at least half of them were naked and thoroughly drained by the end of the party. Drained in both ways, you know?” She sighed happily, and pushed her ass back into him as she recalled a memory. “So many tits out, and pussies being licked and fingered. So many kine dicks getting stroked and sucked. Orgasm makes the blood taste a little different, you know.”

Wow. That definitely painted an image. “Really?”

“Yeap. Most of the young vamps aren’t comfortable enough yet, but the ones with a couple decades under their belt were all over it. No Kindred actually did any fucking, but some of the girls had their tits out, to give the guy kine plenty of encouragement when they started stroking them off, or sucking them off. And while that was happening, Kindred took turns Kissing them, slowly draining them. Same for the girl kine. Never seen girls cum as hard as some of those ghouls, when they got surrounded by Kindred, usually dudes, and were fingered, choked, and Kissed.” Jessy started pushing her ass back into him harder, some small moans of her own slipping into her words as she recounted the tale. “God, I love this city.”

“Clearly.” He laughed, but it faded quick as he started to thrust faster, and tightened his grip on her hips as he did. Each thrust was enough to have her ass shaking back and forth, a wave that met his rhythm with each lap. She squeezed on him in spurts as well, tight ring of muscle locking firm along his length as he worked himself in and out of her.

When his cum started to flood her insides, Jessy grinned at him again, rolled her eyes, and got back to work. “Finally.”

“Hey,” he managed to say, “I’m... just...” His words faded as he continued work his hips in motion, using the strength of his arms to make sure she didn’t go anywhere, as he sank each thrust balls deep into her. He could feel his own cum coating his length inside her ass along with all the lubricant, and he shivered as each stroke sent powerful waves of bliss down his length, and into his core and testicles. And, of course, he could not take his eyes off the sight of her ass as he filled her.

“K, you keep going. I gotta finish a quick report here.” And back to typing.

Luna bless Uratha longevity, he supposed. He could keep going. Paranormals may have had hard lives, but they were utterly spoiled for sex.

He started fucking her again, nice and slow, and he smiled as he noticed the wet spot where her mons sat on the pillows had grown quite a bit. What a sneak, pretending to be more into her work than she was. Or, maybe she really was focused on her work, and just knew how to do that while aroused anyway. Probably the latter, now that he thought about it. Well, he wasn’t in any rush. The night was young, and he was perfectly content to keep fucking her while she finished up her work. He’d make sure she was satisfied after she was done, but until then, back to slow, deep thrusts.

Ten minutes later, she flicked her hand toward her laptop screen. “Oh my fucking god. Terra Den is going full hostile takeover on Xnomina. Fucking assholes. I’m going to have to pay them a visit.”

“I could come, if you need back up. I still have bone to pick with them.”

“Heh, I guess you do.” That sparked her interest, and she looked over her shoulder at him, contemplating. “Yeah, actually, I think I will bring you. Jack or Damien will probably come, too. It’ll be a proper conversation for the Right Hands. And—oh, speaking of, I need to call Natasha, and I see she’s online. You mind?”

“Now?”

“Sure. I mean come on, we’ve both seen her naked, getting DP’d by her boyfriends. I seriously doubt it’ll be a problem if she hears my cheeks clapping a bit.”

He laughed again. God damn it, she was too funny, and utterly spoiling the mood. “Fine.” In the past, he’d have been concerned something like that would destroy his erection; awkwardness had a habit of doing that to any man. But since the wolf spirit took up residence in his guts, it was the last thing he was worried about. The creature inside constantly begged for an outlet for his energy, his

hungers and needs, and Jessy was content to take advantage, or in this case, placate. And, with all the things that'd happened to him since he'd met Jessy, phone call sex probably wouldn't affect him at all.

Nodding, she set the laptop out a little further from her, maybe two feet from her head on the sheets, and dialed Natasha on some app he didn't recognize. Probably something specific to the Invictus or Xnomina.

When Natasha's picture came up on the screen, and then started moving, Eric quickly realized it wasn't a phone call, it was a video call.

