

INT. AMALTHEA'S KITCHEN. NIGHT.

GURI is cutting things for AMALTHEA in the foreground. Behind her, AMALTHEA has her back to GURI, straightening things. GURI is talking to herself.

GURI
I don't know how they could say such things. Especially... all things considered...

AMALTHEA
Hm?

GURI seems surprised to have been overheard. Sighs.

GURI
Oh, I don't know. Chael and Henrick... maybe they're just too used to suspicious people. They don't really trust you.

GURI slips, and cuts her finger. Blood spills out.

GURI
Oh!

AMALTHEA turns, and walks over.

AMALTHEA
Let me help.

She takes GURI's hand in her own, and the cut lessens. GURI is amazed, then her expression tightens. AMALTHEA draws back, suspicion and fear on her face, as though she knows that GURI has realized her abilities are more than just that of a village healer. GURI tries to look reassuring.

GURI
No, wait. You don't understand, it's
-

AMALTHEA shakes her head, a few strands of hair coming out of how she has it tied back. She looks down, obviously upset.

AMALTHEA
I didn't pay such a steep price for something so unappreciated.

She touches the scar on her cheek, a preoccupied look on her face as she turns away from GURI.

AMALTHEA

Do you think I deserved such a mark?
To be branded so, to so narrowly
escape burning?

GURI

I - what-?

AMALTHEA ignores her, continuing on. She is obviously upset,
and only talking to herself.

AMALTHEA

I gave everything, everything I
could have, to save such worthless
ingrates.

She sobers, straightening up, her back still to GURI.

AMALTHEA

But the devil... he has a sense of
humour, doesn't he? He gave me the
power to sure the plague only too
late for Erich.

Her expression is sad, as though on the verge of crying.

AMALTHEA

I cured them! I took the sickness
from their bones, from their
flesh...

She begins to cry. GURI moves forward, her hand extending
towards AMALTHEA's arm to comfort her. AMALTHEA snaps up.

AMALTHEA

Silly girl, you should have listened
to the townspeople. I am a witch.

GURI

No! Ch- I mean - There are plenty of
good -

AMALTHEA turns to face her.

AMALTHEA

The devil, he spread the plague. Or
maybe God did. But I prayed. I
prayed so hard for a cure. I begged
God to let me take the sickness,
even if I had to take it into
myself, to take it out of the
children... I prayed until my voice
was hoarse, my eyes were sore. But

God, he did not answer me.

GURI looks sympathetic.

AMALTHEA

But the devil did.

GURI looks at her, shocked. AMALTHEA continues, bitter.

AMALTHEA

He came to me one night, horns and tail and cold, burning yellow eyes. The eyes of a serpent... He didn't care about the village, but then, hah, neither did God. He told me he could give me the power to cure the sick. Just... all I had to do was wait. Wait, and serve him faithfully forever. And... serve him faithfully.

GURI and AMALTHEA both look disgusted.

AMALTHEA

That was the night Erich died. And in the morning, I had the power to heal... anything. Anything short of death itself. While I lay in his arms, the devil made me a monster in his own image.

AMALTHEA's mouth is all that is visible.

AMALTHEA

I can heal anything. I can bend human flesh to my whims however I feel now, do whatever I want with it. But it costs from the people. No longer can I draw power from myself, only from others now. I am the greatest healer in the world, but if I'm not careful, I'll deplete and kill everyone around me. I've become nothing but a devourer.

GURI looks disgusted and horrified, and backs away. All that is visible is the back of AMALTHEA's head. Next panel is AMALTHEA, her eyes are black voids with sharp teeth.

AMALTHEA

I am every bit the monster the town tried the burn. You were kind, Guri. I will regret this.

GURI backs against the counter, the clouds behind her revealing a full moon through the window. View from behind her, she looks panicked, and AMALTHEA is closer, her eyes shut and a tight smile on her face. AMALTHEA moves closer, her eyes open again, still teeth. She takes another step, and her eyes open further, wide with shock. GURI has grabbed the knife she was cutting things with earlier, and embedded it right in AMALTHEA's stomach. AMALTHEA grabs the knife, and GURI backs away from what little space remains between them. AMALTHEA pulls it out, the wound sealing behind it. She looks at GURI sadly.

