

## Cerberus

### Chapter 8: The Three Heads

Flynn was floating, hovering in a silvery white light. He felt like he was moving in a current, but he didn't have the strength to fight it, nor did he want to. He was being whisked away on that current through this world of white. He couldn't tell if he was blind, or if the world really was this bright. He felt himself being gently cradled in that stream, and then placed softly on the ground. As soon as his foot paws touched the soil, it gave way, and so did the world of light.

Flynn blinked as he saw the barren wastes before him. Dunes of lifeless dirt, bleached of life, and despite how bright it was, there was the night sky, brilliant and dark with only the lightest pinpricks showing the stars.

"What the hell," Flynn spoke, but his voice was...soft? His voice refused to carry on the wind, muffled as it was. He looked about and saw the moon up in the sky, and paused. It looked so big, and...blue?

Flynn gasped and realized exactly where he was. He was on the moon. The earth hovered in the sky half formed.

*"Keep going..."*

Flynn heard the words, the voice that spoke to him before. That current was still drawing him somewhere. It was like he was at the bottom of the ocean, a current pushing him along as his toes bounced off the sea floor. Then there was something there that caused him to take pause. A large, gnarly tree with brilliant branches, overflowing with leaves.

A yew tree, on the moon?

In the crook of the yew, there was a place where the branches forked into two different directions. In that cradle was a glowing white sphere, like the moon itself was held inside it. As he got close, he saw that the orb of light was chained to the tree. The entire tree had shackles and chains lashed around it, climbing up through the branches. Some had fused with the branches where they grew around the old rusted iron.

He slipped through the branches, flowed through the bark, and slinked across chains as he was drawn up into that orb. He slipped through the sphere and found himself inside a living room, the place large and warm. Red carpet, velvet furniture, thick tapestries strung up around the windows to keep out the silvery moonlight. A crackling hearth glowed with reds, yellows, and greens, and as soon as he touched down, blue flames flickered in the hearth as well.

The three sisters were there already sitting on couches and armchairs, Cerberus was leaning against the wall while a fifth person poked the flames.

“You made it,” that voice murred from the hearth, the voice he had been hearing in his head was now out of it and speaking to him plainly. It wasn’t a hallucination, he heard her. She stood up from the hearth, her flowing robes were black, pinned with cosmos as though the night sky were a tapestry on her back. Red and white ribbons adorned her flowing white hair, her face almost angelic with how white her fur was. Pale as the moon with kind yet piercing red eyes. She was a polecat, her fur dazzling white; her stature tall and dignified yet relaxed. Her ageless features made it impossible to tell how old she was. She walked up to Flynn, her arms outstretched. She was taller than him, able to pull him gently into her breast, a mother’s embrace. Her one hand stroked his hair while the other kept him close.

“You’re finally able to open your eyes,” she spoke, her voice soft, yet powerful, as though multiple people were talking at once but with the same mouth.

Flynn felt that hug deep in his bones. He felt his aches bleed away, his fatigue melt, his icy veins thaw, and his mind clear. He took a deep breath and sighed it out slowly. This was home, this was love, this was the place he belonged. He knew it deep in his heart that this was where his home was. With her.

“Yes, you’re home,” the polecat affirmed his thoughts, pulling away and looking down at him, the gentle curls of her white hair coupled with various braids and ribbons.

“You’re Hecate?” Flynn asked.

“Yes,” she smiled, her teeth dazzling like moonlight. “Though you can simply call me mother, mom, ma, whatever tickles your fancy. We’re family after all.”

“H-How?” Flynn stepped back. “I mean...yeah, how?”

“Didn’t your sisters explain?” She cocked a brow and looked at them. Hemala nodded as she kept her talons crossed. She was dressed in dazzling white robes. “I guess it bears repeating.” Hecate shrugged. “When a child is to be stillborn under my moon, I can reach through and grant them life with my essence. My cage here is impenetrable to gods, but mortal souls and children of gods can slip through the bars.”

“So, I was never supposed to be born, but you gave me life?”

