

## CHAPTER IX

### *“untouchable”*

Cianna landed at the now familiar Boeing Field at 5:09 AM, four minutes after its scheduled arrival. She’d slept most of the flight, and was now awake and waiting for her contact to meet her. That contact was a bookish looking man with close cut tightly curling brown hair and about two days worth stubble.

“Ms. Di’Trieste, welcome to Seattle,” he said approaching the smaller woman.

“Marcus,” she acknowledged. “Coffee first, then work.”

The two of them made light conversation as they collected her baggage. Finally upon embarking in Marcus’ 2009 Scion TC with her luggage safely aboard, coffee in hand, and in route to her hotel, she allowed him to start briefing her.

“So what happened?”

“It was definitely a sanctioned move, a very big one. Probably multiple entities,” he announced, taking the on-ramp onto the freeway from the airport.

“Do we have any theories as to why they would be here?”

“There is a good deal of new age and occult activity in the area. We are monitoring several first tier demons in the area, plus of course our favorite succubus.”

“Yes, I think we may want to get in touch with Natalie.”

“Oh? I’ve not made contact with her yet. She called me asking for your number a few days ago actually. She said it was important, I’m sorry if that was inappropriate.”

“No, it was good that you did.” She reassured him.

“May I ask what that was about? The demon was rather insistent.”

“She fought off a demonic hybrid and managed to successfully remove its heart intact, but she didn’t know what to do with it afterward.”

“Wait, she fought off a fellow demon on Earth? Why would she do that?”

“You will have to meet her. But let me just tell you this, she is unique, and she saved my life, so I’m willing to give her much more leeway than I would any other demon.”

“Should we go see her now? I understand from your notes that she mainstreams as an office manager.”

“What have you been doing over the last week?” Cianna asked, now with a little bit of disappointment seeping into her voice.

“I’ve been moving in,” he replied defensively.

“Yes, we’d better go visit her now.” she replied casting an annoyed look at him from the corner of her eye.

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The phone ringing brought Natalie from her “sleep” with merely the snapping open of her eyes. The pleasant feeling of Matt still inside her amplified her annoyance at the early morning ring-tone. She reached over to the cell phone and hit the answer button.

“Hello?” her irritation dripped through the receiver.

“Natalie, this is Marcus Lilley. Buzz me in.”

“Now? Have you any idea what time it is?” she growled.

“Don't raise your voice at me de—”

“If you think this is a good way to introduce yourself to me, you are grossly mistaken,” she hissed, cutting him off with menace.

“What? You work *for us!*” he shouted, his own anger rising now at her reluctance to acquiesce to his demand.

“FUCK! OFF!” She said hanging up.

Marcus looked disbelievingly at the receiver.

“Nicely done. How did you ever get assigned this position?” Cianna glared at him.

“Why didn't she let us in?” he asked rhetorically, ignoring her.

“Probably because you came across as a first rate ass-hat.”

“But she has to let us in...”

“I am going to be recommending your removal from work as a handler.” Cianna said. “Clearly there was some padding of your résumé to grant this position to one with your lack of... finesse. Or social skills for that matter.”

“She has to let us in!” he yelled. Suddenly a feeling of dread came upon him.

Standing on the other side of the glass front door was the most curvaceous and beautiful woman he'd ever beheld, even though her countenance bore nothing but disdain for him when her eyes moved over him. She was “dressed” in a silk baby doll that might have ended an inch below her crotch, and was clearly not up to the task of providing any kind of concealment for the painfully obvious erect nipples that made sizable dents in the fine fabric.

The door flew open and Natalie's hand was at his throat instantly, lifting Marcus off his feet and holding him over a foot clear of the floor.

“If Cianna weren't here with you right now, I would probably do something I'd regret. Consider our relationship permanently strained,” she said before tossing him to the sidewalk a good three yards from where she'd snatched him off his feet.

For her part, the demon hunter did nothing to stop the succubus.

“We are here for important reasons, may we come in?” Cianna asked from her position standing just off to the side of where Marcus had been.

"Does he have to come as well?" Natalie gestured towards Marcus as he pulled himself slowly to his feet.

"Yes, he does, unfortunately."

Natalie held the door for them, even as she stared daggers at the small and now humbled looking man.

They were in her apartment just over a minute later. Matt was up and making coffee in the kitchen as Natalie saw the two visitors to seats around the dining room table.

"Would you like coffee?" Natalie asked Cianna while making it obvious that the offer wasn't extended to Marcus.

"I'll take a cup. Thanks," Cianna replied. Marcus looked more and more unhappy.

Matt sat down across from Marcus and gave the smaller younger man a quick evaluation before extending his hand.

"I'm Matt,"

"Marcus Lilley. Why are you here?" he asked accusingly.

"Um, because Natalie is my girlfriend?" he announced with a questioning tone, even as his expression changed to one of distrust toward the small man. For his part, Marcus was visibly disgusted with Matt's statement.

Natalie returned from the kitchen with a pair of coffee mugs putting one in front of each visitor and then sat at the head of the table. Looking squarely at Cianna she asked, "Okay, what brings you back to my house?"

