

(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)

This is the final bonus chapter! Going forward chapters will come out weekly in the second slot on Tuesdays!

A/N: Grayfia goes on her scouting mission and then returns home to find her Master enjoying himself greatly~

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It felt strange to be leaving her Master's side this quickly. Amadeus had only just woken up a couple of hours ago after all and already she found herself called away from him. If the orders hadn't come directly from her Lord himself, Grayfia would never have stood for it. However, given he was trusting her with not just this mission, but also a priceless artifact in the form of the Valefor Cloak, Grayfia just had to knuckle down and bear with it.

... She was glad that she'd been able to make him a meal before she departed however, even if it was something as simple as a sandwich. Truly, Grayfia had very nearly failed as a maid by not thinking of such a thing on her own merits before Amadeus' stomach had suddenly growled like it did.

Imagine if she'd gone on this scouting mission and come back, only to find that her Lord had been forced to locate the kitchen and make himself something to eat while she was gone! Grayfia isn't sure she would have been able to live with herself if that had happened.

Fortunately, it hadn't come to that. Instead, she'd made him his meal and then departed with the Valefor Cloak wrapped around her, making for the Satan Beelzebub's Territory swiftly but also carefully. It wouldn't do to be caught now, after all. Not when her Master needed her more than ever.

But then, being caught isn't likely anyways. After all, Grayfia has spent the last five hundred years honing her stealth capabilities. As she'd shown Amadeus back in the safe house, if she didn't want to be perceived these days, she

wouldn't be. Combined with the Valefor Cloak, it should be the perfect camouflage.

At the same time... she's admittedly never entered a Satan's territory in these past five hundred years. She'd considered scouting out Lucrezah's lands after finding out the bitch had become the next Lucifer but ultimately set the idea aside. After all, while Grayfia had assumed in the early days (really, in the early centuries) that she would eventually watch Amadeus die and then go to try her best to avenge him upon Lucrezah... that hadn't happened yet at the time.

Risking discovery when her Lord was still breathing and still had a chance, no matter how small, would have been foolhardy behavior... and certainly not the sort of behavior a Head Maid would engage in, that was for sure. Instead, Grayfia had kept her head down and avoided any and all confrontation with the Satans.

Not anymore though. Here she was, entering the Beelzebub's Territory at long last. Or rather, technically these were the Astaroth Clan's Lands. However, everyone knew that even though Ajuka Beelzebub had given up his clan name when he became a Satan, he was still quite involved with them.

In fact, the Astaroth Lands held a number of facilities Grayfia had heard about that would be critical to her scouting efforts. For one, there was a prestigious noble academy for aspiring High-Class Devils to attend and train up their skills in. For two, the Examination Center for Promotion to High-Class within the Astaroth Territory was said to be the most prestigious in the Underworld.

... And for three, the Monument that Grayfia had described to Amadeus, where someone would take a newly acquired set of Evil Pieces and attune to them as their King, was also located in the center of these lands.

Frankly, it was a good thing that Ajuka Beelzebub seemed to like putting all of his eggs in one basket and didn't care too much about being seen overtly favoring his old clan. The Astaroth Lands were a lot more populated as a result of the Satan's old clan and all of their retainers living there, to say nothing of the academy and what not.

There was even an entire stadium built in commemoration of Ajuka Beelzebub, uninspiringly called the 'Ajuka Stadium', where Rating Games and other competitions could be held.

But of course, Grayfia was here for one reason and one reason only. Evil Pieces. And if she was lucky, she wouldn't have to interact with a single person to find them. Instead, all she had to do was wait, watch... and learn.

Fortunately, it's the middle of the day when she arrives. There's plenty of hustle and bustle to observe. People coming too and fro. Everything is open for business, everyone moving like the parts of a well-oiled machine. Grayfia just has to peer closely to see how the well-oiled machine actually works.

For instance, while generally there's only one way to earn a set of Evil Pieces, namely by proving that you are a High-Class Devil, there are in turn multiple ways to receive your set of Evil Pieces once you've done so.

Pureblood Devils, especially the heirs of the remaining Pillar Clans and their closest retainers, tend to be able to 'skip the line' so to speak. There might still be an examination to confirm one's power level of course, but it will usually be nothing but a formality. As such, for Pureblood Devils, Evil Pieces were often delivered to them in their homes so that they could then come over to use the Monument and register at their leisure.

