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I tried the doorknob again and again, jerking it up and down on the verge of ripping it off, but something seemed to have sealed the door from the other side. Probably magic.

I didn't think that coming here was such a great idea anymore.

"Onyx, calm down," Silver patted my shoulder. "Isn't this what you wanted?"

Hell no! This wasn't what I wanted at all!

"The master will see you now," the woman behind the counter, Agatha, told me with a stiff smile. She obviously wasn't my number-one fan. Then again, who was?

"I-I think I'll come another time," I chuckled lightly, although it probably sounded as if I was dismayed. In reality, I was panicking, so I checked the windows as well. Filin ew out of nowhere and landed on the street side of the window frame. He looked at me apologetically, and I realised that the chicken owl knew. He knew that Zion would be in this shop!

Hell, who was I kidding? He probably owned the place! The tattoo on Agatha was a mark of the Shadows, the organisation Zion was the head of for the last couple of hundred years. They did shady, dirty, dangerous, immoral things, and now I was locked in one of their secret places.

"You little traitor!" I hissed at the owl. "I'm going to pluck you like a chicken! And feed you to your--"

"Miss," Agatha raised her voice at me, and I turned on my heels to face her. "This way, please!"

Her tone did not reckon any objections, and I decided not to test her patience further. It wasn't like I could leave anyway.

"Where do I go?" I asked hesitantly, and she motioned for me to follow her. Agatha had sleek brown hair tied into a tight bun with a golden pin holding it all in place, and her hips swayed magnificently as she walked. Even I couldn't take my eyes off her.

Silver tried to follow us, but Agatha glared at her, and the omega stopped without risking saying even a word to her. I had to admit that although it was fun to write about worlds with a hierarchy, I did not like to see my friend being treated this way. Silver was a kind, sweet and funny girl, and she deserved better than this. Not to mention how unfair it was that people were labelled at birth. If I ever had a chance to change the story again, this would be one of the things I would erase.

Agatha took me to the bookshelves behind the counter, and, to my surprise, once she pushed one of them, it started sliding away, opening a dark passage before me. I liked this less and less by the moment.

She stood there, and I stood there, both gnawing at each other while neither of us said a word or made a step. I was going to prolong the waiting time as much as I could. What if the man on the other side got bored and forgot about me? Maybe it was a stupid plan, but it was the best plan I had at the moment.

"Come in, Onyx," Zion's voice sounded like honey and for some reason, it made me feel even more tried. Time to give up and just go with it, so I stepped inside and felt something strange go through my body. As if I went through a thin layer of water or... was it a magical barrier?

I blinked a few times, and it suddenly hit me that I was in a room far bigger than the shop itself. That meant that there was some sort of space-stretching spell in here. Or a portal. That would be so much worse. Shoot. Basically, I was now with Zion, gods knows where, and alone.

The walls were lined with high bookshelves made out of dark wood with hundreds, if not thousands, of ancient tomes. There were ladders on each side of me to help reach the shelves at the top. I couldn't help but graze my fingers over the spines nearest to me, inhaling the scent of pine and books, my most favourite scent in the whole world. This alone was enough to provide the stress relief I needed because, for someone like me, books were an irresistible addiction. Some of the tomes were in languages I couldn't read, and some looked like they were hundreds of years old. At the back, I saw a shelf full of ancient scrolls, which spiked my curiosity. I also noticed strange bottles and objects on some of the shelves, and that suddenly brought me back to reality. The whole place was magical, and I wanted to explore it, but that wasn't why I was here.

"I see you like my little den," I heard Zion's voice and inched, turning to face him. But he was nowhere to be found. I spun around, trying to spot him. It was like trying to find the creepy Waldo for me, but he was still nowhere to be seen.

"Right here," I heard his voice again and turned to see him sitting behind a desk in the centre of the room. He definitely wasn't there before. Someone was showing off, but, of course, I wouldn't be the one calling him out.

"H-hello," I said hesitantly in a suddenly croaked voice. Something about this man made me feel petrified. There was always this dark and dangerous aura around him, and I couldn't believe I had dared to call him Chad.

"Don't be scared," Zion tapped his fingers over the wooden surface of the desk. "I don't bite... unless I am asked to."

"Good to know," I squeaked as he gestured to the seat in front of him, which I took because my legs were giving out on me. In the book, it was rare for Zion to meet someone, and it usually meant he wanted to kill that someone in person.