Marcus scoffed at the mention of home ownership, and received an icy glare from Cianna.

"We have reason to believe that there's been a sanctioned move from Hell to Earth by at least one, and probably several very powerful entities," she announced.

"I felt the arrival." Natalie concurred.

"Which is why we are here. Do you have any reason to believe they might have come here for someone other than you?"

Natalie pondered this question for a few seconds before responding. "No, not really."

"You don't seem to be doing a whole lot of preparation to defend yourself," Marcus declared accusingly.

"Cianna, shut him up before I do, permanently," Natalie retorted immediately with unveiled malice.

"Marcus, I would be a bit more tactful in her house, we are guests here," Cianna warned her compatriot.

For his part, Marcus couldn't believe what he had just been told. He stood indignantly, rage burning in his eyes and a scowl on his face. "Have you lost your damn mind?! Your immortality has corrupted you to the point that you can't see the

enemy right in front of your face! I will not take part in this charade any longer. You can burn in hell with the Hell Spawn!" In a blink, he had a pistol pulled from an unseen holster in his pants leveled at Cianna's face.

"Think very carefully about what you are doing right now Marcus," Cianna warned calmly. "You won't make it out of this apartment building if you do what you are considering."

The look in his eye told her that he'd made up his mind though. His finger was already pulling the slack out of the trigger. She could see it pause as the tension on the sear block mounted, pressure behind his finger building.

Matt sprang into action, flipping his three fourths full coffee cup at Marcus. The scalding liquid missed him completely, but he flinched as the trigger broke, sending the errant round just wide of Cianna, and Natalie was upon him before he could reset his aim.

The speed and force she landed on him flattened him to the floor. Her eyes glowed purple around their green irises and her hair crackled with wild energy. The electrical discharge snapped his hands open, forcing the gun from them. The look of malevolence upon the being that had him pinned to the floor was as terrifying as her body was enticing. "You want to see Celestial power Marcus? You want to see the power of the divine?"

"Natalie...?" Cianna asked questioningly.

"Know what you accuse us of, peer into the blackness of Hell," Natalie continued.

"Nathalia... don't," Cianna pleaded.

"Know that when you have gazed upon the face of evil, it has gazed upon your face as well, it never lets go and it never forgets." She hissed as her hands covered his eyes and felt him descend into madness."

Natalie spun as a hand landed upon her shoulder. Wild green eyes oil slicked with purple stared at Matthew for the briefest moment before her familiar look returned.

"Natalie, sweetie, it's okay," he announced when he once again recognized the woman in front of him.

"No, no it isn't. The power she just used no doubt told whoever it is that is hunting her exactly where she is." Cianna announced looking down at Marcus. "By the way, he *was* your new handler."

\* \* \*

Several miles away, the queens did indeed felt the spike of power radiating from Natalie's apartment, and while they now had the direction to travel, they were together on another task, in a rancid smelling alley in china town.

"Here it is," Eisheth announced at the boarded up doorway. A quick shove from her brawny arms forced the door open to reveal the unworldly darkness inside, along with the reek of many days old cum still slowly drying on the floor.

"Malleus, lover, your queen demands your allegiance." She called musically.

"SUCCUBUS! BE GONE!" came a booming growl.

Lillith strode into the darkness ahead of Eisheth. "I've no time for games, warrior. Show yourself!" she bellowed

In a flash the warrior shot out of the darkness, a glowing hot scimitar raised overhead in a flying attack.

Just as quickly Lillith side stepped the reckless assault and with an inhumanly fast and strong blow changed his course mid-flight to face plant into the stone floor.

"Is that any way to greet the queens of Hell, chosen envoys of Satan?" Naamah asked, saccharine sweet while stepping up to him as he lay forcibly prostrate on the floor.

"He reeks of Nathalia." Agrat Bat Mahlat said flatly.

"NATHALIA!" He raged, even as Lillith's vice like grip and awesome strength ground his neck, and by virtue of attachment, head and torso hard into the floor.

"That's right Malleus. We know she was here. What did she want?" Lilith whispered into his ear calmly.

"She wanted to know more about her past, about her powers," he moaned wincing into the floor.

"Things any half capable Succubus would know," Naamah announced disparagingly.

"What else?" Lilith asked, ignoring the ebony queen's remark.

"She was... asking about interactions with other celestials. Sexual interactions."

"And did you have sex with her?" Eisheth Zenunim asked towering above him on the floor.

"SHE TRICKED ME! SHE CHEATED ME OF MY TRIBUTE!" he wailed, thrashing beneath Lilith's unbreakable grip.

"She sounds capable enough to me Naamah," Agrat announced. The black woman glowered back at her in the darkness.

"Tell him your news Eisheth." Lilith encouraged the tallest of the women. A cloud fell across the amazonian queen's body as she remembered the news she'd learned from Satan the day before. Muscles stood out like cables along her neck and her fists clenched as she knelt beside the trapped hell spawn.

Eisheth whispered to Malleus the demise of their daughter at Natalie's hands. The effect was immediate and obvious as he pushed himself off the floor against the stout grasp of Lilith. Every muscle in his body straining in stark relief. In spite of her strength Lilith weighed less than 150 pounds and once Malleus had countered the

awkwardness of her position at his neck he rose steadily to his full eighteen foot plus stature, roaring deafeningly even as Lilith scampered away.