AMALTHEA

You obviously didn't believe me.
There's nothing you can do that will
kill me.

She reaches forward, her hand against GURI's cheek. A tear rolls down it, and GURI stares at her in horror and quite a bit of fear.

GURI

I - I don't want -

AMALTHEA leans in, her teeth-eyes very close to the tears on GURI's face. GURI squeezes her eyes shut.

GURI

Don't want to - die -

AMALTHEA

Heaven... is better than living in
Hell.

AMALTHEA wraps her hand around the back of GURI's neck, leaning in, whispering in GURI's ear.

AMALTHEA

Tell Erich... I miss him so.

AMALTHEA smiles, then her mouth opens wide. A trickle of blood comes from it. Behind them both stands CHAEL.

CHAEL

She's not your messenger.

EXT. A CROWDED MARKETPLACE, AFTERNOON

GURI

It's nice to be in a city again. I
can't wait to sleep in an inn.

She sighs happily, hands clasped behind her head.

CHAEEL
Don't be too happy yet.

He points. An Inquisitor is harrassing an old woman at a stall, with two armored guards behind him.

INQUISITOR #1
These herbs of yours, woman, in what manner did you grow them?

HENRICK
Disgusting. The Cardinal's brute squa- what are you doing?

CHAEEL has his hand on the nearest wall, his eyes half-closed.

CHAEEL
If it's a sorceror they seek, they should be well-prepared to find one.

The ground under the INQUISITOR buckles and flows like water. He falls on his face. CHAEEL opens his eyes and straightens with a satisfied look on his face.

INQUISITOR #1
A WITCH! The devil's own hand attempts to foul our investigation into his wicked ways!

He gestures to his men

INQUISITOR #1
Take this blasphemmer into custody.

CHAEEL stares, horrified.

CHAEEL
I-

GURI grabs his wrist.

GURI
Chael, no. Don't.

CHAEEL
But I - this is my fault.

GURI
If you reveal yourself it'll be your head as well!

CHAEL stares at her, looking childlike and hurt.

CHAEL

But if I hadn't been trying to prove something, she wouldn't have - what if they kill her?

GURI looks away, mumbling. (small print)

GURI

Better her than you...

HENRICK

What?

GURI

Nothing. Chael, what would it solve for you to give yourself up?

CHAEL

But this is all my -

HENRICK

She's right. They'd likely just call you accomplices and take it as further proof of that woman's guilt.

CHAEL doesn't meet their eyes.

GURI

Chael, there's no way you could have known how they'd react, they -

CHAEL rounds on her, angry.

CHAEL

I should have! What good is magic if all I do with it is misuse it and use it to make others miserable?

GURI

But you didn't mean to-

CHAEL

What difference does that make? Good intentions doom people as surely as bad. How am I any different from people like Amalthea or Adrian if all I do with magic is hurt other people?

HENRICK punches him in the face, hard enough to knock CHAEL

down.

HENRICK

Are you done feeling sorry for yourself?

CHAEEL remains sulky, looking resentful, his hand on his face. He stays on the ground.

HENRICK

So you made a mistake. Everyone does. Are you going to obsess about it forever?

CHAEEL

Most people's mistakes don't get some helpless old woman arrested and probably killed!

Behind HENRICK, GURI looks the other way, shifting her weight. HENRICK continues to stare down at CHAEEL, calm.

HENRICK

No, they don't. You can learn from this, and remember to treat the world like you've got live steel in your hand at all times, or you can continue to lay there in the dirt like an upset child.

CHAEEL

How can you just treat this like that?

HENRICK

You can't be stupid enough to think you're the only person who has ever killed someone with a mistake, boy. I was my duke's armsmaster, as my father was before me. Do you think no boy I ever trained, ever armed, died?

CHAEEL

But that's different!

HENRICK

If I knew every consequence of my actions before I took them, there would be more men alive today than there are. If you want to lecture me about mistakes, you can do it all day, but if you're trying to turn it

into a contest of who has made the more of them, I've got the years in my favour.

