

The first part of this chapter has some R-18.

Chapter 66: Second Day of Winter Break

– Harry Sitri –

The hot water poured down my back as I stood in the massive marble shower of my suite in Sitri Manor, and I tried very hard to remember why I had woken up at the ungodly hour of six in the morning during my winter break.

Right. Grandmother Selene. Eight o'clock sharp.

A full day touring the Sitri clan's businesses across the Underworld, meeting executives and managers and Satan only knew who else. The thought put a knot of nerves in my stomach.

These weren't random strangers.

These were people whose livelihoods my family controlled, people who would be measuring me from the second I walked through their doors. The newly discovered Sitri prince. Serafall's miracle son.

The Sitri Clan did not merely own hospitals.

That was the version people outside the family knew because it sounded respectable and simple. Sitri hospitals were the crown jewel, yes, but they were attached to pharmaceutical laboratories, healing research foundations, potion houses, water purification networks, magical sanitation projects, medical equipment manufacturers, transport contracts, insurance firms, legal departments, training academies, charitable clinics, and now, thanks to the goblins being suicidal morons, an entire bloody bank.

Grandmother had decided that I needed to see all of it.

No pressure.

Thankfully, I wasn't facing it unprepared. I had some of the finest 'tutors' in high society etiquette a young devil lord could ask for.

Two of them were currently in the shower with me, conducting a very early, very hands-on final lesson. In the shower...

"Posture, darling," Narcissa said from her knees in front of me, her voice carrying that crisp aristocratic authority even with hot water sluicing down her flawless naked body. "When you enter a room today, you enter it like you own it. Because you do. Be gracious to your clan's employees. Learn their names. Thank them for their work." She pressed her magnificent breasts together around my hard cock, the soft wet flesh swallowing my shaft completely, and began to slide them up and down in slow, deliberate strokes. "But never forget, and never let them forget,

that you are above them. The only person permitted to give you orders today is your grandmother. No one else. Not a director, not a manager, no matter how long they've served the clan."

"Nngh... right," I groaned, bracing one hand against the marble wall. "Respectful but... fuck... but superior. Got it."

It was extremely difficult to take notes on aristocratic comportment when the most elegant woman I knew was on her knees giving me a boobjob, her pale blue eyes looking up at me through wet lashes with utter devotion.

Her tongue flicked out and lapped at my cockhead every time it emerged from between her breasts.

And she wasn't even the only 'professor holding office hours' despite this being a holiday this morning.

"Mmmm... listen to her, Harry," Tonks purred from behind me, her naked body pressed flush against my back. Her breasts dragged across my skin, slick with water and soap, her hard nipples drawing lines between my shoulder blades as she rubbed herself against me like a cat in heat.

Her hands roamed my chest and abs while she kissed and nibbled along the side of my neck.

"Auntie Cissa gives good advice." She caught my earlobe in her teeth and her breath went hot and heavy in my ear. "And an even better boobjob, doesn't she?"

"Haaah... yeah," I breathed. "She really, mmh, really does."

"Flatterers, both of you," Narcissa said primly. Then she opened her mouth, tilted her head, and swallowed my cock straight down her throat.

"Fuck!" My hips jerked. Her throat squeezed around me, tight and hot and perfect, and she held herself there with her nose buried against my pelvis, her breasts still cradling the base of my shaft.

Any pretense that this was still a lesson died right then and there. The advice portion of the morning was officially over. Class dismissed. This was just my two gorgeous older lovers worshipping my body an hour before I had to go be a respectable heir.

"Mmmgh... mmmph... glk... glk..." Narcissa bobbed her head, throat working, wet obscene sounds echoing off the marble. Steam swirled around the three of us.

Tonks giggled against my neck, and then her warmth left my back. I felt her slide down behind me, her hands gripping my ass cheeks and spreading them, and then...

"AH! Dora!" I yelped, jolting up onto my toes as her hot little tongue dragged teasingly across my asshole.

"Mmhmhm," she hummed, utterly shameless, lapping at me again with slow, wicked strokes. "What? Big bad Ultimate Class devil can't handle a little tongue? Mmmm..." Her hair was probably cycling through colors back there. It always did when she got worked up.

"You're a menace," I gasped.

"You love it," she shot back, and then her tongue shifted lower, and she drew one of my balls into her warm mouth and sucked.

"Ohhh fuck..." My head dropped back. Narcissa in front, deepthroating me with the refined hunger of a noblewoman who had decided that propriety ended at her bedroom door. Tonks behind, mouthing and sucking my balls, moaning against them, "mmh... mmh..." like she was enjoying this even more than I was. The dual sensation built a pressure at the base of my spine that climbed fast, way too fast.

"I'm... nnggh... I'm gonna cum," I warned through gritted teeth.

Tonks pulled off my balls with a wet pop and giggled, peeking around my hip. "Ooooh, yes. Do it, Harry." Her voice dropped into that throaty, gleeful register that meant she was about to say something filthy. "I wanna see you blow a huge load all over Auntie's pretty face. Paint her like a proper Black family portrait."

"Nymphadora," Narcissa managed to scold around my cock, the word coming out as a garbled "Nymmphmmdrmm," which honestly undermined her authority somewhat.

But she pulled back until just the head rested on her tongue, pumped my shaft with both hands, pressed her breasts up around me, and looked me dead in the eye with an expression of pure aristocratic challenge. Permission. Demand, even.

That look finished me.

"Fuck... FUCK... haaah!" My whole body locked up and I came hard, the first thick rope splashing across Narcissa's elegant face, the second over the bridge of her nose and into her platinum hair, the third across her lips and chin. She closed her eyes and tilted her face up into it like she was receiving a blessing, milking my shaft with her hands and her cleavage, "mmmm..." humming in satisfaction as I painted her pretty face exactly like Tonks wanted.

"Ohhhh, that's gorgeous," Tonks breathed from behind me, chin hooked on my hip to watch, her hand audibly working between her own thighs.

I slumped against the shower wall, chest heaving, watching the water slowly rinse streaks of white from Narcissa's serene, smug, thoroughly decorated face. She gathered a stray drop from her lips with one fingertip and sucked it clean.

"Now then," she said, voice returning to crisp professor mode as if nothing had happened, cum still sliding down her cheek. "Repeat back this morning's material, darling."