“Your body was never to be born or grow, but your soul, that is the part of me that thrums through your veins.”

“You’re the Blue Moon,” Kamila said from the couch, her body clad in flowing red robes. “Our mother’s only son, and blessed with the blue moon’s graces.”

“I mean...I don’t really know what that means,” Flynn furrowed his brow.

“I know,” Hecate said, gently taking his muzzle and directing it back to her. “I know it must be confusing, but we don’t have much time to doddle. So let me lay your lineage bear. You are my only son, a son of the moon, the youngest of my children and blessed with the blue moon’s graces.”

“It means you’re lucky,” Tiahna said as she nibbled on a cookie from the coffee table, she was clad in black robes. “The blue moon is known for luck, enchantments, gateways, and most importantly, connection to the divine.”

That last bit struck a chord with him.

“Connection to the divine?” Flynn echoed. “So...is that why my mana is bottomless?”

“Yes,” Hecate smiled, brushing Flynn’s cheek with her thumb. “You have access to the very essence of magic, my magic, the primal source of all that is arcane. You are bottomless because there is no limit to the magic you can hold, only a limit to how much your body can sustain. Remember this,” She said, putting up a finger in front of him, her nails long and pristine. “You have the power of a god, but the body of a demigod. You must know the difference. You are limited by that mortality. Even demigods can only handle so much before buckling under the weight of their patrons.”

“I...I think I understand,” Flynn was more confused, but he decided he would simply learn in time. He lifted his hands and realized he was wearing robes. They were black, trimmed with red and had a white shawl. “So, I’m the three in one? Why is that?”

“The blue moon encompasses all phases of the moon,” Cerberus grunted from behind Flynn.  
“That’s what makes it so powerful. Figures,” he huffed.

“Okay, what’s with the attitude—” Flynn spun around and paused, his eyes wide, his words caught in his throat as he looked at Cerberus. He was completely nude, his jewels fully on display, his sheath plump and full. How did he not realize before? He looked up, blushing, but the cocky bastard already had a shit eating smirk on his face as he bounced his eyebrows.

“See something you like?” Cerberus kissed the air, his collar of runes the only thing on him.

“Sh-Shut up!” Flynn huffed before his eyes went wide. “Wait, did you say you were headless before? What are you talking about with that?”

“Stowe it, you dirty brat,” Cerberus snarled, but he glanced at Hecate and his ears folded back before he huffed and looked down.

“That’s actually why I wanted both of you up here,” Hecate moved to the loveseat and patted the space next to her. “Blue? Can you come here?”

Flynn’s ears twitched as he came over to her and sat down. “What do his heads have to do with all this.”

“They have everything to do with this,” she answered. “You see, many years ago, long before you or any of your sisters were born, magic was far more potent and advancing rapidly. I had many children in my coven, and each one sought inspiration from me, but one in particular was very ambitious. I don’t blame her for what happened, but she brought forth a very potent magic, birthed from a mind inspired by my guidance.”

“What kind of magic?” Flynn paused.

“Necromancy,” Cerberus snarled from where he was leaning.

“Necromancy? Isn’t that just reanimation of corpses through magic?” Flynn cocked a brow. “It’s not even practiced that heavily today. It’s so impractical.”

“It’s weak,” Hecate agreed, putting a hand on Flynn’s shoulder. “It’s weak, because I was imprisoned shortly after it was conceptualized. To halt its advancement.”

“Wait, what?” Flynn furrowed his brow. “So imprisoning you somehow stopped necromancy from advancing?”

“Darling, Blue,” Hecate leaned in and kissed his forehead, speaking right into his brow. “It stopped the progression of *all* magic.”

“All magic?” Flynn pulled away to look her in the eye. “But we’ve done massive advancements in magic since ancient Greece.”

“Have we?” Kamila cut in. “All magic has stagnated, no new magic can be born that wasn’t already conceived or lost to the ages. All we’ve done is found ways to augment it, using special machines to weave magic and make it easier to perform, making it more convenient. But precision can’t always compensate for potency.”