HENRICK offers CHAEL his hand. CHAEL takes it reluctantly. GURI sees someone in the crowd that looks a little like ADRIAN.

GURI
Is...

HENRICK
Hm?

He's gone.

GURI
I thought... I saw something.

HENRICK
Well, best we get out of here before someone sees us.

EXT. ALLEYWAY NEAR THE MARKET

ADRIAN has his back against the wall.

ADRIAN
(thoughts)
How did they find me? Just coincidence?

A peasant WOMAN with a basket in her hands walks up to him, looking concerned.

WOMAN
Is anything the matter, sir?

ADRIAN looks at her, unusual open-looking in his surprise.

ADRIAN
N-no. I just...

His expression shifts back to something more normal for him.

ADRIAN
No, nothing is wrong.

The WOMAN walks away. ADRIAN's expression goes back to looking more worried, and he bites at his thumbnail.

INT. INN. NIGHT.

The moon is chillaxing in the sky through the window. Everyone but CHAEL is asleep. CHAEL gets up, and sneaks out the window. He drops to the ground from the roof, looking around. He walks down the street, a troubled expression on his face. Either a high or low angle. He turns the corner and runs directly into ADRIAN.

CHAEL

You!

ADRIAN stares at him, looking furious, but mostly faking it.

ADRIAN

Get out of my sight before you make me kill you.

CHAEL goes back to looking a little down.

CHAEL

I won't tell the others.

ADRIAN

What?

CHAEL

We're leaving this city soon, anyways. I won't tell anyone I saw you.

ADRIAN

And how do I know you speak the truth? This town is so stuffed with the Church that it bleeds Inquisitors! One word from even the likes of you and I'd burn hotter than a torch.

ADRIAN looks a little angry, but more afraid. CHAEL looks regretful.

CHAEL

Why would I do that? I'm... I'm no different.

ADRIAN looks genuinely angry at him now.

ADRIAN

How convenient you discover such fraternity now. You were quick enough to consider me a monster before.

CHAEL looks up at him, pleadingly. ADRIAN glares down,

scornfully.

ADRIAN

Fine. But do not think me an easy target if you decide to finish what you started in Ingheim.

ADRIAN walks away, leaving CHAEL there, staring at the way he went. CHAEL turns and sneaks back into the window, clumsily. He looks guiltily at GURI. He goes back to his bed, GURI in the foreground. Her eyes are clearly open now.

EXT. CITY CENTER. MORNING.

The INQUISITOR has gathered a large crowd around him. The party is attempting to walk around it.

INQUISITOR #1

The Dark One's power is strong in this city! Your wretched devotions to the flesh are what has let him in to your streets, to your hearts! Fear, for the servants of the Lord have arrived, and clean this filth we shall!

Another Inquistor is visible standing in front of him, but only from the neck-down.

INQUISITOR #1

My brother in arms against evil has joined me in exterminating the devil from this hive of villainy! Together we shall find the source of sorcery in this place!

Pan to AMADEO behind INQUISITOR #1. He looks grim, but somewhat distracted. His eyes are on the crowd to the side, and doesn't seem to respond to anything the other is saying. CHAEL stops walking, staring straight at AMADEO. AMADEO continues to look vacantly at the crowd, cold but quiet, and not harsh like usual.

INQUISITOR #1

(to AMADEO discreetly)

Brother? Does aught trouble you?

AMADEO continues to look away.

AMADEO

Perhaps. There is a certain pressure

here, one I have felt before.

INQUISITOR #1
Perhaps the Lord lends you vision?

AMADEO
I suspect not. It is a feeling of
darkness.

INQUISITOR #1
Truly, your sensitivity to evil is a
gift of the Lord, Brother. Would
that all of us -

AMADEO
Envy is of the devil, Brother.
Rejoice in the gifts you have. And
truly, an awareness of evil is a
double-edged sword indeed.

CHAEEL
(to party)
It's that same bastard Inquisitor
from Norway.

GURI
Are you sure?

CHAEEL looks grim, his head down.

CHAEEL
I wouldn't forget that face.