"I WILL DESTROY HER!"

"No, lover, WE will destroy her," Eisheth announced, a golden crackle of static electricity washing across her.

"You will be summoned if we need you," Lilith added, reasserting herself before signaling that it was time to move on.

\* \* \*

Natalie walked off the elevator at a quarter till nine, dressed in a hip hugging black skirt ending as high as dress code allowed, a hunter green satin second skin blouse and a short double breasted style black jacket that strained to contain the overstuffed blouse. Coupled with old fashioned seamed stockings and towering heels, emerald stud earrings and high gloss red lipstick, Ms. Faust was pumping up the sexual tension in the office to an almost tactile level. The pheromone "perfume" that she was filling the enclosed spaces in the office with helped ensure that those for whom visuals weren't enough got into the spirit. This might very well be her last day at Fox, Bryce and Barlowe, and if it were, it would be memorable.

Heads turned to tracked her into the office. Dilating eyes and tongue-whetted lips followed her like the path of a tornado. The meager expenditure of energy was worth it for what she could potentially call upon if the situation should require it. She passed her desk seeing even Cecilia swoon slightly in her wake.

"Good morning Cee," she called sing-song.

"Morning boss," she replied in a breathy moan.

Natalie smiled as she pranced into her office and closed the door. Turning back from the door to face her desk, she was met by the near dead eyes of Angela Martin seated in her chair.

"Help me?" Angela pleaded in a rasping whine. Her body looked like a like a horrific cross between a concentration camp victim and porn starlet. It was obvious to Natalie that her celestial essence was the only thing keeping Angela alive, even if it wasn't what her body really needed.

"Angela?" Natalie called aloud, rushing to the stricken woman's side. She could feel the frail bones and almost fleshless arms of her one time office antagonist, and knew immediately that she was the one who she'd felt attacked the day prior. "What happened?"

"There were four women. They were incredible looking, like you," she rasped. Her listless eyes focused on Natalie's, searching deep inside her for a compassionate soul. Natalie wasn't sure what she was seeing, but she continued. "There were two of

them... one of them was called Agrat, and the other... she was terrible. Her eyes were like looking into nothing!" she started shaking violently at the recollection.

*Lilith! And Agrat Bat Mahlat. Might as well assume that Naamah and Eisheth Zenunim are with them, which means that all four queens are here for me!*

"I don't know why I came here, but I felt like you could help!" Angela sobbed through the quaking motions of her form.

"It's okay Angela," Natalie said soothingly, even as her mind raced over what to do.

*She's a lost cause, but we can save the energy we gave her,* Id announced accurately  
*We can't do that you fool! She's one of the good people, even if she was a bitch,* Ego shot back angrily.

*You are thinking like a woman,* Id declared. *Stop running from what you are, and look out for yourself!*

*We are one of God's divine creations, cast into a precarious position, and we will not stoop to the levels of the hell spawn we are supposed to mimic!* Super Ego said with steadfast clarity.

*While I agree, you might want to cut back on the self-righteousness,* Ego concurred.

*Fine! If you two are so goody-goody to save her, I am all ears as to how,* Id spat back. *Our power is all that is keeping her alive, and our power alone can't sustain her for very long. Every second we banter back and forth, she gets closer to her end, not to mention, the four queens killing us!*

*That was the most articulate you've ever been. But we still aren't killing her,* Ego and Super Ego returned.

Natalie reached for the phone in her purse and speed dialed Matt.

"What's up Sweetie?" Matt answered with cheer.

"You ever do IV's in the army?" she asked, cutting to the point.

"Yeah, I was a combat life saver/first responder. Not a medic..." he started to explain a little perplexed.

"Think you could do a transfusion?" She cut him off.

"Yeah, probably. But what's this about?" he asked now curious, and slightly worried.

"I think a transfusion is the only way to save a woman's life... Angela, what blood type are you?" Natalie explained even as she switched conversations.

"O positive." She responded weakly.

"I'm O positive," Matt said, overhearing her on the phone. "But shouldn't this be done at a hospital?"

"Too many questions. Just get here fast okay?"

"Yeah, sure, but where are we gonna get the transfusion equipment?" Matt asked.

"Let me worry about that," she said before terminating the call.

A moment later, she pushed the intercom button. "Cee, get in here."

The door opened not ten seconds later. "What's up... whoa!" she started closing the door behind her as she saw Angela's condition.

"I need you to go to the lobby and do whatever it takes to get the paramedic's bag they have behind the security desk. Better yet, you stay here and keep her company; I'll get it."

"Uh, okay." Cee said compliantly, looking at the train wreck of a woman in front of her.

"I'm Angela, why am I not surprised that you are Natalie's secretary?" Angela said sarcastically as Natalie left her office.

Utilizing the stairs, Natalie was down on the lobby floor of the building in seconds. Before leaving the stair well she did something she'd never done before at work; unbuttoning three buttons on her blouse. The relieved stress on the buttons was immediately evident as deep cleavage was suddenly bare for all in the building to see. Using her high heels to maximum effect, that plunging neckline displayed her massive quivering breasts as she walked up to the security point.

