Chapter 20: What’s the best sort of bullshit you ask? The wet and sloppy kind that just gets everywhere and takes forever to wash out. You never forget dealing with that crap.

I don't own Highschool DxD, any of its characters, or any references in this story. If I did, horrible things would happen. Neither do I own any other anime that I reference. I do own all OC's and new abilities in the story as well as every ounce of pure awesome spawned by this.

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Six years ago:

“So what do you think Snowball?” Issei asked as he laid out what they had and their intended goals in front of the latest addition to their merry band of misfits.

The mousy albino freshman couldn’t help but constantly jump between documents as if trying to convince herself that they were real. “You three did all of this by yourselves in just a year?”

“I did some basic research on the topic for a few years before this. That said, nothing got started in earnest until this year. It was originally my project to begin with. We had help here and there for a couple of things along the way, but most of the legwork was done by us, yeah.” Jasmine yawned. She had spent another long night in the lab and really needed a nap soon. “Though we hoped that with you around the rest of us were hoping to skip a leg day or two so we could get some sleep. Paperwork and legalese isn’t exactly our thing.”

“Nee-san and I did most of the research, material gathering, and testing. And Bird Person got the volunteers, connections, and sponsors.” Issei elaborated. “We have proper documentation and procedures for all that. We just need to get past all the litigation and red tape. We’re dealing with the medical and pharmacy departments, so yeah, it’s a shit ton of tape.”

“Even if you’re dealing with those guys, I don’t see how you should be having this much trouble. If even half of what you have here is true, there should be tons of groups and companies that would be *murdering* one another to sponsor your work by now. Literally.” Carnelian flicked through the paperwork at an ever increasing speed.

The three glanced at one another warily.

“Well if someone had not put off the handpicked sponsors Riser had gathered by telling them that your work was partially supported by the Grigori…” Riser pointedly glared at Issei.

“Hey those racist morons were going to find out sooner or later! Zaz has a seventeen percent stake in the profits! We’re legally obligated to reveal the identities of anyone that owns over *four*. You were supposed to get the retarded Nobles that were the sort that sold out their kind for stupid amounts of money! Not the xenophobic retarded Nobles that were just *bad* with stupid amounts of money!” Issei defended himself. “Hell, they were more interested in trying to screw Nee-san than our project!”

“Not that they got that far. I could tell they were lost causes the moment they tried to chat me up.” Jas snorted.

“Says the one that made just as much progress with the Quality and Assurance head of experimental pharmaceuticals.” Riser accused.

“You accidentally try to blow the ONE closet homosexual head of office in the entire department that actually takes his job seriously to get things moving a bit faster ONE time…” Due to that fiasco she was barred from even entering the upper levels of the Q&A department without permission and security watching. “I still think that bastard was setting me up. I was on my knees with his pants down and cock in hand before he bothered to put up any fight or reaction. I was not moving fast in the slightest.”

“Never mind. I think I understand why there’s such a holdup.” Carnelian deadpanned as the three bickered to the point of completely forgetting she existed. “I’m surprised you three have gotten this far as is.”

“Bribes and connections.” Riser stated with his chest puffed out.

“A good favor goes a long way. A better favor goes longer.” Jas shrugged, playing with her hair.

“I’m real convincing and or stubborn when I want to be.” Issei smiled and bounced up and down energetically.

*“By letting everyone know that the sooner they cave in and give us what we want, the sooner we’ll go away!”* Ghost cheerfully added in.

**“Sheer stupid luck. Emphasis on stupid.”** Ddraig added his two cents.

“No wonder you three needed help.” Carn sagged in defeat. “And the reason why you couldn’t do things the legitimate way?”

All three looked at her as if *she* was the crazy one.

“Right. Politics, an over complex management system, and the incompetent Devil aristocracy. My mistake.”

“It’s fine. Even Bird Person still forgets sometimes, and he was born into this mess.” Issei waved off her mistake.

“Oi!”

Due to Riser’s outburst, nobody noticed the albino teen’s flinch at Issei’s comment.

“Calm down boys, you’re going to scare her off.” Jasmine slapped both males upside the head. “She’s still new to this, remember. We’re lucky we managed to get her to stick with us this long.”

She wisely left out the fact that most of the other managerial and litigation based students that they asked for help either flat out denied them when asked, were scared away within a week of accepting, or were blatantly too incompetent to do anything about their requests.

“It’s not like I had much choice.” Carnelian muttered. “I’m a scholarship student with a vanilla human background. I need to do something outstanding if I’m going to make it anywhere here, and you guys… well, everyone knows of you.”

“Awww. You’re so sweet, trying to be polite and not insult us.” Jasmine swooned.

