

Vadim Romanovich had been watching Viscili Avraamovich pace around his office for weeks now deciding if he would be accepting the invitation from Shuichi regarding the private party at the local hot spring. The Syndicate boss' stress had been hanging over everyone like a cloud, and Vadim was just about sick of it. Leaving his post by the door, he picked up the card and looked it over again. Still the same information which left his boss wondering if he could handle being in the nude around even a handful of strangers - despite walking around the compound in nothing but a blanket barely clinging to his shoulders.

Despite the invitation having "RSVP-ASAP" emblazoned in large gold font at the very bottom of the card, Viscili still hadn't contacted the garden owner with his decision. And the party was tonight. Sighing in exasperation, Vadim absently flipped the single piece of cardstock over. A new sentence.

For the comfort of all, guests will be required to remain in bun form.

The GreedBun barked out a laugh. "Boss... Did you flip the card over by any chance?" He couldn't hide his shit-eating grin for longer than a moment, and the reply that Viscili had opened his mouth to snap at him died when the shorter GreedBun saw it.

"No..", he growled out and stalked toward his bodyguard. Vadim couldn't help it, he held the invite out of Viscili's grip for a few moments, waving it far over the other's head in a way he hadn't done in almost half a century. "Vadim.." The threat was clear. So he gave his boss what he wanted and returned to his post, still satisfied.

"FUCK!" With Viscili's loud exclamation, Vadim couldn't help but burst out into laughter. His littermate turned boss really was an idiot sometimes.

Later that same evening, after Viscili had sent a quickly scrawled RSVP via Gargowl to Shuichi, Vadim followed behind the still cranky GreedDoll as they made their way to a familiar sector of Burrowgatory. Viscili kept grumbling under his breath about 'how stupid it was to put such an important note on the back of the invitation card', and each time he did Vadim had to snicker at him. "You realized you're being ridiculous, Vasya?" The diminutive form of Viscili's name was intentionally used as it was too late for any unintended ears to hear it. Familiarity between the head Syndicate

member littermates was revealed only in the safety of privacy after all. Well.. With the sole exception of Varrik: who always went by his diminutive for ease, as most of those outside of his comfort range simply referred to him by his Pit-Title - aka The Feral.

"Vadya, I swear to the church of sulfur.." Viscili trailed off threateningly.

"I thought you'd sworn that off?" The taller GreedDoll quirked an eyebrow.

An exasperated sigh left Viscili's lips. "Yes, yes. Still." He narrowed his eyes at his littermate.

"Alright well we're almost there so if you don't want Shuichi to immediately remove you from the guest list you might want to get the last of your unreasonable ire out now." He grinned back at the silently glowering bun. The shorter GreedDoll was about to snap back at him, he could tell from the way the corner of his scarred lips tightened. So he took a different tactic.

If the boss was being stubborn about seeing sense, redirecting his attention usually worked - always had. "There'll be booze."

And unsurprisingly it worked. Immediately, the glare stopped. And the rest of their walk passed in the first comfortable silence Vadim had gotten for almost a month.

The moment they got to the door, that silence shattered. Even before Viscili could raise his hand to knock, the door swung open. Vadim's instinct immediately kicked in, his skeletal hand flying to Viscili's shoulder ready to drag him out of the way if a threat appeared. "Greetings. I would assume you are Viscili Avraamovich and Vadim Romanovich?" The SlothDoll who had opened the door asked evenly despite the tension he could see in both the Dolls standing before him.

Clearing his throat and shrugging off Vadim's hand, the boss nodded. "Yes we are. And you are?" Vadim could almost hear his littermate's eye twitching with annoyance - Viscili hated meeting new Succubuns.

"The burrow butler, Sir." The SlothDoll blinked at him, slightly raising his arm over which was folded a clean white towel. Viscili was about to snap back at the man; but before he could Vadim stepped in, holding out his hand.

"Vadim Romanovich, head bodyguard of The Syndicate. Since you're the butler I assume you're the one taking the drink orders." Just in case it wasn't the case, the skeletal GreedDoll threw in a terse fanged smile. He really needed to make sure Viscili got that drink if he didn't want an explosion. Yes, he was the head bodyguard, but that also meant that he was Viscili's babysitter in important (whether to The Syndicate or Viscili himself) social situations to help mitigate the damage his boss could cause.

"Wadsworth, charmed." The SlothDoll shook Vadim's hand and winced at the crushing grip before quickly removing his hand and looking over his glove. "I am happy to take your drink orders then show you to the shift room."

"Vodka for Viscili Avraamovich if you don't mind. I'll take a rum and soda for myself." He immediately felt his boss lightly smack his back to remind him that he was still on the job. But he ignored it. After a whole month of dealing with Viscili's temper tantrums he was going to be able to relax while watching over him tonight. Besides, it was a closed invite, no one here *actually* posed a threat.

"Very well, Sir." Wadsworth said and turned to lead them to the room where they could shift into buns and store their belongings. Viscili took the time to remove the fur pelt from his shoulders and place it within one of the boxes; but Vadim was left to clean up the rest of his clothing after he shifted into bun form without removing a single item. Vadim knew that it was a habit they'd gotten in adolescence and all of their littermates did it - including himself - but being left to deal with it in doll form was still annoying.

