

## Our Solemn Hour

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# Our Solemn Hour

by [blackdragonhellfire](#)

## Summary

“It’s gotta stay in the family,” Dante had said.

Which meant that Dante knew that he was related to him. To Sparda. And to Dante's twin brother, who had visited Fortuna with the Yamato and been with a human woman.

There was only one person this man Sanctus spoke of could be.

“My father...” Nero breathed.

(In which Sanctus knew of Nero's heritage and runs his mouth. Which means that Nero finds out that Dante is his uncle earlier.)

(Formerly titled “I Thought I Knew It All”)

## Notes

As a Star Wars fan, I've been obsessed with the long lost evil dad trope. So I was like "why not write this?" and now we have a whole ass long fic with made up worldbuilding BS I came up with. Idk

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

# Chapter 1

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Kyrie!” Nero yelled, tilting his gun away from the freaky looking statue she happened to be half stuck in the forehead of. He didn’t want to hurt her, after all. He had done enough of that already, just by being a demon. A freak.

She looked at him and smiled softly, like she didn’t quite know what she was seeing.

“Is it not your wish to become one with her?” Sanctus boomed, from the top of the statue. “Within the savior, your mortal bodies will combine, melting into one to manifest and create his core! A thing of utter and pure beauty!”

“Go blow yourself,” Nero growled, aiming Blue Rose right at that fucker’s face.

He looked at Kyrie.

“I’m here to save you,” he murmured, “Please trust me.”

Kyrie didn’t respond. Instead, she continued to stare into space, glassy eyed.

Sanctus smiled down at him, seemingly unaffected by Nero’s threats of violence.

“Ah, but it is your destiny to serve the Savior, young Nero.” Sanctus began, “Long ago, a prophecy foretold that Sparda would fall in love with a human woman and beget twin sons. So when a white haired man with the power of Sparda in his veins approached us one day, with that very sword by his side, we knew that the dawn of a new and glorious age was approaching!”

Nero growled.

“And yet,” he went on, “While we were saddened by the fact that he refused to join us, even we could not predict that he would rut with a common woman while he was here.”

A white haired man. Who was able to wield the Yamato the same way he could.

A white haired man. Like Dante.

*“I’m here for the sword. It was originally my brother’s.”*

And like Dante’s brother, presumably.

*“It’s gotta stay in the family,”* Dante had said.

Which meant that Dante knew that he was related to him. To Sparda. And to Dante's twin brother, who had visited Fortuna with the Yamato and been with a human woman.

There was only one person this man Sanctus spoke of could be.

“My father...” Nero breathed.

“Yes, child,” Sanctus replied, “And after we found out about your existence, all we had to do was sit and wait for you to mature enough to harness your incredible power. And then, we would be able to hasten in the new age. An age in which good will triumph over evil!”

Nero scoffed.

“Yeah, right,” he said, “How are you and your buddies going to do that when you can’t even control me? I’m supposed to be your ace in the hole, right?”

Sanctus laughed.

“Who said anything about controlling you, dear boy? All we need to do is give you the right incentive, and you will play right into our hands.”

“Incentive, in-schment-ive, whatever!” Nero yelled, “You and your stupid savior can eat shit! My father didn’t join you, and I sure as hell won’t, either!”

“Indeed,” Sanctus said, “But you already are playing your part. You just have not realized it yet.”

Sanctus transformed in a flash of light, turning from a man to an armored behemoth.

“You will do anything to save your loved ones, won't you? Even if it means serving your most hated enemies.”

Nero summoned the Yamato into his armored hand, and felt the rush of power flow through his veins.

*Father, he thought, Give me the strength to save Kyrie and send this man straight to hell!*

The Yamato seemed to sing back to him, joining his thoughts in a harmonious cry of rage directed at the creature in front of him.

He let out a battle cry, and charged.

---

He had barely managed to do a damn thing against that fucker Sanctus. And now, he was stuck in the iron grasp of that stupid statue.

“I had originally intended to absorb Dante into our savior’s core,” Sanctus said, “We were not sure that you inherited the true power of Sparda until very recently, after all.”

Nero struggled in the statue’s grip.

“But circumstance presenting, I’d rather choose the option at hand.”

The arm holding Nero rose into the air, and he struggled even harder against its grip.

Sanctus lifted his hand, and the Yamato rose into the air in a graceful arc, landing in his upturned palm.

Nero growled. That was his father's sword, damn it! It was all he had of him! He didn't even know his old man's name, or why the fuck he hadn't been there for him, but Nero didn't turn his back on family, even if they were deadbeats. And he would be damned if some nasty fucker fucked with his old man's old sword the day he got it!

Sanctus looked at Nero.

"When this sword and your blood are combined, we will be able to proceed to the final stage of our ultimate goal!"

Sanctus raised the sword in triumph, but not before a monstrous form in white landed beside him and slashed into his torso.

The demon turned towards him, and Nero recognized its face.

*Credo.*

"Nero!" he yelled, "Run!"

Nero used his Devil Bringer to free his arm, but not before Sanctus used the Yamato to run Credo through.

"Credo!" Nero yelled.

*NO!*

Credo reverted back to his human form, and seemed to exchange a few words with Sanctus which Nero, despite the fact that he knew his hearing was demonically enhanced, couldn't seem to overhear.

And soon, Credo was falling down towards the ground, a bloody hole in his torso. Nero watched, unable to look away, as Credo fell towards his death -

Only for Dante to catch Credo before he hit the ground.

His long lost uncle. Catching his surrogate brother. Fate just had it out for him today, didn't it?

A blonde woman in a corset stood beside Dante, a pistol slung casually over her shoulder as she looked up at Sanctus with contempt.

"Oh, it's you, Gloria," Sanctus said. "Unfortunately, you did not anticipate a descendant of Sparda's blood. And because of this boy, you have been outwitted and the savior will be completed!"

That was Gloria? Well, that explained the skimpy taste in clothing, at least. No one who actually liked the order would dress up like that. They were all too conservative to do anything nearly that scandalous. At least, scandalous to them.

“I dunno,” Dante called up, “I’d wager this kid’s still got some life in him!”

Nero glared down at him.

*Gee, thanks for the encouragement,* he thought. That was what family was for, right? Even shitty family that didn’t bother with him before today.

He concentrated and sent out his spectral arm, grabbing Sanctus and slamming him into the side of that stupid ass statue he seemed to like so much.

Only for him to disappear into it.

*What the -*

He felt a blade pierce his demonic arm, and gasped in pain.

“You fool!” Sanctus yelled, from beside him. “Escape is now impossible!”

Sanctus pulled the Yamato out of Nero’s arm, and Nero grit his teeth as he felt it slide out of his flesh with a sickening squelch.

“The ascension of the Savior cannot be stopped!” Sanctus continued, laughing maniacally as he phased back into the statue.

Nero slumped in the statue’s grip. There was no way he was going to be able to do anything, at this rate. He couldn’t save Credo, so how the hell was he going to save Kyrie? He couldn’t pull the power he needed out of his ass on a whim! He had gotten lucky the first time, in the Mitis forest, when his arm had manifested. And again when the Yamato came to him. But this time, he knew his luck was shot.

*Damn it!* he fumed. He was probably going to lose what little family he had today. Credo and Kyrie were pretty much already done for, and Dante was good, but not *that* good. Not good enough to defeat the entire Order and their giant pet statue.

His eyes became blurry, and he suddenly remembered how it felt to be the little orphan boy with no family and no home, nothing and no one left to fall back on despite being surrounded by people.

How it felt to be a slave to fate once again, powerless to change his situation no matter how hard he tried.

“Hey kid!” Dante called up, “Giving up so soon?”

Nero took a deep breath to steady himself again. No way in hell was he going to let this guy know he was going to cry, the asshole. Who gave two shits if they were related or not? He barely knew the guy!

“My options... are limited,” He hissed out.

Dante huffed.

“So melodramatic,” he yelled, “And besides, if you die without giving my sword back, I’m gonna be pissed!”

*It’s not your sword, it’s my father’s! Nero wanted to yell back, And you said you wanted it to stay in the family, anyway, so I’m keeping it. Fuck you.*

He ended up telling Dante to come and get it himself before letting the statue absorb him... but not before shooting Dante one last obscene gesture.

That’s what he got for never getting Nero away from this hellhole. Or even visiting.

Asshole.

---

“Why oppose the order?” Sanctus asked, after Nero had managed to cut himself out of that damn statue’s tentacles and catch up to the fucker, Yamato in hand. “I knew your faith was weak. But I always thought you served our wishes well enough.”

“Bad enough you lying about this and trying to kill me,” Nero shot back, “And not telling me who my parents were. But what really pissed me off was using Kyrie!”

Nero swung the Yamato at him, sending an arc of blue light his way. But he missed, ending up being forced to take an orb of Sanctus’s energy in return.

He grunted in pain. Man, that shit hurt like a *bitch*.

“Come on, kid!” Dante yelled, from outside the statue, “Time to finish this!”

Well, at least he could count on his deadbeat Uncle to have his back and help out.

This time.

“I’m wrapping things up on my end!” Nero yelled back.

“Don’t be too sure, boy,” Sanctus said, suddenly appearing behind him, “Although flawed, the power of the Savior is beyond that of which you can defeat!”

“Yeah, well, like you can defeat it, either! Especially since I have it, and you don’t. Or was all that posturing about me having the blood of Sparda just you spewing shit?”

Sanctus growled and charged at him.

Nero smirked, and the Yamato sang in his palm as he directed a slash towards the beast in front of him.

He would win, this time. For Kyrie, if nothing else.

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It was over.

Nero busted out of the statue and landed gently on the ground, Kyrie clutched tightly to his chest.

She smiled up at him from his arms, and Nero couldn't help but smile back at her, even despite everything. She was just amazing. And beautiful. And awesome. Nero would happily do anything to make her smile, and they both knew it.

“Heh,” Dante said, as Nero walked towards him, “You sure took your time.”

“What,” Nero shot back, “You looking for an apology?”

He let Kyrie out of his arms, and she moved to stand next to Dante.

“Well, how long am I going to have to wait for it?” Dante replied, glib as ever.

Nero growled pointing the Yamato at Dante’s chest.

“You first, *Uncle Dante*. Now, where the hell have you and my Old Man been for the past 19 years?”

## Chapter End Notes

I watched a DMC 4 Cutscene reel and really thought that Sanctus knew a bit too much. So I wrote 2000 words about that thought in 2 hours. Instead of working on another fic idea I should be finishing.

Poor Nero, thinking his family just ditched him on Fortuna. But being loyal anyway. We stan one man.

Anyway, feel free to Kudos and Review!



## Chapter 2

### Chapter Summary

Nero and Dante talk. A few months pass, and Dante continues to be distant.

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

*In the end, Dante didn't really answer his question.*

*"Geez kid," he said, "Way to treat your elders. Didn't your mother ever teach you manners?"*

*Kyrie glanced between Dante and Nero, expression tense. She knew Nero well enough to know that his mother was a sore subject for him. Especially since she had likely abandoned him at the Fortuna Orphanage shortly after his birth, never to return.*

*"Um, Mister Dante-" she started.*

*"I don't have a mother, asshole," Nero butted in, "Now are you gonna answer the question, or am I gonna have to use my old man's sword to beat it out of you?"*

*Dante barked out a laugh.*

*"Oh, man, you're definitely his kid," he said, "Not that I knew about you. But if I had heard rumors of some white haired demon brat running around Fortuna before today, you bet my ass I would have visited already."*

*Well, that answered one of his questions. But not the other.*

*"And my old man? What, is the other son of Sparda too good to come back and see his own kid?"*

*Dante suddenly seemed to look anywhere but him. Nero noticed his face turning melancholy for a second, before returning to a jovial mask, but he didn't say anything.*

*Dante let out a sigh, before slapping Nero jovially on the back hard enough to make him stumble.*

*"Hey!" Nero yelled, "Cut the bullshit, and answer the damn question already!"*

*Dante smiled sadly and shook his head.*

*“Kid, I hate to break it to you, but he couldn’t even if he wanted to. He’s been dead for almost a decade.”*

---

And that was the most Dante said on the subject. Nero tried asking other questions, ranging from “What was my old man like?” To “What sort of moves did he do with the Yamato?” But his efforts only led to further frustration on his part, since Dante seemed to be the master of giving the bare minimum he could to answer the question and then changing the subject.

“Oh, your old man was a real piece of work,” Dante would say, “Just like you, kid. Anyway, do you want olives on your pizza? ‘Cause you’re not getting any.”

And that was all he’d say.

Or he’d give vague hints, like “Don’t swing that wide. You want to be precise with the Yamato. It ain’t built for power like my sword or the Red Queen.”

“Well,” Nero had snapped, “If you know how to use the damn sword so well, why don’t you just show me how to use it?”

“Nah,” Dante replied, “If the sword likes you enough, it’ll show you what to do. And hey, you’re a smart kid. You’ll figure it out.”

Nero was this close to stabbing him again after that comment. Savior, why had he ended up related to the most vague and obstinate motherfucker on the planet?

He was still weirded out by the fact that his girlfriend and the rest of Fortuna worshiped his grandfather. No wonder he didn’t give two shits about the guy. For an immortal being who loved humans so much he sealed off Hell for them, he sure seemed to enjoy not being around his partially human descendants.

Not that he could ask Dante where he was. He’d probably give some shitty half answer again, like he always did.

Dante only seemed to tolerate Nero in small bursts. Otherwise, he left him to his own devices in Fortuna, not even bothering to call or visit past the occasional check in. And when he did, he seemed to take great pleasure in making sure their interactions stayed as short and business related as possible.

Well, at least, until one fateful morning.

“Hey kid,” Dante said, during a phone call, “You wanna hop on over and visit the shop? I’ve got a job I think you’ll like. Hell, I might even show you some sword moves while you’re out here. If you decide to come on out, that is.”

Nero perked up. New sword moves? He was sold. Despite what Dante had said, the Yamato hadn’t shown him fuck all after the Fortuna incident. For all he knew, it was just pissed that he wasn’t his old man. Not that he knew a damn thing about what it thought of him. Even though Dante had told him that Devil Arms were sentient, the Yamato seemed to be anything

but, except for the occasional light show and fancy swing. He could send swings at people and cut shit up without too much effort, but he hadn't been able to unlock any other fancy powers or all that. Hell, he didn't even know what else the thing could do. It seemed to call to him, to tell him he could do more with it, but it wouldn't tell him *how*.

Not that he used it often. He saved the Yamato for special occasions, like near death experiences and all that. It might have been his father's sword, but it still reminded him of all the worst parts of himself - the part of him that wanted to tear demons into mincemeat and bathe in their blood, or rip anyone who wronged him or Kyrie into shreds, no matter how sick the rest of him felt.

He wondered if his Father had been as cryptic as his sword, when he had been around. Or as dangerous, as sharp and conniving.

But, no matter Dante's lack of answers, Nero really wanted to agree to his offer because he had never left Fortuna. Dante had always visited him there, helping with clean up and the occasional demon killing job. The Order of the Sword had disbanded for the moment, and Nero had had to step in and pick up the slack, since he was one of the few capable people who hadn't been complicit with Sanctus's scheme.

To Nero, any chance to leave Fortuna in the dust was good in his books. Well, it would have been better if Kyrie would come with him, but Fortuna was her home. And no matter how much he hated it there, if she wanted him there, he'd stay. He'd do anything for her, even if it meant getting funny looks because he, the bastard orphan son of a foreigner and a presumed whore, lived alone with an unmarried woman. Even if he was biding his time to propose to her, when he was sure he could provide for her the way he wanted to. Not that they cared.

Stupid judgy Fortunan assfuckers.

"Bet on it, old man," he had replied, "How soon do you want me there?"

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Nero's first thought upon seeing Dante's office was *How the hell does he survive in this pigsty?*

Hey, his own room back in Fortuna was a mess, but Credo had always insisted on an almost Spartan level of cleanliness in the whole house. Well, he had before he died. And before Nero started slowly migrating into Kyrie's room, which always seemed to be spotless.

Women on Fortuna were batshit crazy when it came to homemaking. To them, it was "serving the savior" or some shit.

Not that Kyrie ever let him off the hook when it came to cleaning. And Nero knew better than to be messy enough for her to complain. He pulled his own damn weight in the house, thank you very much!

However, Dante wouldn't know the definition of clean even if it bit him in the ass.

“The look on your face!” Dante crowed, cackling, when he saw Nero’s nose wrinkle at the mess in his office. “Jesus kid, you look like you’ve stepped in demon shit!”

“And you haven’t?” Nero said, “If you hired me to clean your office, count me the fuck out.”

“Are you offering?”

“No way in hell. Do it yourself. Hell, hire a fucking maid for all I care!”

“Do I look like I have the money to do that?”

“Well, you can afford the rent on the shop with some to spare, with all the money Fortuna pays you to clean up Sanctus’s mess.”

Dante huffed out a laugh.

“That implies that I can keep that money to myself, brat. Now, you wanna hear about that job, or not?”

---

The job seemed pretty easy, from what Nero could tell. Just getting some demons out of a Sorority House, or something. Piece of cake.

“How come you’re not doing this?” Nero had asked Dante. “It doesn’t sound too hard.”

“Eh, Sorority Chicks are a bit young for me,” Dante replied. “And besides, you could use some real world experience.”

Nero scoffed. He had a girlfriend, thank you very much, and wasn’t interested in some random college girls. And Dante knew that.

“I have plenty of real-world experience.”

“With killing demons. Which is why I’m trusting you with the job. But you don’t have a lot of experience with life off Fortuna, which you’re gonna need if you wanna stay in the business.”

“So you’re just throwing me to the wolves on this one? Why not show me how life works here yourself?”

“Like I keep telling you, you’re a smart kid. You’ll figure it out fast. And what better way to learn than hands-on experience? That’s how I got this good.”

Nero rolled his eyes.

“Whatever. I’m going to bed. Where’s the guest room?”

“What guest room?”

“Excuse me?”

Did Dante expect him to get a hotel room? He could have at least told him that before shipping him over here.

"You're getting the couch, kid. Trust me, you don't even want to see the spare room. And besides, it's technically not a guest room, anyway."

"You have actual guests?"

"What? I tend to win people over with my sparkling personality and wit!"

"What sparkling personality and wit?" Nero grumbled.

"Hey, I heard that!" Dante yelled.

The Devil Hunter stood up, and started up the stairs.

"Make yourself at home and rest up, kiddo. You're gonna need all the sleep you can get for this one."