"Hi Wes," she said sweetly to the late forties guard at the checkpoint. He'd always had eyes for her, and now that she was showing some of the details of what he'd always known were in those clothes and he was putty in her hands.

"Hello Ms. Faust." He managed to say without stammering.

Natalie pulled out all the stops, filling the lobby with enough suggestive pheromones to turn the bottom seven floors of building into a giant orgy before the HVAC system cleared the air. On poor Wes at ground zero, the effect was to become a glassy eyed mute whose gaze oscillated between her eyes, mouth and cleavage over and over again. All he could do was nod as she moved behind the counter and secured the large first responder bag stored there, then retreated back to the stairs, brushing her hand against his ever so briefly as she left the security checkpoint. His wife of twenty years would be in for a surprise tonight.

Flying up the stairs, she was back up in her office with the big kit in less time than it had taken to get to lobby initially. She had the multi-pouched pack opened up seconds later and had four IV bags spread across her desk. Cee watched as she started stripping out the IV kits in preparation for Matt's arrival.

"What are you gonna do with those?" Cecilia asked.

"I am going to give her a blood transfusion and try to save her life." Natalie replied.

"I don't want to die," Angela said as she started to cry.

"I don't want you to either, Angela. Try to stay calm. Help is coming."

Natalie's cell phone rang a moment later. "Natalie Faust," she answered it.

"I'm down stairs, I need an escort." Matt said.

"I will get you one," she said hanging up. She called the security desk where Wes answered lazily.



"Hello? I mean, Lobby, Security Station."

"Wes? This is Ms Faust, can you see to it that Matthew Willcox is escorted up here to the 11th floor ASAP. He should be there at the desk any second." She pleaded in a sugar sweet voice.

"Sure, he's right here," he replied lazily.

"Thanks, you're a peach," she declared hanging up.

Even in her weakened state Angela looked displeased at her manipulative ways.

"Angie, cut me some slack, we're gonna save your life." Natalie said rebutting her look of disdain.

Three minutes later, there was a knock at her office door, and Natalie slipped back out into the main area of the office to see Wes and Matt standing there.

"Thanks Wes, you are a huge help," she said with a sweetness that made him feel warm inside.

"Sure," he replied dumbly, even as she took his hand again and shook it. Oh yes, his wife was in for quite a surprise tonight.

As Wes reluctantly turned and left, Matt saw her demeanor change to one much more grave. She beckoned him to follow her into the office and shut the door behind him. Inside he saw the shocking visage of Angela Martin.

"What happened to her?"

"Remember those bad things I said were coming? They got to her."

"Fuck me!"

"Yeah, so anyway, I need you to give her about a pint of your blood and we will see if Archimedes was right."

"What?" both Cee and Matt said looking curiously at her.

"Long story, short of it is this; stick her, stick yourself, then you lay on my desk we lay her on the floor and gravity plus blood pressure should do the rest."

"I haven't stuck an IV in two years... and her veins aren't exactly easy targets right now. Give me a second," He took the IV line she'd rigged into a double ended line and prepped the classic spot at the top of her fore arm with an iodine pad. A moment later the needle was in her arm, and he was fairly confident he'd got a good stick. He was much easier to start and quickly the line was opened.

"Just a question, but how do we know when I've given her a pint?" Matt asked.

"When this bag is empty," Natalie said jamming the spiked end of another IV line into a saline bag and squeezing it firmly, then running the other end of its line into the waste bin near her desk.

"Okay, I guess," Matt said laying back on her desk.

"Cee, make sure the door is locked," Natalie commanded.

"Okay," she replied moving to the doorway and checking the lock. A feeling of euphoria that was spreading through her as Matt's warm blood infused with her meager supply. Something was building inside her withered form, an energy that had been pulled from her by that terrible woman what felt like an eternity ago, even if it were just yesterday.

Natalie looked at the draining bag on the table next to her lover as it dripped its last drops into the steel waste bin. With deft fingers she pulled the catheter from Matt's arm and closed the line. Pulling the catheter plug from the line with a razor sharp nail she sliced open her own arm, and dripped a few drops of her own blue-black blood into the surgical tubing. Then letting the line briefly open again, she allowed her donation to mix with the far greater quantity Matt had offered up to the stricken woman on the ground. Finally, she hooked up another IV bag to run, this time directly into Angela, just to replace lost fluids.

The effect as the reaction between the angelic cambion blood of Matt and Natalie's demonic vitae was slow to start, but the result wasn't any less impressive. Angela's body began fleshing out before their eyes. She could feel her body's energy welling up, growing stronger inside her. Her heart was hammering in her chest, its rate accelerating as the mingling blood built up the exponentially surging feedback loop of mounting celestial power. But the decadent life forces of Matt and Natalie were tempered by the near lifeless sanguine fluid that languidly oozed through her veins.

Watching the transformation before her eyes, Natalie could see the rapid improvement in Angela's physical health, but she could feel the dulled effects caused by her drained energy levels. *What would happen if we were to do this to a healthy person?*

"Wow," was all Cee could seem to form for words.