In fact, the longer Grayfia watches, the more certain she is that she's watching these very packages be sent out. Couriers depart from the facilities with bags and a certain purpose to their movements, like they're ferrying something valuable. Evil Pieces would certainly count.

Grayfia is tempted to track one of them and take them down herself so she can confirm what they're transporting... but she knows that would be going beyond the remit of her orders from her Lord. Amadeus had been quite clear that she was ONLY to scout things out. Disabling a courier to rifle through their bags wasn't something her Master would approve of.

Instead, she simply catalogues their movements in the back of her mind and focuses on how the other type of High-Class Devil gets their set of Evil Pieces.

Reincarnated Devils aren't so lucky as the Purebloods. Even the Reincarnated Devils who serve under Pureblood Kings still have many more hoops to jump through compared to their Pureblood peers. They have extensive examinations at the Promotion Examination Center and are usually grilled to make sure they are truly High-Class and therefore worthy of becoming Kings in their own right.

And once they pass those exams, they can't expect to just receive a set of Evil Pieces via courier either. No, because of their reincarnated status, they're expected to immediately take the token given to them by their Exam Proctor to a building where a set of Evil Pieces are handed over. At which point, they are then expected to go immediately to the Monument and register themselves as Kings.

Grayfia watches this happen about half a dozen times over the course of the next few hours. It's tedious work, but she doesn't want to return to her Master with anything less than complete information.

She also watches a couple of Pureblood Devils teleport in close to the Monument and walk up to it with their heads held high and their noses in the air. There isn't usually a line anyways, but if there were one Grayfia suspects that her fellow Purebloods, entitled as they clearly feel, would have cut it without a second thought.

In the end though, as the sun begins to set and things start to shut down, Grayfia knows she's seen all that she can see. Perhaps she should stay longer... but she doesn't want to miss making her Master dinner. And she can always return tomorrow if he feels they need her to do another day of information gathering.

With that decided, Grayfia makes her way back out of the Satan Beelzebub's territory completely undetected, feeling a small bit of pride at that fact. Her first time getting anywhere near a potential encounter with a Satan and she'd done just fine... all thanks to her Lord letting her use his Valefor Cloak, of course.

The first thing Grayfia notices upon arriving back at the safe house is that the defenses are still intact and nothing seems to be awry. Nobody has come while she was gone and attacked her Master. It was always a worry of hers these past five hundred years, but especially more so now that Amadeus was awake and moving about. But no, everything is fine.

The second thing she notices once she's entered the safe house proper... is the music. A broad smile spreads across Grayfia's face as she hears the sound of someone trying out a piano drifting all throughout the underground set of rooms. Her eyes drift shut briefly and she sways to the music, knowing full well that it has to be her Lord doing the playing.

She'd thought he might like the piano quite a bit, of all the instruments that she'd collected for him over the centuries he'd been... asleep. It had started out as something of a compulsion, this idea that if she made sure he had things he loved waiting for him, then he would definitely pull through and survive.

Over time, it just became a habit truth be told. Any time she saw a new musical instrument make its way down to the Underworld, or an old one she didn't have yet, she made sure to procure it for her Master. Admittedly, the piano was the hardest one to get down into the safe house... but as Amadeus' inexperienced playing fills her ears, Grayfia knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that it was worth it.

After a moment she makes her way to the door of the instrument room and peeks inside. There, she sees Amadeus seated at the piano, learning how to play it at a record pace. He doesn't notice her, engrossed as he is with his experimentation.

At the same time, Grayfia looks around the room... and with the certainty of a maid who has dusted and wiped down every instrument in this room day after day for hundreds of years, she knows each one that her Master has touched. She can point out every single one he's picked up and given a go for the first time or refamiliarized himself with because he used to play them back in the day.

The piano might have the most of his attention right now, but music... music would always be Amadeus Valefor's greatest passion, followed shortly after by all of the other performing arts.

After a moment, Grayfia pulls back from the doorway and heads to the kitchen. It's rather late now after all, and it's been hours since that sandwich she made for her Master. So she quickly works up a proper dinner for Amadeus... and makes enough for herself as well for good measure, knowing without question that he will demand that she eat with him regardless of propriety.