Flynn’s ears perked up. He learned in medical school that there are limitations on what magic can and cannot do. That no matter how hard we’ve tried, we can’t develop a spell that’ll be able to cure cancer or eradicate HIV. It’s all about magic stitching and making smaller and smaller stitches to pinpoint treatment, but ultimately, medicine and science outshined stitching in terms of preventative care and rehabilitation.

“So...there is no limit to how much magic can grow, but it’s capped while you’re in this prison.”

"Yes," Hecate said gently petting Flynn's hair and brushing it out of his eyes.

"Really? All that to stop one kind of magic?"

"It's because it's an affront to the natural order," Cerberus snarled. "It threatened the balance of all things. Hades would never allow souls out of the underworld, nor should he. It's not their place, and Necromancy, as infantile as it is now, poses more of a threat to the world than the atom bomb."

"You're overreacting," Tiahna waived off Cerberus's concerns.

"Am I?" Cerberus barked. "You don't see Ares in a cage, now do you? War has been off leash for millennia because it's part of the natural order. No matter how many new kinds of weapons that freak comes up with, it won't be an affront to the natural order because it only speeds up the inevitable end of all mortals. He may put bodies in the ground before their time, but the Fates accounted for loss of life, they didn't weave the tapestry of time with the intent of anything ever coming back out of the dirt after it's been buried."

"Cerberus," Hecate started.

"No! You don't get to lecture me, not after what you did!"

"I never intended to have that happen," Hecate was almost pleading.

"Then WHY DID YOU LET IT HAPPEN," Cerberus roared. "You were my patron mother! You were supposed to protect me, and I was supposed to serve! NOW LOOK AT ME!"

Cerberus clawed at his face, the head vanishing in a wisp of smoke, his body scarred and scraped, torn and beaten, and headless. Only a shadowy image of his head was there where three necks hung limply.

“YOU DID THIS TO ME!” He snarled.

“I know,” Hecate answered. “But I’m trying to fix it.”

“You can’t fix shit!” Cerberus’s face flashed back to normal, tears streaming from his eyes. “If I could, I’d gut you here for what you did! You betrayed me. I trusted you with my life, and you turned my patron father against me.”

“Cerberus, that’s enough,” Hecate glared at the dog.

“No,” Hecate put her hand up. “Let him speak. I owe both him and Flynn that much.”

“You owe me that and more!” Cerberus snarled. “I should have never let you by, I should have never let you in. It was my job to guard Hades, to keep the underworld safe and secure, but you...you told me to step aside. I moved my legions, my sons and daughters, my husbands and wives, my pack, my family, and told them to stand down. To let my patron mother through. And what did you do while the gate was open? You changed the underworld. You built a back door that could never be closed. All so your little skank of a follower could continue with their magic, continue with their perverse idea of bringing the dead back to life. Hades knew immediately once one of the souls was gone. Shredded and torn to pieces by that monstrous magic. Whatever came back, it wasn’t human. Changed by its time in the afterlife and fucked up into a mockery of humanity and forced to tread the mortal plane.”

“Cerberus, I’m sorry,” Hecate pleaded.

“NO! Hades was furious. He was more mad than ever. His loyal guard dog had betrayed him, so his dog would pay the price. I had my heads cut off and was banished from the afterlife. It was that or Tartarus.”

“Yes, and that became my cage,” Hecate sighed. “Haven’t we both suffered enough?”

"I only wish Hades made your cage tighter so you wouldn't be able to have visitors, then maybe you'll know a fraction of the solitude I've had to bear."

"What if I told you I could restore your heads?" Hecate answered.

"Don't lie to me, bitch! We both know you can't do that," Cerberus snarled. "You can't do shit inside this cage besides fling your crotch goblins down to Earth."

"I can't, but Flynn can," Hecate put a hand on Flynn's shoulder like a proud mother.

"Him?" Cerberus scoffed. "He can't even keep off my dick long enough to form a simple spell, let alone undo a god's cage. You think my other heads could be slain by him?"

"I do," Hecate nodded.

