

Stage II

A Debt Repaid

Act 2

Date: 2/22/45 A.H.

Location: The Demon Realm, Nautilus City, Club Gatto

A thriving club scene, people on the dance floor with the flashing lights. Booths, private and otherwise, the tables- people getting both drunk and high. Really typical of what you might expect to find in the slums of a town like Nautilus which just so happened to be another of many shitholes in the Demon World. Down here, it is said that roughly 20-30% of all towns are crime towns and of course this was one.

And here back in the back a scene was going down.

The suits, always at every meeting. Oh so professional and business-y yet so very messy. The leader with his gangster hat sat like a total boss trying to aura farm, the big muscle thug to the left with scars all over his face and that greasy top, the beanpole to the right with the glasses and all so very slick and nerdtastic. About half a dozen goons stood around with tommy guns near and knives at reach, all mostly lax and cross armed though.

Perhaps a little different though was the group meeting these thugs at this club. Almec in his butler-looking suit, Danielle with her jester-looking shirt and pants and the works with the jacket, and then two new fellows, a boy and a girl. The girl, long silky black hair and bright blue eyes, wrapped in a dark blue long coat over her dress shirt and skirt combo, a book in hand pressed to her chest with both hands. The boy, far shorter brown hair bobbing about and crossing over his amber eyes, a white dress shirt topped by a dark trench coat which was ever so the style... oh and a sword in his hand kept sheathed.

Danielle stood with her own arms crossed, clinging tightly to her own sleeves. Her face, clear as can be discomfort-filled. Scrunched and sort of sad, hollow eyes with little to no life in

them. Almec sat there at that table pushing forth a case. Across from him the boss of the thugs took that case and pulled it in.

Pops went off and the case flipped, the man looking inside with a smug grin.

“As agreed,” Almec spoke, “Pure Spice from Galvenak.”

“Ahhhhh hah hah my maaaaaaaan- you got the goods alright. Pure Spice from the Galvenak Realm, second best realm for this stuff next only to- what was it, Ashla or something? Ah not important heh heh. Yet my friend, my *amigo*, my good good partner uh, how were you able to procure goods such as this with the war, aye?”

“I have... connections, from the old days.”

“Oh ho ho hooo yes, very very nice right? Well *snort* as agreed upon then I suppose uh, if this all checks out we can uh, we can start your transition. There is a nice spot of Demon World totally void of this terrible terrible stench you so desperately- uhhhh why exactly are you running again actually?”

“... to get away from it all.”

“Ahhhhhhhhh right right right of coourse my friend of course. Well, you’ve gone to such lengths so I can most certainly see what I can do for you and your young compatriots. You have a very very nice team my friend to have pulled such a feat off, eh?”

“Of course,” Almec spoke leaning back and crossing his arms, “They do pretty well for themselves. They are going to do great things once they grow stronger.”

“And what of you old friend?”

“Those details aren’t important... shall we negotiate then?”

“Ah yes yes, hahaha, we shall we shall. But uh, between us, old time’s sake and all that right right? The Kiddos can wait outside if that is alright with you Almec.”

“... very well.”

“Almec?”

“It’s alright Danielle. I will have this negotiated in no time. Take Will and Raven and have a look around while Gustave and I discuss business.”

“... fine,” Danielle mumbled with a swift turn.

The trio made their way away from the table and for the door, one of the goons opening it and allowing the younglings out. The door once more would be shut when they did in fact exit the room.

The boss, Gustave, looked to Almec, “You don’t seem too very kindly to them my friend.”

“Attachment leads to trouble. I’m only doing this as a favor to an old friend of mine. Once I secure them a proper future, our accord will be over. It’ll be back to business as usual for me.”

“I see I see *sniff* rather unfortunate my friend. That Danielle girl seems particularly capable. Buuuuuut no matter now, I have picked out several-”

Outside back in the club the trio exited the corridor connected to the backrooms. Now with the whole of the club in front of them they made their way along passed a couple tables.

“I can’t believe Almec just sent us away like that. Shouldn’t we have some say in what we do?” Raven questioned aloud.

“He has his reasons Rae,” William replied, “Almec has had his neck in the game far longer than we have. We need to trust him to do right by us.”

“Right by us by just handing us off to the unknown and entrusting our futures with gangsters.”

“Hey, if Almec trusts this guy then we should too.”

“That man is a criminal. We are working with criminals. We ARE criminals by association.”

“Rae, shut it. Get the Genesis out of your system alright? They may be the law in Primus but they aren’t here. We both agreed to go, remember? Ugh, Dani, what do you think of all of this?”

“...”

“... Dani?”

“... eh? Oh, uh, sorry. I just uh- what, what did you say?”

“Jeez, you’re both strung out over this.”

