

71: A Proposition

As the trio of the girls were about to leave the beastkin to their work and go to the other building, where they were supposed to stay the night, one girl hesitated—Olivia.

“I think I’d rather spend the night outside,” she muttered.

“Terrific,” Ember said before adding, “Just don’t get into another argument with Bernard or you’ll also end up on somebody’s plate.”

Olivia did not even have it in her to form a retort.

“Nobody’s spending the night outside,” Beatrice put a stop to any more foolish ideas. As much as she wanted to keep Ember and Olivia separately, she also didn’t want Olivia to get into more trouble, which seemed more and more likely, especially when the ninja girl is distressed.

“But... That house,” Olivia muttered weakly.

“Don’t worry—you’re in good company with Samuel and his *sweet, innocent* little child,” Ember chuckled. “Just like all the other—“

Beatrice glared at Ember and the redhead stopped.

“Sorry,” Ember apologized insincerely and walked toward Samuel, who just came out of his storage.

Beatrice sighed, walked up to Olivia, and put her hand around the listless girl.

“I know what you’re thinking,” Beatrice whispered. “But if you’re going to keep that attitude up, you’ll never be able to sleep with anyone in this city ever again.”

“That’s exactly my intent!” Olivia said and grit her teeth in new-found determination. “I’ll gut that pig Belmont like the subhuman swine that he is! Then I’ll free Emily and take her as far away from this revolting city as I can!”

“By all means,” Beatrice said quietly. “But in the meantime you’ve got to keep it together. And remember—just like you—that girl inside this house is a victim of circumstance. Just like you, I was disgusted with them all at first. But now—I feel sorry for her. Having to grow up in such a world, not even knowing any better...”

“And you’re supposed to be the ‘Savior’ that’ll make everything better, right?” Olivia chuckled bitterly.

I will certainly try, was what Beatrice’s old self would say. Beatrice paused for a second before answering, “Without a doubt, I will make this city a better place!”

“Good luck with that. Some places... Some people are beyond salvation,” Olivia said and looked at Ember who had just walked up to Samuel.

“You did have the time to prepare something edible for us, right?” Ember asked her brother, clearly having not lost her appetite despite what she witnessed.

“... Jenny has the table ready,” Samuel said without even making eye contact with Ember.

“Great!” Ember cheered and clapped her hands. “Oh, and don’t worry—we’ll be out of your hair tomorrow.”

“Fantastic,” Samuel said flatly and went with the giraffekin to the carriage to unload another bag.

“Alright, we’ll leave you guys to it,” Ember lightly waved to Samuel, Bernard, and his wolfkin.

“Wait!” Bernard called out to them and ran up to Beatrice.

The giant lionkin grabbed the succubus’s hand and asked, “If you wait for but a moment, wouldn’t you rather spend your night with me?”

“Haah?” Beatrice’s mouth dropped wide open.

“My place might not be much, but it is certainly far more luxurious than this isolated butcher shop!” Bernard continued making his case. “A beauty such as yourself deserves a good company, and someone who not only can protect her, but also take care of her *every* need.”

Ember cleared her throat to get Bernard’s attention and gave him a challenging look.

“Are you saying that I’m not a good company?” the redhead asked and crossed her arms.

“You are a perfectly adequate company,” Bernard said with a straight face. “And I would be glad to have you join us as well! However, there are certain things that even you cannot do.”

Ember snorted and said, “Do tell,” while trying to hold back from laughing out loud.

“I am not the same lionkin you knew when we parted ways!” Bernard explained and turned back to Beatrice. “My dear, I’ll have you know, that I’m the holder of the rare and prestigious A rank in the S.E.C.R.E.T. Guild!”

“My, my, the horny bastard has been moving up in the world,” Ember laughed, half-impressed.

“Ah... Wow! That’s... Impressive.” Beatrice tried to formulate a response while also not looking into the eyes of the horny beastkin. “You’re only the second person I’ve met today that has an A-rank in that guild.”

“Bwahaha!” Ember laughed out loud. “That’s a rejection if I ever heard one.”

“B-but why?” Bernard asked, heartbroken. “You and I, we are made for each other! Think of what beautiful children we would have one day!”

Oh boy! Beatrice realized it was time to get out of this animal’s grasp before he really tried to impregnate her, while Ember continued laughing in the background.

“I’m sorry, but I simply cannot take you up on your proposition,” Beatrice tried to be as kind as she could to the lionkin. “It’s... It’s not you—it’s me!”

“I... I don’t understand,” Bernard seemed crushed and visibly got a foot shorter as if the entire world was on his shoulders. However, he did not press the issue and let go of Beatrice’s hand.

“Sorry big fella,” Ember clapped on Bernard’s back. “There’ll be other big-breasted women for you to fertilize.”

“Impossible!” Bernard cried out and turned his back toward the girls. Rejected and betrayed! “Where will I ever find such a heavenly creature ever again?”

“Is he going to be alright?” Beatrice quietly asked Ember.

“Yeah, don’t worry—he does this all the time,” Ember smiled.

“Alright, maggots, back to work!” Bernard growled at his henchmen.

Olivia, Ember, and Beatrice went inside Samuel’s home.