I huffed out a breathless laugh. "Gracious to employees. Learn names. Never let them forget I'm above them. Only Grandmother gives me orders today."

"Full marks." Narcissa rose gracefully to her feet and kissed my jaw. "You'll do wonderfully."

"And if any sexy businesswomen flirt with you," Tonks added brightly, standing and wrapping herself around my arm, "tell them the position's full. Waiting list only."

I snorted. "Pretty sure Grandmother would freeze them solid before I got the chance."

But Tonks clearly wasn't done with me yet. She pressed her naked body against the marble wall and gave me a hungry, lustful grin, her hair shifting through a dozen colors before settling on a deep wanton red. "Before you go play businessman with your gran all day," she said, dragging one finger down my chest, "you should probably empty those balls one more time. Just in case. Wouldn't want you getting distracted in some boardroom thinking about us." Her grin widened. "Public service, really."

My eyes traveled down her wet, perfect body, the soap sliding over her curves, and any thought of finishing up quickly evaporated.

I stepped in close, hooked a hand under her thigh, and lifted her leg up to my hip. "Generous of you," I murmured, and slid my cock into her tight pussy.

"Mmmf! Hahh..." She gasped as I sank in, and I groaned right along with her, because she'd done that thing she always did, used her metamorph powers to make herself impossibly *tight*, her inner folds and walls gripping and molding around me like she'd been shaped for my cock specifically.

It was unfair. It was perfect.

"Fuck, Dora..." I started moving, thrusting up into her against the wall, her back pressed to the marble, her leg hooked in my arm. Her tits bounced with every thrust.

"Ahh! Ahh! Yeah, like that," she panted, her arms looping around my neck. Our bodies moved together, slick and hot, the wet slap of skin echoing off the tile beneath the patter of the shower.

It felt amazing for both of us, that perfect rhythm where everything just clicked.

Beside us, Narcissa had finished cleaning herself up, gathering the last of my cum off her cheeks and tits with her fingers and licking them clean with a satisfied little hum.

Then she stepped closer, her composure entirely intact even now, and leaned in to capture Tonks's lips in a slow, deliberate kiss.

"Mmmh," Tonks moaned into her aunt's mouth, never breaking the rhythm of her hips rolling against mine.

Narcissa kissed down her niece's jaw and throat, then dipped to draw one of Tonks's bouncing nipples between her lips, sucking softly while I kept fucking her.

I turned my head and Narcissa met me halfway, and the three of us traded sloppy, open kisses, mouths and tongues sliding together, while I thrust into Tonks against the wall.

Hot and filthy and absolutely the wrong thing to be doing an hour before a day of high society etiquette.

Tonks's pussy started clamping down on me, tighter and tighter with each stroke, her metamorph control fluttering with how worked up she was getting. Her moans climbed louder, bouncing off the marble.

"Ahh! Ahh! Harry! Oh fuck, AHH!"

Narcissa reached over and pinched both of Tonks's nipples, rolling them between her fingers, and gave me a sultry look over her niece's shoulder. "Such a slutty little niece I have, isn't she, darling?"

"You bet I am!" Tonks half-laughed, half-moaned, and then she came, hard, her whole body shaking, her pussy clenching down around me like a vise. "Cumming! I'm cumming, ahh, AHHH!"

That was it for me. The grip of her, the sounds she made, Narcissa's hand on her tits, all of it crashed together at once.

"Shit, me too, nnggh, FUCK," I groaned, burying myself deep and letting go, pumping load after load inside her as she rode out her own orgasm clenched around my cock.

We sagged together against the wall, both of us trembling, the water washing over our joined bodies.

Tonks let out a long, blissful sigh, going boneless in my arms. "Mmm... there. Now you can go be all serious and important without your balls aching."

I laughed breathlessly and eased her leg back down, steadying her until she found her footing.

I grabbed the soap. I had forty minutes to actually get clean, get dressed, and become a respectable member of Clan Sitri.

I figured two out of three wasn't bad.

(R-18 End)

...At eight o'clock sharp, I walked into my grandmother's office wearing a black and blue designer suit cut in the Sitri clan colors, tailored so precisely it felt like a second skin.

Narcissa had approved it with a satisfied little hum.

Tonks had said it made me look like an evil prince from an anime and then spent five minutes trying to convince me to let her mess up my hair.

I had not let her. Mostly.

Selene was already behind her desk, looking immaculate as always in an elegant women's business suit, not a single hair out of place. She really was like an older Sona, that same composed, knife-edged poise, the same way of looking at you that made you want to straighten your tie.

"Good, you're here," she said, glancing at the clock. "Though you were almost late."

I coughed into my fist. "Sorry. I was getting some last minute tutoring from a couple of my peerage members."

Selene gave me a long, knowing look over the rim of her teacup. She did not say a word. She didn't have to. She knew exactly what kind of *tutoring* I'd been receiving, and she let the silence sit just long enough to make sure I knew that she knew.

I cleared my throat again and changed the subject before my ears could go fully red. "So, uh, how are things going with Diodora? After he got captured yesterday."

Her expression soured immediately. "The interrogation is turning into a full blown mess that I would very much rather not get into." She set her cup down with a precise click. "Let us simply say that I am glad we discovered what he was up to before the Church did, and leave it there. I'm sure my daughter will be quite busy these next few days cleaning up that particular disaster."

I was curious. Of course I was curious. But the way she said it, clipped and final, told me pushing would get me nowhere.

So I let it drop.

Whatever Diodora had actually been planning, it was apparently bad enough to keep a Satan occupied for days untangling. Which meant he was an even bigger piece of shit than I'd already pegged him for, and given what I'd seen at Lucifer Land, that was a high bar.

"Alright," I said. "So what's the plan for today?"

"I have the entire day arranged." Selene rose smoothly from her chair and smoothed the front of her jacket. "We'll begin with the Sitri farms."

"Farms?" That hadn't been what I'd expected. I'd been bracing for boardrooms and balance sheets.

"Farms." She gestured for me to follow as she crossed toward the teleportation circle inlaid in the floor. "What do you know about agriculture in the Underworld, Harry?"

"Honestly? Nothing."

