

## TRACES

Within the endless expanse of interconnected dimensions layered over and next to one another to form the inescapable hellscape that is the *Underworld*, hushed tales spoke of its uncontested ruler. A champion to rule over all others and the central figurehead that demons from all walks of life worshiped and looked up to with reverence and respect. Doing all they did in the name of a mysterious entity whose face no one had ever seen before. Yet, they would not be swayed into doubting its existence. Believing in their ruler with unwavering faith as they continued to spread their influence throughout the multiversal plane of existence. Conquering whole worlds in an effort to add them into the Underworld's ever growing network for reasons no mere mortal could comprehend.

For eons, the Underworld's armies were thought to be undefeatable. Spreading like an incurable scourge across the stars, consuming civilization after civilization without a hint of slowing their advance. Until one day, a *Hero* would emerge. An unlikely hope in the form of a scrappy village boy. Bearing strength heralded from the divines themselves. A shield for his people and a sword to cleave through the demonic onslaught. With all signs pointing toward an inevitable confrontation with their faceless ruler once the realization was made that this war would be without end until the demonic commander was slain. An outcome that would only be reached after a harsh...you added poison to my tea again haven't you?

"I apologize for the affront Milady, but I had to try...and you know my compulsions, do you not? At the very least, you noticed it this time."

Indeed I should, I made you after all. It would've been a shame for you not to have tried. The venomous sap of the *Sephora Plant* hm? You've certainly outdone yourself to have acquired such...volatile material. It's commendable really...so much so that I have something of major import from the front I think you might want to hear about~

"Your praise is all I live for Milady. Although...I doubt there's anything of interest to me in relation to the outside? Oh...does it have anything to do with Commandant Demeter? I thought I told him to forget about our meeting..."

My~ You undersell yourself my dear. You ought to know plenty of men out there vye for your hand in courtship. Not just Demeter...which coincidentally, brings us to the news...does the name *Hallowstead* strike a chord with you?

"The dirt ball of a frontier that's somehow withstood our might? Indeed it does, I heard the last of its defenders have finally been out of their misery..."

Word travels fast...and how *did* you feel upon hearing of such a thing?

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“What I felt? Why happiness of course! Our best can finally concentrate their efforts elsewhere in spreading your influence...and the idiotic masses know better than to try and resist, now more than ever I would surmise after the blow you dealt them. What could one warrior have hoped for...standing against your brilliance...maybe that’s why I felt so motivated today Milady! The Sephora were particularly stubborn to harvest...”

Hmm...that’s good to hear *Debola*. But I believe the best treats are meant to be shared...so go on, take a bite why don’t you? You’re resistant to poison, yes? So a little Sephora sap shouldn’t be a problem I take it...

“Ufufu...that is true, yes. But...regardless, if Milady wishes it...*mmn*~ The flavor is just...devilishly delightful!”

*Evidently*...was this all a part of your plan as well *Debola*? Normally an aphrodisiac of this level would be enough to drive anyone else to insanity...but you had to have known I would have you eat it right? Your cheeks are absolutely on fire right now~

"*Mmmnmgb!* M-Milady...please...if you don't mind...I'd very much like...for you to...to...savor me...ravish me! Fuck me!"

Such a naughty girl you are...but...I suppose a reward is due for how hard you've worked for me over the many years since you've come to be by my side. And it certainly *has* been quite awhile since I last saw your barren body up close. Come *Debola*, you can make it to the bed I presume? I'm quite eager to see how good you are at using those hands of yours~

THE END

## NOT SO SPECIAL AFTER ALL...

"S-Shit! Where...oh god, this isn't that freak's...what the hell is this?!"

The panic stricken voice of a young damsel in distress echoes across the spacious interior of a well lit room. Sporting simple decor and signs of cohabitation if the mixed articles of men and women's clothing lying about were enough to go by. And yet, the sole individual within seemed to be struggling with herself as if faced by primal levels of fear she had never felt before at the sight of the simple room. With wild eyes darting to and fro before returning to look over her shapely figure clad in a revealing set of flowery lingerie with slits and gaps aplenty. Serving the role of beautifying her figure for the satisfaction of any would-be observers...like the handsome stud walking in to join the scantily clad girl lying on the bed...