"Hey Jessy, I-oh my g-g-god! Eric, I... um..." Natasha threw her hands up to her eyes, covering them and most of her face with both palms. "Jessy, you d-d-dumbass!"

"Hey Tash. Wanted to ask about the ball. I assume you know more than me, what with it being your boss's party." Laughing, Jessy shook her head, and looked back at Eric so she could grin at him before looking back at her friend. "Oh come on, lower your hands. We've both seen that video you sent, and you know it. I think we're past the shy phase, right?"

Frowning, Natasha shook her head, refusing to lower her hands; except one, and just enough so Tash could get a peek. Eric squinted at the corner picture, which showed the video feed that Natasha could see. Yeap, there was Eric, and Jessy. Most of the picture was Jessy, weight on her elbows, breasts hanging underneath her, but the laptop was angled and off to the side just enough so Tash could see the way Jessy's back was arched down toward the bed, with her ass up in the air propped up by pillows. Eric, with his knees out and around Jessy's body, was on full display in the background of the video, though the actual penetration was hidden by Jessy's ass.

"That was a video! This is... I-live."

"Don't worry about it. Seriously, about the ball. Got any details for me? It's pretty sudden. A few days isn't exactly a long time to plan."

Sighing, Natasha spread the fingers of one hand enough so a single eye peeked out. "Um. Uh... Antoinette says she d-doesn't expect there to be as much... you know, kine b-being molested, this time. Maybe some? Jack's m-mom is going to be there, and—"

"Oh come on, really? That's the opposite of what she should do! The hunters are dead, and we should celebrate! Balls to the walls celebration. And Samantha's a Daeva. She's been to Bloodlust before, and I can just tell she's itching to fuck someone."

"N-No no no. Jessy, not every D-Daeva is like that."

“Bullshit.” Shrugging, Jessy slid the laptop further to the side, and then more toward her profile. Now, while Jessy was still the main focus of the video, her large breasts were hidden by her left arm, where her elbows were propping up her chest and shoulders. It wasn’t her breasts Jessy wanted her friend to see, it was the arching body of the athletic woman, and how Eric’s thrusts were making her ass jiggle back and forth.

If he’d told her to turn it off, Jessy would have turned it off. She may have shocked him by making it a video call without telling him, but she wasn’t so mean that she’d keep making him do something he didn’t want to do. He really liked that about her, the fun balance she had, being aggressive with her ideas and her wants, but also leaving room for him to say no. Natasha would certainly understand if he did.

The only thing stopping him from closing the laptop was, he was kinda enjoying this. It was obvious Natasha wanted to watch, and was trying to not. Both hands were still on her face, but both had also spread her fingers enough that she was watching anyway. Damn it, Jessy had corrupted the both of them.

“Daeva,” Jessy continued, “are hornier than anyone, all the time.”

Her friend shook her head. “That’s, um... racism?”

“Ha, it’s not racism. Daeva — at least the ones in Dolareido — obsess over sex, and you know it. Samantha will give into the Prince’s ‘sex for everyone, anywhere, anytime’ philosophy sooner or later. I mean come on, look at who her sire is.”

With an exaggerated and obviously not truly serious groan of annoyance, Natasha lowered her hands and glared at Jessy. “She’s d-depressed! Bad things have happened, Jessy. And now, thanks to J-Jack, maybe she can start to... heal...” Her eyes ran down Jessy’s body, and landed on Eric’s.

Eric moved his left arm off Jessy’s hip, and set it on his own hip. It let the tiny vampire see his body. He didn’t even think to do it, he just did it, showing off for the crowd a bit like he did back in the old days when he was a fighter. The last thing he expected to do tonight was put on a porn show for someone, but considering how much he’d seen of Natasha, and how close Jessy and Natasha were, he probably should have. And, despite himself, the old thrill came back to him, the joy of having an audience, of having the people in their seats focused on him.