Then to her surprise, a completely revitalized and indeed drastically improved Angela climbed to her feet, pulling the IV from her now healthy looking arm.

\* \* \*

Zubud was not a popular demon among her compatriots. She was small, sharp tempered, and easily agitated. She did have one attribute that was particularly useful though. She was good at picking up on mundane details, and along with that, her eyesight was top flight. So when she caught sight of Cianna all but carrying Marcus out of Natalie's apartment building by chance, she made pursuit.

The rumors had been flying that Cianna and a succubus had killed a demon in New York City not two days ago, and as such it made very good sense to follow the infamous demon hunter. On top of that, with the four queens walking the earth, and in the same city no less; there was good reason to think that the demon hunter's location might be valuable. Who the enfeebled man was, was of little consequence.

Down in the Scion, Cianna was struggling to navigate Seattle's myriad one way streets to get to the hotel she was staying in, all the while dealing with Marcus' rambling on and on about the darkness when he suddenly got very quiet.

"Eyes! Above us! Following us, everywhere we go!" he muttered in rising tones.

Cianna paused for a moment to look over at him, and saw him craning his neck around the headrest to look up and behind him into the roof of the car. Something about his changed manner made her adjust her side mirror to look skyward and behind, and sure enough there was a dark colored bird flying high above...

She made the next left and zipped into a parking garage.

"Stay here Marcus," she said unnecessarily just before getting out of the car with a long luggage case and heading up stairs.

Zubud had seen the car pull into the parking garage and knew that there was only one way out, and so she chose to land among the gargoyles perched on the roof of a building across the street. She would have a good vantage point of the garage's exit from there and wouldn't risk much undue suspicion in a busy city.

But as good as her eyesight was, her hearing was not. She did not notice the slamming of the fire door on the roof of the building across the street. In fact, she didn't hear the bolt of Cianna's hastily assembled Remington 700 suitcase carbine locking forward its .30-'06 caliber bullet either. It wasn't until the suppressed rifle's first round exploded her left scapula out the back of her gnarled body that she knew she'd been made by Cianna.

The demon was scrambling airborne again when the second round blew her hand off into a ragged stump below the wrist, but it didn't stop her, and she beat a hasty corkscrewing retreat, feeling several more rounds whip past her harmlessly. When she was several miles away, she landed on a water tower and surveyed the damage. Her shoulder was already largely healed, but the missing hand would take several hours longer to recover. In the meantime, she needed to tell the queens what had just happened. A hunter as dangerous as Cianna Di'Trieste could jeopardize their presence here. They needed to know now.

\* \* \*

Cianna had already disposed of the rifle shell casings in several dumpsters throughout the city. Between the flash suppressor's limited silencing capabilities, and her position on the rooftop, she was doubtful that too many people had paid much mind to the rifle shots, but one could never be too careful. Marcus had fallen asleep in the meantime as well, which was also nice. His constant babbling was getting irritating. But all of this was distracting her from the real issue at hand. Was she being followed by servants of Satan? Or had it been a random occurrence? With as much occult activity

as there was in town right now, it would be hard to figure out. Either way, she had to assume that she'd been made.

\* \* \*

The sun was setting when Naamah knocked on the door and then entered the room. Lilith was reclining naked, her incredibly massive breasts spread out on a king sized bed. On either side of her was a pair of very well built young men, their cocks all straining in tumescence. In quick succession one would climax, shooting a fountain of cum in a high arc landing upon her only to vanish the instant it contacted her alabaster skin. Between her fleshy thighs a young woman was servicing her pussy noisily. About the room on the floor were sleeping naked humans, all of them looking to be in their late twenties to mid thirties. To the untrained eye, it would be strange company compared to the five prime examples of late teen-aged mortals sharing the bed with her.

"Yes Naamah?" she said, even as another of the young studs sprayed an effusive orgasm across her face.

"A scout has come, my queen,"

"So," she said bored with the conversation already. She moved a delicate hand to the back of the woman head between her legs and pressed her firmly home, smiling slightly at the increased pressure and the moan her touch elicited from the girl.

"She says she was attacked by Cianna Di'Trieste today."

"Then she was stupid, send in more boys when you leave." Lilith dismissed her with a careless wave.

"My Queen, she was attacked here, in Seattle."

Lilith stopped and her black eyes bored into her dark skinned compatriot.

"Here? She's sure?"

"The scout, a rather repulsive specimen if there was one, is named Zubud. She said she was tracking Cianna when she got spotted and the hunter laid a hasty ambush."

"If it's true, that is overt even for her," she said sitting up straighter, and making her swollen pillows mound up higher about the bed. "Very well, I am coming."

She stood, leaving the late twenty-ish looking quintet on the bed groaning, and displaying her obvious fecundity to the exhausted throng of humanity in the room for a brief instant before she closed the door behind her.

All of the queens had added to their celestial reserves quickly in their first 24 hours on earth, but none to Lilith's extent. Her body was a cartoonish parody of femininity. Breasts that had started off simply huge were now positively enormous, tethered somehow to a trim upper body and impossibly small waist that transitioned almost immediately into breeding hips and a butt that would turn granny panties into a

thong. Her thighs matched down to her knees which were tiny, and then picked up again in her calves, only to shrink back down to tiny ankles and perfect feet.

