

73: Guard

“I think I’ll just go lie down somewhere,” Olivia mumbled with a broken spirit. Clearly, she would not have an appetite for quite some time. Beatrice wondered if Olivia got enough nutrition from their time spent together in the woods—*No! Concentrate!* Beatrice reminded herself.

“For once, you might have the right idea,” Ember said.

The fact, that her bodyguard said that, really surprised Beatrice and clued her in that this evening was truly over.

“Eh? Seriously?” Tabitha seemed the only one that could not (or simply refused) to read the mood. “You won’t even try it?”

Whether it was her succubi nature or the fact that she had not been fooled into unwittingly consuming corpse meat, Beatrice was not as squeamish about trying some fresh vegetables. She went to the table and filled her plate with a little bit of everything that clearly was not meat, nor was it at any point close to any meat.

“Do we have some rooms we’ll be staying in, or—?” Beatrice asked the little girl, Jenny.

“We do keep several rooms prepared at all times,” Jenny answered quietly with a lowered head.

“Since people come here often with new deliveries and to take the processed ‘product’, it is part of their job to also have lodgings available at all times,” Ember explained and also walked up to the table to grab a few things to eat, her hunger getting the better of her. “Though I thought I was clear about the meat.”

Jenny squeaked like a mouse and bowed deeply, “I’m sorry! I’m sorry!”

“Don’t terrorize the poor girl,” Beatrice scolded Ember.

“‘Poor’, eh?” Ember said.

“Also, make sure to keep these two” —Beatrice pointed at Ember, and then at Olivia—“As far away from each other as possible.”

“Understood!” Jenny replied. “There are three free rooms upstairs and one more on the first floor.”

“I’m staying next to you, obviously,” Ember said to Beatrice and took a bite out of a carrot. “So, Olivia will be down here.”

“Fine with me,” the ninja girl said. Clearly, she did not care much one way or another.

“That means I’ll be next to Lady Beatrice!” Tabitha cheered.

“I wholeheartedly recommend that we tie them both up,” Ember said to Beatrice while gesturing at Tabitha and Olivia.

“Oh!? And what will you do with me after binding my arms and legs!?” Tabitha asked with even greater excitement, her cheeks turning red.

“Just leave you on the floor, alone,” Ember said the opposite of what Tabitha hoped for.

“Then I refuse!” Tabitha pouted.

“Since when was your compliance a factor?” Ember asked playfully.

“It’s fine,” Beatrice smiled. She was glad that Tabitha’s near-oblivious attitude somehow proved positive, and—at the very least—slightly revitalized Ember. “Jenny, could you guide me to my room?”

“Yes! Right away!” the girl raised her head and went to the door leading out of the guest room.

“At the very least let me place a protective spell at your door!” Ember asked Beatrice.

“Do you have one that will not incinerate anyone that walks by my door by accident?” Beatrice asked.

“... No, I do not,” Ember confessed.

“In that case, I’ll politely refuse,” Beatrice said, took her plate, and walked to Jenny. “Lead the way!”

Jenny grabbed a candle on an old, bent, metal holder and led Beatrice through an otherwise completely dark corridor. Beatrice saw a couple of wooden doors to the left and right, but nothing noteworthy. Perhaps, for these medieval times and in this world, this house could be counted spacious and far more than an ordinary butcher had any hope to dream to afford, but it certainly wasn’t luxurious.

At the end of the wooden corridor, Jenny turned right and led Beatrice upstairs. Beatrice stopped and turned her head left when she felt a familiar chill coming from a door just further ahead opposite the stairs to the second floor.

“You’re not allowed to go there,” Jenny said from a few steps above Beatrice.

The succubus wondered how exactly this girl hoped to stop anyone should they decide to ignore that rule. But considering, that Beatrice knew what exactly that door led to, she had no interest in visiting that place, and instead followed Jenny upstairs, and eventually to her crampy, but separate little room.