

Eirenelas stood in the penthouse living room, his gaze cast downward at the glittering city below. Everyone down there had a desire they wanted, a wish they could never fulfill. Eirenelas could smell their desperation as it hung heavy in the air and hear their cries of want as he observed the ants below upon his diamond-studded hill.

"Plan on sightseeing for the evening," his puppy spoke behind him.

Drake stood near the glass, his arms crossed, peering down at the city as if searching for something he'd never find.

Eirenelas smirked, amusement flickering in his eyes. "Simply taking in the sight. But now, I have something far more interesting to observe."

Drake scoffed but shifted closer, enough for an untrained eye to not notice.

Out of the corner of his eye, Eirenelas saw a small cut on Drake's cheek, the faint trace of blood still trickling down. The sight stirred something possessive in him.

The feelings he had for this mortal bothered him more than they should. Eirenelas couldn't help but chuckle as Drake was true to this unofficial title. He yipped, demanded attention, and needed to be fed just like any other pup. A wonder to Eirenelas how he was the son of the egotistical snake currently slithering in his garden. Drake should be another obstacle in his plan to release Circe. Without chaos, good cannot exist, and vice versa. Drake understood the need for balance. Maybe that was why he gravitated toward Drake, beyond the bond that linked them. Perhaps the bond was stronger than it seemed.

Without much thought, Eirenelas reached over and swiped the blood with the pad of his thumb.

"Now pup, you know I'm the only one allowed to make you bleed." Drake's skin was feather-soft beneath his touch as he wiped the blood away. Eirenelas brought the smeared blood to his lips and licked it away, taking a moment to savor the taste.

Drake's face erupted in a deep shade of crimson as he sputtered, "The only dog here is you! Who laps at someone's blood like that?" Drake's voice trembled slightly which Eirenelas found all the more delicious.

Eirenelas smirked, letting the metallic tang of Drake's blood settle on his tongue. "Pup, you wound me. After everything we've been through, I thought you'd be used to my affectionate nature."

"Affectionate? You just tasted my blood! That's not affection, that's some unhinged horror nonsense."

Eirenelas tilted his head, his hair shifting ever so slightly with the movement. "And yet, you still let me."

Drake scoffed, arms crossing over his chest. He opened his mouth for a rebuttal, then promptly shut it. No, he would not give Eirenelas the satisfaction of knowing he was right. He wasn't just annoyed at Eirenelas, though. There was something deeper, a growing, familiarity with the god that went beyond their bond and Drake couldn't quite understand it yet. So instead, he turned his glare to the city below, watching the neon lights flicker like stars in the night.

Eirenelas stretched, the chains hanging from his belt clinking softly. "You never answered my question, pup. How did you get that cut?"

Drake exhaled through his nose, fingers unconsciously rubbing at the celestial bond mark on his neck. The mark itched, a constant reminder of the chain that linked them together. "Your rather expensive errand led to a... disagreement between me and a certain mob boss."

Eirenelas chuckled, eyes gleaming. "I do love a bit of conflict."

Drake gave him an annoyed look. "Oh, do you? Well, thanks to you I almost got my ass kicked."

Eirenelas leaned closer, the warmth of his presence unsettlingly comforting. "You? Getting your ass kicked? Impossible. My pup is far too stubborn for that."

Drake ran a hand through his hair, groaning. "I handled it. Barely. But you could've warned me your 'contact' was the kind of guy who doesn't like surprises."

Eirenelas shrugged, the subtle movement sending another soft chime through the air as the chains along his waist shifted. "Where's the fun in that? Besides, you always manage to scrape by."

Drake sighed, his fingers still idly scratching at the bond mark. "It wasn't about scraping by. It was about knowing what I was walking into. Next time, you tell me everything."

Something flickered in Eirenelas's expression, something softer, but it was gone before Drake could fully process it.

Eirenelas leaned in again, his voice a teasing whisper. "Or maybe... you just wanted to see if I'd come running to save you again."

Drake bristled. "What? No! You're insufferable!"

Eirenelas sighed dramatically, fingers tracing the silver chains around his waist. "And yet, here we are, bound by fate. Truly tragic."

The chains jingled once more.

Drake groaned, turning on his heel. "I'm done with this conversation."

Eirenelas watched him go, amusement in his eyes. "Sweet dreams, pup. Try not to dream of me too much."

Drake didn't dignify that with a response. But as he stomped off, fingers still scratching at the celestial bond mark, Eirenelas knew that he would.

Drake wasn't just bound by fate, he was bound by a choice he'd made, a choice Drake would eventually have to pay for. And yet, every time Drake was near, Eirenelas felt something shift inside him—something he hadn't expected. It wasn't just the bond or the weight of the deal they had struck. No, it was something more delicious. Because every time Drake looked at him, something inside Eirenelas twisted, not with the usual amusement, but with a dark, lust Eirenelas hadn't felt before.

And that feeling delighted him to no end.