"Whatever," Nero said, "At least tell me there's a bathroom in this place."

"Upstairs, first door on the left," Dante said. "See you in the morning, Kid. We'll get you all set then, sound good?"

"Fine," Nero replied, "Don't choke in your sleep."

"What, no 'Sweet Dreams, Uncle Dante, don't let the bedbugs bite?'"

Nero flicked him off, and Dante laughed, before jumping up the stairs in one bound.

"I hope the bedbugs kill you in your sleep!" Nero yelled after him.

A door slammed shut behind him, and silence filled the shop.

*God damnit*, Nero thought. He missed Kyrie already.

Speaking of, he needed to call her and let her know how long he'd be at Dante's. He wondered, idly, just how pissed would Dante be at him if he used his phone without asking?

*Eh, oh well*, Nero decided. Let the fucker stew, for all he cared.

He'd have to wait until the morning, though. Kyrie was probably asleep by now, judging from the time difference.

And judging by how tired he was, he guessed it was high time to join her in the land of dreams.

And before he could start counting the cracks on Dante's weathered ceiling, he'd ended up just there.

---

*As usual, Nero was surrounded by a horde of demons. But, this time, he wasn't in any area he had seen before. The sky above him was a sickly red and the trees nearby twisted and gnarled, sucking up pools of blood through their roots.*

*Creepy. He never thought he'd have to use Red Queen as a weed whacker, but after he was done with all of the normal nasties, it'd have to do to.*

*The demons snarled, and leapt upon him with shrill cries.*

*He drew Red Queen and Blue Rose, throwing himself at them with a battle roar of his own.*

*But, eventually, he knew his luck was shot. So he used his ace in the hole and summoned his Devil Trigger, as Dante had called it.*

*The Yamato appeared in his grip, and his demonic shadow appeared behind him soon after - a wicked looking holographic Devil, katana in hand.*

*He knew he was dreaming when the Yamato actually seemed to guide his hand, instead of him guiding it.*

*And suddenly he was spinning in a whole new dance of utter destruction and domination, slashing at his enemies with a precision he'd never witnessed, cutting into the hordes surrounding him with a ferocity that sang in his blood.*

*And boy, it almost felt good.*

*A few more subtle nudges from the Yamato later, and he'd somehow discovered how to summon holographic swords of demonic energy, sending them into the hearts of the demon horde surrounding him with little thought.*

*Pretty neat, if he said so himself. But he doubted the fading corpses of the demons littering the ground by his feet would agree.*

*Oh, well, he guessed. Sucks for them.*

*He smiled and absorbed the Yamato back into his arm, sheathing Red Queen on his back with a triumphant flair.*

*"Pathetic," he heard a voice say from behind him, "Is that all you've been able to learn so far?"*

*Nero whipped around, only to end up face to face with...*

*No one?*

*"Tch," the voice said, in a nasally tone, "For someone who wished so pitifully to gain power, you seem not to have the drive to actually attain it."*

*"Who are you?" Nero yelled, looking around. "Show yourself, asshole! I've got better things to do than sit around and let you insult me!"*

*“No need,” the voice said, from everywhere and nowhere, “After all, if you are able to find me, you will be powerful enough to vanquish any foe. Was that not what you wished, to be able to protect those close to you?”*

*The world began to spin, and Nero suddenly felt like he was falling.*

*“You received but a taste of your true potential tonight,” the voice said, “Learn to use my power. Seek absolute strength at all costs, and you will find what you are searching for.”*

*But what was he trying to search for, he wondered?*

---

Nero woke up with the Yamato clenched in his clawed hand for some strange reason, glowing a soft blue into the darkness of Dante’s office.

But once he became awake enough to comprehend what he had dreamt, one thought stood out to him.

*Power.*

He stood up and put on his coat, sheathing Red Queen on his back and Blue Rose in its holster on his belt. He shoved his feet into his boots, making sure the Yamato was stored securely back in his arm before making his way quietly towards the storefront.

He walked out of the shop and into the night, not quite knowing what he was doing, but cognizant enough to realize what he needed to do. After all, he had finally found the missing key to the Yamato’s powers, after all these months.

To learn them, he needed to become stronger. He had to train.

And he had been slacking lately.

## Chapter End Notes

Author’s notes:

Nero and Vergil: POWAAAAA. He’s definitely his father’s son here lmao.

Yeah, The Yamato sent the dream. I think just as Vergil knew it was restored in DMC5, it knows he’s alive. So hey, why not?

I’m diverging from DMC5 because while it’s a cool game, I didn’t want to adapt it. So yeah, I’m doing my own thing now.

Also half this fic is going to be inspired by Raining Blood by Slayer. Idk why. Just the whole "dude from purgatory takes over hell and kills angels" vibe seems to work here.





# Chapter 3

## Chapter Summary

Nero runs into some trouble.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Rock Music blared in Nero's ears as he walked into the deserted park, weapons holstered on his back. This was the second night in a row he had snuck out to practice with the Yamato, and even he could admit that there was a sort of rush he got when he did. Maybe it was the feeling of accomplishment that came with learning a new attack. He had always felt that way when Credo had taught him something new, or when he -

Yeah, he wasn't going to think about Credo now. He and Kyrie already thought about him enough when they accidentally made a meal for three instead of two or saw his coat hanging on the rack, still waiting for its owner to return. His presence hung over their house like an omnipresent cloud, and Nero felt guiltier than ever for not being able to save him. Especially when Kyrie would sob in his arms in the middle of the night, grieving everyone they'd lost in private while staying strong in front of everyone else.

He had to get stronger, he swore. What if Dante got in trouble and he wasn't able to save him in time? Or worse, what if Kyrie ended up getting into another situation like the one with the Savior?

He would protect his family, no matter what. Even if it killed him, or turned him into a demon. He knew that.

He summoned the Yamato to his hand, and it hummed in approval at his train of thought.

"It's showtime," he muttered, summoning a dozen glowing swords behind him and sending them into the darkness.

All of them hit their mark, piercing the bark of the trees surrounding him, and Nero pumped his fist, jumping up and down in glee.

"Yes!" he cried. "Now, for an encore performance, am I right?"

The Yamato glowed, sending him its approval, and he sent a second round into the trees, grinning gleefully as he rained destruction around him.

Now this? This was power. And it was *fun*.

He wondered if his Father had felt this way when he was first learning to use the Yamato, and he sobered.

He didn't even know what his Dad was like. How much of his personality had he gotten from him? Was he anything like Dante at all? What sort of things did he like? Did he take his food the same way as Nero, or did he get his love of sweets from his Mom?

The worst part about the whole thing was that he knew he'd never get straight answers about him. Dante would never give him one, and it wasn't like the Yamato could talk to him past vague feelings and impressions. And his father definitely couldn't tell him himself.

The Yamato sent a reassuring pulse to him, sensing his distress.

"Thanks, Yamato," he said.

It hummed, and he raised it into the air once again, settling into a ready stance.

"Let's do some gardening, shall we?" he called out, cutting a slash into the air and sending an arc of energy towards the nearest tree.

It went wide, only creating a shallow slash in its bark.

The Yamato somehow sent a way of disapproval his way upon seeing his lack of aim.

"Shit!" Nero yelled, "Let's try that again."

He swung with less gusto, but siphoned a little more of his power into the strike, and the tree went toppling.

Nero smirked.

"You know, I think I'm getting the hang of this."

Yamato seemed to give him a feeling that was the equivalent of it saying "Don't get cocky."

Nero rolled his eyes, and focused his efforts on using the Yamato to cut the downed tree into neat pieces without even touching the tree.

He hoped that his old man, wherever he was in heaven, was smiling down upon him.

He'd do him proud, he swore. No matter what.

---

"I need you to pretend to be an exchange student."

"Huh?" Nero responded eloquently to the Sorority girl who had hired Dante in the first place. They were meeting to plan out the job at one of Redgrave University's hang out spots, a popular cafe known as Dark Tower Coffee. Which obviously was named for the ominous looking tower in the middle of town.

There was something off about that tower, but Nero couldn't quite place what.

She flipped some of her blonde hair out of her face and huffed.

"You're Italian, right? You have a very slight accent."

"Uh, well, I'm from Fortuna, which is near there..."

"Close enough. Just pretend to be here because you're studying here for a term, and they'll let you in."

"Who will let me in?"

"Tri Delta," the girl drawled. Nero couldn't help but find her voice irritating.

"What?"

"Delta Delta Delta. The Sorority. Didn't your boss tell you?"

Dante did say the job was at a Sorority, but not much besides that.

"Lady, that implies that my boss tells me anything relevant," Nero shot back.

"Whatever," the girl said, mumbling "This better have been worth my money," under her breath. "But, for your information, Tri Delta's throwing a Greek Life-only Halloween party, and I'm *pretty* sure they're going to use the guests as sacrifices, or something."

"You got any proof of that? I don't want to accidentally crash a bash of innocent partiers."

"Fine," she said, "Here."

She handed him an old, leatherbound book, with a Latin title.

"*Ars Vocandi*. The Art of Summoning, huh," Nero read, translating the Latin into English aloud. Fortuna was almost as big into exorcising demons as outright killing them, so Nero, like every other kid on Fortuna, had been forced to learn to read it. Not that it didn't come in handy on jobs, but he hated every second of those lessons while he was in them.

Nero flipped the book open, noting that the pages were made out a waxy, leathery material instead of paper. He knew just what it was as soon as he saw it and removed his hand from the pages in what felt like record time. He wasn't exactly fond of reading demonic books printed on Human Skin, even despite his demonic heritage.

"Where did you get this?" Nero asked the girl.

She shrugged.

"I stole it from the sorority president because I wanted dirt on her. And then I got bored, and decided to try to translate some of it. Big mistake."

Nero sighed. God, why couldn't Dante pretend to be a student instead of him? He acted juvenile enough to pull it off. It was a shame that he had left for another job just that morning.

"Alright then," Nero said, "I'm sold. What do I need for the party?"

"Just wear what you're wearing now. With that arm and those looks, you've got a shot at winning the costume contest."

Nero gave her a funny look.

The girl took out her phone and started texting someone.

"What frat do you want to pretend to be a part of?" she said, not even bothering to look away from the screen.

"What?"

"The party is Greek Life only, idiot. Which means you need to pretend to be in a frat."

"Uh... I dunno. Whichever."

"Fine, I'll stick you in Alpha Phi Delta. The Italian one. You'll fit right in."

Nero rolled his eyes. God, why couldn't every girl be like Kyrie? Women off Fortuna, from what he could tell, were all crazy. With no exceptions.

"Fine," Nero said, "When's the party?"

"You got a phone, or do they not have those in Fortuna?"

Nero pulled out his phone, and glared at her.

"What's your number?" he asked.

The girl snatched his phone and programmed her number in.

"I sent myself a text, so I know it's you."

She had saved herself as *Kayleigh* <3.

Just as he had read that, he heard the barista call out her name.

"Alright then," Nero said, "See you there?"

"I guess," she said, standing up. "I'll text you the details."

"Great," Nero responded, but she was already out of earshot.

She grabbed her coffee, and walked out.

Nero sighed, and followed after her. It wasn't like he had the money to get coffee, anyway. And he had better things to do, anyway. Like napping, since he kept staying up half the night trying to perfect moves with the Yamato.

Worth it, in his opinion. And hey, it never hurt to be prepared, right?

---

That was it, Nero thought. He hated parties.

He stood awkwardly by the bar, nursing a cup of some sort of slightly alcoholic punch in a plastic cup that he only bothered taking a small sip from, just to make sure it wasn't being used to drug the unsuspecting students at the party. He had to stay alert, if he wanted to keep the partygoers from becoming demon chow.

Surprisingly, none of the other frat boys in Alpha Delta Phi questioned his presence, but that was probably because they were all already piss drunk before coming to the party.

People his age off Fortuna were *weird*. When Nero wanted something fun to do on his day off, he watched stupid Italian Soaps with Kyrie and practiced his sword skills. He didn't do... whatever this was.

Nero had already done a perimeter check to make sure there were no summoning circles scrawled around the building, trapping everyone inside.

Nothing. Zip. Zilch. Nada.

He straightened up and got ready to check the inside of the building when Kayleigh approached him, a gaggle of girls in tow behind her.

"So, you actually showed up," she yelled, over the loud music.

Nero shrugged.

"It's part of the job," he yelled back.

Kayleigh looked him up and down.

"You look good," she yelled.

"Thanks?" Nero replied, awkwardly.

"Whatever," she replied back, "Hey, can we go down to the basement? I need to talk to you about something, and it's quieter down there."

"Sure thing," Nero replied. Anything to get away from the stench of alcohol and the pounding music. "What do you need to talk about?"

"Can't say now," she said, "Someone might tell the prez."

"Oh," Nero said, "Makes sense. Which way is the basement?"

Kayleigh sighed.

“Shouldn’t you be able to find it yourself? I’m not paying you to lollygag.”

Nero scoffed.

“Fine,” Nero said, “It shouldn’t be too hard to find a fucking basement.”

He walked off, finding the door to the basement in what seemed like record time, and running down the stairs two at a time.

He opened the basement door, and suddenly felt a little bit sluggish, but he paid no mind to it. It was probably just him adjusting to the different level of noise and fumes, compared to the floor above.

“So,” he turned around, facing Kayleigh, “What's up?”

Kayleigh brained him in the head with a nearby baseball bat. Hard.

Nero stumbled, falling onto the concrete.

“What the Hell?” Nero said.

Kayleigh looked at him, tears in her eyes.

“I’m sorry,” she said, “But it’s you or them.”

And she went in again, only for Nero to use his Devil Bringer to crush the bat in his grip.

Blood trickled down Nero’s forehead and his head felt like it was going to rupture with every motion he made, but he managed to knock Kayleigh away and stumble to the door, even before his healing kicked in.

He wrenched the door open just as his head started to clear and he felt like he could stand without wobbling... only to be thrown into the back wall of the basement by an invisible force as soon as he took his first step towards freedom.

A sorority girl blocked his way, arm outstretched as she chanted in an unknown language.

Nero screamed in agony, feeling as though his entire body was being disassembled molecule by molecule, bit by bit. It felt like hours had passed before she stopped chanting and the pain stopped, leaving Nero’s muscles trembling.

“This is the boy?” she asked Kayleigh.

Nero stared at them groggily.

“Yes!” Kayleigh replied. “Now, can you let my friends go? They have nothing to do with this!”

The woman turned towards Nero, walking up to him and turning his head towards her.

Nero instinctively flinched away from her, snarling.

*What am I, Nero thought, a piece of meat?*

“Hm...” she said, “Interesting. Another demonic cambion, walking the earth as if he belonged to the Human Race.”

“Yeah?” Nero managed to croak out, “What’s it to you?”

She smiled tightly.

“It’s a shame. The lineage of Sparda has proven so useful to us. Without your defeat of Mundus, we never would have been able to regain control over the realms. But, alas, it was foreseen that a member of your accursed family will undo all of our hard work of keeping the worlds separate.”

She raised her arm again, and Nero writhed in pain, screaming at the feeling of a thousand red hot needles pushing into his skin.

“Due to this, we chose to eradicate the problem at its source. Which means keeping you and the other under control until the third can join us.”

*The third?* Nero thought, absently. What third? There was only him and Dante. Did Dante have a kid he didn’t know about?

The woman lowered her arm, and Nero almost cried at the sweet relief from her torture, sinking bonelessly to the floor.

He tried to stand, but only managed to sit up slightly before white hot pain, unlike anything he’d ever felt before, shot through his body.

He slumped listlessly to the floor as torment stopped, unable to even *move*.

Something was very wrong, he thought. Usually he’d shrug off the effects of magical attacks with almost no effort. So, why wasn’t he able to this time?

He passed out before he could come up with an answer.

---

Nero opened his eyes, only to find himself in the middle of what looked like some sort of pentagram.

He scanned his surroundings, attempting to stand up and see how far he could walk around, only to collapse as soon as he stood.

“Shit!” he cried. It seemed like whatever that bitch did still affected him physically, and it wasn’t like he could do much else to move. His arms were tied tightly to his side with a length of barbed wire and his legs chained to a spike in the middle of the room, so he couldn’t even leave the damn pentagram!

He'd have to try this another way.

He tried to summon his Devil Bringer to cut himself out, only to be hit with a wave of pain that made whatever the bitch did to him look tame.

He was left gasping for air after it ended, collapsing to his knees.

"Damn it!" he croaked. "Fuck!"

"Do not waste your energy attempting to escape," someone said from behind him, "The circle is designed to drain demonic power. The more you attempt to use it to free yourself, the more it will take."

Nero turned his head, only to notice there was someone chained to another circle across the room, his back to him.

"Fucking great," Nero said, "So I guess we're stuck here."

The stranger hummed.

Nero scooted around until he was facing the stranger.

The stranger happened to be a tall man in a tattered cloak, from what Nero could tell. But, he couldn't exactly tell much because the stranger still had his back to him and his hood over his head.

Well, at least he wouldn't go nuts with no one else to talk to, right?

"What'd they get you in for?" Nero asked. "A doomsday prophecy? Family troubles?"

The stranger took a while to respond, seeming to take his sweet time to think about his answer. Nero was just about to complain when the man piped up.

"I believe that I'm in for the latter," the stranger replied, "Although the former one may be apt as well."

And wasn't that just great?

"Damn, so a member of your family was planning on causing the apocalypse too, huh?"

The stranger scoffed.

"I highly doubt the only remaining member of my family would bother."

"Honestly? Same," Nero replied. "He can't even keep his shit straight. How would the guy even control the armies of hell when he can't even clean after himself?"

"Perhaps he may surprise you."

Nero scoffed.



“Dante? Nah.”

The stranger seemed to stiffen at the mention of Dante’s name.

“You’re related to Dante?” he asked, cautiously.

“Sadly,” Nero responded. “How do you know the guy?”

“We were... acquainted in our youth.”

“Huh,” Nero said, "That's cool. Good to know he had friends, as a kid."

The stranger scoffed yet again. He seemed to do that a lot.

"We weren't friends, by any stretch of the imagination. And yourself? How are you... related to him?"

Nero sighed.

"The bastard's my deadbeat Uncle."

“Uncle?”

“Yup. My dad is Dante’s brother. Well, was. The guy's deader than a doornail."

The stranger seemed to stop short.

“Hey,” Nero called out. “You good over there?”

But instead of answering, the stranger merely turned around, fixing Nero with a curious look.

And Nero was greeted with an all too familiar face.