"Then this is an excellent place to start." She stepped into the circle and I followed, the runes beginning to glow a soft blue beneath our feet. "Most of the Underworld is infertile. Barren rock, ash, and dead soil for as far as the eye can see across vast stretches of it. Crops simply do not grow in most regions. It is one of the great limiting factors of devil society and always has been."

"So how does anyone eat?"

"That," she said, and there was a flicker of clan pride in her voice, "is where the noble families earn their keep. Several of the great clans possess bloodline traits that can overcome that infertility, and the ability to feed the Underworld is no small part of how those clans hold their power." The circle's light climbed higher around us. "Our Sitri water magic does far more than make pretty fountains and crush our enemies, Harry. It revitalizes the soil. We can purify it, balance it, draw life back into dead earth. The Sitri farms grow a significant portion of the food this entire realm depends upon. It is one of the true foundations of our wealth and influence."

I let that sink in as the office dissolved into blue light around us.

"Huh," I said. "I never thought about it like that."

"Most people never do," Selene replied as the world reformed around us into open sky and rolling green. "Which is precisely why you need to."

– Selene Sitri –

Selene Sitri watched her grandson speak to the workers of the eastern agricultural complex and found herself smiling.

Harry stood near one of the lower irrigation terraces, black and blue suit standing out sharply against the rich green of the fields and the pale glow of Sitri water channels. Around him had gathered a small cluster of low-class devils, farmers, canal technicians, soil ward specialists, and several curious younger workers who had clearly invented excuses to drift closer.

He had been nervous when they first arrived. Selene had seen it in the tension around his shoulders, the way he glanced too quickly from the fields to the workers to Director Mavia, as if trying to decide where a prince was supposed to look. He had hidden it well for a young man raised without noble training, but she had still seen it.

Then one of the older farmhands, a weathered low-class devil with cracked horns and hands stained green from nutrient paste, had asked Harry whether it was true he had fought Kokabiel?

Harry had blinked, laughed awkwardly, and said, "Mostly I shot him in the bollocks and let my mother do the terrifying part."

The workers had roared with laughter.

The tension had shattered.

After that, he was fine. More than fine, in fact.

He listened. That was the thing Selene noticed most.

Plenty of noble heirs knew how to speak to common devils. A smaller number knew how to appear charming while doing so. Almost none of them knew how to actually listen.

Harry asked the canal technicians how often the water arrays had to be rebalanced. He asked a mushroom cultivator why one shaded dome smelled faintly of copper. He asked a low-class woman named Rella how long her family had worked Sitri fields, and when she answered "four generations, my lord," he remembered her name ten minutes later when she explained the difference between ashgrain and moonbarley.

Selene saw the tiny flicker of surprise on Rella's face when he did.

Good. Names mattered. Respect mattered. Not because low-class devils were equal to high nobility. They were not. Pretending otherwise was sentimental foolishness, and sentimentality had killed more good intentions than cruelty ever had.

But rule built entirely on fear was brittle. Rule built on gratitude, stability, and pride endured.

Harry understood that instinctively. Or perhaps he had learned the opposite under the roof of those awful human relatives and had resolved never to be like them.

Either way, Selene approved. Of course, not every interaction was purely professional.

Two young low-class women from the greenhouse division had attached themselves to Harry's orbit almost immediately. One had bright orange hair, tiny black horns, and a blouse that had somehow lost two buttons between the inspection platform and the western nutrient tanks. The other had deep violet skin, lovely gold eyes, and the sort of figure that would have drawn attention in any noble ballroom if bloodline prejudice did not exist.

They were not subtle.

They laughed too loudly at Harry's jokes. They leaned too close when explaining seedling rotation. The orange-haired one touched his sleeve three times in under two minutes. The

violet-skinned one bent over to pick up a dropped soil charm and made certain Harry had an excellent view of her backside.

Selene did not blame them.

Devils were ambitious creatures.

Low-class devils especially learned ambition early, because ambition was often the only rope thrown down from above. A night in a noble's bed could mean jewelry, protection, employment in the manor, a contract position, or even, if the stories were especially romantic and improbable, a peerage offer.

And Harry Sitri was a prince of the clan, the son of a Maou, handsome enough to cause traffic accidents, unmarried in the strict legal sense, and famous enough that half the Underworld had watched footage of him fighting Fallen Angels with his shirt torn open.

If two pretty farm girls wanted to gamble on that, Selene considered it entirely rational.

What pleased her was how Harry handled them.

He smiled, complimented their work, gently stepped out of reach when the orange-haired girl tried to take his arm, and said with warm politeness that his family would murder him if he came home from his first business tour with additional romantic complications before lunch.

The girls laughed. The rejection landed softly. Both retreated with their dignity intact, and one of them still looked as though she might write a diary entry about his smile later.

Selene's smile deepened by a fraction. *Good boy.* Her grandson.

That, in fact, was something Selene was a little ashamed to remember she had worried about when she'd first learned, months ago, that her daughter Serafall had *a son*.

As much as she and Sebastian had been overjoyed to finally have a grandchild, there had been a quiet thread of unease in taking in a grown male half devil their clan had not raised.

It was no secret that male devils tended toward ambition, and being the son of a Satan would open a great many doors for Harry. A young man with that kind of leverage, raised entirely outside their values, could have been a danger to everything they'd built.

She was even faintly ashamed now to admit that her first private fear had been that Harry might try to fight Sona for the position of future head of the Sitri clan. It would have torn the family apart.

But that had never happened. Instead, Harry and Sona had fallen in love, and one day they would be married.

The boy—*no man*—had no interest in supplanting his aunt's birthright. If anything, he'd reached Ultimate Class and simply lifted Sona up alongside him, encouraging her to do the same. Selene's worries had been entirely unfounded, and she'd never been so glad to be wrong.

And there was more good fortune layered on top of it.

With Harry taking Rias Gremory as his second wife, the dream she and her dearest friend Venelana Gremory had nursed for decades, to one day unite their two great clans, would finally come true.

Selene watched her grandson laugh at something a farm worker said and felt a warm, deep satisfaction settle in her chest.

It was going to be a touch unusual, even by devil standards, that her own daughter Serafall would in all likelihood become Harry's third official wife. Selene had needed a moment to make her peace with that.

But at the end of the day, devils were devils.