HENRICK
Then there's a good chance he hasn't
forgotten yours, as well.

GURI
We can't leave now. They've likely
closed the gates, we'll be suspect
if we flee during their
proclamation!

The INQUISITOR's guards have a POOR WOMAN.

INQUISITOR #1
Luck charms?

POOR WOMAN
They bear the likeness of the
Saints-

AMADEO faces her, no longer so distracted, but still

uncharacteristically calm.

AMADEO

Luck is a too of Satan, child. Let God be your strength, put your trust in Him. Luck is random, and not something to put faith in.

POOR WOMAN

I -

INQUISITOR #1

The devil can use the image of the Saints to trick the pious! This city is a hellhouse, with baited snares cast for the faithful!

He remains incensed, and turns to his guards.

INQUISITOR #1

Take her in! The first of many to come, I suspect.

SOMEONE FROM THE CROWD

But she -

INQUISITOR #1

You protest, boy?

He grabs and drags a tall cloaked figure out of the crowd himself. He yanks the hood down, revealing ADRIAN.

INQUISITOR #1

Your name, boy?

ADRIAN stares back, regal.

ADRIAN

I am Lord Haupt of Ingheim.

INQUISITOR #1

And hat a shame it is, that evil fosters even in the hearts of the mighty.

He holds ADRIAN's arm up at the crowd, glaring at the crowd. ADRIAN stares at him, shocked.

ADRIAN

The Haults have long remained devout
- !

INQUISITOR #1

Then what an even greater shame it
is that the seeds of corruption have
been sown in such soil.

ADRIAN

I -

The INQUISITOR turns to his men.

INQUISITOR #1

Put him with his accomplice.

ADRIAN

I'm not with some common street
vendor!

ADRIAN looks shocked and scornful. The INQUISITOR turns to
face him, grabbing his chin and staring right at ADRIAN.

INQUISITOR #1

Then you shouldn't have spoken up,
boy.

ADRIAN looks terrified.

INQUISITOR #1

Take him.

The GUARDS take ADRIAN by his arms. ADRIAN keeps his head
down, gritting his teeth. The GUARDS are blasted back a good
distance. A birds eye view of them laying a near the edges
of the crowd, energy still crackling along their trajectory.
ADRIAN still crackles, a determined, wicked look on his
face.

AMADEO

(to himself)

A sorceror? And yet... not what I
felt before.

The INQUISITOR is terrified.

INQUISITOR #1

You...

ADRIAN

Care to try that yourself, holiness?

The INQUISITOR panics, shouting to his men.

INQUISITOR #1

Get up! Take the demon!

The POOR WOMAN is shocked, and runs, disappearing into the crowd. CHAEL watches, grimly. Behind him, GURI looks terrified.

GURI
What do we do?

HENRICK
Friend of yours?

CHAEL
We've met.

GURI
Only in some remote alternate
reality where I'm a turtle and Chael
has a -

CHAEL looks at her disgusted. GURI looks grim and replies seriously.

GURI
He's nothing like a friend.

Beyond them, the crowd is still staring at ADRIAN, who is still staring warily at the INQUISITOR. AMADEO stands beside the INQUISITOR, without malice.

AMADEO
Your soul is doomed, child. You must
know where the route of easy power
leads.

ADRIAN snarls.

ADRIAN
Don't preach at me!

AMADEO remains uncharacteristically calm. Either he's just having a damn good day or his previous crazy behaviour was limited to CHAEL.

AMADEO
The Lord -

ADRIAN
Don't speak to me of your God! If he
was so good, he wouldn't damn people
from birth!

AMADEO
It is the devil who has -

ADRIAN

It's your Inquisition who has damned
me! Not your devil, and not the God
you pretend to speak for!

ADRIAN looks tired, panting a little from expending so much
magic earlier.

AMADEO

The Lord can fix -

ADRIAN lashes out with electricity that jumps in several
directions but doesn't touch AMADEO.

ADRIAN

I don't want to be fixed!

He pants, hands on his knees. AMADEO falls back into the
crowd as the electricity misses him. For a moment his eyes
meet CHAEL's.

