"You look like death — oh, wait…!" Shabriri howled in laughter as he shook the bars of the door. Salem slowly moved his head, shooting a glare back at him.

"I would say if I could only see!"

As Salem went to speak angrily, he covered his mouth as he felt the tightness in his chest. Lowering his head he coughs violently. His other hand pressed against the wall to stable himself. The coughing has gotten worse over the years, these coughing fits left his body trembling and weak.

He wasn't as strong as he once was.

"Careful." Shabriri smirked as he leaned his face against the bars, "You might die at this rate… leaving that poor maiden alone."

"Shut up." Salem wheezed, taking shaky deep breaths, "I am death, I will never die."

"As I am chaos, and I'll never die. Oh, we have so much in common you and Shabriri…"

Salem slams the door with his fist, leaning close to Shabriri's face, "Death is not chaos. You and I are not alike. I can bring peace and *order*. You are the opposite… and I grow tired of your voice."

"Then *free* me."

"No." Salem's eyes do not stray from Shabriri. He may have the face of his brother, but that was not him.

Clutching his chest, Salem's head finally drops down again, the sickening wheezing and coughing taking over once more.

Shabriri only smiles as he finally takes a step back from the door. listening as Salem fell into another coughing fit. Death blight creeping around the man as struggled to breathe. emerging from the ceiling, walls and the floor.

This was becoming the norm to Shabriri. He has seen — or rather *heard* — the decline from most powerful to quickly weakening. Almost a sad thought to behold.

If he only would submit himself to the flame… it would heal him. But his words alone never swayed the death god. Nothing did. Except for one… *little thing*. a *woman*. A sensitive topic to the god to the point he let his *emotions* get the best of him time and time again.

Shabriri wasn't stupid.
He knew how to get under Salem's skin.

"You went to see her, didn't you?" He chimed in, cackling to himself as Salem slowly raised his head once more. his angry eyes flickered a glimmer of softness upon remembering.

"That is none of your concern."

"There's no point, you know. Poor girl will never remember you. Just give up."

Salem slid his back against the wall to sit down. hunched over as he kept going in and out of coughing fits. no different sounding than the wormfaces.

"... she spoke my name. I couldn't reveal myself, but she knew it." Salem held out his hand, watching as a faded butterfly fluttered weakly above it.

"... so, you are wrong *again*. I have faith in her to keep going. You … you will never get her." Salem whispers now, his voice hoarse from the violent fits of his coughing.

"My, my… and what if she lets go?" Shabriri hummed, once again leaning against the door. If he could eye him, he would. The metal covering his eyes was always in the way.

Salem fell silent. his chest felt weak, his body still trembling from the aftershocks of the coughing.

 What if she lets go?

"... she won't." Salem whispers quickly. so softly.

"I'll make sure of it."

Salem stood back up, glancing up and down of the door — back to Shabriri's face. Leaning close again.

"... *endure* this prison. For you will stay here forever." Salem hums as he spun on his heel, walking back up the stairs.

"You can't keep me — Shabriri — forever!" The other shook the bars, laughing, "I'll be free and when I am, I'll get you next."