“Sorry, I just... the sooner we get out of here the better,” Danielle murmured walking away from the two.

“Huh? Hey wait- Dani,” William spoke out following.

Danielle moved on paying no mind to her comrades behind, pushing passed a couple people in the aisle while behind her both William and Raven followed after, with Will still calling out for her to wait.

“Hey Dani just, just wait a minute. Why are you so-”

She paused, turning back around, “I don’t like being in some of these places, alright? They... they bring back bad memories.”

As she spoke she once more clenched and squeezed at her own sleeves. Her gaze distance, glancing downward.

“Look. The sooner we get this done the better. Before something happens like-”

“Ooooooooooooooh myyyyyyyyyyyy gawwwwwwwwwwwwwwwd is that Danielle Mersella~?” a voice cried out from afar.

Anyone could see the chill run down her spine, all of the color leaving her face as her head rose back up. The dilation of her pupils, her frown completely dissolved. The voice so very feminine yet clearly manish. Slowly she turned back around towards one of the walls there, the crowd not present allowing for very clear view.

Both of her companions looked in just the same direction and what stood there- or rather who stood there, could only be described as a total pimp. The dress coat and the dress hat with the dress cane all done up in reddish pink with zebra stripe décor and hearts. This man, his face absolutely decorated in sky blue face paint. Paint around the eyes, lipstick, very obvious blush, a huge shit eating grin.

“Oiiiiiiiiiii Dani I know that gorgeous gorgeous orange from anywhere doll, how ya doin sis???” the man called out.

“R-Reggie,” Danielle murmured.

“Heeyyyyyyyyyyyyyy gurl heyyyyyyyy,” the pimp called rushing over right away from across the room waving a hand.

And as he drew closer the fact that he was wearing stockings and sandals became clear. Behind her both Raven and William stared.

“Reggie,” Danielle murmured again.

“Like hi girl. Dani, Dani, it’s been so long hi~” he spoke and in that next second moving to wrap his arms around her in an embrace.

The hug lasted only a second before the man pulled away, maintaining that smile.

“It’s been like so damn long girl, here I thought you had died or some shit.”

“It’s... good to see you, Reggie.”

“Mhmm mhmm like yeah it is isn’t it? Gosh what’s it been? Like thirty or forty years hasn’t it? Myyyyyyyyyyyyyy you haven’t changed a bit!!”

“Y-yeah no, no I haven’t. Uh, guys, this is Reggie. Reggie, my friends... uh, William and Raven Frost.”

“Oh hiiiiiiiiiiii~ So nice to meet you all~”

“Uh-”

“Heh, yeeaaaaaa-”

“Reggie... why uh... why are you here?”

“Ooooooooooh you know just working my job.”

“Your... job?”

“Yeaaaaaaaah girl. Boss man put me in charge of this whole ass club maaaaaaan. Like you know, after the old one came down with a sudden case of stabbing.”

“Archie gave you a night club? That’s... cool. Congrats?”

“Ooooooh sweetie nooooo. Nooo. Archie he uh, he isn’t around anymore luv. He also came down with a sudden case of stabbings... and gunshot holes.”

“Archie is- if he isn’t the boss then who is..?”

“Oh like uh, no, no you probably shouldn’t- like really you shouldn’t probably be here anyway cuz he’s gonna be stopping by to check in on the place soon girl. Like actually you uh, you should probably scram like now.”

“Reggie. Who is the new head of the cartel?”

“... like... you might not wanna know but you so totally do know. And he’s uh, he’s going to be here like soon.”

Danielle moved backwards, her whole body shaking in that next moment, her mouth hung. Both of her partners looked to her whilst Reggie now wore a rather somber expression.

“Dani?” William questioned.

“Will we need to get the FUCK out of here now. Raven go get Almec we are LEAVING-” she blurted out, turning round and grabbing hold of Will’s hand.

“Dani what’s going on?!” Will questioned.

“Will we need to get THE FUCK out of here, now!!”

“The back girl, the back,” Reggie spoke, “The back streets will get you guys gone~”

Raven moved off back in the direction they had originally come from whilst Danielle pulled on William, dragging him through the crowd. With her at the lead they weaved and bobbed around people. The tug on William was just enough to keep him moving after her despite the confused questioning look on his face.

Through the crowd and towards the corridor in the back, not to the private booths but instead to the exit. Around the corner and BOOM- she came to a halt and William nearly walked right into her back. He pulled back and looked ahead, unable to see her expression though very able to see the men in front of them. Three of them, each one distinctly different.

A tallish man a good few feet over William, jet black & short shaven hair. Jet black eyes staring back half cocked ultra-serious fierce as if the gaze of a psycho was being returned to him. Half his face hidden by a skull face mask which completely covered everything from the top of the nose down. Dressed in a black suit with a black overcoat somehow flapping, his hands in his pants pockets.