## Chapter End Notes

Deadweight, meet Deadbeat. (What does that make Dante, Red Dead Redemption? Lmao)

Enjoy this extra long chapter, because I thought I had to rewrite this chapter, but turns out, I didn't!

Next chapter is gonna be fun :3 Vergil POV let's goooooo

# Chapter 4

## Chapter Summary

Vergil reminisces and bonds with his son.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It started when Vergil awoke, after what felt like years of his consciousness vaguely drifting through an endless sea.

He returned to consciousness with only one thought in mind: the need to cut away the rot that clung to him. He needed to be strong again, to be able to face his brother and his enemies alike with pride and dignity.

Unfortunately, he didn't know how he would cut away his weakness then, and he lacked the strength needed to seek out such power. At least he didn't until, one day, he sensed it for the first time in years.

The Yamato.

Whole, yet again.

His beloved blade, once shattered at Mundus's hand, probably years and years ago. Had it been years? How long had it been since he kept Dante from catching him at the Temen-Ni-Gru? He didn't know, nor did he care. All he cared about was finding the Yamato, using it to cut away what he didn't need, and returning it to its rightful place at his side.

But they had found him before he could gather the strength needed for his objective, wasting away in a dank cell in a strangely familiar castle. Their operative had used a spell to neutralize him, despite a struggle on his end, and Vergil could only vaguely place what language they were chanting in before he was forced into unconsciousness.

He struggled against the bonds they had placed on him when he woke up, chained to the floor like an animal.

How dare they! When his rightful power was restored, he would show them what happened when one was foolish enough to cross the blood of Sparda, he swore. He'd feast on their entrails and bathe in their blood for their slight against him. Mark his words.

Ever the pragmatist, he then attempted to use his summoned swords to cut away his bonds, only to be subjected to blinding and agonizing pain not even a moment later. It would have

been nothing to him before Mundus's corruption, but now, in his fragile and wounded state, it affected him more than he would have liked.

Damn his humanity for making him weak.

After the pain had faded, he chided himself for his rashness. He had only become powerful enough to raise the Temen-Ni-Gru by studying and outwitting his enemies, and then resorting to brute force to overpower them. No matter how foolish his goals were in hindsight, his ability to outsmart his opponents had been the only reason he had survived as long as he had. Acting rashly while being held by unknown opponents would get him nowhere, no matter how urgent his goals were.

So he sat and studied the room he was in.

He was being held in a room with three identical pentagrams carved into the floor, as well as chains leading towards a set of spikes set into the middle of the room. From what he could tell, the circles were designed to trap demons, drain their demonic energy, and dull their senses, rendering anyone with demonic blood as helpless as a newborn babe.

Thankfully, unlike his arms, his legs were not bound tightly together. And thus, he was allowed to walk the length of the chain leading to the middle of the room. Even then, he chose to avoid pacing past looking closer at the circle he was chained into, in order to conserve much needed energy.

His captors remained elusive and did not bother returning and providing him with amenities. He did not need human amenities, so that did not bother him nearly as much as the fact that he had not gained any insight into their motives, past their drivel on how Sparda's bloodline was fated to combine the worlds and bring about the apocalypse.

As if. Dante would not bother, with his foolish desire for human frivolity, and Vergil himself was too weak to dare. Sparda himself was either dead or missing, meaning that their father couldn't possibly try to do so, even if he wanted to.

There was no one else to think of. He and Dante were the last of their line, as far as he knew.

But soon after, the boy was brought into the room, and Vergil's whole world was turned onto its head.

---

It was obvious at first glance that the boy was related to him somehow. The white hair and pale skin was a definite tell, as well as the demonic arm he sported. Was it some sort of partial demonic transformation, Vergil wondered? He could not tell, and was unable to wander closer and find out due to the chains.

Had his father sired another child after he had left? Perhaps, perhaps not. He could be Dante's, or some other distant, mostly human relation of his father who had awakened latent demonic power after many generations of dilution with human blood. Who the boy's sire had been was of no consequence to him, as long as he could aid Vergil in his escape.

He would have to endear himself to him, then, in order to gain his aid. But in the meantime, he decided to turn away from the boy and bide his time until the boy awoke. After all, it was highly unlikely that the grungy state of his clothing and haggard demeanor would aid his cause.

The boy woke up with a curse and attempted the same rash attempt at escape as he had. Vergil noted that the boy was impulsive at best and reckless at worst, and warned him against any further attempts. He needed the boy alive and strong in order to escape, after all.

After some idle chatter, the boy had revealed that he was an acquaintance of Dante's. Perhaps he was Dante's spawn? Vergil had not kept track of the time since the Temen-Ni-Gru, but the timeline could have fit.

And then, the boy had told him of his true parentage, with no hesitation.

Vergil was floored.

It could very well be possible, he surmised. The boy had a slight, but very familiar accent to his speech. Maybe his father's cult on Fortuna found out about Vergil's heritage and manufactured a child with his stolen DNA?

*No.* Something in him told him otherwise, something long lost and hazy. There was someone on that cursed island, someone that he had once trusted enough to lay with and make love to. A woman bathed in morning light as they lay naked and entwined, chest to chest, sated and sleepy. One with a wry smile, and a laugh like chiming bells. He saw the trail of her dress clear as day in his mind's eye, as red as blood, twirling as she beckoned him to follow her somewhere. He could not remember her, but he knew, deep in his heart, that this boy did not lie about his parentage.

About just who his father was.

So he turned around, and truly looked at his son for the first time.

The boy stared at him, shell-shocked. Which was as Vergil expected, since he had been told that he was dead.

Vergil stared at his son in return, taking him in. He felt like a fool for not seeing the resemblance sooner and assuming that the child could not have been his. It was obvious, in hindsight. Had Dante ever glared at him so fiercely? His memories were spotty at best, after years of torture and confinement, but, despite their mutual animosity, he doubted it. That glare was all his. He saw that very expression on his own face, every time he had bothered to glance at his reflection, but never on Dante's face.

"W-what the Hell?" The boy stuttered, looking Vergil up and down with wide eyes.

Was his current appearance shocking and grotesque enough to warrant that treatment? Or, perhaps, was the boy surprised by his continued survival?

He hoped it was the latter, but couldn't fault him for the former, either.

“What’s your name, boy?” Vergil asked.

The boy swallowed, before giving him a defiant look.

“Nero,” he said, swallowing in what almost seemed like apprehension. “My name is Nero.”

“Nero,” Vergil repeated. His son, with all of his pale features, was named “black.” Or named after the Roman Emperor who had famously watched Rome burn while playing the Lyre. He did not know which one was worse.

“A fitting name, if ironic,” Vergil mused.

“And you...” Nero said, “You’re Dante’s brother.”

“Indeed,” Vergil replied, looking his son in the eye. “You may call me Vergil. And, despite the circumstances of our acquaintance, it’s a pleasure to meet you, Nero.”

---

“Well,” Nero said, after a few minutes of awkward staring and waiting, “This is... uh... awkward.”

“Indeed,” Vergil replied, gravely.

Nero shot a glare his way, having seemed to move past his earlier wariness and awkwardness. Vergil was thankful, since it didn’t serve the blood of Sparda to be held back by things so human and trivial. Not when there were other, more prescient things to worry over.

“You gonna say where the hell you’ve been, instead of bothering with your own damn kid?” Nero snarled.

Vergil stilled. He had been waiting for the other shoe to drop.

He sighed, moving his eyes to the ground. How would he explain his foolishness to his own nestling, who was barely even grown? How would he justify committing the same sin as his own father and leaving his own spawn to rot?

“I did not know of your existence before today,” he ended up saying, swallowing down any further sentimentalities before he could fall prey to weakness and spew them. “If I had... things would have been very different.”

Nero scoffed, giving him a disbelieving glance.

“Sure,” he said. “Whatever you say.”

They sat in silence for a few more minutes, stubbornly attempting to look anywhere but each other. But, Vergil was no fool. He knew that they both knew that both he and Nero were stealing small glances the other’s way, trying to gain a measure of their newfound kin.

“So, what have you been doing the past few years?” Nero piped up, his voice laced with faux casualness and a thin veneer of barely restrained anger.

“Reaping the consequences of a foolish mistake,” Vergil responded. “I don’t desire to speak about it.”

“Is that why Dante thinks you’re dead?”

Dante thought him dead? Well, Vergil could not fault him for that. Not after what he could remember from their confrontation on Mallet Island.

“I suppose,” Vergil replied. “Perhaps it is because he believes he dealt the final blow.”

“Wait, what?”

“As I said, I do not desire to speak of it.”

“Okay. Whatever.”

Another minute of silence ensued, and Vergil noted that Nero had trouble sitting still, tapping his feet against the lines of the circle and fidgeting slightly. Vergil had never had trouble with that himself, but Dante had always been a whirlwind of motion, unable to stay still for even a moment. Much to Vergil’s annoyance, during their boyhood.

It was strange, how Nero could be so much like him and not like him at all.

“Have you always had your arm?” Vergil asked.

Nero looked down to where his arm was chained to his side.

“Nah,” he replied, “I got it a while ago. It’s been a bit hard to cope with, you know? One day, I’m one hundred percent human, and the next I’m some demonic freak. It was a bit of a shock, that’s for sure.”

“Why do you desire to be human?”

Nero looked up at him.

“Huh?”

“You were never human, Nero. The blood of Sparda set you above humanity the moment you were born. Why desire human weakness when your demonic blood can give you strength beyond human comprehension?”

Nero scoffed.

“No wonder no one told me anything about you. You’re fucking crazy!”

Vergil disagreed. Human weakness had only held him back. His foolish sentimentality had been the reason he had fallen into hell, anyway. If it wasn’t for his desire to protect Dante from Mundus, he would have never gone in half cocked and underprepared, and he never would have suffered as he had.

If only he had stayed. He would have been able to know his son before now, to watch him grow, to teach him the way of the sword as his father had taught him. To teach him to be strong. Possibly, he could have even changed Dante's stubborn mind, and taught him the value of strength and his demonic heritage.

But, his humanity had cost him everything. His foolish desire to protect what he had left had cost him his strength.

"I am not crazy," Vergil replied, "I am merely correct in my observations."

"Savior help me," Nero muttered. "Do I need to spell out why you're crazy for you, or what?"

Vergil looked his son in the eye.

"If you believe you're correct, then enlighten me as to why."

"Fine," Nero snapped. "You want to know why I hate that part of me so much? It's because demons don't love. They don't have feelings past wanting to kill and conquer and hurt. Without being human, I wouldn't have any reason to get stronger past the thrill of the fight. Past getting a kick out of it."

Nero sighed.

"You know, I was like that for a while as a kid. All I wanted to do was get the rush from the next fight I'd pick. I didn't really give two shits about anything past that. And then... I met someone, and she showed me that meaningless fighting just wasn't it for me, you know? That I was meant for better things. For using my strength to protect people. If getting stronger makes me a demon, so be it. I don't care, as long as the people close to me are safe."

Vergil smiled bitterly. It seemed as if his son's grasp of the realities of their world was... unfortunately limited. Nero had a lot to learn if he believed his human desire to protect alone would keep him safe against the forces that embattled their family. Human connections were only a weakness for the enemies of Sparda to exploit. How many people had Vergil himself lost due to his human sense of love? His mother? His brother? Perhaps even his son, in his own foolishness?

But he would leave his nestling's foolish beliefs alone for now. If all went to plan, he would have plenty of time to change the boy's mind after they found a way to escape.

"She sounds like a special woman," Vergil responded, "To change your mind so thoroughly."

Nero smiled softly.

"Oh, she is. Without her and her family, I don't know where I'd be right now."

"I'm glad you had them, in my stead."

"Me too."

They sat in silence.

“Say, Vergil,” Nero said, after a few minutes, “What sort of stuff did you do with the Yamato, back in the day?”

And that was when Vergil realized the enormity of the opportunity at hand. If his suspicions were correct, then...

“You... you have the Yamato?”

If Nero truly had the Yamato, then Vergil would soon have his sword, his only companion got many lonely years, at his side once again.

And nothing in the near future seemed sweeter.

“Uh, yeah?” Nero replied. “I restored it a while ago. But you know what’s even better? Those fuckers took all of my other weapons, but didn’t take the Yamato. Idiots.”

Vergil shot to his feet.

“Give it to me,” he snarled, stumbling towards Nero in his haste, “Give it to me now!”

“Okay! Fucking hell,” Nero responded, backing away. “You can have it back! If I can get to it, anyway. It probably won’t be too helpful in getting us out of here.”

Vergil smirked. That foolish, foolish boy. Even if the Yamato had allowed him to restore it, he would not know the powers of the Yamato as well as its true master did.

“No,” Vergil responded, “I believe it shall suffice quite nicely.”

## Chapter End Notes

This chapter was sponsored by baby me's obsession with Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader bonding fics. You're welcome.

Anyway, Vergil was fun to write. He really thinks he's right when his logic is sucky at best lmao.

Hope you enjoyed.



# Chapter 5

## Chapter Summary

Kyrie worries about Nero.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Kyrie was really starting to get worried.

It started after Nero first called her from Dante's shop, grumbling about the state of his uncle's office, among other things.

"Dante gave me one of his leftover jobs," he said, "You know, one of those shitty jobs that he doesn't even have time for. And then he had the balls to give me some lecture about how I need to learn how to talk to people off of Fortuna! I think he thinks I can't do anything. He's seen me kill demons! He knows what I'm capable of. But he treats me like a little kid! God, I'm fucking sick of it."

Kyrie hummed.

"Hm... maybe you're judging him too harshly, not the other way around."

"Huh?"

"Well, you're the last remaining member of his family, right? And he just found out about your existence."

"Yeah? So?"

"Maybe he thinks that treating you the way he does will keep you safe."

Nero scoffed.

"Like that'll do anything. The fact that we're related means that no matter what he does, demons are gonna be after us. That's how it is, being related to Sparda."

Kyrie rolled her eyes fondly. She loved Nero to bits, but Sparda help him, he could be so obtuse at times.

"Your Uncle treats you the way he does because he loves you and he's scared of losing you, Nero."

Nero sighed.

"Yeah," he replied, dully, "I guess that'd make sense."

"Give him some time, and, once he knows you're around for good, he'll come around, alright?"

"Fine."

Kyrie stirred the tea in her mug, placing it on their worn coffee table to steep. It was nearing time for her to wind down for the night, and tea had always made it easier for her to relax and digest her dinner without thinking too much about just why the house was so empty.

"You know," Nero said, after a pause. "I wonder every day how a dumbass like me managed to get such a smart girlfriend."

Kyrie giggled.

"And I wonder how I managed to get such a strong and brave boyfriend. Even if he can be a little bit dense at times."

"Hey!" Nero said. "I'm not that dense."

"Of course not," Kyrie teased, "You're not nearly as bad as Credo."

"Oh boy," Nero groaned. "The amount of women who were throwing themselves at him that he just... didn't notice."

"Yeah. Half of the women in town were head over heels for him! And the poor man either didn't notice or care."

She sighed.

"I wonder what he would say, if he was here."

"Probably something along the lines of me being a colossal moron."

Kyrie let out a chuckle.

"Maybe."

"Yeah."

Nero let out a breath.

"Well. Uh... I'm gonna have to go out and get some actual food. You know how Dante is."

"Completely hopeless?"

"That's the understatement of the century. Anyway..."

He blew a kiss into the phone.

"Love you. See you soon, okay?"

"Love you, too. Be safe." Kyrie said, before Nero had last hung up, three days prior.

It had been radio silent ever since.

She called Dante a few hours after he missed his evening check in the next day, only for him to tell her that Nero was probably fine, just busy with work.

"The kid's tough, you know?" he had said. "And these jobs take time. I bet you'll hear from him tomorrow and he'll be right as rain. Don't worry too much, okay?"

Kyrie acquiesced and hung up, only to once again not hear back the day after.

Thankfully, Dante started to share her worries after the second day.

"I'm gonna go out and look for him as soon as I can get my colleagues to cover this job, but that's gonna be a few hours, at least. They're finishing their own thing right as we speak and then they'll be right over."

Kyrie took a deep breath to stop herself from snapping at Dante and asking why he wasn't looking for Nero right now, but she understood where he was coming from. Nero could protect himself, but Dante's clients couldn't.

"Thank you," she ended up saying. "If you can't find him..."

"I will," he said. "Mark my words. I don't turn my back on family."

"That means so much to him, Dante. More than you will ever know. Once again, thank you."

"Sure thing," Dante said. "I'll call you back soon, okay?"

He promptly hung up, and never called back.

Kyrie was getting close to turning on their crappy old computer and buying the next available airplane tickets to Capulet City, planning on going and looking for Nero herself, when someone knocked on the door.

"Coming!" she yelled, running to the door and wrenching it open.

Nero stood in front of her, his clothes scorched and half in tatters, and a large, almost dead looking man in a tattered cloak hanging halfway off his back.

"Kyrie," he stammered. "I...I..."

"Nero?" she said.

"Yeah it's me," he replied. "Sorry, just... tired."

Tears sprung into Kyrie's eyes, unbidden.

"Where were you? You've been missing for three days! Dante and I have been so worried, and..."

"It's been three days?" Nero asked.

Kyrie nodded.

Nero raked his hand through his hair, and sighed.

"I think you're gonna want to sit down for this one."

---

"So..."

"Yeah," Nero said, after explaining everything over a large dinner of leftover pasta. "I don't know who those guys were, or how they found us, but..."

He looked to where the man in the cloak, who he had revealed to be his father, lay on the couch, breathing shallowly in his sleep. Kyrie hadn't been able to place the resemblance to Dante at first due to his state, but looking at him now, she could definitely imagine mixing them up if she saw them side by side.

"Hm?" she said, taking another bite of Penne.

"I think my Old Man knows more than what he's letting on about those fuckers. I guess he's just too out of it to really say what he knows."

"He does look awfully sick," Kyrie replied. "I wonder what happened to him."

"Oh, he didn't say a damn thing about that either when I asked. Just some shit about 'reaping the consequences of a foolish mistake from my youth,' and that he didn't want to talk about it."

Kyrie laughed.

"He sounds like an interesting man."

"That's for sure," Nero said.

He sobered.

"He did say some things that were sorta...disturbing, back there."

"Like what?" Kyrie asked.

"Like some stuff about how I shouldn't want to be human because humans were weak. I dunno. It just sorta rubbed me the wrong way."

"Oh."

Nero sighed, before giving her a grimace.

“Yeah.”

Kyrie stood up, and grabbed Nero’s empty plate.

Nero stood up after her.