MMA fighting was a spectator sport, after all, and he’d been drawn to it because... because of a lot of reasons, really. He liked being in shape, he liked the skill of fighting, and he liked money. But damn, he’d forgotten how awesome it felt to have people watching you, their attention focused on you,



as you did what you did. Back then, the thing he did was kicking ass. Now, because Jessy was an evil woman content to corrupt everyone around her, it was fucking her ass.

“You know what heals? Sex! Sex heals. Sex, with the Kiss, is a concoction that will soothe her soul.” Jessy turned her torso over, propped her head up on her right fist with elbow to the sheets, and reached out with her left hand to start working her laptop again. Surprising that she didn’t start doing something a lot more blatant, like playing with her breasts and putting on an even lewder show. But, she was serious about having work to do, and she pulled up another app on the screen with her left hand, and scrolled through blocks of information. More stuff about Xnomina. Looked like receipts for purchases of things Eric couldn’t understand, ID codes likes XEMR233 and FRTE421.

“M-Maybe, but—”

“Jesus Christ, have you seen these reports, Tash? Terra Den is royally screwing with us.”

“What? N-No, I haven’t seen them. I’m not an Invictus anymore, remember?”

“Ah, right. Figured you might have been spying on Xnomina’s purchase history or something, you know? Guess you wouldn’t be allowed to tell me if you were.”

“And are you... w-working?”

“Yeah.”

Natasha’s frown returned all the meaner. “You’re having sex, right n-n-now! P-Poor Eric.”

“Poor Eric? Dude’s getting treated to the best ass this side of the planet.” She reached behind her with that left hand, and gave her ass a good slap. It rippled with the impact, a large ripple that faded quickly. Large as Jessy’s ass was, it was mostly muscle, and damn firm.

And of course, Natasha’s eyes went to Jessy’s ass. They stayed there for a while, and Eric could see from the mirror video in the corner of the screen, that the tiny vampire could see a bit of Eric’s cock as he eased out of Jessy, before sinking back into her. It wasn’t long before the vampire was looking at him again, his abs, his ass, and frequently looking back to where he was penetrating his lover. The angle made it obvious which hole he was fucking.

“I... sup-p-ppose,” she said.

Jessy grinned at her friend. “Gonna make a new movie?”

“Movie? Oh, I... I um, d-don’t know.” She squirmed. If she’d been Blushing Life, Eric bet she’d have turned solid red. “The boys enjoyed it.”

“And, from what we saw in the movie, yooooou enjoyed it. How many times you cum making that vid? Five? Six?” With a hearty chuckle, Jessy shook her head, and resumed scrolling through the Terra Den receipts. “And I know you. When something’s got your attention, you analyze and nerd out over it. So, what’s your next movie gonna be like?”

“Um, it... it’s already filmed. I’m editing it.”

“Knew it. Pervert.”

Natasha’s frown kept returning, only to flee in a second. She, like Eric, could just not stay mad at the Gangrel for very long.

“It’s uh... a b-bit of a... you know, um, reluctance fantasy.”

“Oh fuck yeah.” That got Jessy’s attention. She stopped scrolling, and set her hand on the blankets as she smiled at her friend. “Can’t wait to see it.”

“Well now you w-won’t! Surprising me like this, and Eric. I assume Eric d-d-didn’t even know you were calling me.”

“I knew,” Eric said. “Not that it was a video call, though.”

“See! Horrible.”

The Gangrel laughed again, a hearty laugh Eric hadn’t heard her do often since Julias died. Maybe that’s why he was willing to do this? Much as he felt the old thrill stirring of being the center of attention for an audience, it was nothing compared to the sound of Jessy laughing.

He eased his cock out of her, and laid it upon the crack of her ass. It was hard, long, thick, and as he slid it back and forth along his girlfriend’s butt, spreading some of his earlier cum, he watched Natasha through the corner of his eye. She was staring hard now, with zero effort to hide it, eyes locked on his body, his muscles, and his wet shaft easing back and forth along her friend’s firm ass. Much as it was obvious Natasha thought Jessy was attractive, it didn’t take much to see that Natasha was more into men than women. Jessy had to have known that, too. She was showing him off for her friend.