The second also fairly tall of similar height to the first, floppy somewhat messy brown hair combed over to his right side. Amber eyes shining with total amusement, curved about in much the way that that smile of his was, a smile surrounded by facial hair. A green dress shirt, jeans, boots, brown gloves, and a long brown trench coat. In his right hand he held a cigarette, one with normal colored smoke.

And then the third at the head, slicked back black hair in a pony with only a few strands left behind to form bangs that hung over his deep golden amber eyes. Golden earrings hanging down the sides of his face, a rather bland and cold face. He wore a black suit just like the first; though over top that suit was a black fur coat with the fur all around the collar and shoulders and the cuffs. In hand a cigarette holder red with a golden etch pattern, a cigarette in place with blue smoke radiating out and a red decorated ribbon wrapped around his fingers.

The third man exhaled the blue smoke into the air as before him both Danielle and William backed away, the former of the duo moreso. His golden amber gaze rested upon the very wide faced Danielle, his stern expression unchanged. The fiercely serious man with the skull mask glared at both, the smoking man popped a grin.

Danielle herself backed away another pace right passed William with all of the color leaving her face. The man in the fur coat looked upon Danielle, the fire in his eyes almost that of a lion’s, predatory in nature, maybe even a little Draconic.

"Well..." he uttered coldly while flicking his cigarette holder, "Danielle Mersella. It's been awhile."

"V-Virgil..." she murmured.

"Heh!" the smoking man in the brown coat scoffed, "How about that, Zero Blackheart's old pet. You know her boss?"

"I suppose you might say that," the man called Virgil spoke.

"D-Dani. Who is this guy?" William whispered.

"... my former employer."

"Hmph. So those few years you spent under my wing haven't been forgotten. Touching," Virgil spoke, again tapping his cigarette holder with his fingers.

"Heh, well how about that," the smoking man uttered, "So before the Big Bad Z she worked for you. One... HELL of a glow up. Course, now here she is with nothin'. Surprised you're still alive kid after all that fun shit that went down."

"..."

"Talkative ain't she?"

"Young Danielle Mersella. You were a rather prized assassin back then. Your skills, your appearance. It was truly a shame to give you up," Virgil murmured.

"Give up? You sold me."

"Mmm... so I did."

As he spoke he began to move forward ahead of his two cronies, while Danielle was left backing up and into the now-parting crowd. William stepped aside, dumbstruck, watching as the mobster kept putting his friend on the retreat. The people formerly dancing by now had quieted down near them and begun to move away whilst much of the rest of the club continued.

"And now here you are, once again. Dear little Danielle, all alone now. And to survive for so long without a master, I wonder how troubling that has been. A slow burn, has it not?"

"I... I'm not alone, I have allies!" she spoke, stomping down.

Virgil stopped, glancing to his left at William momentarily before turning his focus back to her, "Hard to find decent help these days I suppose, with the wars going on. Though with that having been said, Dani, since Zero has died, I do believe you could return to your old master. I

believe you owe it to me regardless that you *have* lasted so long, and I find myself in need of strong subordinates once more to keep our organization on top.”

“I don’t owe you *shit* Virgil. You sold me-”

“I lent you out. And now, I think it’s time to come home little one,” he replied again approaching, “Yes, the idea is there. And I think I shall claim you as I desire.”

Danielle took another step back as Virgil continued to creep towards her.

“Hey!” came a shout from behind, William’s voice in fact, “Back off sleemo!”

William stood there, his sword in hand and in stance ready to be drawn. Danielle looked from Virgil back behind, looking to her friend. Meanwhile behind that friend the two muscles remained, the smoker in fact smirking wide now. Soon there came a cackle from the man whom had thrown his own head back.

Looking back ahead with that grin now showing his teeth- “Watch it kiddo, you might get spanked, haha!”

“William hush-” Danielle hissed.

“HA! Oh that is precious. Look at the youngster trying to stand up for his friend. Kid, you have no idea how damn stupid you sound. We’re not just some thugs you no-diff in some cheap assassination mission for a couple of lowly clowns looking to get ahead in the game, we’re at the top of the class,” the smoking man laughed.

“B-bastard” William grunted side stepping, “How can you-”

“Tell? Easily. Ha!”

To Will’s left stood Virgil and Danielle, and now to his right both of the muscle that came along with Virgi, “... Dani, who the hell are these guys?”

“HA! He doesn’t even know,” the smoker mocked.

“Insolence,” the masked one growled.

“Why Danielle, I’m hurt. Have you not mentioned our past antics to your newfound allies?” Virgil questioned.

“... William... this is, this is Virgil Gorgon... the now-head of the Sunnycide Cartel,” Dani spoke aloud.

“Sunnycide?” William murmured, “Sounds overblown.”