The squeamish human notions of taboo simply did not apply to their kind, not where power and the strength of a clan's bloodline were concerned. Serafall was happier than Selene had seen her in centuries, Sona had blossomed, and the family was strong and whole.

That was what mattered.

For now, Selene watched Harry crouch down beside an old, gnarled devil tending a row of crystalline grain stalks, asking earnest questions about irrigation and soil saturation. The boy was actually listening. Learning. Taking it seriously.

"He really is a good boy," she murmured to herself, the cool composure of the Sitri matriarch softening for just a moment.

Then she straightened her jacket, composure restored, and called across the field. "Harry. We've a great deal more ground to cover today. Say your goodbyes."

He waved to the workers, who beamed and bowed as he made his way back to her, and Selene led her grandson toward the next stop on a very long, very important day.

– Harry Sitri –

We went to a whole string of businesses after that, and Selene had clearly planned the day to do double duty. On the surface it was a tour, a chance to show me the breadth of what the Sitri clan actually owned and ran. Underneath, I quickly realized, it was also a series of surprise inspections. She'd appear without warning, and you could watch the managers' faces go from delight to panic in the span of a single breath.

First was a potions emporium, gleaming shelves of bottled remedies that tied right back into the family's grip on Underworld medicine. Then a sanitation plant, which was less glamorous but apparently kept half a city running. And then, of all places, a toy factory that churned out merchandise for my mum's show, Magical Girl Levia-tan.

For about thirty seconds, I thought that would be harmless.

Then I saw a life-sized cardboard display of my mother in full Magical Girl Levia-tan costume winking beside an equally ridiculous display of me in the black and silver villain outfit from the Cassium episodes.

I stopped dead.

Grandmother did not. "Keep walking, Harry."

"That is my face."

"Yes."

"On a lunchbox..."

"Several lunchboxes."

"Cassium Betrayal Battle Bento Set," I read in horror as we passed a shelf stacked with them.

Grandmother's mouth twitched. "It sold very well."

"I hate that you know that."

"You should know it too. It is *our* factory..."

The toy factory was bright, loud, colorful, and full of cheerful workers assembling everything from plush Levia-tan mascots to transformation wand replicas to tiny chibi figures of my mother doing battle poses.

And then someone recognized me.

Not as Harry Sitri, prince of the clan.

As **Cassium**.

A woman with lime-green hair dropped an armful of plush tentacle monsters, pointed at me, and shrieked, "It's him!"

Every head in the assembly room turned.

I had faced a *basilisk* with less fear than I felt at that instant.

Within seconds I was surrounded by female factory workers holding posters, figure boxes, keychains, art books, commemorative episode scripts, and one very worrying body pillow that I refused to look at directly. They were all talking at once.

"My lord, please sign this!"

"Cassium-sama, your final kiss scene made me cry!"

"Was Levia-tan really that emotional during filming?"

"Can you write, 'To Mira, remember our forbidden love'?"

"Please sign across my chest!"

Grandmother stood three steps behind me, looking utterly serene.

I shot her a betrayed look.

She lifted one eyebrow as if to say that a Sitri handled public relations without whining.

So I handled public relations. I signed merchandise. A lot of merchandise.

At one point, a pretty red-skinned worker clasped her hands under her chin and asked, "Lord Harry, when Cassium said, 'Even darkness remembered your light,' did you improvise that?"

"No," I said truthfully. "I was desperately trying to remember the script."

She swooned anyway. Devil television fans were terrifying.

By the time we left, I had signed my name so many times my wrist hurt, and one of the supervisors had promised Grandmother that productivity would recover "as soon as the emotional impact settled."

"You handle adoration well," Selene observed dryly as we left, the workers waving us off like we were royalty. Which, technically, I supposed we were.

"Lots of practice lately," I admitted.

As we moved between stops, she kept teaching, and one lesson came up more than once.

"Always remember this, Harry," she said. "The Underworld is a far kinder, more welcoming place now than it was before my daughter and the new Satans took power. That is true, and I am proud of it. But devils are still devils. Even in a gentler age, our kind can fall to sin as easily as we draw breath. Greed especially. There will always be those who look at the wealth and trust of this clan and see something to steal from."

She wasn't speaking idly, either. The next stop proved it.

It was an insurance firm operating out near the edge of Sitri territory, and Selene's expression had gone cool and businesslike on the way there.

"I've been receiving complaints about this office," she explained. "When devils in this territory suffer injury to person or property from the occasional demonic beast, this insurance firm is meant to pay out. The reports say they have been refusing to honor those claims. I intend to verify the rumors myself." The office doors sensed her approach and opened. "Sometimes," Grandmother said, "people steal from the clan because they believe they deserve more than their station grants them..."

We entered. The lobby froze. It was almost funny.

A dozen employees in dark blue uniforms looked up at the same time. A receptionist dropped a stack of claim folders. Someone in the back made a squeaking sound. A young man carrying coffee turned so fast that half the cups launched out of their tray and splattered across the polished floor.

"Lady Selene..." the receptionist whispered.

Then everyone started moving at once.

Too fast. Too nervous. Too guilty.

Employees bowed so hard several nearly smacked their heads into desks. Someone frantically tried to vanish a pile of files and only succeeded in turning them bright pink. A printer began spitting paper at high speed. One woman opened a drawer, saw whatever was inside, slammed it shut, then sat on it.

I looked at Grandmother. She looked calm. That was how I knew things were already bad.

"Good morning," she said. The lobby went silent.

A door at the back burst open, and a man hurried out. No. Not hurried. *Waddled*.

That was unkind, but accurate. He was fat. Fat in a way I had not thought devils really got. Most devils looked like they had been designed by artists with a grudge against ordinary people. Even older devils tended to stay elegant, powerful, or at least dramatically imposing.

This man looked like Uncle Vernon had somehow found the Underworld, grown horns, and discovered expense accounts.

His suit was expensive but strained at every button. His jowls shook when he moved. Sweat glistened along his upper lip despite the office being cool. His small horns curved out from a receding hairline, and his smile had the exact desperate oiliness of someone who had practiced looking innocent in a mirror and failed.

For one second, I smelled Privet Drive.

Grandmother's voice cut through the memory. "Manager Golvas."