“Seriously though, the ball. What’re you wearing? I won’t be touching any kine, since Eric’s my date, but that doesn’t mean I won’t put some goods on display. Gotta show those Carthian fucks that I’m hotter than them.”

Natasha stared at her friend for a moment, before she erupted into laughter. “You w-want everyone to think you’re hotter than them.”

“Damn straight.”

“How ab-bout... the black dress, the one you wore to Bloodlust a few w-weeks ago?”

“Yeah, maybe.”

As the two ladies started talking dresses, Natasha half caught between trying to watch him, and trying to bounce ideas with her friend, Eric eased his knees back a bit, set his left hand on Jessy’s thigh for support, and sank two of his right hand’s fingers into Jessy’s pussy.

The Gangrel groaned immediately, but he knew what would happen. It was part of the game. He got to do what he wanted to her, and she had to try and ignore him and keep talking with Natasha. So after a quick glance from Jessy, a tiniest hint of worry in her eyes, she refocused and looked back to Tash.

“How about you, Tash? Hoping you’ll wear something really revealing.” Her voice wavered a little. “You can do the fashion runway model thing, you know? You got the frame for it. Lots of dresses go better for a girl with your proportions, like, scarf tops that dangle over your tits.”

“Um, maybe? I d-don’t know. I mean, I suppose... b-but, if I bend over, then everyone could see.”

“Ha, so? L—nnng!” Jessy moaned, loudly, as Eric started to finger her g-spot, hard and fast. With a rigid hand, he drove his index and middle finger straight down into her g-spot like a jackhammer, until her whole body was shaking.

The sounds of her pleasure filled the room, and the bed trembled, as the Gangrel quickly came to orgasm. She’d be on edge for forever now, he figured, since he’d been fucking her ass for so long. But the angle, the pace, none of it had been good for getting her off. If he’d lain on top of her, and started thrusting down a lot harder, then maybe. Or if he’d transformed, and relied on the sheer size of his girth, that’d have pushed her over the edge as well. But, much as she enjoyed anal sex, he knew she came easier this way.

As her insides clamped down in a desperate attempt to stop him, he kept fingering her. Tiny splashes of her juices landed on the pillow and her thighs, and he kept fingering her. She clenched like a vise, and the liquids grew until they were more than splashing, they were soaking. He kept fingering her, a consistent, fast rhythm that drove her g-spot down toward the pillows underneath her, and forced another tiny squirt from her, and another, and another, little things that went no more than an inch before soaking the pillow.

Jessy had given up keeping her torso twisted to face Natasha. She went onto both elbows again, and her head dangled between her shoulders, groans escaping her that soon turned into weak pants as

she struggled to get more air; she didn't need the air, but damn she liked to make noise. Her legs were quivering, and a quick peek behind him showed her toes were curled hard.

After he was satisfied, having earned a dozen small squirts from her over maybe thirty seconds, he eased up, and pulled his fingers out of her soaking hot depths.

"M... M... Maybe s-s-s-something like.... Jennifer wore at the last ball," Tash said, her eyes wide and locked onto Jessy. "That top, um, d-dangled." Poor girl was doing her best to keep playing the game she'd noticed the two of them were playing, but Eric had already won. Everything from here on out was a victory lap.

After a few groans, Jessy lifted her head, and turned to the laptop. "Y-Yeah, something like that. I was thinking, less inner boob, and more underboob. Something that—" A moan cut her short, as Eric got comfortable back where he'd been before, set his cock against her drenched, trembling slit, and sank himself balls deep into her pussy in one, hard thrust. "Fuck!" She took a second to recover. "Uh, maybe something that... really... lets people see how tiny your waist is, and how flat your stomach is, you know?"

"I b-bet I can ask Antoinette, and she'll—" This time it was Natasha who went quiet, as Eric reached out, took each of Jessy's hands in his, and pinned them to the small of her back. She fell onto her chest, head turned to face the laptop, and Eric couldn't help smile as he saw the wicked grin on his girlfriend's face. Jessy was looking at Natasha, still trying to play the game, as if Eric wasn't affecting her, but the spasms of her insides around his cock told a different story. She was just coming down from her orgasm, and it wouldn't take much to make her cum again.