AMADEO

(thoughts)

The British warlock? He's what -
it's his evil I've felt burning
against me since I arrived here!

CHAEL stares, frozen. AMADEO is noticeably angrier now,
looking straight at CHAEL.

AMADEO

I should have known there would be
more - were you the one to corrupt
this one, boy?

INQUISITOR #1

SEIZE THEM ALL!

GURI

Chael -

CHAEL

Run!

CHAEL grabs GURI's arm and runs. They run down one street,
then an alleyway. GUARDS stand at the end of it.

GUARDS

Heretics!

CHAEL is about to run the other direction, but then the
GUARDS crackle and fall over. ADRIAN stands behind them,
dusting his hands off.

ADRIAN

I think... you owe me one.

GURI walks past him.

GURI

That's not how it works at all.

ADRIAN looks completely surprised, and walks after them, walking around to in front of them to stop them.

ADRIAN

But I just saved your lives!

GURI rounds on him.

GURI

How nice, since last time, oh, weren't you the one trying to take them!

CHAEEL puts his hand on GURI's arm.

CHAEEL

Thank you.

He walks past ADRIAN.

ADRIAN

What are you going to do?

CHAEEL looks over his shoulder, back at ADRIAN.

CHAEEL

We have to leave the city.

ADRIAN looks thoughtful and a little nervous. The expression is replaced with his usual haughty, arrogant one, and he walks past them again.

ADRIAN

I'll join you until we get out of the gates, then, but no further.

EXT. FOREST, A PRETTY STREAM SURROUNDED BY TREES. MIDDAY.

GURI is kneeling by the stream, CHAEL and ADRIAN stand behind her. ADRIAN is angry, and appears to be talking to himself, because CHAEL isn't paying him any attention.

ADRIAN

The nerve of those people, to turn away wealthy travelers! I've never known a peasant's ignorance to outweigh their greed.

GURI scowls, and stands up to face him, her hands on her hips.

GURI

And what would you do about it, Lordship? Slaughter them for their impertinence?

ADRIAN looks at her, genuinely shocked to get such a response. Behind him, Chael looks thoughtful, and completely oblivious to the tension.

CHAEL

They seemed nervous about something. This is fairly far north, after all...

ADRIAN seems to recover a little, his expression hardening into an icy anger.

ADRIAN

You will not speak to me like that.

GURI

I don't fear you, my lord.

CHAEL finally notices the open hostility.

CHAEL

Don't do this...

ADRIAN and GURI both completely ignore him.

ADRIAN

Is that what you think? That I want to scare you?

CHAEL sulks, a little deadpan. GURI goes back to kneeling at the stream, continuing to wash something.

ADRIAN

Do you think me some villain in a farce?

GURI does not look up at him, her expression entirely sarcastic.

GURI
First impressions have an
unfortunate way of lingering.

CHAEL, behind the two, throws his hands up in defeat. He continues to be ignored. ADRIAN looks outright pissed.

ADRIAN
And you think I-!

His expression cools, becoming something a little more unreadable.

ADRIAN
Are your own hands so clean you
would judge mine?

GURI
Yes!

She stands up, quickly whirling to face him. It's obvious how close they're standing, the distance further closed by the way she leans toward him.

GURI
Don't compare your blood magic with
me, Lordship! The things you've
done...

ADRIAN stares back at her, his expression cold and hard.

ADRIAN
Are you afraid of my magic?

GURI continues to look him in the eye, trying to match his coldness and failing.

GURI
Yes.

She gives up on that, glaring with outright fury now.

GURI
Oh yes.

She leaves, stomping off past CHAEL and ADRIAN. ADRIAN continues staring in the same direction she previously stood in, his expression inscrutable. CHAEL suddenly seems to find something outside of the panel absolutely riveting. An

awkward silence pervades.

CHAEEL

She...

ADRIAN

Nothing new. You think fear is somehow novel? My own mother had the same expression, before -

He pauses.

ADRIAN

I can handle fear.

CHAEEL

That's not -

ADRIAN

Isn't it? I would think you would understand.

CHAEEL

There was a wit- a woman. She tried to...