"Oh dear...two times in a day? We can't be having that now can we? C'mon Miriam, *back to bed...*"

"W-Wait! You've got the wro-*ah!* I...I'm sorry dear, I don't know what came over me back there. Did I keep you waiting long? You must be starving!"

"No need for the rush Miriam, your safety and health comes first. And besides, you look dressed for something else altogether..."

Despite eyeing herself up just seconds ago, *'Miriam'* would dumbfoundedly turn to look herself over once more. Continuing the eerie display of a sudden personality shift as her eyes, once bulging in abject terror, narrow into a loving gaze. Speaking in a hushed, demure tone that displayed no sign of the uncharacteristic 'energy' she had mouthed off with soon after coming to in a bedroom she looked completely at home in now that the man's suave voice had calmed her down. An impossibly merry notion that would've been believable were it not for the very obvious signs of something insidious going on behind the scenes. A backstage act *'Miriam'* had accidentally found herself participating shortly after a dimwitted decision had backfired on her spectacularly.

Born a biological male from another set of parents altogether, *Alex* was the name of the invasive mind inhabiting Miriam's body. Blessed with the supernatural ability to 'hop' from body to body akin to possession, Alex had been smart enough to keep his powers a secret since young (especially since no one in their right mind would ever believe such a claim). Starting off as nothing more than harmless practice sessions where he would hop into his friend's bodies for the fun of it. Making them do silly things or play games and read books he otherwise couldn't have access to. Innocent stuff that would soon turn sour once he had come of age and entered into highschool; using his powers to coast through his education without lifting a finger. Until eventually becoming a full blown pervert who would hop into the hottest girls at school before fiddling around with their bodies as if they were inanimate mannequins and not living, breathing human beings with lives of their own.

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But like all bad habits, the consequence of dabbling in such depraved behavior would inevitably come to bite Alex in the ass. With the initiator of his own downfall being the use of his ability to hop into a pretty girl he had laid eyes on while walking down the street. A mature, 10 out of 10 babe he just had to 'try' out, jumping without hesitation after ensuring his body would be hidden away beneath a sheltered walkway. And at that very moment, the body hopper knew something had gone wrong. Feeling an intangible presence pass him by before what felt like a series of unbreakable ropes binds his spiritual form. Constricting like snakes before vanishing entirely once Alex had become Miriam. Growing uncertain of herself before watching her old body stir with alarm, yelping in surprise as another hurdle reveals itself in the form of Miriam's then-assumed boyfriend.

Realizing the gravity of her mistake, Miriam had attempted to hop back into her original body. Finding herself unable to do so no matter how hard she concentrated. Struggling to tear free from the man's unusually strong grip as she watches 'Alex' look around in confusion and then relief upon sighting his old, possessed body. Almost as if he was *happy* to have been swapped around, not even caring to look for a second time as he makes himself scarce presumably with the original hopper's ability. Leaving Miriam as she was stranded with all the baggage her new life entailed. Blacking out shortly after her 'boyfriend' had uttered a word before finding herself awakening in someone else's bedroom dressed up like a lovey dovey wife trying to entice her husband to sleep with her. Alex had never once thought to think about the possible existence of others like him. That he should've looked both ways on the metaphorical road before hopping to another person's body for his own nefarious entertainment. And now he was paying for it in full by experiencing what it felt like for his victims now that an equally perverted mind had unintentionally ensnared him. None the wiser to his girlfriend's escape thanks to a shared philosophy the two corrupt superhumans shared; an egotistical outlook on women for their looks alone and nothing else...targeting Miriam for her beauty before overwriting her personality with that of a submissive, doting wife of his own creation thanks to the psychic influence his voice had over others.

And as long as had his Miriam there by his side, the 'freak' would be appeased. Uncaring of Alex or whoever else it was lying trapped beneath the mask that was his ideal partner as he crawls over to join her on the sheets. Undoing the buttons and straps on his clothes before snuggling up to Miriam's side. Happy to have his subservient slave again...

If anything could be said in consolation, at least Alex could be proud of himself for liberating the poor girl by inadvertently offering himself up in her place...

**THE END**

## SOURCE GLOSSARY

### *Traces*

Image 1 by Jdw : <https://www.pixiv.net/en/users/7952219>

Image 2 by Fujioka Yatsufusa : <https://www.pixiv.net/en/users/34753>

### *Not So Special After All...*

Images by Nanaichi : <https://www.pixiv.net/en/users/737236>