"Wait," Flynn stood up. "What do you mean, 'slay his heads?' I don't understand."

"For that," Kamila stood up and walked over to Flynn. "We might want to explain exactly what cages our mother."

"I...sure?" Flynn shook his head as the barn owl came over to him, gripped his shoulders and herded him to the fire place. "Look at the tapestry, what do you see?"

Flynn glanced above the mantel, there, a large tapestry of Hecate was displayed. She stood proud, tall, framed by a duo of torches while holding a ring of keys. She was in a stone room, a large window in the back had the lunar cycle in the sky, a table held a crystal ball wrapped by a serpent, and at her feet was a three headed, feral dog.

"I see...so many things."

“Yes, all symbols of our patron. She is holding a ring of keys, she has the dual torches, the serpent, and—”

“The three headed dog,” Flynn finished.

“Good,” Kamila nodded. “These symbols and idols not only allow us to commune with our patron mother, but they are also tools that can bind. If you wish to trap the energy of something, you use a proper vessel. A mortal can trap someone in something precious to them, like a mirror or a locket, but a god must be trapped in an effigy that embodies them. So, Hades used the moon itself as the vessel, a Yue tree to house it, iron snakes to lash her, and finally, the triple lock to bind it. Cerberus’s three heads.”

“So...” Flynn looked over at Cerberus, he snarled and looked away, his claws digging into his biceps. “Hades used Cerberus’s three heads as the locks on Hecate’s prison?”

“Exactly,” Kamila nodded. “Something she loved, something both Hades and her loved. The god of the underworld’s sacrifice of a loyal dog, and her being bound by the guilt of Cerberus’s punishment made it very potent indeed. A dual sacrifice compounded by betrayal strong enough to bind a goddess to the moon itself.”

“So, it’s like a layered cage with three locks, right?”

“Right again,” Kamila smiled. “Look at you; we’ll make a proper enchantress out of you yet. The head of the sky locks the moon, the head of the earth locks the yew, and the head of the waters locks the serpents. All three heads were given to other hellhounds to adorn themselves with, and scattered to the four corners of the realms, each one residing in one of the great three’s domain.”

“One to Zeus to keep as a champion of the skies,” Cerberus huffed. “Another to Poseidon to protect his shores. Finally, one to remain with Hades as a reminder to the rest of hellhound kind to never cross him.”

“Sounds like Hades really didn’t want you getting out,” Flynn turned to Hecate.

“I know I deserve it for what I did,” Hecate nodded. “I was imprisoned because of hubris, ambition born of my acolytes need to progress magic. I can’t promise a fix to Necromancy as soon as I’m free, but I can ensure that the underworld will never be mended without the progression of magic.”

“Easy enough for you to say,” Cerberus growled in his corner.

“It would also be a peace offering that Hades might actually accept, come the time.” Hecate offered. “And you would have your heads again.”

“Yeah, explain how that shit is going to work?” Cerberus glared at her with a scrutinizing eye. “How can that cum stain possibly do anything?”

“That is my son, Cerberus,” Hecate raised her voice ever so slightly, her ruby eyes glowing with power. “One that I have permitted you to commune with so far. Don’t make me change my mind.”

“Whatever,” Cerberus huffed. “How’s *Flynn* going to make a difference where your other three daughters failed?”

“The locks are powerful, this we know. Defeating them isn’t the problem,” Hemala sighed. “It’s keeping them dead. Your heads are immortal, same as you, so even when we kill them, it’s only a matter of time before they come back just as strong and twice as angry.”

“The problem isn’t killing them,” Tiahna spoke up. “It’s having enough mana to break the lock.”

“Hecate has many allies amongst the gods,” Kamila added. “So Hades made it so that only a god’s mana could fill each lock with enough power to break it. Ensuring that no mortal could, and giving Hades a warning as to who broke it and time to stop them. With magic’s progression stunted, there was simply no way to free our mother, and no god strong or loyal enough to fight for Hecate’s freedom.”