The sight of pinning Jessy's hands to her back stirred something in Natasha, as well. Her eyes locked onto him, his arms, his side, where his pelvis was snug to Jessy's ass, and most often, where his hands were wrapped tight around Jessy's wrists. What did she say, that the second movie she made was a reluctance fantasy? Getting pinned like this was probably a big kink for Natasha then.

Eric didn't want to make her feel too uncomfortable though, so he never looked at Natasha, not directly, only through the corner of his eye. Most of the time, he made sure to keep his eyes on Jessy; not like that was hard. And as he started to thrust into her, going slow for now, he watched her expression with joy as her eyes rolled up in pleasure. Every inch was met with a hard clench of her soaked insides, and he shivered as her boiling depths sent pleasure sparks down his length.

"Antoinette, right," Jessy said, voice barely more than a whisper. "I bet she'll have lots of options for you. She'll—nng... she'll have better ideas than me, but I still think you should wear a top that—nng! ... that really shows off your waist, with a bit of boob."

“I’ll... m-make sure to t-tell her that, and ask, um, what she thinks.” Natasha fell silent, and stared, eyes fixated on Eric and growing wider and wider by the second. He was getting faster, and now each thrust was enough to make the bed shake; must have looked like an earthquake to Tash, considering the laptop was on the bed. Each thrust also caused the fit woman’s thighs and ass to ripple, in that special way that demanded Eric stare.

The laptop started to drift. Before Jessy could say anything, Eric reached out, and adjusted it, setting it between some blanket folds so it’d stop shifting. He also moved it closer to him, and pointed it directly at where he was penetrating Natasha’s friend. The small, whimpering gasp from Natasha signaled he’d lined up the shot perfectly. The small vampire could now see everything, could see Eric and his body thrusting back and forth at the hip, see his cock plunging into Jessy’s soaked slit, and see Jessy’s ass jiggle with each impact.

Vaguely, he was aware that this was very much outside his comfort zone. He felt mostly comfortable with Natasha’s presence now, and considering she’d sent a sex tape of her to her friend, a friend she knew would show it to him, it was clear that Natasha was willing to let him see her naked. Naked, and with two huge dudes pumping her full of cum, both holes. Compared to that, letting her watch him fuck her friend, a friend that very much loved this sort of stuff, seemed tame. And hell, he’d been used to putting on a show, just not this kind of show.

Damn, Jessy really was corrupting him.

By the time his second orgasm came around, Jessy had already cum twice more, groans blatant. He’d have lasted a lot longer, but she kept wriggling, squirming, trying to fight him but unable, not with pleasure running up and down her body. Each motion meant muscles clenching and milking his length, along with the random spasms her climaxes forced on her insides, and all that gripping and squeezing on his cock built up the heat underneath his testicles quickly.

He slammed his hips forward, and Jessy groaned openly. Her eyes were half open, head still turned to face the laptop, and she had a strange, almost dopey smile on her face as she came again. She was loving this. Tightening his grip on her wrists, he slowly eased out most of his length, and slammed into her again, a drastically slower rhythm, but each thrust was much harder, earning separate and defined moans from the Gangrel, and a gush of cum from him. It was leaking out of her by the third thrust.

He slipped back again, and withdrew his length, all of it, from his girlfriend. A heavy strand of the white fluid connected them, and another small gasp from Natasha announced that she could see it. He

looked at her, again through the corner of his eye, and smiled as he watched the tiny woman stare at his dripping cock.

When he wrapped his hand around his girth, and started to slowly stroke it, working his and Jessie's cum back and forth along his veined skin, Natasha sat up straight with a jolt. Her eyes lit up with fire.

"I... I... g-g-g-gotta go!" And with a small, panicked motion of her arm, the call ended.