The fat devil bowed so low I thought he might topple forward and bounce. "Lady Selene! What an unexpected honor. Truly, truly, our humble branch is blessed beyond measure by your presence." His eyes flicked to me. They sharpened with calculation so fast I almost admired the audacity. "And Lord Harry Sitri. The famous young prince himself. We are doubly honored."

He bowed again.

I inclined my head exactly as Narcissa had drilled into me. "Manager Golvas..."

His smile widened, showing too many teeth. "My lord, allow me to say what a privilege it is to welcome you to our modest branch. We have followed your exploits with great admiration."

"Have you?"

"Naturally. All loyal servants of Clan Sitri have celebrated your arrival!"

Behind him, one of the clerks looked like she wanted to melt into the floor.

Grandmother stepped forward. "We are here for an inspection and an audit of your books..."

Golvas's smile twitched. "Of course, my lady. Had we been informed, we would have prepared a proper reception."

"That would have defeated the purpose of a **surprise** inspection...."

"Naturally, naturally." Sweat gathered faster on his forehead. "We maintain impeccable standards at all times..."

Grandmother's gaze drifted to the pink files still sitting on one desk. "Do you?"

Golvas laughed. It was a bad laugh.

The lobby had gone dead silent, every employee frozen mid-cower, and that was when my grandmother decided to handle things in the most efficient way imaginable.

"Let me make this simple," Selene said, her voice carrying that pleasant, glacial calm across the room. "The first one of you to tell me precisely what is going on in this office, and exactly what crimes Director Gorvas has been committing, will be the one to take over his job."

The silence lasted one heartbeat. Then the office exploded.

"He pockets payout reserves!"

"He ordered assessors to delay site visits until evidence degraded!"

"He changed claim classifications after signatures were filed!"

"He takes bribes from beast ward contractors!"

"He made us deny widow compensation claims!"

"He keeps a second ledger in his desk!"

"No, three ledgers! One for the auditors, one real one, and one private one!"

"He fired Tava because she approved a claim without asking him first!"

"He sold beneficiary data to debt collectors!"

"He said low-class families were too stupid to fight back!"

"I have copies!"

"I have originals!"

"I have the key to the locked drawer!"

The entire lobby fell over itself trying to confess.

It was amazing. Terrifying, but amazing.

Five seconds earlier, every employee had been frozen in place, terrified of Golvas. Grandmother had spoken a couple sentences, offered power to whoever moved first, and the whole structure collapsed under the weight of everyone's ambition and fear.

Devils were devils. Selene had said it like a warning. Now I saw the other side of it. Ambition could rot a branch from within when a man like Golvas used it to steal and threaten. But ambition could also make a room full of frightened employees turn on him the instant someone above him offered a ladder.

Golvas's face had gone through several colors. Red first. Then pale. Then a blotchy purple that made him look even more like Uncle Vernon after a bad day at work. "You ungrateful little shits," he hissed.

That shut the room up. The receptionist who had dropped the files flinched. A thin devil with spectacles took half a step back.

Golvas rounded on them, his mask gone completely. "I protected this branch. I made it profitable. I kept this place from bleeding money into the hands of whining gutter trash who think every snapped fence post is a fucking tragedy. You think any of you can run this office? You think she will keep you once she sees how useless you all are?"

Nobody answered.

Grandmother's voice cut through the silence. "Manager Golvas."

He turned toward her.

"Your employment is terminated."

For one second, he looked like he could not understand the words. Then rage twisted his face. I felt the movement before I fully saw it. His demonic energy flared, ugly and greasy, far stronger than his appearance suggested. He was mid-class. His bulk shifted with surprising speed, and he lunged for Selene.

My body moved on instinct. Or tried to. I had one foot forward, power already gathering in my hand, when Grandmother lifted her arm.

She simply flicked her wrist. A blast of Sitri water erupted from empty air with a sound like a cannon firing underwater.

WHOOOM!

The torrent slammed into Golvas dead center. His charge stopped instantly. Then he went backward. Through the reception desk. Through the back wall. Through the private office behind it. Through the outer wall of the building.

I saw a perfect fat-devil-shaped hole punched through three layers of architecture.

Then, from outside, came a distant crash.

I stood there with my hand half raised, feeling vaguely foolish.

Grandmother lowered her arm and smoothed the cuff of her jacket.

The receptionist made a tiny squeak.

Someone behind me whispered, "Satan preserve us."

I turned my head slightly. "Which one?"

The whisperer went pale.

Grandmother gave me a look.

I shut up. This was her show still.

Selene stepped forward, heels clicking across the debris-strewn floor. Every employee in the lobby watched her with the horrified attention of people who had just remembered that the elegant woman in front of them was not only the clan matriarch, but also Serafall Leviathan's mother. She stopped in the center of the lobby.

"Listen carefully," she said.

Everyone listened.

"This branch exists to serve the people of Sitri territory. Insurance is not charity. It is not a decorative document sold to make frightened families feel safer while providing nothing when danger comes. Your job is to help devils who have paid for protection receive that protection when they suffer loss." Her gaze moved over them one by one. "Not scam them."

A few employees swallowed.

Grandmother smiled. It was a pleasant smile. That made it worse. "Good."

She turned toward a woman near the rear desk. The same woman who had tried to sit on a drawer earlier. She had dark green hair pinned in a messy bun, and a terrified expression that suggested she had just realized attention had landed on her.

"Your name?"

The woman stiffened. "M-Merra, Lady Selene."

Grandmother's smile softened by perhaps one degree. "Congratulations, *Acting Director Merra*. You have until tomorrow morning to send a full written report to my office. Include every corrupted claim, every delayed payout, every forged assessment, every bribed contractor, every employee who participated willingly, and every employee who acted under threat. Be thorough. Be honest. If you attempt to hide anything, I will *know*."

Merra looked like she might faint. Then she bowed so deeply her forehead nearly touched the floor. "Yes, Lady Selene. Thank you, Lady Selene. I will not fail you."

"See that you do not." Grandmother turned toward me. "Harry."

"Yes?"

"We are finished here."

I glanced through the hole in the building. "What about Golvas?"

From outside came a distant groan.

"Eh, our territory security will collect him."

"Is he alive?"

She grinned maliciously. "Unfortunately for him..."

Several employees gulped in perfect unison.

I decided not to ask what unfortunately meant in practical terms.