ADRIAN

Whether such prejudices have a grounding in reality means little. It's no comfort to a child burning at the stake that they're paying for some mad sorceror's sins.

A dark look comes across his face.

ADRIAN

My own father's fears weren't founded until he acted on them.

CHAEEL looks faintly ill, either at the reference to ADRIAN's past sins, or to the metaphor he proposes, or perhaps to both.

ADRIAN

She isn't entitled to tread me so just because of what I am capable of. Neither of us asked for such capabilities. Birth chose this path for me, and I won't be treated like a common criminal for it by some half-ignorant Scandinavian peasant.

CHAEEL looks thoughtful.

CHAEEL

But you would let the Inquisition...

ADRIAN sulks.

ADRIAN

They are a congregation of miserable hypocrites. But there's no shame in avoiding conflict with miserable hypocrites who control everything.

CHAEEL

Guri's wrong about you. You're not some fearsome killer. You're just a selfish coward.

CHAEEL looks thoughtful, not angry. He doesn't mean offense as much as he means to state a fact. ADRIAN is surprised at the sudden reversal.

ADRIAN

Wha-

CHAEEL

All that matters to you is your own safety.

ADRIAN

There's no shame in surviving. No one else looks out for me.

CHAEEL

No shame, maybe.

He looks at ADRIAN without malice.

CHAEEL

Loneliness, though, maybe.

CHAEEL leaves, going in the direction GURI went. ADRIAN gapes at him.

EXT. CAMPSITE.

GURI stands by herself, facing towards viewer. CHAEEL walks up behind her. She doesn't turn to face him.

GURI

You know I... I shouldn't have.

CHAEEL

No, I know.

GURI
 He just makes me so mad. And... I
 don't trust him. What he did, what
 he can...

CHAEL looks down.

CHAEL
 I know.

GURI turns around, and looks at him.

GURI
 I mean - you know I...

CHAEL doesn't meet her eyes. GURI takes a step forward, and
 grabs his wrist.

GURI
 I trust you.

CHAEL looks up at her, a little surprised.

CHAEL
 ... Thank you.

They both pause, and smile at each other. Zoom shot that
 shows the whole clearing, arrows at their hands. They're
 both suddenly awkward, letting go quickly.

GURI
 Oh! Uh - sorry.

CHAEL
 Yeah. Uh - let me help you with
 that.

INT. ROOM IN AN INN - NIGHT

GURI and ADRIAN are on their respective beds. ADRIAN is
 sitting, GURI is laying.

GURI
 This isn't right. I shouldn't have
 done that.

ADRIAN doesn't look up.

ADRIAN
 Done what?

GURI looks at him, genuinely concerned.

GURI
We've left him when he most needs
help.

GURI shakes her head.

GURI
What kind of friends does that make
us?

ADRIAN
It's not like that.

GURI looks at him, genuinely curious about what he has to
say, lacking most of her usual sarcasm towards him.

GURI
Then how is it?

ADRIAN looks at her, sincerity on his face.

ADRIAN
Guri, he's a -

GURI
He's Chael.

ADRIAN
How do you know that? What makes you
think it wasn't some sort of act?
Drekavac don't have friends, they
certainly don't travel like peasants
on jaunts across Europe, and they
definitely don't -

GURI
He's Chael. He was Chael yesterday,
and he was Chael before that, and...

GURI pauses, looking at her hands.

GURI
I don't think he's any different
just because he's one of those
things.

ADRIAN stands up, standing over her.

ADRIAN
How can you say that? You've seen
their handiwork! You're just another
one of the people they've seduced

into spreading their evil. They're a race of monsters.

GURI doesn't meet his eyes.

GURI
Are your hands so clean you would judge his?

ADRIAN looks stricken to find his own earlier words thrown back at him, and is at a loss for a reply. GURI looks up at him, pleadingly.

GURI
Chael was the one who trusted you. I would have left you for the Inquisitors, and that's assuming I wouldn't have done their job for them. Chael saved me from Amalthea, from the demons. He saved me from you.

GURI's resolve grows.