“That is, until you Flynn,” Hecate stood up and came over to Flynn, and pulled him into a deep hug. “You have the power to break the locks, my power. How incredibly blessed you are, how lucky.”

“Lucky?” Flynn pulled himself away from Hecate. “You think I’ve been lucky? I’ve had the worst week of my fucking life! I had a hellhound bite that baffled medical science, got jerked around with hellhound hit after hit, half frozen to death with this innate ability, and gone through withdrawal several times. It’s been a nightmare!”

“Yes,” Hecate knelt down so Flynn was eye to eye with her. “You have endured much, but look how it brought you here. It might not seem like it, but luck brought you back to me. Had you never met Cerberus, you never would have been bitten, you never would have been bound to him. He never would have sought out my daughters for help, and they would never have found you.”

Flynn did take a moment to consider that and relaxed a bit. Sure, it was hell, but he can’t say it hasn’t been interesting. He finally got some answers, but now he was left with a decision.

“What makes you think I can do this?” Flynn asked.

“You were born for this,” Hecate smiled, lifting Flynn’s chin up. “I know I’m asking a lot, but you’re the only one who can help me. The only one who can truly save me from this prison.”

“But...how?”

“Not alone,” Hemala came over and placed a hand on Flynn’s shoulder. “You have three big sisters that will help you every step of the way.”

“But...I don’t know. I just want things to go back to normal.” Flynn felt the weight of this task forcing his shoulders to slump.

“Currently, that’s not possible,” Kamila came over and put her hand on his other shoulder. “There is no known cure for a hellhound bite, but if we were to free Hecate, we might be able to find a solution.”

“Really?” Flynn perked up and looked at the barn owl before a pair of arms flung around his shoulders as Tiahna jumped on him for a piggy back ride.

“Of course! What is family for? I’m sure once magic gets flowing again, we’ll all be able to work something out. Besides, not like yours is fatal. We can find a fix, even if it takes time, and you’ll be able to get back to doing whatever it is that you do with your days.”

Flynn had corrected himself and found Tiahna to be surprisingly light.

“So,” Flynn looked back at Hecate standing before him. “You can fix me?”

“I assure you, we can,” Hecate nodded. “Once I’m free, I can inspire you four directly, a powerful coven directly linked to their mother will know no obstacle they can’t overcome.”

“Okay...Okay,” Flynn smiled and nodded. “I think I can do this!”

The five of them were pulled from their discussion as they heard Cerberus doing a slow clap.

“Bravo! Very touching,” Cerberus’s voice dripped with sarcasm. “But you’re forgetting one very important thing. You need me to help you. My heads can’t be contained or magicked away. For them to

fully break the lock, the sacrifice that made them needs to be undone. In other words, I got to get my heads back, and I ain't helping you with jack shit."

"Good thing we don't need your permission," Tiahna smiled and plucked the air, the collar lashing Cerberus to Flynn glowed and hummed like a guitar string. Cerberus's eyes went wide.

"Don't you fucking dare," he snarled. "Don't you DARE! You can't make me betray Hades again! No! I'd rather die!"

"That can be arranged," Hemala smiled. "I can have the spirits drag you straight back down to the underworld. I'm sure your hellhound kind would love to tear you apart. You're the reason they were demoted, thrown down low and cast out of the underworld."

"Any that still roam the underworld would love to get their hands on you," Kamila added matter of fact. "And being immortal while being torn to shreds and gnawed on would be quite the experience. A unique kind of hell befitting one who betrayed their kind."

"You bitches! I'll tear you to fucking shreds! I'll stop you!"

"Good luck with that," Tiahna smirked and pulled the wolf fang pendent from her robes. "You can't touch us any more than what we want you to. That was the deal for that little exchange, wasn't it?"

Cerberus snarled, flames licking at his lips as his eyes locked on Flynn.

"You fucking luck drunk son of a BITCH!" Cerberus lunged forward, his fangs bared, his claws ready to slash, but he didn't get within three feet before a barrier flashed into reality and propelled the hellhound back into the wall. Cerberus yipped and collapsed as static rolled around him.