Grandmother moved toward the exit, stepping around broken wall fragments with perfect grace. "Come along," she said. "It is time to visit the Sitri main hospital." Her voice changed when she said that. "The clan's pride and joy."

The Sitri main hospital was located in Lilith, the capital city of the Underworld, and it made every other medical building I had ever seen look like someone had stacked bricks together and hoped illness would get bored and leave.

It rose above the surrounding district in sweeping pale-blue towers of glass, white stone, and silver metal, all joined by arched bridges and floating garden terraces. Water ran everywhere. It moved through carved channels in the walls, flowed beneath transparent floors, circled reception desks in glowing streams, and fell in silent curtains between wings of the building.

The whole hospital felt like a living spell array built out of water, stone, glass, and centuries of accumulated medical genius.

"This is ours?" I asked before I could stop myself.

Grandmother gave me a sideways look. "Yes, Harry."

Grandmother's lips twitched. "Do not gape."

"I am not gaping."

"You are absolutely gaping."

I closed my mouth.

She looked amused for half a second, then started up the broad steps toward the entrance.

The doors opened before us, and the inside was somehow even more impressive than the outside. The main atrium stretched upward at least twelve floors, with healing wards floating like translucent blue petals between balconies. Devils moved everywhere. Nurses in pale uniforms guided patients. Healers crossed bridges with clipboards and glowing diagnostic crystals. Floating stretchers drifted along marked lanes. Families sat in waiting gardens where small fountains released calming mist. A child with tiny wings ran past laughing while a nurse chased him with the exhausted speed of someone who had lost this exact battle six times already.

It smelled faintly of rain, clean linen, and something herbal.

For a moment, I thought of St. Mungo's in the wizarding world. Then I realized comparing this place to St. Mungo's felt unfair.

This was the reason people spoke the Sitri name with reverence.

"Phenex Tears are famous," Grandmother said as we crossed the atrium. "But their reputation causes outsiders to misunderstand medicine in the Underworld. Phenex Tears do not cure disease. They do not reverse congenital defects. They do not regrow missing limbs or severed body parts if the tissue is gone. They do not repair damage to the soul, nor do they remove certain curses, bloodline disorders, magical rot, deep poison syndromes, or degenerative conditions."

I looked around at the enormous hospital again. "So anyone with those comes here."

"Anyone who can reach us, yes. Noble, common, low-class, reincarnated devil, stray recovery candidate, servant line, mixed blood, civilian, soldier, child." Grandmother's voice held quiet pride. "The Sitri hospitals are the greatest medical system in the Underworld."

"That sounds like bragging."

"It is accurate bragging."

"Fair enough."

A group of healers waiting near the central fountain straightened as we approached. The one at the front was a tall, narrow man with swept-back white hair, deep blue skin, and a doctor's coat whose silver embroidery probably meant something important. He bowed to Grandmother first, then to me.

"Lady Selene! Lord Harry. Welcome to Lilith Central."

"Director Mares," Grandmother greeted.

The man's entire face lit with pride at being addressed so directly. "It is an honor to receive you both." He turned smoothly and began leading us through the atrium.

I quickly learned that hospital directors were worse than toy factory fans, just in a different way.

Director Mares did not ask me to sign a lunchbox, thankfully. Instead, he gave us numbers. So many numbers. Survival rates, discharge totals, surgical success percentages, potion efficiency improvements, patient satisfaction metrics, ward expansion timelines, magical trauma response times, curse stabilization ratios.

He was smiling the entire time. "Seventeen thousand outpatient treatments this month," he said proudly as we passed a row of diagnostic rooms where glowing water spirals floated around patients. "Three thousand four hundred and twelve in-patient admissions, with a ninety-seven point eight percent successful discharge rate. Two hundred and six limb reconstruction cases. Eighty-nine full nerve lattice restorations. Twelve soul-adjacent curse stabilization cases referred from Agares territory, all still alive."

"Excellent," Grandmother said.

Director Mares somehow stood taller.

"Our pediatric wing also completed the first round of demonic core stabilization treatment for the low-class children affected by the western ash fever outbreak. All forty-three recovered without permanent damage."

That made Grandmother's expression soften slightly. "Good work."

The director practically glowed.

It was nice, honestly. After the insurance office, seeing someone actually proud of helping people felt like fresh air.

We passed through a transparent corridor overlooking a surgical theater below. Four healers stood around a patient whose entire left arm was missing from the shoulder. Sitri water floated in the air above the stump, threaded with silver runes, shaping itself into a glowing outline of bone, muscle, nerves, and skin.

I stopped walking.

Director Mares noticed and smiled. "Regenerative reconstruction. The patient lost the arm to a corrosive beast bite three weeks ago. Too much time elapsed for Phenex Tears to restore the limb, and the original tissue was fully destroyed. We are rebuilding from his own demonic blueprint."

"That is insane," I said.

"That is Sitri medicine," Grandmother corrected.

I watched as the floating water sank into the wound, and the patient's missing shoulder began to glow.

For once, I had no smart comment.

Director Mares led us onward.

Grandmother listened attentively, asking precise questions that made doctors straighten and junior healers scramble for notes. She knew staffing numbers. She knew budget expansions. She knew which wings had received new research funding and which suppliers had tried to raise ingredient prices after the goblin collapse. She knew names, old cases, senior healers' specialties, and apparently the exact year the left side of the pediatric tower had been renovated.

I had no idea how she kept all of it in her head.

Then again, Hermione probably would have called it basic preparation and asked for three more ledgers.

Eventually, we reached a quieter upper-floor corridor overlooking the city. Lilith stretched beyond the windows in endless layers of towers, lights, floating roads, and distant noble districts. Director Mares had just finished explaining a new curse-purging technique when Grandmother asked a question that made his proud smile falter.

"And the sleeping sickness?"

The director stopped. Just for a fraction of a second.

But I noticed.

So did Grandmother.

"Lady Selene," he said carefully.

"How has the research progressed?"

His expression turned sad. This was the face of a man who had been asked about an old failure that still hurt. "Not as we had hoped."

Grandmother's eyes narrowed slightly. "My family has donated considerable resources toward that research. On your request which we were happy to accept, even if you won't tell us who it is you obviously know that is affected by the disease."