“See this is why children need to be smacked around a bit. Helps them learn a thing called respect,” the smoker sighed.

“William- just stop talking!” Danielle called out.

“Hmph... so you would reject the shelter of my wing after all I have done for you... I see.”

Step- SMACK!!

Danielle fell to the ground, her left hand right up to the side of her face. Virgil stood there, his arm and hand outstretched, soon lowered to his side. His fiery gaze locked upon her as he towered over, smoke still billowing out of his smoke.

“D-Dani!” William called out, watching Virgil now pace around Danielle as the crowd moved away.

“I gave you power, I brought you to prominence. I gave you to that bastard Blackheart which gave you everything... and yet you lost it all, squandered it. I can tell with one look at you that you no longer hold that great power he had bestowed upon you, and you barely have what I gifted you.”

He stopped beside her, turning about and raising his left foot.

“Ungrateful little whore,” he growled, immediately delivering a kick, and with that kick she collapsed and rolled, “You think just because that piece of shit angel died that you are free now? Oh please. Have you forgotten why I was, why I always will be- your one *true* master? I own you, and that has not changed.”

Swiftly he formed the Earth Seal with his left hand, the pinkie and ring fingers bent along with the thumb whilst both index and middle were extended. Her eyes pulsated, her back arching. Both of her hands immediately flew to her lower right abdomen. A howl of pure agony escaped her all musky, saliva flying from her mouth, her eyes dilated, her face flushed.

The gruff as she rolled around, her arms eventually flopping and flailing about as she rolled. As she rolled about on her back, her jacket- rather a part of it, had begun to actually glow red. A surge of quite literal purple electricity enveloped her, all originating from that single spot, all radiating around her body.

And it was at this point when the music of the club, when the very dancing, the very fun- all of it died in that single instance. Her screams radiated, becoming garbled at times as she choked on her own spit and anguish. The tears streaming down her face and the literal smoke flowing off of her body. All of this while Virgil who towered above maintained his fierce composure, not even batting an eye.

Across the way the smoker grinned with a sadistic smirk while the masked man did not react in the slightest. For William, however, that was another story as he cried out “DANI!!!” and ripped the sheathe from his sword. Will wasted no time, charging straight in with that sword ready to thrust forward into Virgil.

CRACKLE

CRASH-CLATTER BANG

Will hit a table, his katana flying out of his hand and rattling across the floor. Standing right before where he had been, the smoking man who still wore his grin. Virgil had not batted an eye at the intrusion, maintaining his dominance over Danielle who continued to writhe in pain on the ground. The smoker on the other hand now had begun to walk in the direction of Will, who was only then beginning to sit up.

Srrrrrruuunnnch

Will’s head was pulled back, his hair gripped by the smoking man who was all at once behind him, “Heh, damn kids. This is what happens when you fuck around with grownups brat.”

The surge of electricity halted, her screams continuing briefly before waning off. She lied upon her back, arms sprawled, huffing and puffing. Virgil moved forward another couple stepped. **Prop.** Down went his left foot right atop the glowing bit of fabric, the lower right part of her abdomen.

“Come now Dani,” he muttered, twisting his foot like a dagger, “It pains me ever so to do this to you.”

She said nothing, instead gasping away for breath that she had been unable to take in, crying out again though at the twist. Tears continued to flow, her hands moving a little as if to grab Virgil’s foot but instead slamming back down.

“I see,” he mumbled, moving his cigarette holder to his mouth and at once having a hit.

He removed it, breathing out smoke up into the air, soon there after looking back down to her. Momentarily he glanced over to William, held in the other smoker’s hand.

“Mmm... perhaps you require-” he began, pulling his foot off of her and taking a couple steps back, “Alternative motivation. Serve me again, or your friend will die.”

“D-Dani, don’t!” Will howled.

“Oh you be quiet,” the smoker laughed.

Danielle huffed and puffed, moving her hands over to the spot radiating with pain, “Y-yu... you... you’ll just- you’ll just kill him... anyway!” she then croaked out.

“Heh,” he chuckled, “You know me so well... kill the boy. Spill his guts all over her.”

“HA! Gladly,” the smoker laughed, reaching down to Will’s abdomen with his free hand after discarding the cigarette.

“W-Will!” Danielle cried.

“Danielle, William!” came the howl of Almec all at once.

The smoker glanced up as his hand came to a halt over Will’s stomach. Both youngsters glanced over still wincing in pain. Virgil did not move. Behind them ran up Almec and Raven, and then close behind them Gustave and his crew.

They all came to a halt a distance back, Almec holding position and stance ready to engage. Meanwhile ahead of him the masked man did not move, the smoker did not move... and Virgil, he merely spun a quarter turn around and turned his very head to look to Almec.

“Ah... more guests.”