“Here,” he said, gesturing for the plate, “I’ll wash the dishes. It’s the least I can do, after scaring you like that.”

Kyrie held the plate closer to her.

“You, mister, are going to bed. You look dead on your feet.”

Nero looked at his feet, abashed.

“Fine,” he said, letting out a yawn against his will, “But I will make it up to you tomorrow.”

Kyrie smiled, putting the plate in the sink and preparing to rinse it.

“Go to bed, Nero. I’ll keep an eye on your father.”

“You should sleep too, Kyrie. He can take care of himself.”

“Of course. But even the toughest of men need someone to take care of them sometimes.”

Nero laughed.

“Oh, don’t I know it.”

He embraced her from behind, burying his face in her hair as she washed the plates.

“God, I missed you,” he mumbled into her scalp.

Kyrie giggled.

“I missed you too, sleepyhead.”

Nero grumbled and extricated himself from her, and Kyrie found herself immediately missing his warmth.

“I’m glad you’re safe, Nero,” she said, at long last.

Nero smiled tiredly at her.

“And I’m glad I’m back here, with you.”

Kyrie rolled her eyes fondly, and gave him a kiss on the cheek. God, he was such a sap.

“Go to sleep.”

"I'm going!" he said, turning towards their room. "Geez."

Kyrie turned back towards the dishes with a soft smile on her face. She'd follow him there, at some point. But, if something happened to Nero's father while he was asleep, Nero would never forgive her. And since Nero was too tired to watch over him himself, Kyrie would take care of him for him.

That's what family did.

---

"Kyrie," Nero asked, the next morning, "Did you call Dante after we got back?"

Kyrie's eyes widened. She had been too busy last night to remember.

"Shit," she mumbled under her breath.

She slapped herself on the forehead upon realizing what had just escaped her mouth. Maybe being with Nero so often had *some* negative benefits... but she reserved the right to curse occasionally. Especially with something as... worrisome as the last few nights happened.

Nero raised an eyebrow at her, chuckling at the expression on her face.

"I'm so sorry," she rambled, "I forgot! I was tired, and I got caught up, and..."

Nero stood up and headed for the phone.

"Hey, it's okay, alright? I'll call him now and tell him what's going on."

Kyrie nodded, stating blearily at the table. She had only gotten a couple of hours of sleep in between making sure Nero's father was alright, and she was practically running on fumes.

She took another sip of the coffee in front of her and grimaced. God, she missed being able to get better coffee.

Nero picked up the phone and dialed Dante's number, tapping his fingers on the table the phone's cradle rested on.

The phone rang at least five times before Dante picked up. Nero could see the amount of zeroes in front of their phone bill multiply before his eyes just from the sheer amount of times he'd had to call the guy in the past month. Couldn't Dante invest in email? Or WhatsApp, or some shit? He was sick of having to pay for international calls just to chat for five minutes with fucking family. God.

"Kyrie," Dante started, "I know you're worried, but I had a late night last night -"

"Not Kyrie," Nero interrupted.

"Kid?" Dante said, "Jesus fuck, where the hell have you been?"

“Got kidnapped. It’s a bit of a long story. But you’ll never guess who I found when I was there.”

“Oh no,” Dante deadpanned. “Who?”

“Guess.”

“Kid, you’re scaring me.”

Nero rolled his eyes.

“Then you mind explaining why I got stuck in a room with a guy who looked exactly like you but acted even more like a prick?”

“What?” Dante croaked.

“You told me he was dead, you bastard. But, guess what? He isn’t.”

“Wait, wait wait. Hold up. He’s alive?”

“Yeah,” Nero said, “But he’s in really, really bad shape. I think... I think he’s gonna need our help. Big time.”

There was a pause on the line as Dante fumbled with something on the other end.

“I’ll be there as soon as I can,” Dante said. “And kid?”

“Yeah?”

“Keep an eye on him. He can be unpredictable at best, and I don’t want you to deal with any nasty surprises.”

Nero scoffed.

“Sure thing, but I doubt he’ll move an inch. He hasn’t woken up since we got here last night.”

“Still. You never know with him.”

“Whatever you say,” Nero said. “I’ll be fine. I doubt he’s as bad as you say.”

“Have you talked with him?”

“A bit, yeah.”

“Then trust me when I say that you don’t know him very well if you think he isn’t a threat, even if he’s asleep. He’s a tough bastard, and a survivor at that. He’ll do whatever it takes to get the upper hand in any situation.”

Dante sighed.

“Look, kid. Just make sure he stays there and doesn’t do anything dumb, okay?”

“Fine,” Nero said.

Dante hung up, and Nero sat and stared at the wall for a moment, the dial tone ringing in his ear, before hanging up.

That could have gone better.

## Chapter End Notes

I hope I did Kyrie some justice. I tried to make her a bit more three dimensional, and not just Nero's love interest or a background character. I dunno.

Enjoy.



# Chapter 6

## Chapter Summary

Enter stage right: Dante. Who is not having a good time, at all.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dante whistled lowly as he took in his brother's face for the first time in a whole decade. Damn, he thought, had it really been long? It definitely felt longer than that, with all the shit that had happened between Vergil "dying" and discovering Nero's existence.

Vergil, frankly, looked like shit. Black veins crisscrossed across his gray skin like he was some sort of corpse, and he was too out of it to even slick his hair back into its usual state. Which was saying something, because Vergil was the type who'd rather die than look like some sort of unwashed leper... or, rather, look like his dear, sweet, younger twin.

Dante honestly was just glad he was alive, but he knew better than to leap onto his brother and become a teary mess. At best, Vergil would just stab him for the show of emotion when he woke him up, depending on how much he'd changed in the past couple of decades. At worst...

Yeah, he didn't want to think about that.

"He's looking peachy," he quipped.

Nero gave him a flat glare, very reminiscent of how his old man would've in the same situation.

"Shut your ass up," he hissed, "He's sleeping."

"Doubt he will be for long," Dante replied, "Demoniac healing and senses and all that."

"Then you mind explaining why the fuck he hasn't fixed himself yet?"

Dante sighed.

"That's a good question. But, still, he looks better than he did the last time I saw him. I didn't even recognize him back then. Not until it was too late."

"So you really thought you killed him?"

"How'd you - god damn it," Dante grumbled, "Of course he told you. Anything to one up his brother, right?"

Dante sighed again.

“Yeah. He was... he wasn’t himself. It was bad.”

Nero’s face softened, and he put his hand on Dante’s shoulder.

“I’m sorry,” he said.

He looked up, truly meeting his nephew’s eyes for what felt like the first time in months. Why had he always kept Nero at a distance, again? Sure, he was plenty like his old man. But he wasn’t enough like Vergil to ditch Dante for stupid shit, even if he’d probably get sick of him after a while and start avoiding him like everyone else did. Hell, if Dante was able to drive Trish crazy after a few months of co-running the business with her, he’d definitely piss off Nero in less time. And then Nero would go running for the hills just like his old man, and they’d probably never be able to talk without a good old-fashioned stab fest.

He wasn’t gonna tell the kid that, though. Nero’d probably just think he was pathetic.

And the worst part was that he’d be right.

God, he needed another drink. The drinks he’d had on the plane ride to Fortuna had long since worn off, and the haze of Alcohol always helped when life threw him curveballs - like this particular piece of garbage situation. At this point, he was fed up and sick of thinking in general. so he was really looking forward to hitting up the nearest liquor store as soon as Nero wasn’t looking. Not before - there was no way in hell he was going to expose Nero to that particular demon of his. Not yet.

But he could wait until the kid was okay before self-medicating. He could do it.

“Hey kid,” Dante said, trying to seem reassuring, “It’s all good now. He’s here. You’re here. The family’s back together. That’s what matters, right?”

Nero raised a skeptical eyebrow at him, calling him out on his bluff in no time flat.

Damn, this kid was really good at sniffing out his BS, wasn’t he?

“You know,” Nero said, “It’s okay to be upset about this, right? You don’t have to pretend to be happy.”

That was it, Dante thought. This was getting just a touch too emotional for him. He was gonna have to bow out, stage exit left, and high tail his ass to the nearest liquor store before getting as drunk as he could in the forest where no one could see. So what if he had no money after that plane ticket? He didn’t want to think about... this. At all. Nope.

“I *am* happy,” Dante lied. “My brother’s alive. Why wouldn’t I be happy?”

Nero just sighed, and pinched the bridge of his nose.

“God damn it, old man,” he muttered.

Dante stood up and stretched. Nero was getting a bit too close to girly talk about emotions, and he needed out ASAP.

“You know what?” Dante said, “I think a walk will be good for me. Clear my head, and all that.”

“Go on ahead,” Nero said. “I’ll keep watch over the Old Man. Just don’t do anything stupid while you’re gone, capiche?”

“Obviously,” Dante said, “I think I’ve destroyed enough of this town for a lifetime.”

Nero scoffed.

“Get outta here.”

“I’m going!” Dante called. “Geez.”

“And you’d better be back for dinner!” Nero called. “Skip out and I’ll help Kyrie beat your ass six ways to Sunday!”

Dante just laughed and shut the front door behind him.

He probably wasn’t going to be back for dinner, but what Nero didn’t know wouldn’t kill him.

---

Now that Dante looked at the situation again, a few hours and a few bottles of the good stuff later, he sort of found this whole situation hilarious.

First off, Vergil had gotten his ass laid at some point. Score one for him, Dante guessed, since he didn’t think the guy had it in his stuck up prick ass until he met the proof. But with ol’ Vergie being as much of a nerd as he was, Dante would be surprised if Vergil didn’t know what protection was. So he was a bit shocked at Vergil’s lack of Condom use in the first place, even if Nero was an awesome nephew to have. Score one for Dante for using protection when he got laid?

And then Vergil fucked off and jumped into Hell, the fucking asshole. Leading to many a drunken night where Dante imagined what would have happened if he managed to pull him up by the Yamato and beat some fucking sense into him before he could try to jump right back in again.

Score two for Vergil, since he’d count making Dante miserable as a win. What could he say? That’s what brothers did.

Then he’d come back as some sort of mind controlled zombie knight thing at Mallet Island and Dante had to basically kill him. Negative points for both him and Vergil, since Vergil was basically Mundus’s slave and Dante *had to fucking kill his own brother*. That didn’t help his nightmares, that was for sure.

God what was this, some bad supernatural sitcom? He could imagine it now: *The Sparda Show*, some shitty ass soap but with the added bonus of gratuitous violence and gore.

He couldn't help but laugh at the thought of the reviews it'd get. "Not suitable for kids?" Someone should've told Mundus that before he decided to send a shit ton of demons to burn down his house!

Then, there was the kid. Enough said. Vergil was always the more mature one, but Dante didn't think being a teen dad counted as mature. So score one for Dante for actually being the mature twin for once.

And now there Dante was, celebrating being the mature twin by getting drunk off his ass and blowing through alcohol like he was young again and his liver was invincible. Even more invincible? Did it get rid of any effects from alcoholism if it got stabbed and then healed?

Huh, he thought absently. He'd have to try that again sometime.

For now though, his buzz was starting to wear off, and if it was up to him, he'd much rather deal with his hangover back at Nero's than in the middle of the forest. Besides, judging by the time of night, the kid'd be asleep and by the time he'd wake up, Dante would be right as rain again.

He stood up and managed to hobble towards Nero's place without having to think too much. Hell, he even made it through the front door with a blissfully fuzzy head.

And then he saw Vergil on the couch, breathing softly in his sleep, and everything came roaring right back.

What would Vergil think of him if he saw him like this? He'd probably scoff and lecture him on making the Sparda bloodline look weak or some shit. He didn't know.

God, what would his Mom think? How disappointed would she be in him, knowing that he still couldn't get over her dying?

He'd need a few more drinks to process that one.

But instead of finding some, he collapsed on the beaten up recliner next to Vergil and put his face in his hands.

"Geez, Verge. You really are going to be the death of me, aren't ya?"

He sighed.

"You know that Mom died looking for you, right? She loved you to pieces, man. Sometimes it felt like she liked you better, because you'd actually sit down and study and I just... wasn't ever like that."

He stared at the wall until it started to hurt his eyes.

“I’ve never really been good for much except playing pool and hunting demons, honestly. My coworkers can’t even stand me. Lady only keeps me around for cash, and Trish just fucks around and does whatever. You’ve met them. Lady’s Arkham’s daughter from way back at the tower and Trish is... well, it’s complicated. She’s basically a demonic clone of Mom. Doesn’t act like it at all, though. She’s sorta crazy.”

Dante sighed again.

“Honestly, I don’t know why Nero even bothers with me. So what if we’re related? That didn’t keep you around.”

He didn’t know why he was rambling. In fact, he really wished he would just shut up right fucking now before embarrassing himself further. The only saving grace he had was the fact that Vergil was asleep and couldn’t hear a damn thing he was saying.

And thank goodness for that.

“God damn it. You know what? Fuck you. I can’t... I can’t fucking believe you’d jump into Hell rather than be around for your fucking family. I don’t care if you did it to avoid me or some shit, but Nero? That’s a new low, even for you. I don’t know if you knew about Nero or not, but that was... God.”

And then, he started sniffing. Kill him now, because if someone didn’t, he’d off himself after he started feeling hung over.

“He’s a good kid, you know? He deserves better than having some power hungry jackass as a dad. You better have had some sort of attitude adjustment while in Hell, or I’m gonna beat you with a stick until you realize what he’s worth, you prick.”

He wiped his wet eyes, and then stood up to go to bed.

“Fuck you, Vergil. You’re my brother, and I love you, but Fuck you.”

“Dante.”

Dante turned around.

Vergil glared at him, bleary eyed.

Dante just stared, open-mouthed. Of course his luck just had to be that shitty. The asshole was probably awake for his entire drunken rant, which mean that the judgmental comments were incoming in 5...4...3...2...

“Stop your babbling,” Vergil snapped. “I’m trying to rest.”

...1...Zero.

“That’s what you have to say about all this?” Dante snapped back. “Seriously?”

Vergil glared at him.

“Not all. I’d also like to comment on how the stench of whatever swill you’ve decided to drink tonight is making my headache worse.”

Dante scoffed.

“I can’t fucking believe I thought you’d have changed, asshole. Seriously. Fuck you. You’d better not act like this around the kid, or I will put you into the ground a second time. Got it?”

Vergil just turned over and buried his face into the couch.

“Hey, are you even listening?”

Vergil sighed, and turned his head back towards him.

“I’m not, no.”

“God fucking -” Dante started. “Why am I not surprised?”

He turned away from his asshole prick of a brother.

“You know what?” He bit out. “I’ll deal with you later. I’m going to bed, and hopefully I’ll forget this entire conversation in the morning.”

Vergil responded with a fat lot of nothing, and Dante turned in the direction of the guest room, ready to hobble right into his comfy bed.

“Dante,” Vergil called again.

“What?” he snapped. “I don’t have time for your shit-”

“I will think on all you’ve said,” Vergil interrupted. “Does that satisfy you?”

“Fine,” Dante said. “Whatever. I’m going to bed.”

Vergil’s breath evened out a moment later, signaling the fact that he’d fallen asleep again.

And as soon as Dante collapsed on his bed, he joined him in the land of dreams.

## Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the late update. I was working on my other DMC fic (A crossover with the anime Yu Yu Hakusho, if you're interested! Both are about fighting demons and have similar themes about human vs demon nature, so I thought that'd be fun.) If you like Japan and epic demon fights, check it out on my profile! You don't need to know anything about YYH to enjoy it, since the power systems are fairly similar.

Hope you like this chapter!



# Chapter 7

## Chapter Summary

Vergil recovers, and plots his escape.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The light of the sun was beginning to bleed through the curtains when Vergil next awoke, causing him to cover his eyes with his arm to block it out. Vergil noted that bangs were matted against his forehead, probably causing him to look like his fool of a brother instead of himself...

*Dante.*

He could sense him in the house, almost feel the acrid burn of his aura on his tongue. He felt as if he knew it like the back of his hand, but also as if he didn't know it at all. Their relationship had been doomed from the start and years apart had only doomed it further.

Vergil knew that at the end of the day, only one of them would be left standing and the other doomed to be defeated in their weakness. That was how it had been, and always would be.

How long had it been since they last met? A decade? Two? He only had a hazy recollection of their meeting when he was trapped in that accursed armor, but he remembered the Temen-Ni-Gru as if it happened yesterday. It was what he had thought about during sleepless nights in Mundus's torture chambers, while his body knitted itself painfully back together after being broken and beaten, again and again while Mundus and his generals laughed at how they had finally made him beg for the sweet release of death.

He had awoken for a short period before now, he recalled. Dante had told him something, something about... his mother? Him being a jackass? He couldn't recall. But despite barely remembering such a recent meeting, old memories from what had been a different life played clearly through his head, like he was still 19 and felt as if he could take on the entire world.

He had been a fool.

As a child, his mother did not protect him. As an adolescent, he was unable to protect himself from his own pride. And now, as an adult and with his current weakness, he was barely able to protect Nero during their escape from confinement.

*Nero.*

His son. His *nestling*.



He still could barely wrap his head around it. Obviously Nero was his, not Dante's. Nero was too strong to be Dante's, and the Yamato would have never responded to the call of Dante's spawn. No, Nero was his, through and through.

He was strong. Vergil had seen his power first hand, and a swell of pride had bloomed in his chest at seeing him use it to take out unsuspecting minions during their escape. First by sending out a spectral version of his arm, and then by using his own version of Vergil's summoned swords, no doubt taught to him by the Yamato just as the sword had taught him.

They had worked well together, like a smoothly oiled machine. Father and Son, fighting side by side, them against the world. Just as it should have been, even though Nero was doing most of the fighting after a while and Vergil was struggling to keep himself upright.

Vergil had collapsed just after cutting a portal open to a street he vaguely remembered from his time in Fortuna, leaving his son to carry him to... wherever this place was. His residence? Vergil did not know, nor did he care. As soon as he had the strength to stand, he would be leaving. He had a job to do, and his newfound knowledge of Nero's existence only hastened his resolve.

He had to eliminate all weakness. After all, how could he keep Nero safe if he couldn't even stand? His quest for power wasn't purely selfish. Not anymore. Their previous captors were too strong for Vergil to take on in his current, weakened state, and if they went after Nero, his son would be crushed under their power like an insect. Even if he had his human blood protecting him from their magic, they both knew he had enough demonic power for it to affect him negatively.

