

Ronnie wasn't totally sure how she'd ended up in attendance at the Masquerade. Or, well, that wasn't totally accurate. She knew *how*. As skilled a poker player as she was, she knew Angora from around the casino. She felt the other woman's eyes on her as she played, occasionally, as if she was trying to determine if she was a liability or not. If the invitation she'd received meant anything, she supposed she'd managed to get on Angora's good side.

What she didn't know was *why* she was in attendance. She'd never really liked this kind of thing, if she was going to be honest with herself. Her mask was a last-minute purchase she made when she realized the theme of the event and it only *mostly* fit, sitting uncomfortably on her face. Her dress had been something she'd pulled from the back of her closet, too fancy to wear most of the time and slightly too tight. It felt a little like her chest might pop out of the damn thing if she moved around too much.

Despite her own misgivings, she at least felt surer about how much she belonged there than she did about the succubun near her. She looked fresh-faced, with her fancy outfit and slung off mask seeming like something that she wasn't that comfortable with wearing. More than her outfit, though, Ronnie could tell that the other felt out of place based on how she was chugging down the free champagne.

For a moment, Ronnie watched in amusement, baffled by how quickly she was drinking. It was when she reached for another one that she finally spoke up, reaching over to put her free hand on her arm.

"You can slow down, honey. S'not going anywhere," she said, giving the other a careful, easy-going smile.

She startled, seeming to finally notice her. She looked over with wide eyes, her cheeks flushed. She opened and closed her mouth. "Uh," she said awkwardly. It kind of made Ronnie want to grab her face.

The other bun lifted one of her sleeves and wiped the expensive material over her face, as if that would sober her up a bit. She looked back at Ronnie again, her eyes

widening a little further as she focused on her chest for a moment. Ronnie had to resist the urge to laugh when her head shot back up. Based on how she looked away, Ronnie wondered if Asuki thought she hadn't been obvious.

"I'm Asuki," she said suddenly, leaning in a little and speaking up. Ronnie raised an eyebrow, unable to hide her amusement. She leaned back in, relishing the way that the Asuki's cheeks somehow got redder with the proximity.

"Ronnie," she replied. She looked around for a moment before she lowered her voice conspiratorially. "You know, it isn't actually all that loud in here. You can speak at a normal volume."

Asuki blinked, looking like she was actively thinking about that. Close to her, Ronnie could smell the champagne on her breath. She had been about to say something when Asuki spoke up again.

"Do you... come here often?" She tried. It seemed like, based on her face, that she was trying to whisper this time. It came out at full volume, though not as loud as before. Ronnie raised her eyebrows, deciding to play along. She leaned back a little.

"Ah, no, not really. It is only an event for the one night, after all," she said, gesturing in Asuki's direction with her own champagne glass. Asuki nodded sagely, as if she had thought of that before.

"Cool, cool," she said. "I don't come here often either." She lifted her own champagne glass to finish it off, though Ronnie reached out to grab her arm again.

"Maybe you wanna consider switching over to water, baby. I think at this point you're going to be hungover anyway, but at least you don't wanna make it worse," she said, plucking the glass from her hand as she spoke. Asuki's lips parted for a moment before she spoke.

"M'not that drunk," she protested, though she didn't reach for the glass again. "Just a little tipsy, s'all."

“Mhm. Right. Well, still.” Ronnie put the glass down on the table behind them before she grabbed for some water, pushing it into Asuki’s hand. She leaned in a little before the other could protest, kissing her cheek before she pulled away again. Asuki looked like she might faint if any more blood rushed to her face, clearly flustered over the attention. Ronnie smiled at her, tucking some of her hair back into her updo before she backed away.

“You just drink some water and eat something and feel better in the morning, hm?”

“Huh? Uh. Yeah. Sure,” Asuki said, still flustered by the attention. She lifted the glass, looking at Ronnie over the rim as she took a sip. Satisfied (and not particularly interested in doing much more than teasing), Ronnie picked up one of the sides daintily, taking another step back again as she did.

“I ought to be going. You stay safe now, though. And maybe then I’ll see you around at the casino sometime?”

Asuki looked at her with wide, hopeful eyes. She nodded. “Yeah, sure. I’ll go to the casino. Totally.”

Ronnie both didn’t think that she seemed the type and didn’t think she’d remember much of the details of the conversation later. So, instead of leaving her a note or anything, she left her to continue to sober up. Besides, she couldn’t just watch after her all night! She still needed to see the live band!