Zubud was standing in the smallish living room of the safe house in her demon form, a glossy black frail looking creature, withered and gnarled with big eyes, a grimacing countenance and scaling locks of flesh that passed for what most would call hair. Her stunted left hand was still growing back. She wore not a single stitch of clothing and smelled of a mix of rancid meat and ammonia.

In spite of her beauty, Lilith's scowl was horrifying, "Why do you disturb us scout?"

The obviously distraught minor demon was almost cowering in her presence. "Th-the demon hunter Cianna i-is here!"

"We are queens of the damned! A mere mortal hunter means nothing to us! You should be looking for the Succubus Nathalia!" she shouted making the walls rattle. "What kind of scout are you any way! How can you hope to spy upon anyone when you are in that form in broad daylight?!"

The diminutive demon shrank, and if possible would have turned pale. "Your unworldly majesty, I-uh-I don't like being in mortal f-f-form."

"You don't like it?" Lilith shrieked the question.

"You would refuse one of your queens, whelp?" Naamah chimed in. "Refusal smacks of REBELLION!"

The room got palpably darker as the darkness of Lilith's eyes seemed to intensify into a pair of endless voids. Black arcs of energy radiated from their corners as a wind whipped up and her cascading ringlets began to fly behind her. The feminine softness of her form began to slip into bulging cords of muscles that rapidly bundled together into a horrifying display of raw power at her command. Her height rose until she was hunched against the ceiling, making the terrified demon even more insignificant.

"Do you know how the royalty of hell deals with rebels?" Lilith thundered, her voice literally ripping flesh from Zubud's thin body.

She just looked up at the dreadful sight before her with her huge eyes, despair penetrating her whole body.

With the outstretching of a finger, the scout was on her knees, her body wracked by agonizing spasms as she was transformed into human form against her will. When that finger touched her, Zubud screamed for an instant as every bit of her demonic power was forcibly but instantly stripped from her. What remained was a short, rail thin mousy woman with a stumpy arm and big dull blue eyes.

"Naamah," Lilith's booming voice called from above.

"Yes my queen?"

"End her."

With a touch of Naamah's finger the naked woman who was Zubud, flashed into a small pile of dust, as every consumable bit of her being was instantly and completely absorbed into the black skinned queen.

"Well, it would seem that Zubud wanted to tell us something," Lilith announced as she returned to her mortal form.

"What is that my queen?" Naamah inquired, shuddering from the influx of power she'd just partaken in.

"She knew where Nathalia lives. Perhaps I should have let her tell us and spared her?"

"My queen?"

"No, weakness such as Zubud's needs to be purged from Hells ranks, and we have the information any way. Besides, consuming a demon's power is something I haven't been able to do in *ages*," she laughed maniacally.

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Dawn broke early over the three bodies in Matt's sleigh bed. Natalie's eyes fluttered open feeling human warmth on either side of her, happily remembering the night before. Both Matt and Cee were snuggled up to her, Matt with his head on her shoulder, while Cecelia was absently nuzzling a nipple. All was right in the rising sunlight when her cell phone rang.

Who the hell is calling me at 5:42 in the morning? She thought as she disturbed everyone's sleep to get it. The caller ID displayed FRONT DOOR. Okay, who the hell is at my front door at 5:42AM?

She slid the answer call slider and answered, "Hello?"

"Nathalia," a chillingly familiar voice came across the speaker.

She hung up immediately.

"Who was that?" Matt asked groggily.

"Lilith is at my front door."

"Who's Lilith?" Cecelia asked.

\* \* \*

"Eisheth, you may have the honors, she's up stairs," Lilith announced stepping aside and allowing the inhumanly muscular seven-foot tall amazon access to the door.

Without a word she plunged her fingers into the edges of the jam and in a single quick motion tore the door from its hinges.

"Just remember, Satan wants her alive,"

"I remember," Eisheth hissed hurling the door into the street as she crashed up the stairs sundering the hand rail as she rounded the corners, until she arrived at the

doorway indicated as belonging to "Natalie Faust" on the directory. Then, rather than ripping the door apart as she had the front door, since it opened in, she just ran through it. The door exploded into the apartment, but a quick search showed that Natalie wasn't anywhere in the unit, let alone the building. The frustration of the hulking Mediterranean queen was evident when the whole apartment exploded out the corner of the building like a bomb went off.

She was down stairs with her three compatriots and moving away quickly before sirens started being heard in the distance.

"Guess she forwards her phone," Agrat said with a smirk. "She's sounding smarter and smarter all the time," she added digging at Naamah.

"It's not like you've done anything useful on this trip," the black queen shot back angrily.

"Both of you behave," Lilith said, interdicting further bickering. "We know she's in town, and we know that she works at Bryce, Fox and Barlowe, we'll just intercept her there. And in the meantime, we split up. Naamah, you are with me,"

"What do we do if we see her?" Eisheth growled, golden eyes self-luminous with demonic rage.