Yet with enough demonic power, even their magic could be overcome. And when Vergil cut out his human rot, he would slaughter them like the animals they were for daring to hurt his nestling. Attacking the blood of Sparda was a mistake they would pay for in blood, and they would pay twice fold for not just daring to capture him, but for hurting his spawn as well.

But, before then, he had to get stronger. Otherwise Nero would not be able to survive the oncoming threat... at least, until Vergil eliminated it.

He struggled to sit up, every muscle in his body straining and he heaved himself upright. It seemed as if without the adrenaline that had kept him alive and fighting until that point, he was as useless as a sack of rocks.

But he at least managed to push his hair back into its usual state with a shaking hand before collapsing back onto the couch, panting heavily.

*Damn it all*, he thought hazily, as sleep overtook him once again.

---

The next time he awoke, it was to the smell of some sort of soup permeating the air.

Against his will, his stomach growled. How long had it been since he relied on food for precious energy? It was more expedient to live off of the energy of fallen demons down in Hell, when one could never tell if the flesh of a lesser demon would be poisonous or not.

Most demons lived off of the energy of their prey, although lesser demons feasted on the blood, flesh, and souls of humans instead of the energy of their kin. That was why they were lesser demons, destined to be fodder for their more powerful counterparts. Only the most powerful demons feasted on other demons rather than humans, showing their prowess in battle and ability to rise above their baser instincts. And Vergil, of course, counted himself as one of their number.

Despite that, it had been a long time since he had last sated himself on red orbs, and he was famished.

A young woman with auburn hair noticed his state of wakefulness, and soon rushed over.

“Mister Vergil!” she said, “Are you alright? Here,” she said, helping him into a sitting position, “Sit. I’ll get you some soup. I don’t think you’ll be able to handle anything heavier right now.”

Vergil noticed Nero’s scent all over her and surmised that she must be his mate, or, at least, someone his son wanted to court. Interesting. Was this the woman he spoke of, who had changed his mind about humanity?

There was something about her that reminded him of a different woman from Fortuna. He hazily recalled another instance of being bedridden and weak after a particularly bad attack, relying on the kindness of an unfamiliar woman to gain the strength to stand again.

What had she been like, he wondered? How much of her personality had Nero gotten from her? What about her had attracted him? He could not picture himself laying with just any woman. She would have had to have been some sort of marvel to get him to want to lay with her.

His lack of memory frustrated him. It was yet another sign of his weakness, of something his inability to resist Mundus’s tortures had taken from him. Something his human weakness had robbed him of.

Relying on the generosity of a human grated on him then, just as it grated on him now. But he had been raised better than to not be a gracious guest and a gentleman, so he would treat his hostess with the graciousness she deserved, even if he sought to use her kindness for his own ends.

She put a bowl of soup and a spoon on the coffee table in front of him.

“Here,” she said, “This is Nero’s favorite for when he’s sick. If you’re anything like him, you’ll probably enjoy it, too.”

Vergil looked at her and nodded his thanks before picking up the spoon and the soup with shaky hands.

He stared into the bowl, letting the chicken scented steam waft into his nose. Had his mother’s soup smelled like that?

This soup tasted similar enough, his brain decided. It tasted...

It tasted like home.

Vergil saw the tears drip into the bowl before he registered the fact that he was crying, and hastily wiped his face. It would do him no good to show weakness now. And besides, it was only food. It wasn't too big of a deal.

Even if he hadn't had a homemade meal in years. Probably not since Nero's conception, when he was fairly sure he'd last felt as if he'd had a home...

He needed to leave. Men like him didn't have homes. They didn't need something so frivolous, no matter how much they craved one. Not when they couldn't keep anything or anyone close to them safe. Nero had gotten lucky thus far, but Vergil would have to commence with his plans, and soon, if he truly wanted to keep the boy safe. How would Nero feel if he knew that Vergil had doomed him by not being strong enough? Vergil dared not think about how his son's face would look, twisted into the grimace of an untimely demise.

Nero deserved nothing less than the best from him, especially after Vergil had failed to keep him safe throughout his childhood. Would *they* have kidnapped him if Vergil had been there for him, he wondered?

What-ifs and has-beens didn't matter, Vergil chastised himself. What mattered was gaining strength.

The woman was looking at him with a strange expression.

Vergil couldn't leave now, however. It would be rude to leave without letting his hostess know that her soup was the best meal he had had in years.

"This soup," he ended up saying, "It's very good. What's in it?"

The woman smiled, and then proceeded to give him the recipe.

---

He had gone back to sleep after the meal, warm and full, and awoken to the noon sun shining brightly through the windows.

He managed to sit up with barely any trembling, noting that no one else was currently in the house.

Good, he thought. Now that he had regained enough strength to function, he could summon the Yamato and cut a portal to a secluded place and finish what he had returned to the human world to do.

Yet before he could, he sensed a very familiar someone approach the front door and slam it open and shut, forcing his plans screeching halt.

Damn Dante to all hell.

“Heya, Vergé,” he said, walking over and plopping himself onto the nearby recliner. “Good to see you awake.”

Vergil grunted. The last thing he wanted to do at that moment was talk to Dante.

“You’re looking a bit better,” Dante continued. “At least, since the last time I saw you. The mysterious cloak and dagger look is pretty good on you, honestly. Is that how you managed to nab Nero’s mom?”

Vergil growled.

“Do you ever shut up?” Vergil snapped.

“Nope, and you know it,” Dante replied, leaning back into the chair and putting his feet up. “Are you ever going to tell me who the lucky lady was?”

As flippant as ever, Vergil noted. Did the man ever take anything seriously? And besides, how would he tell Dante about Nero’s mother if he couldn’t even tell Nero, due to his faulty memories?

Vergil grunted and decided to continue attempting to stand. Just in case he had to clobber his annoying fool of a brother into blissful silence.

“C’mon, man,” Dante said, “Are you seriously going to leave me hanging here?”

Vergil hissed.

“Quiet, Dante,” he said. “Your incessant noise is a constant irritant.”

Dante scoffed.

“You at least going to tell the kid? He deserves to know. You know that he was raised in an orphanage, right?”

Vergil did not know that, no. He would have thought that she would have...

Maybe. Maybe not. Fortuna was not kind to women who became pregnant out of wedlock. He wasn’t going to tell Dante that, though.

“It is of no matter to me where Nero was raised,” he said instead.

“So you’re not even going to try to get to know your kid?” Dante retorted, “I’m sorta surprised. I wouldn’t have taken you for an absent father. But hey! Maybe Hell did give you an attitude adjustment.”

“My time in Hell only strengthened my resolve,” Vergil replied. “Yet, it seems as if your time in the human world has only weakened yours.”

“Heh,” Dante said, “If that resolve means keeping your stupid ass out of trouble, then I’d say it’s recently gotten a bit of a boost.”

“Hm,” Vergil said, smiling sardonically. “Indeed.”

Even in Vergil’s weakened state, Dante would not be able to stop him from doing what needed to be done. However, Vergil’s usual methods of overpowering his brother would have to be altered to fit the situation. Which meant that he would have to overpower him in terms of wits, and not in terms of physical strength.

He would play along with his brother’s foolishness until the time was right. And then, once Dante was comfortable and his back was turned, Vergil would slip away and shed his weakness once and for all.

But for now, he would endure. And then, Dante would rue the day Vergil would show him just how weak he truly was.

## Chapter End Notes

There are SO MANY good DMC fics being updated frequently right now, and I felt really bad about the fact that this story hit a roadblock. But hey! I’m back.

I based the eating humans and red orbs thing on the anime Yu Yu Hakusho again. Demons there mostly eat humans and human souls (they can eat human food occasionally as well,) but I added the more powerful demons eat other demons energy thing.

Vergil’s emotional constipation and inability to say the right thing in any meaningful situation is sponsored by my parents being the same way (ouch). I wanted him to be soft, but he’s also the sort of guy who wouldn’t show that unless he really trusted the person. Obv, he trusts Nero that much, but at this moment, he doesn’t trust Dante nearly that much. So he’s trying to act like he doesn’t care about Nero to seem tough, although he just wants his kid to love him. Poor dude.

Also: Should I write my own version of how Vergil and Nero’s mom met? Yes/No. Lemme know, because I have some gripes with how some people write that, and I want to do my own version.

# Chapter 8

## Chapter Summary

Nero calls Vergil out on his BS. Vergil doesn't take it well.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Nero was starting to get a bit pissed.

Sure, he should have been happy. His family was all together. His father was alive, and although he was weak, he was starting to get better. Hell, Dante had even seemed to get over his previous sadness and was more chipper than Nero had ever seen him, hanging around Vergil like he could barely believe his brother was alive and in the same room as him.

Even if his father found it so annoying, he'd started resorting to trying to stab Dante to get him to leave him alone. It took Nero literally forcing them apart and Kyrie laying out some ground rules to keep him from actually turning Dante into a red-clad shish kebab in the middle of their living room, but otherwise, everything had been going rather smoothly. At least Nero could say that he wasn't bored, watching their antics.

Yet, as much as Vergil responded to Dante's needling, he seemed to regard Nero with a detached disinterest no matter how often Nero tried to approach him. Which confused the shit out of Nero, since he'd almost been a chatterbox when they had been kidnapped together. Maybe Vergil had decided he wasn't worth his effort despite being his son? Or maybe he just decided he didn't give a shit anymore? Nero didn't know. It sucked, but he wasn't enough of an asshole to throw his sick dad to the curb just because he couldn't stand the sight of him.

He talked to Kyrie about it that night. She was just as confused as he was, because Vergil had treated her with nothing but graciousness despite his reserved demeanor, much to the surprise of both of them. Nero had been almost sure he'd talk down to Kyrie due to her humanity, but he didn't seem to care about her human status one bit.

Then again, he didn't seem to care about Nero one bit, either. Which was even more puzzling.

"Why don't you ask him about it?" Kyrie said. "I doubt he's avoiding you because he dislikes you."

Nero very much disagreed, but he didn't want to snuff Kyrie's idealism. Even then, she was right, and it was probably best to just ask the man why he was avoiding him and not just assume what he was thinking.

"Alright," he agreed. "I'll talk to him tomorrow."

"Good. I need to run some errands in the morning, anyway, and Dante would be the perfect man to help me carry everything around."

"Well, it's the least he could do for continuing to egg Vergil on," Nero replied.

Kyrie giggled.

"Their antics are so lively, despite all the threats. I think a bit of liveliness is just what this house needs after everything."

"Yeah, that's for sure."

"I'm happy for them. It's not every day when your brother comes back to life, you know?"

Nero sighed. The thought of Credo's death had been looming over their heads, especially when Kyrie noticed how happy Dante seemed to be now that his brother was back and talking with him.

"Definitely. But, you know what? I think Credo would be happy that we have some new family here, even if he isn't."

Kyrie sniffled.

"He would be, wouldn't he? It did always seem like he couldn't stand being in the house for too long after our parents passed. Maybe the reason he threw himself into his work with the Knights was because he hated the quiet."

"That makes a lot of sense," he replied. "It never was the same after they died."

"Yeah," she said, in a small voice. "I miss them. And him."

"I know," Nero said, but his words felt hollow. He had finally gotten the family he had dreamed of for years, only for Kyrie to have lost the last remaining member of hers the day he found out he even had relatives. How was that fair at all? If Sparda happened to be the deity Fortuna thought him to be and not just his grandfather, Nero would have kicked his ass just for letting fate screw over Kyrie the way it had. But since Nero knew that Sparda was anything but, he'd just have to direct his anger towards making sure Kyrie stayed safe and happy. No matter what happened.

He still wished he could bring Sanctus back to life and kick his ass all over again for how he hurt Kyrie and Credo, but that train of thought wasn't very productive. So he'd just do what he was able to and hope it was enough.

It had better be enough, or he would never forgive himself.

Kyrie smiled up at him anyway, despite her tears.

"But you're still here, and now Dante and Vergil are, too. I'm glad I have you all, even if Mother and Father and Credo are all gone. And I like to think they'd be glad I have you, too."

Nero wiped her tears away and drew her into his arms, holding her as she calmed down.

"It's okay to be bitter about it, Kyrie," Nero said, gently. "I wouldn't fault you at all."

"I'm not bitter at all!" Kyrie said. "It's not just you who has a family again, Nero. My family was yours as well, and I like to think yours is mine, too."

"And it is, for as long as you want it to be."

"Then we'll have to make sure to take good care of it, won't we?"

"If Vergil and Dante can go two seconds without trying to kill each other, that is," Nero grumbled.

Kyrie just giggled at him, before letting out a wide yawn. Nero thought she looked like a chipmunk when she did, all wide-cheeked and cute.

"We should sleep," she said, leaving his embrace. "It's late."

Nero nodded, and gathered his bedclothes and a towel.

"I call the shower first!" he called.

"Nero!" she called. "Ladies first, remember?"

"Tough luck!" he called back, "You're not the one who's gross from hunting demons all day!"

Kyrie just rolled her eyes fondly

"Fine," she said, "But don't use all the hot water this time!"

"Oh come on, Kyrie! I wouldn't do that!"

Kyrie just smiled, and shooed him off.

Nero couldn't help but smile back at her radiance.

---

Vergil was reading a book when Nero found him, dressed in some of Nero's more formal clothes and sitting serenely on the couch, his lap covered by a blanket.

He looked up when Nero approached the room and nodded at him, before promptly returning to whatever he was reading.

Nero cleared his throat, and Vergil looked up at him once again.

"We need to talk," he started with.



"About?" Vergil asked.

"I think you know what about," Nero said. "You know... this."

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"Oh my fucking G -" Nero started to yell, but he forced himself to calm down. It wouldn't do to provoke his rather easily provokable father, judging by how often Dante got him ready and rearing to spill his blood.

He sighed.

"Why are you avoiding me?"

Vergil raised an eyebrow instead of responding.

"When we were in that... room, you actually seemed to feel bad about not being in my life. But now that we're out and you're better, you seem to think that I'm not even worth your damn time. What's up with that, huh?"

Vergil took a deep breath, seemingly trying to find the words to say.

"Is it really any of your concern what I think of you?"

"Of fucking course it's my concern!" Nero yelled. "Don't you think that I want you to be in my life? Maybe I want to know if you actually want me in yours!"

Vergil just gave him a blank stare.

"I currently have no time to entertain a childish tantrum," he ended up saying.

"You'd better make time, then!" Nero responded, "Because I exist, whether you like it or not!"

"Then I'm sure you'll stay near no matter what I think of you," Vergil retorted icily.

"Not if you're going to be such a massive prick about my existence."

Vergil scoffed.

"I did not even *anticipate* your existence, child. And perhaps I never would have, if I had never submitted to folly and human weakness during my own adolescence."

Nero saw red.

"That's all I am to you, huh? A human weakness?"

"To be human is to be weak, Nero. Do you not regard yourself as more man than demon?"

Nero growled.

"Perhaps if you shed your human weakness and gain true strength, I will entertain your talk," Vergil continued. "But since you refuse to, what you think is of no consequence to me."

"And you know what I think of that shit!" Nero yelled. "You think I'd want to trade caring about my family for more power? Fuck that! I can't believe you'd even think I'd even do something like that, just because you said to!"

"You should mind your tone around your elders, boy." Vergil said, starting to stand. The aura around him radiated sheer danger, and Nero took a step back from the sheer force of it.

But that didn't mean he was going to back down.

"And you should get your head out of your ass and start caring about something else besides not having 'human weakness,' or whatever bullshit you're on!" Nero shot back. "You know what? Go fuck yourself. Fuck you, and fuck your stupid demon supremacy bullshit! God."

His eyes started to burn with unshed tears, and he turned around. He didn't want Vergil to see how his words had affected him. His so-called *human weakness*, according to him.

"I spent my entire childhood wishing that I hadn't grown up in an orphanage. *Years* of wishing my parents would come back for me. But now?"

He took a shaky breath, and a stray tear escaped. He hastily wiped his eyes, hoping Vergil didn't notice.

"Thank the Savior you didn't raise me, because if I ended up anything like you, I'd... I'd probably kill myself out of shame. I don't know."

He turned around, and started towards his room, but not before reminding Vergil of one thing.

"Not a word of this to Kyrie, got it?" He said. "If she hears any of your anti-human bullshit, you're *dead*."

"Understood," Vergil said plainly, sitting back down and turning back to his book like nothing happened.

Nero didn't even make it back to his room before his tears turned into full-blown sobs.

He slammed the door behind him and sank down against it, crying pathetically into his sleeves like he was a little boy once again, facing the orphanage matron's disappointment after yet another fight. Or Credo's stern lectures after he did something stupid and reckless.

Why had his life had to be such a shitshow?

---

Nero sat in his room for a bit, listening to music on full blast to drown out his thoughts. All he wanted to do for the rest of the day was sleep, and hope that everything was just a bad dream when he woke up.

He managed to hear someone knocking on his door, despite the volume of his music. Three fast and strong knocks, but still gentle. Probably Kyrie. Dante wouldn't knock so nicely, and Vergil wouldn't even bother going up to his door to apologize. Not when he didn't even give a crap about him.

He put his headphones around his neck, ready to hear what she had to say, but not ready to answer. If all went well he'd be able to respond through the door and be left alone for the rest of the night.

"Nero," Kyrie called, "Are you in here?"

Nero noticed she sounded slightly frantic. So he stood and went to the door, wrenching it open just to make sure she was okay.

"I'm here," he said, "What happened?"

Kyrie gave him one look before enveloping him in her arms, letting him bury his chin in her hair.

"Oh, Nero. I'm so sorry."

"What happened?" he asked, confused.

"Your talk with Vergil didn't go very well, did it?"

Nero scoffed.

"That's an understatement."

Kyrie sighed.

"I guessed as much, judging by Vergil's reaction."

"Whatever. I don't give a damn about his reaction and he doesn't give a damn about mine. either. So what?"

"Nero..." Kyrie started.

"Kyrie," he said, noticing her pinched and panicked expression. "Wait. What happened?"

"Nero, Vergil isn't here. He left before Dante and I came back and we don't know where he went, or if he's coming back."

Nero looked at her.

"He did?"

Kyrie nodded.

*Oh.*

Well, he guessed the fight affected him more than he thought. That's what he got for expecting Nero to be some sort of carbon-copy of him. But, even then, part of Nero didn't know whether he would even see his father again, after this. And that? That worried the shit out of him.

Nero felt numb. In one fell swoop, he had managed to drive his father away within just a day. How fucked was that? It might not have been his fault that Vergil didn't approve of him, but it was his fault that he had caused him to outright *leave*. He should have just kept his fucking mouth shut, and enjoy it while he had.

