

BNA 12 – Until the shadows flee

Description

SCENE: INTRO

ENOCH: Be not afraid! It's just me again, the voice in your head that you just can't stop listening to. Don't worry, you're not insane. And even if you are, this message is more important than the state of your sanity so you will receive it either way. Let's look into the vortex of events together.

BG: (Eighties montage music)

ENOCH: Asmodeus and his friends have been through a lot. They have been compressed into three dimensions and forced to work non stop to make Solomon's arrogant dreams a reality. Their own dreams have been put on hold. Naar dreams of taking her family on a warm holiday. Asmodeus wants nothing but to go on a weeklong pub crawl. In order to achieve these dreams, the two of them have been trying to escape. But while trying to get one step ahead of their captor, they lost their friend ZikZak. His new living arrangements: a bottle. On the ocean floor. However, instead of discouraging the spirits, this only made them more steadfast in their efforts to break free.

An unexpected acquaintance of Asmodeus', specifically his step grandson, has arranged a plan to escape their bondage. Let's see how things go.

SCENE: THE GREAT ESCAPE

ENOCH: They meet up with the naga called Darshan, behind his pharmacy, as requested.

DARSHAN: You're late.

NAAR: Sorry, we had to wait for the right window. Can't be too careful.

DARSHAN: I was beginning to think you'd changed your mind.

ORNIAS: Fat chance. These guys have had nothing but escape on their minds since they arrived.

ASMIDEUS: What is *he* doing here? Come on guys, he's going to set us up. Let's leave before the king comes.

NAAR: I'm this close to killing you, Ornias. If it wasn't for these circumstances you'd be burnt to a cinder.

ORNIAS: What? I would never- (affronted)

DARSHAN: Wait, what are you talking about? Ornias is on our side.

ASMODEUS: You've been played. He works for the king.

DARSHAN: No, he was the one who discovered the weakness in the king's power. Tell them, Ornias.

ORNIAS: It was quite brilliant actually. Since I got to work as a baker I got to spend a lot of time around the king. You'd be surprised at how people just ignore food delivery. He discussed all his problems with his advisors and didn't even take notice of my presence while I delivered bread and cakes. That's how I heard that his power has limits in proximity and number.

ASMODEUS: He speaks with a forked tongue.

DARSHAN: Yikesssss.

ASMODEUS: Sorry. You know what I mean! But Ornias, be real with me. What's in this for you? I thought you were comfortable here.

ORNIAS: No. That was years ago. I want to leave as much as the rest of you. This... isn't comfortable. I honestly believed that he would grant me access to the astronomy tower eventually, but I have proven my loyalty to him time and time again and it still hasn't happened. He took advantage of me and I'm not the type that easily forgives.

DARSHAN: See? Sounds pretty earnest.

NAAR: As if he could be.

ORNIAS: Come on! If this was a setup you'd be in bottles by now.

ASMODEUS: ...fine. But I'm watching you, Ornias.

DARSHAN: Can we go on now? You don't have to be friends, just cooperate until we're out. Then you can kill each other. Or... whatever it is you do for fun in The Pit.

FX: All enemies in the group mumbles in agreement

ENOCH: And so they begin to make their way toward freedom. After a couple of minor setbacks, they get to the part they all have dreaded since they began their escape. The most dangerous passage, and it's even longer than they had anticipated. In the middle of the corridor is the door to the guards recreation room. On the opposite side, the water cistern.

NAAR: The hallway is too long, there's no way we'll make it without running into guards. Let's go back before it's too late.

DARSHAN: We don't have any intel on any other ways back. There could be guards anywhere. The only way is forward.

NAAR: Alright go. Move.

FX: walking

FX: several guards talking, muffled

DARSHAN: That would be their headquarters. Just stay quiet and move past it.

FX: something burning

ORNIAS: *(trying to contain a rising squeal, he's in great pain)*

BUER: Ornias, your wing is on fire!

NAAR: Oh fuck, I'm sorry!

ASMODEUS: Someone put it out!

ORNIAS: *(uselessly blowing at the fire)*

FX: clapping noise of someone putting out fire with their bare hands

FX: The muffled guard dialogue has gone quiet

NAAR, DARSHAN, ASMODEUS, BUER, ORNIAS: Sssh!

YUSUF: *(From inside the room)* Yeah, I'll check it out.

FX: Door opens. Soundscape of drinking, dice, talking. Spirit group holding their breath.

ENOCH: Yusuf stares at them in quiet disbelief for so long it feels like time itself has stopped.

ASMODEUS: *(Whisper)* Yusuf, please.

FX: Door closes carefully, soundscape muffled.

YUSUF: You shouldn't be here.

ASMODEUS: *(exhale)* Thank you.

YUSUF: Up to no good, I take it? Ornias! I thought you hated this bunch.

ORNIAS: I am most loyal to the king, I swear— uh. Um. I mean.

ASMODEUS: You shut your mouth, Ornias. Not another word from you.

ORNIAS: *(Affronted noise)*

YUSUF: Look. I have no idea what you're up to and I don't want to know. But these last few years, you've really given me perspective.

NAAR: Perspective?

YUSUF: Yeah. It's been an eye opener, for sure. You've been so nice to me, despite, you know, me

being your professional enemy. It's not as simple as good and evil, and I... Really miss ZikZak. I'll buy you some time for whatever you're doing. I didn't see you. Luck be with you.

FX: door opens and closes again

ENOCH: Yusuf returns to the headquarters and the group continues their scheme to poison the water supply.

DARSHAN: It's done. I've drugged their water supply. Now we need to get down to the dead end.