"I have to say I didn't expect to see you in a place like this, Onyx." His lips curled into a little smile as his gaze grazed over my neck and down to my cleavage lazily. I once again swore to get myself a new wardrobe. The outfit I had on suddenly seemed too revealing, although it was the most modest thing I could find back in the closet at home. The set of tight black pants and black silk blouse with a very plunging neckline was very daring, yet somehow elegant, too, so I chose it over every other outfit I had.

"I am here by mistake." I tried to return the smile but failed miserably. My hands were shaking, and I had to clutch them together on my knees to hide it.

"Are you sure it was a mistake?" Zion asked calmly. "This is a special place, Onyx. If you need help, and by that, I mean any kind of help, we can take care of it for you."

"It's not really," I mumbled, shaking my head. "We walked into the wrong shop. I was actually out to buy a dress."

"Oh," Zion's smirk grew wider. "Too bad then. Since you are not a client, but already know too much, I have no choice but--"

Oh, God! Was he going to kill me?! Just like that?

"I am looking for a potion!" I blurted out in panic, and he stopped talking, leaning over the back of his chair.

"That's more like it," he chuckled softly, still piercing me with his eyes and making it hard for me to breathe for all the wrong reasons. "What kind of potion are you looking for, Onyx?"

"The one that can make it look like I was poisoned with colloidal silver," I confessed, swallowing the lump in my throat. Gosh, he was scary! How could a man this beautiful also be so terrifying? When I wrote about him, I imagined him as some hot villain. All the killing made him look more dangerous and ferocious. But now, sitting in front of him as one of his potential victims, it was just creepy.

He studied me carefully as his finger traced every detail on the scorpion ring he was wearing. His hair was combed to one side, and the three-piece suit he wore sat well on his perfectly toned body.

"That's an interesting choice." He stood up all of a sudden and walked around the desk, leaning over next to me and crossing his arms over his chest while watching me intently the whole time. "May I ask you why you need it?"

"And here I thought that Shadows just do the job and don't ask questions!" A nervous laugh escaped me... before I realised what I had done. Zion's friendly expression dropped and his lips parted.

And I realised that if he wasn't going to get rid of me before, he was definitely going to do it now. I wasn't supposed to know that! God, why couldn't I keep a secret?!

"I see you are very discerning, Onyx," he added after a pause. "And that explains why you are shaking like a leaf in the wind. I have to give it to you, though; it was very brave of you to come in here if you knew this much."

"I... I just," I mumbled, standing up from my chair and slowly backing toward the exit while he watched me curiously. Right now, he looked like a predator who was bored and decided to play with his prey.

The window behind Zion's back burst open, and Filin ew in, landing straight on his shoulder. The warlock tore his eyes off me for the first time since we met today, and I carefully took a few more steps to the exit, only to find the door I came through locked.

"Is that so?" I heard Zion muttering, but when I turned to check what he was doing, I found him right next to me and screamed loudly.

"Onyx, I am afraid there is going to be a slight change of plans," he told me, and I took a step back, hitting the door. Zion placed one of his hands right next to me and leaned so close that his hot breath caressed my skin. "Since you know who I am, I cannot let you leave this place."

I knew it! I knew I wouldn't be able to escape the most dangerous villain in this world! What was I thinking? Barely anyone survived meeting him!

Unless...

"I can pay you!" I practically screamed into his face, and that made him pause. Not a muscle on his face inched, but I knew that he was surprised.

"I wonder what makes you think I can be bought so easily?" he taunted, brushing a strand of hair off my face. "What exactly are you offering as payment, Onyx?"

"Information!" I said firmly and held his slightly shocked gaze. We stood like that for quite some time: me pressed against the door and him towering over me.

"What can you possibly tell that would be of value to me?" Zion sneered at me, and I started to think hectically of what I could give him. I knew the book; I knew the events. Now that I was thinking of it, I knew everything! And it was about time I started to use that knowledge. Now I had to think of what the best thing to tell him would be. It couldn't be anything major, but it still had to be important.

"Prince Seth is going to challenge his brother at the Moon Goddess Gala," I decided to go with the event that was the closest and didn't have anything to do with Zion personally. At least for now. In the future, he would be a supporter of Seth, but only because of Melody. For now, it was just something to make him not kill me.

"How do you know about this?" He asked the most reasonable question given the current situation.