As she's cooking, she gets to continue to listen to Amadeus playing the entire time. He doesn't remain at the piano though, moving on after a while longer and working his way through a number of other instruments. By the time she's finally finished plating their food and setting the dining table, he seems to have moved on to the guitar of all things.

Making her way back down the hall to the instrument room, Grayfia stands in a position where Amadeus inevitably notices her. On the one hand, it's uncouth for a maid to interrupt her Master. On the other hand, it would be improper for her to let the food get cold.

Fortunately, her positioning means he sees her within the minute, blinking and coming to a stop in his latest round of experimentation.

"Grayfia! You're back!"

She bows her head in response.

"Dinner is ready, Master."

Of course, Amadeus furrows his brow at that.

"Hang on, how long have you been back?"

Grayfia just smiles.

“I returned less than an hour ago my Lord, but you were busy so I sought to prepare an evening meal before alerting you to my presence. Please, the table is ready for us.”

Sighing, Amadeus puts down the guitar and leads the way back to the kitchen. Now that he knows where it is, it's only proper for Grayfia to make sure she follows two paces behind and slightly to his right, always.

They arrive soon enough and Grayfia feels a burst of pride as her Master makes an appreciative noise in the back of his throat.

“Looks amazing, Grayfia.”

“Thank you, sir.”

As expected, he gestures for her to sit along with him, which she does so without complaint. Grayfia still waits for him to take the first bite (and hum approvingly) before she begins to eat as well.

After a few minutes of quiet eating, Amadeus clears his throat.

“Tell me what you were able to find out.”

Not missing a beat, Grayfia does as she's told, explaining the results of her scouting mission in between bites. When she's finished, Amadeus takes a moment to consider everything before slowly nodding.

“Alright then. So it seems to me we have a few options. First and foremost... we go in the night, break into the buildings you saw people retrieving Evil Pieces from, and hope there's a set we can steal. From there, we sneak over to the Monument and hope that it's either automated or I can use Unlock to make it register me as a King. Main benefit is that there won't be a bunch of people around to potentially cause complications.”

... Huh, she hadn't considered how Unlock might get them around the Monument problem. It's clear that Amadeus hasn't JUST been using his day to

play music. But then to be fair, he'd always told her that he did his best thinking while playing.

“Option Two, we go during the day and try to follow one of these couriers you think are leaving to deliver a set of Evil Pieces to a Pureblood Noble. Benefit would be that we could nab the courier outside of Beelzebub's territory, which is probably safer than trying to steal anything inside of his lands. But on the flipside, we can't say with absolute certainty that a courier will have a set of Evil Pieces. Still, if we do manage to get one from there, we can just walk up to the Monument like we belong and hopefully register ourselves right then and there.”

Yes, Grayfia thought she liked that plan... even if maybe it did have some holes.

“Option Three, we wait until one of these exam takers come out of the Promotion Examination Center with a token and steal it from them. Use the token to get Evil Pieces and also to get access to the Monument, and then we get out of there before anyone knows something has happened. Benefit is that it would probably be the most 'legitimate' method of grabbing a set of Evil Pieces. But on the flipside, it does expose us to a lot of people who would see my face...”

Hm. That wasn't a bad option either. Although... Grayfia narrows her eyes.

“It seems to me, Master, that you are biased towards the first option. Given that you didn't bother to name a single downside to that plan, while coming up with reasons not to go with Option Two or Three immediately.”

Amadeus blinks... and then grins sheepishly.

“Well. Guilty as charged. I do like the idea of just going at night the best. Between our stealth capabilities and my Unlock Power, I doubt we'd have much issue.”

Grayfia hums.

“Yes... unless they put the sets of Evil Pieces somewhere else at night and only bring them to the facilities in question during the day.”

Amadeus pauses but she can tell immediately that her Lord already thought of that possibility. He just still liked going at night the best.

In the end though, it is his choice and so Grayfia just smiles and nods.

“Whatever you decide will be best, Master. Simply say the word and we shall enact your plan.”

For just a moment, he hesitates... but Grayfia’s Lord is a man of conviction and action. The sort of man who runs out into the middle of a battle between two Ultimate-Class Devils and puts himself between the two of them without a second thought in order to save her life.

Nodding decisively, Amadeus makes his choice.

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