"Take care of her, and if for some reason you aren't able to subdue her, then delay, and we'll be there as fast as we can." Lilith instructed.

"She's a halfhearted succubi, any of us should be able to bring her to heel with a thought!" Naamah added over her shoulder as she and Lilith moved down a diverging side street.

\* \* \*

"- Authorities are being tight lipped at the moment about the nature of the explosion, but they are confirming that there was no gas connections in the unit and at least for now, all they are willing to say that it wasn't an explosive device. Again, no one was home, and aside from minor cuts and bruises and some shattered windows from falling debris no significant property damage beyond the apartment unit's complete destruction...." The three of them were watching the news report in varying levels of disbelief.

"Okay," Cee started first. "I think I need to know what's going on. Something or someone just blew up your apartment Natalie."

Natalie looked at Matt for a long second, who just shrugged and then at Cecelia with a contemplative expression. "If I tell you, it's gonna open Pandora's Box. Once you know what I will tell you, you will be a different person. Are you willing to accept that?"

"God, you make it sound like you are going to try to sell me on some strange religious cult that will give me insight into the Illuminati and all manner of secret societies." She said sarcastically.

Matt almost choked on his coffee, and sent a fine mist of it spraying across the table. Natalie looked at him with a bit of a frown while Cee showed surprise.

"What would you do if in a manner of speaking I were? If I could show you, beyond a shadow of a doubt that God, Satan, Angels and Demons all exist?"

"I would say that you should go work for the 700 club." She replied caustically.

"The world cannot know these things Cecelia. It would be catastrophic. It would seriously upset the way the whole system works." Natalie said standing up from the table. "Do you want to see what I have to show you? If not, this conversation never happened."

"Fuck it, you only live once," she said. "Hit me."

With that, Natalie removed the robe she was wearing and began her transfiguration. Taller and taller she grew, while her subtle muscularity became more pronounced. Horns sprouted from her hair and grew to nearly six inches in length, while black wings unfolded and spread the width of the living room. Her hands and feet lengthened and the nails grew longer and pointed, her toenails almost claw-like, while her skin changed from pale pink to dark bronze. Her eyes stayed green but now glowed like neon apertures into her being. Her facial features stayed very similar, and her hair only darkened a few shades, but expanded into a wavy mane of wild locks. The transformation ended with the extension of a spaded, whip like tail that slithered down from her tailbone to the floor.

"Behold, I am Nathalia! Cast down angel, demon, succubus, one of God's first children, an unwilling minion of Satan. I am proof to you that Heaven above and Hell below both exist, and are at all times at war for your soul," she announced in a seductive breathy voice that was both hers, yet so much sexier than hers.

Matt for his part had moved to Cee's side and taken her hand as she looked on in stupefied awe.

Then the young secretary did something totally unexpected and stood up, moving closer with an outreached hand and touching the sweeping curve of Natalie's broad hip. The warmth and erotic energy that zapped her at that touch surprised both of them, and Cee recoiled from the contact shaking her hand.

"Amazing!" was all she could say.

Natalie flashed back to her mortal appearance and moved toward the staggered and dazzled teen. "Cee, are you okay?"

She didn't answer, instead plopping onto her generous derriere in her chair. And still she just looked mesmerized at Natalie in her naked splendor.

"Matt, are you okay?" she asked looking over at him.



"You've never fully transformed like that before me, but I kinda knew what to expect. I think you totally blew Cecelia's mind."

"No. I'm okay. It just makes sense." Cee interrupted.

They both looked at her, "What makes sense?" Matt asked.

"Everything Natalie does. How she can be so graceful, so amazingly sexy, so smart, and how she flawlessly interacts with people. Like she knows them before she even talks to them."

"See, I told you she was smart," Natalie said to Matt with a genuine smile.

"You said unwilling minion of Satan. What does that mean?" she asked.

"It means she's not working for him," Matt said before Natalie could.

"I am trying to get back into God's good graces. I am trying to be a good girl." Natalie expounded.

"But if you were cast down, how can you do that? Wasn't there some big battle in heaven and the demons and Satan were on the losing side?"

"My place in the battle was... complicated," Natalie started to explain.

"I want to know how you got here. I mean, you said you had been a prisoner in hell, but how does one escape, and how did you get to be the way you are now?" Matt interjected.

Natalie sighed, then explained.

\* \* \*

"I escaped through weakness. The barriers that separate the celestial from the mortal work inversely to power. Human's don't have the strength required to pass through the barrier between Earth and the divine planes, while the divine have too much power to pass from their plane to the mortal world. Angels and demons are, as a rule, powerful creatures, so the laws to protect the Earth are backwards. The stronger you are, the harder it is to pass from one plane to the other.

I knew this from my first trip to hell, and as Malleus continued to use me, he brought my power levels lower and lower. Finally, I had my opportunity, and I seized it. First I tricked him and escaped his clutches, then I hid till there was a summoning, which I managed to piggyback upon and with it, I arrived in San Francisco.