Flynn gasped and put his hands to his muzzle. "Shit, is he okay?"

“He’s immortal,” Tiahna waived off Flynn’s concerns. “Well, sort of. Hades won’t let him die because that would also break the locks simultaneously. Previous sisters have tried, but he just came back once Hades had a hold of him.”

“Also, he’s only here in spirit,” Hemala pulled her own hands from her face and brushed her robes back into place. “His body is still on Earth.”

“Cerberus, you okay?”

“Fuck...off...” Cerberus grumbled as he peeled himself off the floor, his jaw snapping back into place.

“Yeah,” Flynn sighed. “He’s fine.” He didn’t know if he was relieved or disappointed. Maybe a bit of both?

“So, Flynn,” Kamila stepped aside and looked the wolf in the eye. “Are you going to accept this divine call to action? You are, quite literally, being given a quest from a goddess after all.”

“In return, you’ll heal my hellhound bite? And things will go back to normal.”

“Oh, my darling son,” Hecate put a hand on Flynn’s muzzle and gently stroked her thumb on his cheek. “Your life will be better than normal. It’ll be extraordinary.”

Flynn was a bit tongue tied, but in that moment his breast swelled with pride.

“I’ll do it.”

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Aaron sat in the library, his feathery thumbs tapping away at his screen and shooting messages off to Flynn with no regard of the fact that he hadn’t replied once.

*"How cool would it be if you could use wind magic as well? You could make blizzards out of your breath!"*

*"I'm reading a book about the history of frost mages now and it looks like you can also direct the heat you take!"*

*"Apparently, steam mages are the same, but the heat they manipulate goes into their magic instead of away. You'd just have to work your magic backwards!"*

*"Wait...how would that work with an innate ability?"*

*"I guess you could breathe inwards."*

*"Wouldn't that be nice if you could warm yourself with your own breath!"*

*"That would fix a lot of your problems."*

*"Well, I'll keep researching."*

*"You're still coming to the library today, right?"*

*"You said earlier you were coming by, right?"*

*"I have a whole stack of books that'll be helpful. Stuff that the internet just isn't as good at portraying."*

*"There's something about books, right?"*

*"You think that I was a wizard in a past life and that's why I like books so much?"*

*"That makes sense, right?"*

*"I mean, it would make sense, but that would mean I have some sort of magic in my bloodline, right?"*

*"I guess it's whatever."*

*"I'll read up for when you're here so we'll have lots to talk about."*

Aaron stopped his clicking, a soft, happy coo coming from him as he rocked in his seat. He was so glad he had a friend that was as interested in magic as he was. He was even coming to discuss with him his innate ability. When he got the text earlier that day he had been so excited he hadn't been able to sit still his entire shift.

He was alone after all with Nathan tending to his dad.

"Oh, he would probably enjoy a hot pot too," Aaron scuttled out of the front desk, flipped the sign to "Back in 5" and went to the office to brew a fresh pot of coffee. He got a fresh one going lickity-split and came back to see there was someone at the front desk.

"Hello there Sir," Aaron had a sing song tone to his voice. "How may I help you." He finished by flipping the sign back around.

"You Aaron?" the big man grunted?

Aaron blinked and took his first good look at the guy. He was tall, very tall, super tall. He was a Great Dane with a coat as black as night. He wore a red suit with no under shirt, his powerful and fuzzy cleavage exposed. Aaron looked up into his dark, coal like eyes.

"Yup!" Aaron beamed the biggest smile before tapping his name tag. "That's me!"

“Good,” he tossed something out of his pocket in front of the owl. “Flynn, where is he. You two must be close.”

“Huh?” Aaron was pulled from his buzzing high and looked down at the phone, then back up at the Doberman.

“I can make it worth your while,” the Dane smirked. “I caught a few bits of your little side scroller action,” he said while flicking the phone screen to show the walls of text that Aaron had sent Flynn. “You like magic, don’t ya?”

“I...um...” Aaron was frozen.