He was a fucking idiot.

"Do you want some time alone, or do you want me to stay with you?"

Nero sighed.

"I think I need some time to process everything, if that's okay. Alone."

"Of course," Kyrie said, letting him go, but not before giving him a comforting squeeze. "I'll see you soon, okay?"

Nero nodded, and she shut the door behind her.

He cursed his misfortune. *Damn it!*

He punched the wall, imagining his father's stupid, smug face under his fist instead of just his stupid cracked drywall.

Why couldn't he have kept his fucking mouth shut?

## Chapter End Notes

Yeah, Vergil had to do something stupid. Typical Vergil.

Good news: I'm working on my story about how Vergil met Nero's mom! That'll be published when I'm actually finished with all the chapters. I generally publish chapters for my stories after I write them, but I'm debating on whether to finish this story fully as well, and then update it. We're about halfway through this one.

Also, you'll figure out why Vergil was being a asshole next chapter. (hint: he thought him telling Nero to get stronger and stop bitching was helpful. Idiot. I did mention him never saying the right thing, right?)

As well, I definitely do think Kyrie would be a bit bitter about Nero's dead dad not being dead while her whole bio family is dead, but she'd also try her best to share Nero's joy instead of focusing on her bitterness. Because she's cool like that.

Enjoy.

# Chapter 9

## Chapter Summary

Enter V.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

*With every passing day in Nero's care, Vergil gained the strength needed to reach his aim.*

*After another few days of good food and rest, Vergil was able to stand and walk around the room without falling over, as well as stay awake for more than a couple of hours at a time. But he was beginning to grow bored with nothing to do than to talk to Nero's future mate, who he learned was named Kyrie, so he had started to read everything he could get his hands upon. Nero had quite the eclectic collection of books, he had discovered, which seemed to match his son's eclectic nature.*

*Nero, he learned, was both surprisingly similar to and different from him. And despite his... negative habits, Vergil was glad that Nero had seemed to bypass inheriting his stubborn pride. Even if it meant he acted more like Dante than him at points.*

*Foolishness, he thought. He would address Nero's negative habits when he could. But he could not afford to get too close to his son at that moment. If he did, Nero would only be placed in further danger due to his father's current state of weakness. Vergil forced himself to stay content with the knowledge that he would finally be able to get to know his son in full without worrying about his safety once he regained his strength. Yet for now, he would have to stay distant, no matter how much it pained him to do so.*

*He knew that Nero was more than annoyed with his avoidance, mistaking it for a lack of interest on his part. But that was of no matter. He did what he did for Nero's sake, and Nero's alone. The boy was too human to truly seek power, as Vergil did. And without power, Nero had no hope of protecting anyone he held dear. His stubborn refusal to seek strength at all costs would soon become his undoing, just as it was his father's.*

*He would have to gain enough power for the both of them, Vergil knew. Which meant he would have to commence with his plans as soon as possible. After, he would return to answer all of his nestling's questions, but he first had to battle other factors besides his own limitations in his quest for strength - namely, his brother.*

*His plan of outwitting Dante quickly fell apart due to his brother's innate ability to push his buttons. The constant petty remarks regarding any and every so-called "mistake" he had made in his life made his patience grow thinner with every work. If Kyrie and Nero hadn't banned sword-fighting in the living room, he would have killed Dante ten times over for his*

*incessantly annoying behavior and left him to rot. But, despite Kyrie's humanity, he respected her too much to not follow the rules of her household. She had been nothing but kind to him, and he respected her kindness towards his son too much to risk harming her, as well as ability to accept the demonic in full without questions or judgment.*

*He often wondered why he had stayed at Nero's residence for so long. He had already spent enough time idle wherever he had been held before being captured. He had no time to sit around, not now, when every second wasted meant more time Nero spent in danger. But he felt himself waver in his iron-clad convictions, unable to leave. Kyrie's food was almost divine, after all, and the couch he occupied most of the time was the comfiest thing he had slept on in years. And spending any modicum of time with his son was always worth the extra wait, even if Nero had decided that he wanted nothing more to do with him.*

*He had been slowly making preparations to depart, already planning what he would write on the note explaining his departure and what he would do to thank Nero for his hospitality as soon as he truly awoke the very first time.*

*But then he and Nero had fought, and he could stay no longer.*

*So he left, abandoning the comforts of Nero's home for the squalor of his old childhood manor and beginning the process of separation post-haste...*

*Only for everything to go horribly awry.*

---

The first sensation Vergil felt was an overwhelming sense of emptiness, almost crushing in its intensity. It gripped his chest like an iron vice, twisting and turning like the rack Mundus initially strapped him to when he first tried to break him.

But even when he was being flayed alive or tortured until all coherent thought was lost, he never felt this weak. Not even after he had awoken once again in that awful armor and unable to move, all while being prodded at by a boisterous mad scientist with who prattled on and on about how his body would be used to serve the savior with a thick stutter.

Vergil - no, he couldn't call himself that. Not anymore, now that he had divested himself of what his prior self thought of as his truest self - took his first true breath, and his lungs burned. He had no name for himself, as of yet. It would do him good to find one, but first -

He opened his eyes for the first time.

The cold air caressed his naked skin. The old parlor of his childhood home was not inviting and warm as it had been in his short lived youth, but drafty, the fireplace long since cold and the windows long since broken.

He looked to the part of him Vergil hadn't discarded and watched as its appearance shifted from the regal appearance of his old self to an amorphous mass of demonic energy, its skin grotesque and covered in bruise-colored scales.

It let out a harrowing and cruel laugh, and the as-of now nameless man suddenly remembered just what it wished to do with him.

Wasn't it the basic way of the world? The strong survived, and the weak were killed. His demonic half was strength personified, and his humanity was weakness. Therefore, it needed to be culled, as all weaknesses did.

But he found himself unable to move, the cold air seeping into his bare skin and causing a strange rattle in his chest. His now skeletal limbs shivered, unable to stand up to the cool air as he would have been before the separation.

His demonic half began to settle, turning into something only vaguely resembling the dignity and strength of his demonic form, yet with twice the sheer power. And even then, despite his gut screaming at him to run, the nameless man could barely summon the strength to push himself upright and hobble towards the door.

He knew that no matter how fast he moved, his other half would catch him before he could get away. And after that, it would take great delight in making sure he suffered for his sins before finally giving him the sweet mercy of death. Vergil had never been the type of man who showed mercy to those who had wronged him, and who had wronged him more than his own weaknesses? His own inability to protect those close to him? He could not protect himself, he could not protect Dante, and he could not protect...

*Nero.*

If his other half was able to get to Nero first and implement its plans for its so-called spawn, Nero would surely die. He was more human than his father and the process of splitting himself would most surely kill him. And even if it didn't, he would choose to die before anything could force him to divest himself of his humanity, to shed his weaknesses as his father had -

He had to get away, he told himself. He had to get to Nero, or it would spell his certain doom.

He spotted a worn book on the floor by his feet and long-faded memories flashed through his mind. Memories of carefully crafting a new cover for the book so that Dante knew that it was his and he couldn't steal it, of reading it over and over underneath the boughs of his favorite tree in the backyard, or under the covers of his bed with a flashlight in hand -

He grabbed it in an uncharacteristically smooth motion, holding it close to his chest with trembling limbs like it was a long lost lover. The comforts of his lost childhood had soothed him during his tumultuous adolescence, helping him regain the motivation he needed to seek power when he was close to giving up. And perhaps, he thought, he could share the joys of poetry with Nero one day. His son did have quite the eclectic taste in literature. Despite his impatient nature being antithetical to the study of poetry, he probably would even like Blake's works.

What was the saying? The apple doesn't fall far from the tree?



He was so lost in his musing that he didn't notice himself stumbling over a loose floorboard, alerting his his other half to his escape as he fell.

It turned, and then it came closer, and closer -

He suddenly felt himself be lifted by his armpits by the talons of some sort of beast. And said beast promptly dragged him over the threshold of the Manor's dilapidated doorway and through the yard at breakneck speed. The cold wind whipped past him, feeling like icy needles in his naked flesh, but even that didn't seem to permeate the strange sense of relief he felt at being able to cheat death.

However, that didn't mean that whoever, or, rather whatever rescued him didn't have some sort of ulterior motive. Everyone had an ulterior motive, Vergil had learned, even the most altruistic of people.

So he looked up, intent on finding the identity of his rescuer and what they wanted with him, only to be met with the face of... one of Mundus's generals?

He was being held by Griffon. Griffon, the demon who had taken the most delight in making him scream out of any of the generals Mundus had sicced upon. And Vergil had bitten off his own tongue numerous times before giving the demonic bird the satisfaction, only for the demonic bird to cackle gleefully as his tongue healed itself before starting his routine once again.

He struggled weakly to get free, to get away before the bird could use his weakness to taunt him, but the bird held firm, looking down at him with beady eyes.

"Took you long enough!" the demonic bird cawed. "Geez, I thought we were gonna be goners in there! Especially since you took your sweet time in summoning me to save your hide. You're welcome, by the way."

*He* had summoned Griffon to his aid, in his desperation?

How... quaint.

And indeed it was. Looking more closely at his rescuer, the man soon realized that it wasn't quite the Griffon he remembered from his days in captivity. There was something... off about the demon that held him. Something... familiar, in a way that the Griffon who had tortured him wasn't.

The bird unceremoniously dumped him in a clearing a mile or so away from the house.

The man endured the uncomfortable sensation of every piece of grass and twig digging into his naked flesh, hissing at the stinging sensation of a fresh cut from a root and wishing that Vergil had the decency to cast away his human clothing along with his human essence .

He couldn't see the face of this pseudo-Griffon grimace as much as he could feel it do so, deep in his bones.

“What are you?” he questioned. His new voice sounded strange in his ears, deeper and with less nasal, but also more faint. He idly wondered how different his demonic form’s voice was from his. Did it keep the nasality of his voice, with none of the tonality of his current?

“C’mon, genius,” the bird cawed, “You know what I am, already. You’ve just gotta look deep inside and do a little meditation! Find inner peace and all that.”

“Inner peace?” he mused. “I know no such thing.

*"Cruelty has a human heart,  
And Jealousy a human face;  
Terror the human form divine,  
And Secresy the human dress."*

“Ugh, gross,” the shade said, “I forgot about your whole thing for stupid Romantic-era poetry. You know, you probably could’ve gotten rid of us the first time ‘round if you used that schtick to piss us off. You know how some demons are. No time for poetry, and no taste!”

“Are you here to kill me?” he questioned.

“Pshaw, What use would that be? If we got rid of you, we’d have no one to keep us in this plane. And if you got rid of us... Well, we’d all be dead for good. So what do ya say?”

“We? Us?” the man questioned. There were more of them?

He felt something rub against his side and saw the familiar yet unfamiliar form of Shadow using him as a rubbing post. Shadow rather enjoyed seeing how far he could go before he was too battered to even struggle, then waiting patiently while Vergil knit himself back together before tearing into him again. He reveled in watching Vergil attempt to keep his cool, despite the both of them knowing that he was constantly bracing himself for the next blow.

“Yeah, all three of us!” Griffon cawed. “There’s yours truly, and then there’s Shadow and Nightmare.”

Even *Nightmare* was there? That didn't bode well.

Griffon, Shadow, and Nightmare were the generals Mundus tasked with breaking Vergil initially, before their efforts proved unfruitful and Mundus had to intervene. Under them, he was forced through what felt like eons upon eons of torture, driven to the brink of death and healed back to perfect health before almost dying all over again. Nightmare in particular had stolen his memories and violated his mind until he could barely think through the haze of pain. And when he closed his eyes, he heard their laughter, felt their blows, saw their smirking faces -

Ah. That explained it.

“You’re my nightmares,” he concluded. “The hidden depths of the darkest, most painful corners of my mind.”

“That took you longer than I thought it would,” Griffon cawed, chortling. “And they call *me* the bird-brain!”

He glared at him.

“I suppose that if I do accept your offer of partnership, you’ll attempt to keep quiet?”

“No promises,” Griffon said, “But hey! Someone’s gotta keep you from thinking yourself into an early grave. Well, an even earlier grave, I suppose. But...”

The man sighed.

“I’ll have to take your aid, then. If only to keep myself alive until I can reform,” he said, looking at the ground.

“You don’t have to sound so put out about it,” Griffon said, “All you’ve gotta do to solidify the contract is to give us all a bit of your blood, and *voila!* You’ve got yourself some familiars at your beck and call. Nightmare’s being a bit shy, but it shouldn’t be too much of a problem. All I’ve gotta do is fly back and get them, and then we’ll be good to go!”

With that Griffon flew off, and V sighed again, looking at the ground.

For some godforsaken reason, a poem sprang into his weary mind. One that Vergil first read as a young teen, hiding out in a library to wait out a rather unpleasant storm during his initial travels. He hadn’t liked it much upon first glance, despite memorizing it out of spite. In fact, he had outright scoffed at it, back in his youth.

But, then again, he had been a fool in his youth.

In the end, all of his efforts amounted to nothing. There he sat - in a foreign, weak body, shivering naked in the cold. The rest of him would soon have everything he ever wished for as a juvenile, all the demonic power and strength in the world at its beck and call. But it had taken decades of suffering to get to that point. But if his other half had its way... his existence would sooner be an afterthought, nothing but an infinitesimal speck of light in the distance while his demonic half was a blazing inferno. All of his memories, his experiences, his regrets, his suffering... gone.

He supposed it was what he deserved. But even then, humans were rather annoying pests. Stubborn to a fault, always attempting to fight even though they were clearly heading towards defeat.

He was nothing if not human, now. And, if his other, more demonic half had anything to say about it, he would never take back his strength and his faculties. But if he didn’t...

Then it was not just him who was doomed to an early death, destined to be forgotten.

*“My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings,” he muttered, under his breath,  
“Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!  
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay*

*Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away."*

"What the hell is that about?" Griffon squawked. "And what happened to being a William Blake fan? I thought you weren't into Shelley and his goon squad."

The man rolled his eyes.

"Merely me reflecting on my own foolishness, Griffon. It seems as if nothing I have done during my wretched existence has aided me in any way, shape or form."

"Well duh," Griffon said, "Everything you've done has ended up being worth nothing, right? First that stupid stunt at the Temen-Ni-Gru, and then trying to fight Mundus. And now this whole fiasco with splitting yourself in two to keep your kiddo safe has gone to hell. I mean, since when did you think *that* was a good idea?"

The nameless man scoffed.

"I question my reasoning myself. But even then, not *everything* has amounted to nothing, Nero is still alive and whole. But if we are to keep him that way -"

"We're gonna need to book it to Fortuna and fast, before Grumpy gets there first. And he's not the only thing we're gonna have to worry about - remember what those crazy doomsday people were saying back when you met Nero?"

He groaned. He had indeed put their drivel about their bloodline causing a rift between worlds and bringing about the apocalypse in the back of his mind until that very moment, when he remembered what exactly his other half's plans were. He would raise the Qliphoth tree when the time came, nurturing its fruit with the blood of an entire population of humans. Then he would consume the fruit, giving him enough power to defeat anything in his way. But before that, he would do his best to get to Nero, keeping him close before forcing him to split away from his humanity.

The blatant obviousness of his other half's plans meant that there was a very plausible chance of his old kidnappers taking Nero into their custody as bait in a vain attempt to prevent his rampage.

But they hadn't accounted for Vergil deeming any and all information on their cult as useless and trivial information. After all, even with all of his demonic power, he did not think they could possibly be a threat worth his time or effort. And, as well, he would be able to locate Nero with little to no trouble no matter where he was, through his demonic instincts alone.

Which meant that luckily for his human and discarded half, he had all the information on them he needed.

And even more luckily for him, he had a very, very good idea as to where to start looking for clues.

## Chapter End Notes

### Poems Used:

- A Divine Image by William Blake (not originally in Songs of Innocence and Experience but let's pretend they shoved it in V's book anyway)
- Ozymandias by Percy Shelley (I just really like this poem. It's my all time favorite romantic era one, and I really don't like poetry all that much. Blake and Shelley are great though. Lord Byron is meh, I'm just there because him and Shelley made the Kardashians look tame.)

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I was trying not to write Griffith instead of Griffin every time I wrote his name lmao... only to remember it GRIFFON with an o, not an i :/. I might be working on a super angsty DMC/Berserk Crossover where Vergil summons the Godhand to get power but that's gonna be a while. It's so angsty I'm having trouble trying to finish it. (Sorta Dead Dove Don't Eat tbh.)

Anyway, hi! It's been over a month, I know. I got really bad writer's block for a bit, but it's better now. Thank goodness, because I really do want to finish this story! But I also have... a bunch of other stories I'm working on that I like slightly better. Like my other DMC stories (this franchise is freaking GREAT for crossovers - see my profile if you're into that!) and my other fandom stuff.

I did manage to get this chappie out though! Yay! And it's a good thousand words longer than the usual chapters, so at least it was sort of worth the wait haha.

# Chapter 10

## Chapter Summary

Nero makes a new friend. Not that he wants to. In fact, he'd rather be anywhere else, but he's sorta stuck.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“You ready, kid?” Dante said, hefting the Rebellion over his shoulder.

“You bet your ass I’m ready,” Nero said, putting Blue Rose into its holster. “What? You thought I was gonna leave Kyrie to deal with you alone?”

Kyrie giggled.

“Nah, you’re too whipped to leave your lady in need. And not just in that way,” Dante said, smirking and winking obnoxiously.

Nero felt his face turn tomato red at the innuendo.

“H-hey!” he stammered, “It’s not like that!”

“Well, if your old man was definitely getting some at the same age - “

Nero cut him off with a spectral arm to the face. If his old man hadn’t gotten some at the same age, then maybe they wouldn’t be in this fucking mess!

Dante skid a couple of feet to the side with the force of the blow, holding a hand to his rapidly healing cheek.

Nero clenched his teeth, balling up his fists. The last thing he wanted to do was think about his fucking bastard prick of a father, who'd decided that up and running was preferable to talking with his overly human, squishy son again.

Asshole.

He didn’t need the guy, anyway! Even if the one actual conversation they had was honestly pretty nice, and it was nice to know that there was a decent chance the man would have raised him if he knew he existed. And it was nice to know that there were people in the world like him, who understood what it was like to not quite be human but still feel and love like one.

Well, Dante did. Vergil? No way in hell.

“Geez kid, you pack quite the punch!” Dante quipped, spitting blood into his hand. He knew better than to leave a mess on Kyrie's floor. “That bitch slap almost hurt, you know.”