He swallowed nervously. "Yes, my lady. And as always I thank you for your *discretion*, but the disease continues to elude myself and our top researchers..." The hurt in his voice made it sound very personal.

That sounded awful, obviously. Sleeping sickness. People trapped in their own bodies, kept stable but unreachable. It was exactly the sort of thing that would make a medical clan furious because it sat there refusing to be solved.

My grandmother and him continued talking quietly, but halfway through Director Mares's explanation, something tugged at me. Like a drop of water falling into a still pond somewhere inside my chest.

I looked down. My sword was not in my hand. It was fused with me now, bound to my magic, my blood, my soul, whatever ridiculous category legendary fey weapons filed themselves under.

But I felt it. The sword *stirred*. That was the only word for it, and it was a deeply strange thing to think about a weapon.

Another pulse moved through me. *Interested? Curious?*

I turned my head.

Down the corridor, past a pair of nurses speaking quietly near a station, past a sealed door marked research access, past a bend where the light dimmed slightly, something waited.

I drifted a step away from my grandmother and the doctor while they kept talking. Then another. The pulse got stronger when I turned a particular direction, weaker when I turned away.

So I followed it.

Through one hallway, then another. The halls grew quieter the further I went.

Fewer nurses passed me. Fewer voices behind closed doors. Eventually I stepped into a corridor that had no foot traffic at all. No patients. No staff. Nothing. A whole wing of the hospital, silent and empty.

And then I was standing in front of a *perfectly ordinary* blank white wall.

There was nothing there.

No door. No sign at all that anything existed on the other side. But my sword was practically humming inside me now, and my own senses, the ones I'd been training, were screaming at me that there was something behind that wall.

I wondered if my grandmother knows this is here?

Whether there was a secret room tucked away in the heart of my family's flagship hospital that even the matriarch of the Sitri clan wasn't aware of.

I probably should have stopped right there. I probably should have gone back to fetch Selene, told her what I'd sensed, let her handle it. That would have been the smart move.

Curiosity won out instead.

I drew Viviane's sword—my sword—and the blade practically jumped in my hand, vibrating with something that felt absurdly like excitement, like a hound on a leash that had finally caught the scent it wanted to pursue. I didn't know what was up with that. I'd worry about it later.

I traced a quick square into the wall with the tip of the blade. The instant the steel touched the surface, the illusion fell away and powerful, ancient looking seals flared into visibility across the wall, a dense web of containment runes layered three and four deep. Real, heavy, expensive work.

The seals tried to hold.

The sword cut through them like wet paper. The square of wall fell inward with a soft thump.

I stepped through.

The room on the other side was small and sterile and almost completely bare. A single bed sat in the center. Soft monitoring lights blinked on a panel beside it, registering vitals. And lying on the bed, perfectly still beneath a clean white sheet, was a girl.

She had long purple hair spread across the pillow like silk. Her face was delicate, beautiful, the kind of beauty that stopped you for a second before you remembered to breathe. She wasn't reacting to me being there at all. She was asleep. Deeply, profoundly asleep, in a way that no normal sleep had any business looking, her chest rising and falling in slow, measured breaths.

I stood very still in the broken doorway, sword still drawn, and stared at her.

Who the hell was hiding a sleeping girl behind sealed wards in my family's hospital?

The answer became obvious in hindsight. Mostly because Director Mares came practically whipping around the corner a second later, coat flaring behind him, face drained of color. "My lord!" he shouted, voice cracking. "How did you find her?"

That was not the reaction of a man surprised to discover a hidden room. That was the reaction of a man surprised someone else had discovered his hidden room.

I turned slowly, sword still in hand.

Director Mares froze at the doorway, staring first at the cut wall, then at the broken seals, then at the sleeping girl on the bed. His expression twisted with panic so raw it almost looked painful.

Behind him, Grandmother arrived.

Then she saw the girl. For one fraction of a second, Selene actually gasped. Then her face went cold. The same cold that had sent Director Gorvas through half an insurance office, except this time it felt deeper. Personal. Dangerous in a way that made the room itself seem to hold its breath.

"Director Mares," she said softly.

The head doctor flinched. "My lady..."

"Why," Grandmother asked, each word precise enough to cut glass, "is there an unknown member of the **Leviathan Clan** hidden inside my family's hospital?"

I blinked. *Leviathan?* My eyes snapped back to the sleeping girl. The name hit like a stone dropped into deep water, and ripples spread outward through every lesson Sona had ever drilled into me about the old Satan clans, the Civil War, the descendants who survived, the remnants who hated the new Satans, and Katerea Leviathan trying to use Saji like a disposable revenge knife.

"She's Leviathan?" I asked.

Director Mares looked between me and Grandmother, frantic. "It is not what it looks like."

Grandmother's laugh was silent and utterly humorless. "A secret chamber sealed behind illegal concealment wards in my hospital contains a hidden Leviathan-blooded patient unknown to the clan matriarch. I assure you, Director, it looks like **treason**."

"No!" Mares stepped forward, then stopped instantly when Grandmother's demonic pressure sharpened. "No, my lady. Please. I swear on my cursed soul, I am not a traitor to the new Satans. None of us are!"

"US!?" Selene repeated, sounding more annoyed there were other conspirators. That one word made the doctor go even paler.

I had the feeling he had just realized he had made things worse. "There were others," he admitted, voice shaking. "A few doctors. Nurses. Old retainers. We were loyal to her family before the Civil War. Before everything collapsed."

Grandmother's eyes narrowed. "Her family..."

Director Mares swallowed. "Her name is Ingvild Leviathan..."

The sleeping girl did not move.

Mares pushed on quickly, words tumbling out now that the dam had cracked.

"She is **half-devil**. Her mother was a minor Leviathan-blooded noblewoman from a branch family, not one of the combatants. Ingvild was never part of the rebellion. She was never part of the Civil War. She was a child when the old order began to fall apart. She wanted nothing to do with politics, nothing to do with war, nothing to do with the old Satan loyalists."

Grandmother did not soften. "And yet you hid her..."

"Because after the war, her name alone would have condemned her!" Mares's voice cracked again. "My lady, you know how it was. You know what happened to the branch families. Some deserved judgment. Many did not. Some were hunted by vengeful survivors. Some were murdered by old loyalists for not joining them. Some disappeared into prisons and never came back. We were afraid."