GURI
Chael is the only reason none of us have killed each other yet. He's the only reason we trust each other as much as we do, and it was because he trusted us and...

She seems to deflate a little.

GURI
And we let him down.

ADRIAN remains quiet, a thoughtful look on his face.

GURI
We've made a mistake. Somehow - we have to go back. What I mean is - we need to fix this.

ADRIAN puts a hand on GURI's arm.

ADRIAN
It's not that simple. Even if we wanted to, how could we find him? He could be miles away.

GURI looks at him skeptically.

GURI

You can't with your magic?

GURI makes woobly chibi hands at ADRIAN, who stares at her, deadpan.

ADRIAN

No. And even if I could, he could just hide himself from me. He's always been the more powerful one.

GURI sulks.

GURI

And here I thought you were some mighty sorceror.

ADRIAN looks childishly upset.

ADRIAN

I'm very mighty! I'm not exactly some petty hedge wizard.

ADRIAN sobers, and looks thoughtful once more. He sits down on the side of the bed nearest GURI.

ADRIAN

But next to a Drekavac prince, I suppose I must seem one. There might not be a human mage with that level of inborn potential. If nothing else, THAT'S why we can't just go frolicking off looking for him. He's a walking forest fire, he could roast us with half a thought.

GURI is calm.

GURI

Chael wouldn't.

ADRIAN

Chael wouldn't. But this is a man who has had his world reversed and has been abandoned by those he trusted. Can you honestly say you would be the same person you'd been before in that situation?

Bird's eye view, ADRIAN looks at his hands, his face hidden.

ADRIAN

Chael's a good person, but some things have a way of changing a

person's... priorities.

GURI

And you want Chael to become a bitter, selfish person, haunted by the world's arbitrary prejudice against the way he was born?

ADRIAN looks up at her with a bitter smile. GURI stares back, unhappy but not angry.

ADRIAN

It's served me well enough.

ADRIAN looks back down, still smiling.

ADRIAN

Chael is a better person than I ever was. But this isn't something I can or will help him with.

GURI

And that's all? You'd just betray him like that?

ADRIAN

Maybe he was wrong about me.

GURI

No. He wasn't wrong. We are.

ADRIAN

Where he's gone now is a place only he can. Following an exiled demon prince is a death sentence, or as good as.

GURI smiles a little knowingly, and sadly.

GURI

Always worried about your own skin.

ADRIAN

I'm more worried about yours.

GURI looks at him, obviously shocked. He meets her eyes with honesty.

ADRIAN

It's not like you do, not often enough. And Chael isn't here to save you anymore. I... can look after myself. It's what I'm best at, after

all, isn't it?

GURI

If I were to leave, to go look for
Chael, would you follow?

ADRIAN pauses, looking thoughtfully at his fist.

ADRIAN

It doesn't matter, because I
wouldn't let you.

He opens his hand, palm up. It's full of amber.

ADRIAN

I may be no match for a demon
prince, but restraining you is well
within my capabilities.

GURI looks at him disgusted, for the first time in this
scene seeming genuinely upset with him, and not with
herself.

GURI

You're still carrying that...

ADRIAN

The deed's done. The misbegotten
goods could save someone, why not
use them? I could use these for
something worthwhile, don't make me
squander them on subduing a
hysterical girl.

GURI is angered by his words, and by the presence of the
amber.

GURI

And what worthwhile pursuit would
that be?

ADRIAN

Has it occurred to you yet where we
are going? Whether or not Chael
wanted it, war looms, and by luck,
or fate, or maybe even God, I have
no doubt that it will catch us. If
we ally ourselves with Chael, that
will stand us opposite the entire
Church, and the forces of the of the
Drekavac.

GURI

You would...

ADRIAN looks a little sheepish.

ADRIAN

I'm not proposing we look for Chael.
But that isn't exactly the same as
leaving him to be devoured by the
coming war.

The implications surprise GURI.

ADRIAN

Will I have to restrain you?

GURI reverts to her usual sarcasm, but with the usual anger
conspicuously absent.

GURI

I don't want to be touched by your
blood magic. Keep your corpse
crystals to yourself, my lord.

ADRIAN smiles.