“You know what you did, bastard,” Nero growled.

Dante sighed.

“Yeah, guess I do, huh?”

They both knew that Kyrie's encouragement to go on this impromptu uncle-nephew hunting job was her way of trying to distract them Vergil promptly fucking off to who-knows-where. But despite that, both of them were having an extremely hard time not poking at the elephant in the room.

Nero strode over to Kyrie and gave her a chaste peck on the cheek, letting her draw him into his arms for a quick hug. God, he loved hugging her, loved making her feel as safe and secure as she made him feel loved.

She smiled up at him, radiant as ever.

“Stay safe, alright?” She said.

Nero smiled right back at her, hoping he didn't look as dopey as he knew he did. Eh, oh well. If Dante commented on it, he'd just slap him again. That got him to shut up real fast.

“You know I will,” he said, stepping away from her embrace and turning towards his uncle.

Most likely, they'd only be out for a couple of hours before he'd be right back in her arms. He highly doubted whatever crazy magicians had trapped him on that job in Capulet would be crazy enough to trap a descendant of Sparda on an island that literally worshipped the guy and distrusted outsiders like the plague. And besides, no one else around was dumb enough to try either him or Dante. Not after the Savior incident.

“Let's go,” he said, storming out the door.

He pretended to miss Dante and Kyrie giving each other a worried look as he turned his focus to the hunt ahead.

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It was one of their typical jobs. Some lady living in one of Fortuna's old manors had a problem with a demon infestation and she was paying them handsomely to clean it up. But, for once, Nero let Dante do all the customer service smiley chit chat bullshit. Usually he'd use his status as a local to win over the citizens of Fortuna since Vergil walk out, he didn't trust himself to say anything that wasn't some sort of barb or angry comment at the moment.

God, why the fuck was that deadbeat asshole leaving him affecting him so much? They'd only had a total of one decent conversation. And besides, Nero had done just fine for 19 years without knowing he had a father around. Why was not having one only harder now that he knew who his old man was?

When they got to their destination, he and Dante split up to make sure the entire house was accounted for. And Nero threw himself into the ensuing fight with a fervor he hadn't felt since the day of the Savior Incident, back when he thought his family didn't give enough of a crap about him to even bother visiting and telling him they existed. And boy, didn't he hit the nail on the head with that one?

Sure, at least Dante gave a shit about him now that he knew about him. That was obvious, even if the man tended to keep him at arm's length. But Vergil? Yeah, no. He didn't want to think about how his old man thought he was a waste of space. In fact, he'd rather be covered in demon guts than even admit he had a dad.

He shot and sliced through demons like butter, completing the job in what felt like record time. So he traveled back to the mansion's foyer, waiting for Dante to finish up so they could go back home and eat whatever Kyrie had made that day.

And that was where he made a crucial mistake.

"The demons are all gone?" The woman asked.

"They should be, yeah," he said. "Got a problem with it?"

"Don't take that tone with me, boy. I thought I'd paid you and that glorified thug better than to talk so crassly in my household."

"Don't call him a glorified thug, you -"

He took a deep breath to calm himself before the lady decided that she wasn't going to pay them.

She just raised an eyebrow at him, like he'd just proved her point.

"Fine," he grumbled, smiling tightly. "You want proof we did our job, right? Because we're always happy to provide when it comes to ensuring quality."

And this was why Dante didn't let Nero do the promotional speeches when he was in a bad mood. He tended to sound a little too sarcastic when he was giving them to asshole customers when he was already mad at some other asshole. Although, to be fair, Dante was only good at selling shit to extremely gullible people. Or thankful ones. Depended on the mission.

The woman let out a hmph, before turning imperiously toward the wing of the house he'd just cleaned out.

"I will inspect your work myself, for quality's sake. Follow me."

"Whatever," Nero mumbled. As long as she paid them, he'd deal. He'd dealt with worse people on jobs. One crotchety and snobby old widow was nothing, right?

*Wrong*, he soon realized. Because as soon as they went back into the west wing, she started chanting in an eerily familiar language and shit started feeling all wonky, like someone had



taken his body and wrung it through the highest setting on his and Kyrie's shitty ass clothes dryer.

Nero collapsed, his body convulsing in pain as he realized just how stupidly confident he'd been in his own safety. How the hell had he been stupid enough to think that whatever was left of the Order would keep *them* out? They couldn't even stop guys like Agnus and Sanctus from doing similar shit. Why the hell would they try to stop other people from taking a crack at Sparda's bloodline after that?

"I've been waiting to do that for a long time. You should know that the Garden of Eden grows even in the least fertile ground, blood of Sparda. Be warned."

"W-what the fuck does that even mean?" He stuttered out.

Before he could ask anything else, he was out cold.

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*Ugh* Nero thought. *Why does my head hurt so much?*

He kicked his leg out from underneath him in an effort to make it stop being numb, feeling more than hearing the rustle of the chains attached to his leg as it moved.

Then he noticed the barbed wire keeping him immobile and snapped awake in what felt like an instant.

And then, he remembered. The fucking asshole bitch who had hired him and Dante led them into a trap and used some spell to knock them out. Well, probably just him. Dante was too good to end up in this sort of mess.

Fuck, he groaned. Why did his life have to fucking suck so much lately?

"Psst," he heard a voice say from the next cell. "Hey, demon boy."

He ignored it. He sure as shit didn't want to talk with anyone.

"You seem sorta like the bad boy type. You got any cigarettes? I've been dyin' for a smoke."

What part of him not responding did this person not understand?

She waited a moment for him to say something, and then cursed under her breath. And quite creatively, too. If the nuns had heard him say anything like that when he was a kid, he'd be eating soap for a week.

"Aw, man," she groaned. "You're probably too prissy for that sorta shit, anyway. You're too neat to be a rebel like that. I betcha even iron out that dumb coat of yours every morning before leaving the house."

She tapped her fingers on the wall and Nero felt more than heard the echo of every "plink" her nails made against the brick. It felt like nails on a chalkboard - even more than her

annoying voice did. But that was probably just the massive headache he had from whatever spells the cell had talking.

“You know, you could turn that coat into a really killer battle jacket if you wanted to,” she continued. “I’d sew some cool shit on there myself, but they don’t let me around anything sharper than a crayon after I almost shanked one of ‘em with a drawing compass. Asshole deserved it, too. That’s what they get for thinking they can just kidnap me from my house and force me to design shit for them. Fuckers. They don’t get that art ain’t created on command, you know?”

Oh, Nero believed her when she said they deserved it. But what did they need new weapons for? They had magic powerful enough to capture a son of Sparda. They definitely didn’t need new toys if they could do *that*.

Tap-tap- *scratch*. Nero visibly cringed at the sound of the woman dragging her nails along the wall. Ugh, why did some women keep their nails long again?

Well, he couldn’t talk. The claws on his demonic arm were definitely longer than most people’s nails. But he wasn’t enough of an asshole to run them against the wall over and over when they screeched on just about every surface!

“Hey, have you ever thought about putting something on your human arm to soup it up?” She went on. “It’s probably pretty tough to fight all off balance like that. They’re gonna get you to try to fight demons for ‘em, you know. They were gonna kill ya, but then they decided it would be funnier to let the demons kill you. And honestly, since we’re sorta stuck here together, it’d sorta suck if you died. You’re my only entertainment these days, so I guess I’ve got a vested interest in keeping your ass alive. Gee, why don’t you all applaud at once?”

More tapping. Nero’s fists clenched on their own accord, almost. Maybe he should take these crazies up on their hypothetical offer just to get away from the constant chatter. Or maybe they put him next to this woman in order to torture him into agreeing. That was probably the more likely scenario, in his opinion.

He could deal, he told himself. She was probably human. She’d get tired after a while and he’d have peace and quiet soon enough.

“I bet you listen to My Chemical Romance and cry on your days off like the emo you are,” the woman taunted.

That was *it*.

“Would it kill you to shut up?” He yelled.

“Fucking finally! Damn, I was getting bored.”

“You didn’t have to insult me into talking to you, you know! Fucking Hell.”

She scoffed.

“Sure I didn’t. Wasn’t like you were being super chatty in there, anyway.”

Nero rolled his eyes and groaned.

“I have a headache and I can barely even move, of course I’m not going to be in the mood to talk. Constantly. Without stopping. Like you are. Which is really annoying, by the way.”

“Spells, huh?” She said, ignoring his insult. “Damn, that sucks. I mean, they cuffed me to the wall, but... never underestimate the power of a skilled weapons smith and a slim piece of metal, right?”

Nero scoffed.

“Whatever.”

He enjoyed their newfound silence for a whole two minutes before the woman piped up again.

“Please tell me you listen to My Chemical Romance. No one I know is into anything heavier than Taylor Swift, and it’s really gettin’ to me.”

Nero sighed. His headache sure as hell wasn’t going away and it wasn’t like anything else besides this stupid conversation would help him tune it out, so he was stuck. At least she was a metalhead, despite her very country accent.

“They’re pretty good, I guess,” Nero replied. He was more into industrial than emo himself, since that’d been the first type of foreign music he’d smuggled into Fortuna on purpose. Give him Nine Inch Nails any day of the week and he was a happy camper, but My Chemical Romance was always great for especially shitty days. Like the entirety of his past week.

“Only pretty good?” she said. “C’mon, bro. Admit your taste in music sucks and move on.”

“Fine,” he acquiesced. “They’re fucking great. Will you shut up now?”

“Sure!” she replied brightly. “For the next, oh, five seconds or so.”

Nero groaned again.

“Please tell me there’s some way to get our captors to knock me out again so I don’t have to listen to any more of your shit,” he said.

“You could just thrash around a bit. That’ll get ‘em over here real fast.”

“Yeah, no. If your constant talking hasn’t brought them back, nothing short of a catastrophic event will.”

“I’d say being stuck next to a whiny pissbaby is a catastrophe.”

Him? A whiny pissbaby? Well, two could play at that game. And if she was playing...

“Well, duh,” he replied angrily. “I’m stuck next to one right now, didn’t you know?”

She barked out a laugh.

“You know, I think we’re gonna get along great, Mister Irons-his-Coat.”

“Well,” Nero said. “I really hope we don’t, to be honest. And my girlfriend irons my coat, thank you very much.”

The woman, instead of answering, honest to god cackled.

“I’m Nico Goldstein, master weapons smith and destroyer of whiny pissbabies. You?”

“Nero,” Nero said plainly. “Now, do you think you can stay quiet for *more* than two minutes?”

“Oh come on, where’s the fun in that? And besides, how else are we gonna plan our daring and epic escape from this hellhole?”

Nero sighed.

“Don’t you think it’s a bad idea to talk about this in the open? They’re probably listening in on us.”

Nico scoffed.

“Sure they are. If they were, they’d’ve noticed the past five times I called them cowardly assholes and told them I’d fuck their girlfriends. Or their moms. I ain’t picky when it comes to women.”

“Are you always this vulgar?”

“Are you always this cranky?”

“Yes, I *am*.”

“Then, between you and I, I think we have this escape in the bag. Hey, you wanna hear my master escape plan?”

Nero sighed. He didn’t exactly have another option for busting out, did he?

“Fine. What’ve you got?”

## Chapter End Notes

Updates are slow here in Black Dragon Hellfire post-finals slump land, but they are steady.

Anyway: CHAOTIC PUNK LESBIAN NICO! CHAOTIC PUNK LESBIAN NICO! (I stand by this and will continue to until I die. She is SO FUN to write, istg. I love her.)

And Nero being an emo. Pfffffft. (He denies it vehemently, but...)

Enjoy!

# Chapter 11

## Chapter Summary

Nero and Nico's plotting session gets interrupted.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Has anyone ever told you that your plans suck?” Nero asked. They'd only gone through a couple of her ideas, but even then, he was pretty sure he could've come up with better plans while simultaneously high on demon venom and bleeding to death.

Nico huffed.

“No way! My plans are awesome. You're the one who doesn't seem to get that they'd be a lot more likely to work if you'd just have a little faith.”

“Faith,” Nero scoffed. “Yeah, no. Faith hasn't gotten me anywhere before, and I highly doubt it's going to get us anywhere now.”

He'd prayed to Sparda for his real family to take him away from Fortuna what felt like a thousand times as a kid. And even if his family *had* finally shown up and sort of taken him away from Fortuna years after the fact, after he'd found another family himself, it wasn't like they actually wanted him around for more than five minutes. Dante had only visited due to the threat of the Apocalypse and his brother coming back from the dead, and the less said about his brother...the better.

“Fair,” Nico replied. “But I mean, like, faith in my plan working. Not faith in some demonic savior or some other dumb shit.”

“Like Sparda?” Nero asked.

“Yeah! That fucker. My shitty deadbeat daddy ditched me to go back and live on his dumb island full of Sparda fanatics. Gotta say, I was real relieved when I'd heard it'd blown up.”

“Your dad's from Fortuna?”

“Oh, yeah. I was actually on my way there to check if he'd kicked the bucket or not before I ended up here. And I'm not much of a hoper or a prayer, but I sure hope to God he died,” Nico spat. “Even then, a nice, quiet death is probably better than what he deserves.”

“Yeah,” Nero said bitterly. “I get what you mean.”

Well, he got being pissed about his dad ditching him. But he was at least a little bit sure he didn't want Vergil dead. He had been happy that Vergil was getting better and worried to all hell when he'd disappeared to god knows where, right? But, knowing Vergil, the man would find some way to survive and get strong enough to come back and tell Nero what a disappointment he thought he was eventually. If he even cared enough to let Nero know, in the first place. But hey, who knew what could happen in a few years?

It probably would be a little bit easier if he was dead. But a small, treacherous part of Nero wanted the guy to be alive so he could beat some common sense into him. Maybe he'd finally make him acknowledge that he didn't need to be a demon to be taken seriously. Or maybe he'd give him a hug, but he'd die before admitting that. And Vergil would probably commit seppuku before accepting a hug from him anyway, so it didn't matter.

"You too, huh?" Nico said. "Shoulda guessed you had daddy issues from your music taste."

"Hardy har har," Nero said. "Funny."

"I'm hilarious."

Whatever. She totally wasn't.

"You know..." Nero said, after a couple minutes of blessed quiet that he spent wondering who the hell Nico was unfortunate enough to be related to instead of enjoying. He really, really wanted to know which idiot on Fortuna would have an aneurysm upon discovering that their daughter grew up to have such a foul mouth. And he definitely wanted to see the look on their face when they realized their daughter grew up to be, well, Nico. It'd be massively entertaining, in his opinion.

"I'm actually from Fortuna myself," he said.

"No shit, really?" Nico asked, incredulous. "Damn. That must suck, being part demon and all."

"It's... okay, I guess," he said. He didn't want to get into the sob story that was his life. "But I was going to say that it's a pretty small town, so I could probably tell you if your shitbag dad was killed in the attack or not."

"Holy shit," Nico said, "Really? Well, I'll take you up on that offer. But..."

"You're going to make me do something dumb, aren't you?"

"Dumb?" Nico scoffed. "Nah. Just a little dangerous. A smidge suicidal. A tad treacherous - "

"Look. I get it, okay? It's probably gonna get me killed."

"It'd kill the both of us, not just you, but..."

"Are you going to tell me who your shitty dad is or not?"

"Oh, his name's Agnus," Nico said. "I look a lot like him, apparently."

Agnus?

No way, she had to have his name mixed up with someone. There were a couple of people with similar names on Fortuna, after all.

“Wait wait wait,” Nero said. “Repeat what you said again. Agnus?”

“Yeah? At least, I think that’s his name. It could be Angus - “

“No,” Nero said. “You’re saying that *Agnus* is your father?”

Nero needed brain bleach. And lots of it. What woman in her right mind would voluntarily sleep with *Agnus* ? He didn’t even think the man had it in him, he was so... off-putting.

“Uh, yeah,” Nico said. “Is it really that shocking? I've heard I look a lot like the old bastard and trust me, I’m a real looker.”

Nero scoffed. Well, it sure explained the motormouth. Agnus was also a massive talker.

“Have you *met* the guy?” Nero said.

“Not since I was like...2. Otherwise, I’d probably be hoping he’s still alive.”

“Good point. Well, luckily for you, he’s dead.“

“Halle-fucking-lujah,” Nico said. “Thank every God or Savior that’s out there.”

“Yeah,” Nero replied. “Fucker deserved it, too. Let’s just say I’m glad my uncle got to him before he got to anyone else.”

“Who’s your uncle? I should send him a gift basket once we get outta here. Or maybe a custom weapon or two.”

“He’d like that, I think. He hunts demons for a living, so he collects devil arms - “

“Whoa, really?” Nico said. “Does he know a demon hunter named Dante, by any chance?”

“Uh...” Nero said. “My uncle *is* Dante.”

"You're serious," Nico said.

"Yeah?"

“Holy fucking shit!” she almost shouted. “That is beyond cool! You know, my granny on my mom’s side made his guns. Ebony and Ivory?”

Nero let out a small chuckle. He'd have to let Dante know he had a fangirl, when... well, if they got out of here.

“I know them, yeah," he said.



“Have you held them? Tell me everything!”

“Uh... he doesn't let other people touch them, so no.”

“Aw, shucks,” Nico grumbled. “Seriously, though. My dream is to just get my hands on those babies and take a good look at them once before I die. I've looked at my Grandma's plans, but those can't hold the candle to the real deal, you know? Maybe I'll even make a side piece or two that'll outdo them one day. Now, that'd be amazing!”

“Sounds like it,” Nero responded.

He was starting to worry. If Dante had been captured, he was probably even worse off than he was. Nero himself could barely move because of the restraints, and could barely muster up the energy to talk at all due to the spell work. The only reason he'd busted out the first time was because the assholes hadn't noticed the Yamato, but now that he was without it and without *his* help...he didn't want to think about what could happen to either him or Dante, who had even more demon in him than him.

“What's wrong?” Nico asked.

“Well, he was with me when I got captured, and I...”

“You're worried these bozos got to him, too?”

“No way,” Nero said, with false bravado. “I'm more worried that he escaped without me.”

“Uh huh,” Nico said. “Sure. I mean, assuming he's also part demon - “

“He's half, yeah.”

“Half, then. Well from what I can tell from looking around these cells, these guys specialize in capturing any sort of demon. So if you have any sort of demon blood, you're probably gonna be stuck in here.”

“Isn't that just great,” Nero snarked. He knew that already. Obviously.