“Speak for yourself. Riser’s reputation has been at an all-time low since meeting you lot.” Riser snorted.

“Sooo it hasn’t changed much then?” Issei asked. The sad thing was he was being completely genuine with his question.

“You…” Truth be told, Riser reputation has taken a bit of a heavy hit since hanging with the group. Nobility in general were notorious gossips, and Riser had been hanging around an eccentric genius human child and his promiscuous female handler far more than most thought acceptable.

“That said, if this is what you three have been working on trying to pass while driving everyone nuts, then I definitely want in.” Carnelian concluded.

“You sure?” Jas asked skeptically.

“If I get a cut of what comes out of this, and the reputational boost from being involved? Why wouldn’t I?” She asked with a bit more force than expected. “Even if this is only a partial success, the profits from this and doors it can open would set anyone up for life. Even a nobody human like me.”

“Why do you keep on saying that?” Issei tilted his head to the side confused. “You’re a Devil, aren’t you?”

Carnelian froze. “Wh-what? What are you talking about? Didn’t you see my history? I grew up in Ohio.”

“Yeah, to a single human mother.” Issei pointed out factually.

“Aaaah. Fuck. I see what you’re getting at.” Jasmine groaned. “Another “Devil’s Gift”. Issei, shut up. You’re talking about private shit again.”

The boy winced as his mind caught up to him. “I, crap! Sorry! I’m so sorry Snowball! I’ll make it up to you! I won’t talk about it again!”

“Devil’s Gift?” Riser blinked in confusion. “I’m unfamiliar with the term.”

“Seriously?” Jasmine balked before glancing at Carnelian. “Look. We’ll tell you later. It’s not exactly…”

“It’s fine.” The albino sighed. “I, it was going to come out sooner or later. Secrets don’t tend to remain intact if you spend time near Azazel from what I’ve heard.”

“You sure?” The older female asked warily. It was a pretty heavy topic after all.

“Yeah. Might as well tell him before it gets out of hand.”

“Well?” Riser probed skeptically.

Issei and Jasmine glanced at one another before the former stepped in. “A “Devil’s Gift” is a street term for a bastard between a Devil and Human. Normally an accidental product of a commissioned one night stand requested by the latter, but it isn’t uncommon for it to happen when a male from a Noble family decides to get a bit crazy during a night of partying in the human world.”

“Human women have a higher fertility rate with Devil offspring than Devil women, so ironically, despite Devil kind’s very dedicated efforts to repopulate its pureblood pool, it’s estimated that there’s roughly fifty percent more hybrids walking around this generation than purebloods.” Jasmine elaborated. “Hell, if our numbers are right, half of the extinct Noble Pillars could be repopulated almost instantly if you lot accepted mix breeds descendants.”

*That* rumor Riser *had* heard in passing over the years. He had brushed it off as mere hearsay in the past, but if Jasmine and Issei were the ones that considered it plausible, then he reluctantly had to admit that there might be some validity to it.

“Of course, most of the ones that do try to make the claim that they’re related to someone from Devil Aristocracy have a tendency of well, *disappearing*.” Issei winced, glancing at Snowball, who made it a point to try and not draw attention to herself.

“… Ah.” Riser got the point that the pair were trying to make. With some effort, he stood up tall and cleared his throat. “My apologies. Rest assured. This conversation never happened.”

“I-it’s fine. You didn’t know.” Carnelian smiled halfheartedly.

“Yeah, and it’s not like she’s the first mixed race we hang out with anyways.” Issei shrugged.

“Yeah. Wait what?” Jasmine did a doubletake. “Someone else we know is a mix?”

“Yeah. Ass-man. You didn’t know?” Issei shrugged. “He’s also half Devil. I put him down as that when he helps us out sometimes with some of our experimental medicine.”

“I… huh.” In Jasmine’s rather feeble defense, she tended to overlook her sample testers’ names when she went over the test results unless there was something distinctively unique or wrong with their results.

“Riser was not aware of this.” Then again, Riser did not spend much time with Vali to begin with whenever Issei wasn’t around. “Upon retrospection, Riser is also wary of asking what young Vali’s lineage is as well. Anyone and anything related to our idiot here tends to have the potential to be far more trouble than its worth.”

“Relax. Ass-man isn’t a part of the Seventy-two Pillars.” Issei waved them off.

“Shit. He’s related to someone worse.” Jasmine immediately went to a worst case scenario. Issei flinching at her conclusion didn’t help his case either.

“Issei. Riser is being serious. Will young Vali’s family history be a problem for us?” Riser leaned forward and sternly stared down Issei.

“No! I mean, maybe? I mean, Zaz was already doing his thing to make sure nothing would happen before I even met Ass-man! There’s not much more we can do even if we wanted to!” Issei floundered. “You don’t have to worry. He *hates* the Devil part of his family! They’re all major assholes even by our standards!”