1877 in San Francisco was an interesting time. It was the biggest "city" on the west coast, but it was a far cry from Europe, let alone Paris, where I'd been when Cianna banished me before. It was a boom town, still rich from the gold fields, but added to that were the merchant ships that brought goods from the Orient and occasionally the eastern seaboard. The city was fast and loud, and with that came all sorts of opportunities. That was where I saw my next opportunity.

Weak as I was from my time in Hell, I had almost no presence in the real world. I was a ghostly shadow, a shade of darkness as fleeting as a thin cloud before the sun, but I was unbound. I wasn't trapped within a circle of power or any other binding."

"You mean like a pentagram?" Cee interrupted.

"No, pentagrams are just a convenient pagan symbol that has been made the poster child of the occult. They can be useful to tie things together but a pentagram alone is just a bunch of lines that make an inverted star; it's the symbols and circles that have the real power. But I digress.

I needed a host, and it had to be a willing one. I knew I didn't have the energy to bend a mortal to my needs. I would be overwhelmed by their consciousness and lost, so my host would need to welcome me in. In the end it turned out to be easier than I thought.

Any boom town has prostitutes, and prostitutes are exposed all manner of maladies. Patience McMannus was fortunate to have the consumption, a disease that while destroying her body from the inside, left her natural beauty visibly unscathed. And natural beauty was one of several things that Patience had going for her, coupled with an Irish brogue a sharp wit and a keen mind for numbers. She'd amassed a good sum of money but found herself rapidly wasting away as her ailment ripped her lungs apart.

I came upon her one night as she dreamt; managing some scant sleep between the coughing fits that left bloody sputum smeared across her pillows. It was my only chance to infiltrate her devout Presbyterian Scots-Irish mind. I made my offer.

"Grant me sanctuary and I will give you peace and immortality," I said. She knew her time on Earth was drawing to a close, and worried that her immortal soul would forever be cast to burn in the fires of hell for her sins.

Between the illness and the fatigue, I don't think she knew what she was accepting. "If you will save me from this illness and my sin, I accept."

There was no fanfare to her possession. No fireworks or music, just the rush as my consciousness wove its way into her body. Under normal circumstances, I would enhance my host, adding attractive features and correcting flaws, but I was too weak. It was everything I could do to keep from fading out of her body with the energy it took to meld with her. In fact I was so weak that had she fought me, even a little, or had the possession been anything but effortless, that I may very well have just dissipated to nothingness then and there. Dead and gone for all time.

I needed Patience to turn a trick, and I could not help her. Not this time. I didn't have anything left. And that is where the comeliness of her body came into play. The most I could do was make suggestions. The next morning I woke her up and begged her to get dressed, telling her to cinch her corset extra tight, to accentuate further and shrink her already narrow waist while making her generous breasts stand out even more, and as a benefit restrict airflow to keep the violent coughing to a minimum. I

talked her through getting dolled up and ready as best I could, and together we went out to make a new beginning with one last old trick.

It's sad to say I don't really remember the man, except that he was a sailor on some steam ship. He was the first one we ran into, but he had money, which satisfied Patience's requirement, and he was ready, which fulfilled mine. I can't say he was the best lay but as weak as I was, any sexual contact was divine. Just the lust he had for Patience done up as she was, was invigorating, and his moment of release... Earth-shattering.

Earth-shattering for both of us, because I prolonged him, kept him strong and hard and ready to go again for longer. I pushed my host's consciousness aside, sharing the emotions and sensation from the first person. We rode him to a second, much more spectacular orgasm, milking him for all his body could muster without permanently hurting him. I had to fight my ingrained need to keep from draining him to dust right before Patience's eyes, but even so he was unable to leave her bed by himself.

From that point on though, I was effectively in control. My psyche was now firmly in command of this body, and slowly but surely I pushed Patience to the back of "my" mind. Sure, I let her run things for another month as she slowly weaned herself off of prostitution. And I kept my word and healed her body, let her savor the feeling of freedom being healthy, strong, and financially independent brought, but I was now directing her to do everything. When she slept, I was in charge and I made more money manipulating lovers and turning free tricks while she slept than she did while awake and charging for the act.

Then, after I had pulled in enough money to buy a house and settle down, I took a break, giving her one last day of freedom, free from my control to do whatever she wanted. We took a carriage to the ocean and walked the beach, rode a ferry boat and then went to the theater. She always loved the water... I wonder sometimes if that's why I live in Seattle. Once home I waited for her to sleep. She was so happy. Then as she dreamed I boxed her up, and in so doing I kept my other promise to her. She's still in here, sleeping. Still living 139 years after we made our deal."

\* \* \*

"I could have locked her away permanently at any time over the past 139 years, but I can't. She did me the greatest favor a mortal could in my most desperate time of need. And she never caused me any hardship. I hope that someday I can let her free, but it's beyond my ability. So she stays asleep. Maybe she dreams of what I do in the mortal world, or maybe not. I can't talk to her, I wish I could. I just know she's still there," Natalie said in an almost sad tone.

"So why do you sound sad?" Cee asked after a pause.

"Because I can't do one of the things I promised her," Natalie responded, black tears pooling at the bottom of his eyes.

"You can't save her soul," Matthew responded before Cee could figure it out to ask.

"Exactly."