"Vasya, I swear to the good of The Syndicate; if you don't knock that off when it's somewhere I can't leave it I'm gonna start making your coffee wrong in the morning." He grumbled.

"You wouldn't dare."

And Viscili was right. He wouldn't, a cranky Viscili in the morning was the closest he'd ever known to torture. The man had a sharper tongue than barbed wire. Shuddering he finished putting away both of their clothes and shifted himself.

Following the other into the hot spring, he saw Viscili immediately avert his eyes from something; and Vadim couldn't help but look. Azrael, The Syndicate's medic, was sitting right in front of the

waterfall flanked by two familiar PrideBuns. He almost couldn't hold in the laugh that bubbled in his chest when he saw how flushed the SlothBun was and heard the Remil-like squeak that came out of its mouth when the two PrideBun showered him in compliments. It was about time the little shit was put out of his depth; and at least it was in the safety of a caring situation and not in The Pit - Vadim always found himself worrying about that after all. And even once Viscili had settled and been brought his Vodka (which Wadsworth must have sensed was extremely important due to the fact that it was the only drink on the tray when it was delivered) and settled into the hot spring, Vadim continued to watch the trio enjoy themselves. Kuchinashi was reaching out to touch Az's face knowing that touch - despite how much the snarky bun protested it - was his primary love language. Seeing how much the glassy bun was protesting and its tail was twitching, Vadim was itching to place bets on how long it would take for their love to make him flee the establishment entirely.

But now wasn't really the time with Viscili trying to avoid even looking at the three of them - it was likely that Azrael would always be a sore subject. And the moment that Hadron reached out to touch Az's arm, Vadim immediately muttered "I give him 5 minutes." His grin started to appear.

But before he could see the 'finale', his attention snapped back to Viscili when an almost familiar but long forgotten voice hit his ears. "Well hello there. I don't believe we've met?~" The voice called out to Viscili. The noteworthy PrideBun, was wearing a familiar necklace; and Vadim knew that Viscili had already noticed it with the swishing of his chipped tail under the water. He'd place the rest of his next paycheck on the fact that he was evil-eyeing the PrideBun. It seemed to be working too because the PrideBun was getting more uncomfortable by the second. Viscili had never taken very well to his items of favor, even those that he misplaced, being taken from their 'appointed' places.

"My name is Viscili Avraamovich." Vadim was impressed. The half submerged bun had managed to keep himself calm and his tone level. Improvement. Good.

"O..Oh." The mysterious PrideBun sounded like he was swallowing a lump in his throat as he said it. Vadim raised an eyebrow, tapping his chin with his skeletal claw as he tried to place this Succubun. It was the way the PrideBun laughed and rubbed the back of his head with his hoof before speaking that made it click. "I'm so sorry to bother you. I'll just g-"

"Don't I know you from somewhere?" Vadim broke in. His eyes had narrowed, and the downright cruel grin he sometimes wore had come out fully as he stared down the PrideBun.

His sharp eyes caught the moment that the other Succubun's breath stopped. Those startled gold eyes widened to an almost impossible width. "No I don't believe we've ever met."

The earth toned bun tried to smile his way out of Vadim's direct attention. But it wasn't going to work, he needed something to pass the time. "No no.. I think we do.. Didn't I arrest you back in the day?" He cocked his head, never letting his 'target' out of his sights.

"I've never had any run ins with th-"

"Yeah I did, fuck what was your name.." Vadim snapped his claws together, effectively cutting the PrideBun off. "Shit I just remember that I booked you outside of Krystal Jewelers, ya thief." His eyes shot down to the necklace and back up to the other's eyes with heavy implications. 'I know it's not yours and I know where it came from.'

"You know what. I'm pretty parched so I'm..... I'm going to go.. Take care of that... Right now." The Pride bun had begun backing away at the very beginning of Vadim talking, but by the time they were a few feet away, almost next to where Shuichi was soaking and lighting his pipe. It was the that he seemed to get up the confidence to run for it. "Goodbye." He flashed a quick grin and bolted away from the pair of GreedBuns. Every fiber in Vadim screamed to chase him, old and well-trained in behavior burning under his fur. The scoff from Viscili kept him in place just long enough for the shock of a very loud voice breaking through the air to snap him out of the rest of the old conditioning.

"EY TSILLAS STOP BEING A FUCKING COWARD AND GET BACK HERE TO FACE YOUR PROBLEMS!" A pause as the PrideBun - apparently named 'Tsillas' finished making his way quickly to the door. Tsillas paused at that door and glared at Hadron, which was returned in kind; then he slipped out the door continuing his flight from the ex-cop, but not without pausing to snatch a bottle of wine off the table to take with him. "FINE BE A FUCKING MORON, IT'S NOT LIKE THEY CAN'T FUCKING FIND YOU WHEREEVER YOU GO WITH HOW GAUDY YOUR GODDAMN ROBES ARE! YOU'LL HAVE TO FACE IT EVENTUALLY!! ... Motherfucking idiot..." Hadron sighed and rolled his eyes before bursting out laughing. Seemed he got just

as much enjoyment from antagonizing that particular PrideBun as Vadim had this evening. Must be a history there, Vadim mused to himself. But it wasn't any of his business, so he returned his attention to his boss knowing that soon enough that sweet sweet rum and soda that Wadsworth had on his tray would be in his claws. To him this was the perfect start to the night.