“Well, this does explain why Vali doesn’t like showing off in public.” Jasmine hummed in thought. “Come to think of it, he doesn’t really expose himself to many people that aren’t in the know about our group to begin with. I doubt anyone even knows he exists outside of being that insane kid that’s always bugging Issei for a fight.”

“Can we not go any deeper than that?” Issei pleaded. “I’m normally pretty open about things, but this is real personal stuff for him.”

Jasmine and Riser glanced at one another skeptically. It wasn’t often that Issei willingly tried to push away from a topic that was sensitive for someone else. “Fine. Have it your way. No real point in pissing off that kid to begin with. It’s his story.”

“Um.” Carnelian spoke up, reminding them she was there. “Just for future reference, Issei, how did you know that I was part Devil?”

“Your trapezeus, teres major and minor muscles.” Issei stated factually.

“What?”

Jasmine rolled her eyes. “Remember when he gave you that massage a week ago? Devil, Angel, and Fallen back muscles are set up differently than humans because of their wings. Not by much, but for an OCD nut like Issei it’s enough to figure you out then and there. Don’t worry, you’re not going to be called out by some random ass on the street here.”

“The college campus is recognized as neutral grounds regardless. Anyone that brings unnecessary conflict here does not last long.” Riser nodded in agreement before giving Carn a gentle smile. “And even if that is not the case, you will find that you are in reliable company. We protect our own.”

“Relax. You’re in with the misfits now.” Jasmine smirked. “Riser’s a noble ass. I’m a degenerate whore. And Issei’s the sort of sociopathic child genius that you’d expect will either bring in a new age or destroy the planet by the time he hits his peak.”

“Screw the planet. I just want my Harem.”

“As you can see, we’re all doomed.” Riser lamented sarcastically before looking at Carn warmly. “If, rather when, you require a bastian of stability, please don’t hesitate to ask for my aid. I shall accommodate you to the best of my ability.”

“Hey, why don’t you treat us like that?” Issei asked somewhat hurt.

“Because my bastian is a place I deemed to be sane and quiet. Not a prison to contain your chaos and debauchery.”

“In other words it’s too boring for us plebs.” Jasmine supplemented with a wry smile.

“Oh. Okay then.”

“I hate the both of you.”

Their banter was interrupted with a light giggle. Three pairs of eyes turned to see the albino laughing at their banter.

“Sorry. It’s just, it’s refreshing to see a group like you being so carefree.” Carnelian explained her mirth while holding up one of the documents in hand. “Especially when you are working on projects as important as this. I doubt there would ever be a dull moment with you around.”

“That’s exactly the problem.” Riser deadpanned, getting slapped upside the head by Jasmine.

“So you’re going to stay with us Snowball?” Issei asked with shining eyes.

“For now. You do need to work on your sales pitch though.” The girl smiled.

“Yes!” Issei cheered.

“She’s not a part of your Harem you idiot.” Jasmine pointed in a tone that indicated that she doubted he heard her.

“She’s in!” Issei didn’t hear her.

“Do not be afraid to harm the fool if he invades your personal space. He’s rather apt at healing his own injuries, and the bulk of the school body is perfectly aware of his eccentricities and what is required to stop him.” Riser advised. “On a side note, you’ll soon learn why there are so many crowbars in the campus facility this year.”

Surprisingly, they were in fact more effective at their original intended use than they were as improvised weapons.

“Aha. Ah. Thanks, but I’ll try to stick to the more diplomatic methods for the time being.” Carn turned back to the small pile of documents in front of her. “It’s going to take me some time to get through all of this though. Do you guys have a list of contacts I can work with?”

“In the index documentation on the top.” Jas pointed out, knowing just how valuable contacts were. “Hold on. Just give me a moment to point out which ones are still willing to talk to us for the next week.”

It was the start of a golden age. An age of growth. Of progression. Of development.

“This is awesome! Hey, Snowball, how good are you at registering patents? I made like, thirty sex toys that I’m ninety percent sure would get past screening and safety testing.”

“Doesn’t Azazel do that for you already?”

“Yeah. For twenty percent of the profits, and another forty for production costs from the shops he owns that mass produces them. The guy deserves his fair share, but I’m not bending over and taking the jerk raw if I can help it. That’s what his Faction’s for and they already do it with a smile on their faces.”

“Fair enough. You have a point.”

“Aha. Ahahaha…”

“A word of advice. Don’t give those two an inch with their requests and madness. You’ll lose any hope of regaining control over your existence if you lose yourself in it all.”

“I’ll keep that in mind.”

It was the start of something that would grow far out of their control.

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