Grandmother narrowed her eyes. "Afraid enough to infiltrate my hospital?"

Mares bowed his head. "Afraid enough to save our lady..."

It was obvious, especially with the fact the girl wasn't waking up. "The sleeping sickness. That's why you asked for research money. That's why you sounded like it was personal," I said.

Mares looked at me with something almost like desperation. "Yes, Lord Harry."

I glanced at the girl again. "How long?"

His mouth tightened. "Nearly one hundred years."

A HUNDRED YEARS!? She had been lying here, hidden inside the hospital, asleep longer than I had been alive by five times over. The idea made my skin crawl.

Grandmother's voice cut back in, colder than before. "For a century," Selene said, "you concealed a Leviathan-blooded patient in my hospital, used Sitri facilities, Sitri staff, Sitri resources, and Sitri research funding, and never once informed the family whose name protects this institution."

Mares bowed lower. "My lady, I know. I know what I have done. But she had no one else."

"Do not make this sentimental."

"It is sentimental." His voice broke. "I served her mother. I held Ingvild when she was born. We hid her. We kept her safe. Then she fell into the sickness, and I have spent a hundred years trying to wake her."

Grandmother's power pressed into the room. "You endangered my clan with this..."

"I know." Mares looked like every word physically struck him.

I should have been fully focused on them. I should have listened to every detail, because hidden Leviathan girl in a Sitri hospital was the sort of sentence that probably made wars start if handled wrong.

But my sword tugged again. Gently. Insistently. Like a hand wrapping around my wrist and pulling me toward the bed.

I looked down at the blade. The silver-blue steel hummed softly, the light running along its edge brighter than before. A strange certainty, like the sword had found the exact reason it had dragged me here.

I took a step toward the bed.

A smear of blackness gathered above Ingvild's sleeping body, thin at first, like smoke caught beneath glass. Then it thickened. It coiled upward in ribbons, oily and wrong, swallowing the clean hospital light until the white room looked dimmer around it.

I tightened my grip on Viviane's sword.

The black miasma twisted over Ingvild's chest, and the longer I stared at it, the more I realized it was not just smoke. It had shape. Intention. A presence pressed against my senses like mold spreading over fresh fruit.

Foul. That was the only word for it.

The miasma rose higher, forming the vague outline of a tall figure.

An elf?

Not the cute house elves from Hogwarts or the pretty, storybook sort Hermione sometimes mentioned from Muggle fantasy novels. This thing was tall and thin and angular, its edges unfinished, its limbs too long, its face only half-formed from shifting black vapor. Pointed ears jutted from either side of its smoky head, and where its eyes should have been, two pale green lights burned with cold malice.

It leaned toward me. Then it hissed. The sound slid across my skin. "Hssssssssss..."

My sword hummed in answer. "Fuck me," I muttered.

"Harry, do not move," Grandmother warned from behind me.

"I feel like moving might be involved with what I need to do here..."

Director Mares whispered, "What is that?"

Grandmother answered him, and for the first time since I had known her, Selene Sitri sounded genuinely shaken. "The sleeping sickness is not a disease."

The miasma's head snapped toward her.

Grandmother's pink eyes widened with fury and realization. "It is a fey curse!"

Well. That explained why Viviane's sword had dragged me through half the hospital like an overexcited hunting dog.

"Did it reveal itself because of the sword?" I asked.

The black elf shape looked back at me. Its mouth split open far wider than anything vaguely humanoid should have managed. "HSSSSSSAAAAAH!"

It lunged. There was no time to think. No time to ask whether cutting a curse with a legendary sword counted as proper hospital procedure.

The thing dropped toward me like a sheet of living shadow, claws forming at the ends of its too-long fingers. The air went cold, then wet, then rotten. My instincts screamed at me that if it touched me, something very bad would happen.

So I swung. Silver-blue light flashed through the room. The sword met the curse.

For half a heartbeat, the black miasma resisted. Its green eyes flared. Its mouth opened wider. A thousand whispering voices shrieked inside the room, layered over one another, promising sleep, silence, drowning, roots in the lungs, flowers in the blood, dreams without waking.

Then the blade cut through it. One blow. That was all.

The tall elf shape split from shoulder to hip in a clean diagonal line. The shriek became a soundless tear. Black smoke burst outward, then collapsed inward, sucked into the silver-blue edge of my sword like dirty water vanishing down a drain. The green lights snapped out. The foul pressure vanished. The room filled with the clean scent of rain.

For a second, nobody moved.

Director Mares stared at me with his mouth open.

Grandmother stared at my sword.

I stared at the space where the curse had been. "Huh," I said intelligently.

The sword pulsed once in my hand. Satisfied. Smug, almost. Then it dissolved back into light and sank into my body, leaving my palm empty.

I blinked down at my hand. "Did my sword just look proud of itself?"

No one answered.

Behind me, Director Mares made a noise that might have been a sob.

I turned toward the bed.

Ingviid Leviathan's fingers twitched. Then her eyelids fluttered.

Director Mares took one shaking step forward. "Ingviid..."

Her eyes opened. They were orange. She blinked once. Twice. Her gaze drifted across the ceiling, unfocused and confused. Then she slowly turned her head toward the three of us standing in the broken hidden room with a ruined wall behind us and enough political tension in the air to choke a dragon.

Very slowly, Ingviid pushed herself upright.

The sheet slipped from her shoulder, and her long purple hair spilled forward over her chest in a glossy wave. She looked around the small sterile room with the dazed expression of someone who had gone to sleep expecting one world and woken up in another.

Which, to be fair, she had.

Director Mares covered his mouth with one hand.

Grandmother looked like she was deciding whether to be relieved, furious, or both.

I had absolutely no idea what to say. No one prepares you for waking a hidden Leviathan princess from a hundred-year fey curse with a magical sword during a business tour with your grandmother.

Honestly, Hogwarts has been slacking.

Ingvild's eyes settled on me. She stared.

I stared back.

The silence stretched.

Awkwardly.

So, naturally, I opened my mouth and said the first thing that came to mind.

"Hi. I'm Harry." I paused, then added, "You must be hungry after sleeping for so long!"

Grandmother made a sound behind me that might have been disbelief.

XXX