“I'd say so. But, that's only if you don't have a handy human to help you bust out. I mean, I've already picked their handcuffs. What're a couple of locks gonna do against the might of \_”

But, before she could finish, whatever she was going to say was cut off by the sound of a heavy door opening.

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A familiar woman strutted into the room, white robes framing her long legs as she almost glided over to their cells.

Nero felt himself tremble against his will upon seeing her, which pissed him off even more. He didn't want this bitch to have this effect on him. She shouldn't even have such a large one. But she did, thanks to her stupid penchant for torture. And that was on top of her

threatening Kayleigh the sorority's girls friends in exchange for her compliance, which only served make make Nero even more pissed. That girl had been annoying as all fuck, but no one deserved that shit. No one!

"So you'd rather consort with a demon than help your peers," the woman said, staring into Nico's cell imperiously. "I suppose I should have expected as such, judging by the... unfortunate end your father faced."

Nico, for once, was silent.

"Oh, you didn't think we knew about him, hm?" The witch continued. "We know everything about you, Nicoletta Goldstein. Since dear Agnus refused to help us before his untimely demise, you happen to be our best bet at getting access to his research. You do share a particular... penchant for tinkering and the occult, after all."

"I'm nothing like him," Nico spat, angrier than Nero had ever heard her. "*Nothing.*"

"Oh, you silly girl," the witch said, smiling kindly, as if she was lecturing a small child. Nero had always hated it when adults had used that voice on him, and he'd bet his left kidney that Nico felt very, very similarly. "Children always follow after their sires, no matter how much they try to deny their fates. The son of a demon will always be a demon, and the son of humans a human. I, for example, was always destined to use my talents to serve the Garden as my father did before me, just as you were fated to share your father's passion for demonic weapons."

The Garden?

"And you were probably also destined to strut around in a shade of white that clashes with your shitty blonde dye job, instead of using your cult trust fund to hire an actual fucking stylist," Nico spat back. "So what?"

Nero tensed, waiting for the witch to raise her hands and cause Nico to convulse in pain. But, instead, the witch merely chuckled.

"How quaint," she said. "It's a shame that you've chosen to oppose us. You have talent, Nicoletta Goldstein. And if you so choose, we could help you refine it into something special, something greater - "

"I'd rather make out with my father's rotting corpse than join your league of assholes, you bitch," Nico replied.

"Oh? Well, I'm afraid it's not a choice. Join..."

She raised her arm, and Nero braced himself for the incoming wave of pain.

"Or he dies."

The pain blocked out everything but the sensation of white hot fire licking up and down every nerve. He tried his best not to show any weakness, biting his tongue to avoid screaming... only to fail miserably and scream himself hoarse anyway.

After what felt like an entire day, the pain finally receded and Nero fell listlessly towards the floor with a groan.

He distantly heard Nico sobbing from the next cell over, but he could barely focus past the ringing in his ears and pain throughout his body.

"I - " Nico started, "I'll jo-"

"She's not going to join your death cult," Nero managed to interrupt, despite his entire body protesting. Torture be damned, there was no way in hell he was going to force Nico to go along with the witch's plans. She might have been annoying as all hell, but he honestly could see himself being friends with her if they got out of this hellhole. Hell, he thought she'd even get along with Kyrie, and that was saying something. God knew she needed more friends their age. All of the people their age on Fortuna shunned her for associating with him after he'd destroyed the town during the Savior Incident, or for moving in with him afterwards despite them not being married.

Ignorant fucks. They didn't deserve her.

"I wouldn't use such language to describe the saviors of the human race, blood of Sparda," the witch interrupted. "You forget, this world would have succumbed to demons thrice over if it wasn't for us."

"That means that I know who you even are," he said.

"Oh?" she said. "How surprising. I thought the Order of the Sword would have at least mentioned the Garden of Eden."

The what? He thought absently.

"A group of the worthiest humans," the witch continued, "Chosen by the Archangels to oversee the termination of demons and security of humankind -"

"You mean a group of psychos hell-bent on torturing my family?" Nero interrupted. "News flash, Sparda spent his free time *helping* humankind. I don't see why -"

He burst out coughing. Fuck, the next time he had his weapons and this bitch was nearby, she was getting it.

"It seemed as if capturing you the last time didn't shove any common sense into your tiny demonic skull," she cut him off, like the self-righteous bitch she was. "A shame. But we should be able to prevent the unfortunate disaster your bloodline will cause if we play our cards right."

"What disaster? I'm telling you, you're nuts!"

The woman chuckled.

"It seems as if we both underestimated the lengths a desperate man would go to protect his kin."

“You should've expected Dante to go apeshit,” Nero snapped back, coughing afterwards. “He doesn’t take kindly to people messing with his family.”

“No, you fool,” she snapped. “Not the Demon Hunter. The other Son of Sparda - the Dark Slayer. *He* is the one you are here to attract.”

She expected Vergil to come and try to bust him out? Oh, that was rich. Nero would've laughed, had he had the energy to after being hit with that damn spell.

“Is he?” he taunted. “Good luck. 'S no way in Hell he’s gonna come, 'cause tha' implies that he cares about anyone else besides himself.”

The witch just laughed.

“Just you wait, little demon. He’ll come. After all, he’d be a fool not to when we could offer him what he seeks on a silver platter.”

## Chapter End Notes

Two months of writer's block later, I FINALLY ironed out the plot holes and planned the rest of the story. I didn't really know how the hell I was gonna tie everything together last update... but I do now. Mwahahahaha. So it should be easier to pump the rest of this story out. Here's to hoping!

Next chapter: Back to V! AND I finally figured out how tf I'm gonna fit Lady and Trish into the story. I knew I wanted them in the story because I love them, but I didn't know how they'd show up. But now I know. You'll see.

# Chapter 12

## Chapter Summary

V returns to Fortuna, only to discover some unfortunate news.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It was official, V decided. He despised ferry rides. Every aspect of them was vile, from the awful concessions, the lack of room, and the accursed swaying.

"O-fish-al, get it?" Griffon crowed. "Because we're on a ferry? And you've spent the entire time here heaving your guts out over the railing like a fish out of water -"

V dispersed Griffon's corporeal form in the vain hope that the bird would shut up, for once in his very short lifetime. But even turning him back into a tattoo didn't seem to do much to stop him when he wanted to say something he found especially titillating, much to V's eternal consternation.

*You're gonna want to freshen up before visiting Nero, you know , Griffon chortled. And maybe find a change of clothes. The locals are gonna think you're some sort of infected prostitute with your get up and sick man schtick.*

"I would thank you for your oh-so wonderful advice, but I could care less what they think of me," V muttered. "And besides, neither Nero nor Dante would expect me to look... like this."

Which was exactly what he wanted. He'd rather die than be recognized for who he truly was by his brother and son. No, he'd much rather summon his demonic half to torture and kill him than have either discover the foolish course of action he'd taken to darken their doorstep once again.

*Uh huh, Griffon replied, Because the alias you picked totally won't give you away.*

"V is a perfectly valid alias, and you know it."

*You could have at least picked something slightly more fun, you know. Since you're not all about power anymore and all that.*

"I don't see what that has to do with anything."

*Oh, c'mon! Use that big head of yours, for once!*

"I use my brain plenty, unlike some people I happen to know."

Dante, for example.

*Uh huh, Griffon retorted. Face it, V. Being weak and squishy has made you do things that are actually interesting for the first time in years. I guess all us nightmares really made it stop functioning correctly, didn't we?*

“Doubtless, you’ll never apologize for it.”

*Not when we’re the only thing keeping you alive long enough for your big head to actually function.*

“If only it happened to keep functioning correctly while under duress from you as well,” V lamented, wiping at his mouth. “But alas. I suppose I deserve worse, for everything I’ve done. Raising the tower, abandoning Dante, abandoning Nero ...”

*Yeah, yeah. Keep throwing yourself a pity party, and you’re going to end up dying here before we can get anything done about it. Speaking of, are we actually going to try doing something, or are you just going to whine and moan about life the whole time?*

“Perhaps a little whining and moaning may finally annoy you into silence.”

*Spoilsport.*

---

Nero’s couch was as welcome of a relief for his sore legs as it was before, when he’d still been whole, albeit even wearier than he was now.

*Serves you right,* Griffon snarked.

Kyrie walked in from the kitchen, setting a glass of water down beside him.

“It seems as if you’ve been on quite a long journey, Mister...”

“I have no name, I am but two days old,” he quoted. And it wasn’t quite a lie, anyway. “But you can call me... V.”

“Mister V, then,” Kyrie said. “It’s nice to meet you. But, I have to be frank with you - I haven’t a clue as to why you’re here.”

“I’m here to ask a favor of... your lover. Nero.”

Kyrie frowned.

“What about him?”

V inhaled, ready to recite the cover story he’d come up with on the way there.

“He saved my life a while ago, and I was wondering if there was any way I could thank him for his trouble, of course. And pass a possible job his way?”

The best lies did spawn from the truth. Even if V wasn't the only part of him Nero had helped to save.

Kyrie grimaced, before letting out a weary sigh.

"I'm afraid to tell you that Nero's currently... unavailable."

"Unavailable?"

"I..."

Kyrie gave him a searching look, not even bothering to hide the fact that she was skeptical of him.

"You know Mister V, there's something about you that makes me want to trust you. But I also know there's something you're hiding from me. Now, I won't pry, but..."

"You wish to know whether my secrets will harm your beloved before I proceed."

"You're here with a job, Mister V. Whatever news you do have comes with some risk of harm. I just need to know whether you have Nero's best interests at heart."

V nodded.

"I would never do anything against Nero's best interests," he allowed, "On purpose, that is."

Kyrie nodded.

"Good. Then you can help me find him and his uncle."

Nero was... missing? As was Dante?

"He's missing?" he said. Dante could probably handle himself. But Nero?

Kyrie nodded, tearfully.

"They went to this mansion on the other side of Fortuna for a job a couple of days ago. I thought it would be helpful, since things have been especially... tense around here for a while between them. Dante, Nero's uncle, swore up and down that they'd be back before dinner, but..."

She sniffled, before letting out a sigh.

"I apologize for being so... unbecoming, Mister V. It's just that it's been a long few weeks for my family. A few days before Nero and Dante left, I came back to find that Nero's father had gone missing as well. I can only pray that he left willingly and the same party isn't responsible for them all disappearing. but there is a decent chance that they all went missing for the same reason. And that worries me beyond belief."

"I see," V said. "Hm..."

V knew for a fact that Nero's father definitely did not go "missing" and his son had. But he also didn't want to burden Kyrie with what he had done, especially when his... transformation greatly reduced his capabilities for finding and rescuing Nero. If he still had his demonic side, he would have already leapt into action, tracking Nero using the Yamato's call and killing all that stood in his way. But now...

He lamented his prior self for being so idiotic yet again. Yet, even without his full power, he still had something Kyrie didn't have: an idea of why Nero had gone missing. The fact that the Garden had infiltrated Fortuna was especially worrying, in his eyes. Who knew what they would do to Nero due to his hybrid nature - or even Dante, if he was unable to escape them?

"Perhaps I can help you find them?" V asked. "The job I came with may present a possible lead on Nero's location."

"Really?" Kyrie said.

V nodded.

"I have some experience with these things. I'm just rather... weak, as of current."

Kyrie looked close to tears, though she persisted on keeping a strong front. V didn't begrudge her that at all - he was a stranger, and a foreigner at that. He hadn't seen how other people on Fortuna treated his son and his future mate, but he'd heard enough about their ostracization through their murmurs and defeated expressions.

"That would be splendid, Mister V," Kyrie replied, clapping her hands together. "Dante's friends should be arriving soon to help, as well - "

"Dante's friends?" Dante had spoken about them sometimes, he recalled. Lady, Arkham's daughter, and... Beatrice, the she-demon Mundus had made in the image of his mother from Vergil's tortured memories of that fateful day. He refused to call her whatever asinine nickname she stuck with, no matter how petty it was of him.

He could only hope that seeing either of them wouldn't unearth memories he would rather leave buried. It wasn't as if he had the time to spend remembering his failures at the Temen-Ni-Gru and Mundus's tortures in detail. Not when Nero's life depended on him.

He couldn't afford to become further incapacitated. Not now.

"Oh! Yes. They work with him on jobs sometimes. I called them once it became obvious that I couldn't find them alone, but they had to finish another job before coming over."

"I see," V nodded, tapping his cane. "Then I suppose it would be best to wait for them before starting our search."

"Exactly," Kyrie replied. "But in the meantime, would you like some leftovers? You look half starved."

Was that what the stabbing pains in his stomach were, as well as the fuzziness in his head? It was strange, feeling the full extent of hunger for the first time in years. Vergil hadn't had to



deal with it since he was a boy and discovered that his demonic heritage made it so that he could consume demonic energy in lieu of food, but now that V could barely stomach demonic energy in his human form...

He'd forgotten about just how painful hunger was. And now that he remembered what the sensation was, his thoughts turned to the taste of Kyrie's soup, how the flavors burst across his tongue -

"I'd be delighted, Miss Kyrie," he responded.

She gave him a thankful smile, before bustling back towards the kitchen.

---

"So this is the house they went to before they disappeared?" Mary - no, Lady asked, turning towards Kyrie. She was armed to the nines, covered in weapons and ammunition and toting her rocket launcher on her back.

Beatrice stood at her side, looking deceptively casual with a gun slung over her shoulder and her usual risque choice in clothing. But there was something about the way she moved that gave her true nature away to a trained eye. Her movements were too fluid, too... smooth to be human.

"This is it," Kyrie confirmed.

Beatrice stepped into the house's foyer and took a deep breath in, probably in order to gain a lead as to what exactly had occurred using her enhanced senses.

She stopped short before the rest could follow her inside, turning around to face them.

"Dante and Nero haven't been here for hours," she announced. "But it wasn't demons that took them. This whole place just stinks like magic. And not just any magic, too."

"What type?" Lady asked. "Blood Magic? Necromancy? Demonic Energy?"

"Worse. Holy energy."

Lady paled.

"Holy energy?" she repeated.

"Yup," Beatrice replied. "I've never run into myself, but I have some... knowledge of what it feels like, so I'm pretty sure that's what it is."

V immediately understood what she wasn't saying - either some of Vergil's knowledge on the subject had leaked to her, or Mundus had instilled his own knowledge of it into her upon her creation. Neither was especially appealing to think about, but that wasn't anyone else's business.

"Shit," Lady said. "Shit!"

“What’s going on?” Kyrie asked.

“There’s only a few groups who know how to properly channel holy energy,” Lady explained. “The Order of the Sword, obviously, but they stopped using it years ago. There’s a few Orders of Witches who know how to use it, too, but they’re not the type who’d go after someone like Dante. Which leaves only one group...”

“The Garden of Eden,” V filled in. He’d obviously known who’d taken them, but it was good to have confirmation.

“The Garden,” Lady agreed. “And knowing what I know about them, their plans for Dante and Nero aren’t going to be good.”

Beatrice raised her eyebrow.

“Oh?” she said. “Now that’s strange, because I’ve never heard of these people. Meanwhile, you two seem to know a whole lot about what’s going on - “

“Which I only happen to know from an unfortunate run-in in my past,” V responded. “Not because they particularly care to advertise their presence.”

“They’re not like the Order of the Sword, Trish,” Lady said. “They’re big into keeping their crusade against demons a secret, especially from demons. The only reason I know anything about them is because my...”

Lady took a deep breath.

“My *father* used to be one of them,” she spit the word like it was a curse. “In fact, they’re where he got the idea for raising the Temen-Ni-Gru.”

V grimaced. There it was - how he’d heard of the Garden of Eden, years and years ago, and the only reason he knew that their magicks would not affect him as he was now. Arkham hadn’t been too keen on keeping silent, especially about his hatred towards his old benefactors. In fact, he’d spent plenty of his acquaintance with Vergil waxing on about what he’d do to them once the Temen-Ni-Gru had risen... only to be killed before he could do any of the things he’d wanted.

But V remembered it all - in fact, he’d mentally begun to add his own tweaks to Arkham’s grand plans. One change here, a few changes there, and not only would Arkham’s plans be expedited, but the tortures he’d wished upon the Garden would be increased tenfold... if V was able to implement them without his demonic half, that was.

Arkham was... deeply flawed at best. But he had been right about one thing: the Garden needed to be eliminated, and soon. But before it was wiped off the face of the earth, V swore, they would rue the day they crossed the Blood of Sparda. He might not have been the man he once was, but he wasn’t the type to stand idly by while his family suffered - when his own son was suffering - because of something foolish he’d done in his haste for power. Because he’d decided to split himself from his wits instead of using them to save him.

Vergil may have been keen to cut away his mistakes with one cut of his sword. But V was not Vergil, and he would not sit idly by and leave his mistakes be.

Not anymore.

## Chapter End Notes

Hello all,

This fic isn't dead yet! After a few months of on and off writer's block and other stuff, I've planned the rest of this fic and am slowly chipping at it. I also have plans for not one, but TWO semi-connected prequels in this 'verse (one's also slowly being chipped at rn, and another is still in planning but I have some scenes I'm thinking of. Both are pre-DMC3 and one is going to actually be a long Vergil x OC "how I met your mom" fic!)

I also went through and edited this whole fic for kicks and added some stuff, if you want to check that out.

See you soon!

## End Notes

Edit log:

8/24/22: Changed song quote in the first chapter, because I felt like STARSET worked better. Also, Bury the Light would fit right in on STARSET's Vessels Album from 2017. Not gonna lie.

I also edited chapter 2 since I forgot Patty took over the spare room. So...

9/21/22: edited Vergil's dialogue in chapter 4. I'm trying to get better at writing him but it's tough.

10/3/22: Edited the 4th chapter to say that Vergil was captured from Agnus's lab because I now subscribe to the theory that Agnus got ahold of his body and was using the Nelo Angelo armor for his research. I keep having to rewrite his parts because he's tough to nail down. Sorry

11/16/22: changed the story's title and song quote because I found one that fit better. I'll get to that next chapter soon!

12/24/22: I orphaned the old prequel one-shot. It's still on here, though! It's called "Demons Are a Girl's Best Friend." It was the "How Vergil met Nero's Mom" thing.

5/3/2023: after a few months of on and off writer's block and other stuff, I've planned the rest of this fic and am slowly chipping at it. Also, I have plans for not one, but TWO semi-connected prequels in this 'verse (one's also slowly being chipped at rn, and another is still in planning but I have some scenes I'm thinking of. Both are pre-DMC3 and one is going to actually be a long "how I met your mom" fic!)

Wish me luck!

K & C if you want!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!