"You... scared her off. Heh, probably running to... find her boy toys and... fuck them silly." With a heavy groan, Jessie tried to push herself back up onto her elbows. "Dude, I... didn't think you'd get so into it. I mean, I've been offering threesomes and foursomes on a plate, and you kept shooting them down. I figured—" Her voice cut short as he set the head of his cock back onto her asshole, and he again sank into her. "Again? Oh... fff... uuuuck."

This time, he lay atop her, and used his greater weight to gently pin her underneath him as he began to fuck her ass again. Like this, with his cock driving toward her abs, and her body hypersensitive, he knew she'd be cumming in no time.

"Didn't think I would," he said, and he thrust, hard. She didn't just groan, she squeaked. "I used to like being in the limelight, you know? I never admitted it to myself, but I guess I did. Kinda reminded me of that." His hands found hers again, and he pinned them into the blankets, a foot over and past her head. "But, honestly, it was just seeing how much you enjoyed it, that really got me into it."

"Of course," she whispered between pants. "I'm... awesome."

"Uh huh." He slammed down into her, hard enough to make her ass jiggle despite his pelvis being pressed firm against it. It drove his glans deep into her, stretching her, and down against her pussy through the walls of her insides. Instant groans from the exhausted vampire.

"She... was really into watching... you fuck me. She likes guys."

"You don't like guys?"

"Heh, I do, but—nnng!" She turned her head to bury her face in the blankets for a second, before turning it to the side again so she could look up at him. "I'm like, sixty percent down for fucking guys, forty for fucking girls. She's more like an eighty twenty mix."

"Bisexuality on a spectrum?"

“Exactly.” Nodding, she sucked in a breath as he withdrew his length, and let out another moan as he slammed down into her. He didn’t thrust as hard as he would if penetrating her pussy, but she was thoroughly lubricated with lube and cum. He was in the clear to get rough.

“I did kinda like it though,” he said, and he set his lips to Jessy’s ear for a kiss. “Wouldn’t mind doing it again, especially since we know she’s making another movie. Wouldn’t mind watching it with you, either.”

“Awesome.” Nodding, Jessy melted into the blankets, and stopped squirming or wriggling. Instead, she went limp, tiny shivers working up and down her spine, as he continued to fuck her ass with a heavy rhythm. “Think... you could transform, and let her watch... that?”

“I think transforming would fuck up any cameras watching.”

“Damn.”

He rolled his eyes, chuckled, and kissed her neck between thrusts. “I’d never agree to swinging. I’m way to into you for that. But, if Tash ever caught us having sex and I was transformed, I seriously doubt I’d stop fucking you. Especially when transformed.”

Jessy managed her own chuckle, but a moan ripped it away. “I’ll make sure to... to plant the idea in her head.” Her body started to tremble again, mostly in her legs, and he made his own groan as he felt her ass clench hungrily, as her legs kicked at the bed a couple times, weak little kicks made only below the knee. “You’re... into me?”

Oh good god. He chuckled again, and did not let up his pace, even as she came. The feel of her rings of muscle trying to stop his cock from sinking into her deep enough until he felt her stretching to fit him, but too wet to provide any resistance other than a milking massage, was heaven.

“Very into you.”

She moaned, and unless his ears were lying to him, it almost sounded like a swoon. “Girl could... get used to... talk like that.”

“Get used to it.” He started to thrust a little faster, instinct demanding he satisfy the building pleasure running up and down his length. Each thrust made his glans more sensitive, more swollen, until each sent a shock of pleasure down his length, into his testicles, and into his body. Muscles clenched within, and then released, allowing the first wave of warm cum to flood up his cock, before the muscle clenched again, causing it to squirt into his lover.

“I... I think I will.”

He smiled down at her trembling body as his rhythm slowed but his thrusts grew harder, the almost desperate sensation of needing to milk every wave of his cum a natural instinct taking hold of him. He sank himself into her again and again, until Jessy managed to get some breaths, and matched each thrust with a grunt and moan. And, the occasional, girlish mewl.

When he was done, he rolled over, lay next to her, and before he could say anything, she inched over to him to put the top half of her on top of him, breasts to his chest, and didn't move. Cuddle time, evidently. She'd liked what he said.

He'd liked saying it.