“You see, I’m a purveyor of rare and, frankly, magical things,” the Dane pulled up a black leather briefcase. “I’d be willing to part with a little something if you were to give me Flynn’s location.”

“What?” Aaron paused, looking at that case. Was it true? Could he be allowed to use magic? Finally get some sort of talisman or focus that could channel magic into him? “Wait, you want to know where Flynn is?”

“Yes,” the Dane half growled, half huffed. “I have something important for him.”

“Oooooohhhh,” Aaron smiled and clapped his hands excitedly. “You must be the guy he went to in order to get a talisman for himself.”

“I...yeah, sure,” the Dane had a sly grin. “I need to find him right away and give him his talisman, or he could put himself or a lot of other people in danger.”

“Well, that’s not good,” Aaron wasn’t the sharpest tool in the shed, but he felt something was off. “Wait...why do you have his phone?”

“He left it in my office when he came for his consultation,” the Dane answered. “I was going to return it, but you were the only one hitting him up, so I decided to reach out and see if I could get a hold of him through you.”

“Yeah, that makes sense,” Aaron mumbled, but he wasn’t fully convinced. “But...why didn’t you just give him the talisman before he left?”

“I needed to go get it from storage,” the Dane snapped. “Listen, tell me where that fuc-Flynn is now or things could get really bad for him.”

Aaron flinched at that. He knew a threat when he heard one.

“How about this,” Aaron decided to counter. “He has to return some stuff here anyway. Why don’t I tell him you came by and return his phone. That should work.”

The Dane slammed his fist on the counter, snarling.

“Listen here you little chicken finger! Tell me where Flynn is now or I’ll gut you like a fish!”

“What! Get away from me!” Aaron pushed away from the desk, his roller chair taking him just out of gripping distance as the Dane lunged forward.

“Get back here you little shit!” he snarled.

Aaron screeched and scuttled back to the back room. The Dane hopped the desk and ran after him. The little owl didn’t know exactly what to do, but he ran to the coffee pot and spun around.

“Don’t make me use this!” The little owl warned.

“What? You gonna make me a macchiato? I take mine with cream and sugar,” the Dane mocked him as he came into the room, and pushed a return cart out of the way with such force it crashed into the wall and warped.

Aaron screamed and tossed the coffee at him, the scalding liquid slapping the Dane in the face. He paused, his suit stained with coffee, his eyes closed, but instead of the blistering of skin and the screams from burns, he simply snorted. The owl’s eyes went wide, his pupils going tinny.

“You’re going to pay for ruining my suit, chicken nugget,” the Dane snarled, lifting his hand to slash down.

Aaron screamed, the Dane screamed, they were both screaming only the Dane was twitching as static popped in the air. The Dane collapsed onto the floor at Aaron’s feet. Behind him was Nathan holding a taser that was still sparking.

“What...the...” the Dane grunted from the floor, but Nathan slammed his foot on his back and sunk the taser into his neck and gave him another hit, the bruit collapsing unconscious.

“Fuck! Stay down!” Nathan huffed, pulling his hair back into place. “Shit, you okay Aaron?”

“I...” Aaron sniffed, his eyes welling up with tears. “I was so scared...” He scuttled over to Nathan and hugged him. “You saved me!”

“Fuck, it’s okay, it’s okay Aaron, you’re okay. I’ll call the police, don’t worry.” Nathan stroked the owl’s feathers to calm him down as much as himself.

“Wh-Why are you here?” Aaron shuddered. “I thought you were going to be gone for a family emergency.”

“I forgot some stuff in my locker,” Nathan replied. “Good thing too, huh?”

“Wh-Who is that?” Aaron sniffed as he pulled away from the ferret.

“His name is Damian,” Nathan huffed and guided Aaron out of the office.

“Damian?” Aaron asked, more confused. “Who is he? Why was he looking for Flynn?”

“He’s looking for Flynn?” Nathan scoffed. “Why am I not surprised.”

“What? What is it?” Aaron pressed.

“He’s Flynn’s dealer,” Nathan huffed as he dialed the exorcism core office. “He’s definitely using  
again.”