FX: Spirits making their way down the corridor

DARSHAN: This is it. Buer, dig us a tunnel.

BUER: Will do, boss.

FX: hissing, followed by flowing magma. The wall has melted quietly.

DARSHAN: Naar, why don't you go first.

NAAR: Oh yeah, didn't think about that. Sorry. Lighting the way!

ORNIAS: Ow, watch it! Fucking djinn...

BUER: Ssssh!

ENOCH: Soon they have all emerged from the tunnel. It's almost pitch black except for Naar's flames and a sliver of light coming from the gate. Their way out.

ORNIAS: See, the door is open! Just as I said! Ornias always delivers.

ASMODEUS: Guess I was wrong about you.

NAAR: Yeah, good job!

DARSHAN: You have my eternal thanks, Ornias.

ORNIAS: (*Clearly enjoying himself*) There there, come on. It's nothing. Alright I'm pretty awesome, really. Do you even know how many strings I had to pull? Had to risk my head at least three times. But that's nothing for a guy like my—

ASMODEUS: Hold the celebrating til we're out of here. Let's go.

ORNIAS: Check your privilege, angel, let them have fun while it lasts.

ASMODEUS: What's that supposed to—

FX: Door slam

NAAR: AAhh! What's going on?

ORNIAS: (*Bad at acting surprised*) Indeed, what in the world is this? I clearly asked the guard to keep the door open for me.

ASMODEUS: YOU DID WHAT? YOU BASTARD!

SCENE: NOW OR NEVER

FX: Fire whoosh

ENOCH: A ring of fire bursts up from the floor, surrounding the group of prisoners. Guards storm the room with weapons ready. And they are followed by none other than King Solomon himself.

SOLOMON: Not just one, but nine dissidents! I released you from the torments of Hell so that you may instead help bring glory to my kingdom under the one true God. I am doing you a favor, and this is how you repay me! I am very disappointed in you. But I suppose it's not in your nature to do anything but evil.

NAAR: We're not evil though!

SOLOMON: God sent his finest angel to grant me the power of commanding the spirits of below. The very fact that you are here, says that you are, in fact, evil. Thank you for bringing this to my attention.

ORNIAS: Can I have the astronomer's position now?

SOLOMON: Whatever, the tower is yours. Leave us.

ORNIAS: (*Snickering*)

NAAR: Traitor! You goddamn traitor! May you burn for eternity!

SOLOMON: It pains me to get rid of a spirit of your caliber, djinn, but I have to start somewhere. Into the bottle with you!

NAAR: What bottle-

ENOCH: Naar is dematerialized into a whirlwind of mist and is sucked into a brass bottle in Solomon's hand. He seals the bottle with a lead seal. In the light from the fire, Asmodeus sees a faint glow from the king's hand. But also... Something else. A light that doesn't belong in this world.

ASMODEUS: (in disbelief) No.

SOLOMON: Listen up, every one of you cursed evil spirits! This is what happens when you try to defy me.

ASMODEUS: (*Stressed and panicky*) WAIT! Please! Don't do this! I'll do whatever you want!

SOLOMON: I want nothing from you.

ASMODEUS: Ah— well. I could set you up with an angel! A wife, yes? Isn't that what you called it?

SOLOMON: I won't fall for your lies again, spirit.

ASMODEUS: Sure you want to take that risk? Ask yourself, is it really worth going through life without knowing what you could have had? I can give you one final lesson in the arts of absolute pleasure, the angelic edition—

FX: hurried footsteps

SOLOMON: (lower, snarling) You are testing me. One more raunchy joke out of your mouth and I'll make sure you'll never speak again.

ASMODEUS: (also low) Not a joke. I mean it. Just imagine how great your chances will be at impressing your future angel wife. You have a unique opportunity here. How many more angels do you think you'll meet in a lifetime? All I'm asking is that you forgive all of these "cursed evil spirits" if I succeed in teaching you the ways.

SOLOMON: If you insult me again—

ASMODEUS: Yes, you can bottle us up tomorrow just the same. But I'm sure it won't come to that.

SOLOMON: (silent, then stammering) Well... what... Why?

ASMODEUS: Come on. I've been flirting with you since we met.

SOLOMON: (stifled insecure giggle, then serious) What?

ASMODEUS: You're intriguing, for a human. I'd love to explore what makes you writhe in ecstasy. What do you say?

SOLOMON: Uh. (disoriented) What- what do you want?

ASMODEUS: That you kindly get Naar out of that bottle.

FX: Solomon waves his hand over the bottle, unplugs the seal, and releases Naar.

FX: fire whoosh

NAAR: Brrr, that was cramped.

ASMODEUS: Thank you. I'll make it worth your while. How about we go somewhere private, just you and me? 'Until day breaks and the shadows flee'

NAAR: Wait. He's doing the voice.

DARSHAN: Yep.

NAAR: At Solomon. He's actually serious.

DARSHAN: Dead serious. (louder, at Asmodeus) Don't you dare! Stay and take your punishment like the rest of us! You always leave!

ASMODEUS: Darshan, no, that's not what I—

SOLOMON: Enough. We will talk in my palace.

ENOCH: And there it is again, Asmodeus is dragged along by an invisible force. This had better work. If he fails, he will join the others at the bottom of the ocean, and who knows how many will follow. He has to think fast. Everything hangs on how he will spin this. Under normal circumstances, he would be in his meat suit, which would make any sort of seduction lessons a breeze. Humans generally don't respond well to his true shape. A shape that always seems to be unfolding, rotating, iridescent and deeply unsettling. But this isn't a normal situation. And Solomon isn't a normal human. The sorcerer has worked with spirits enough to be unfazed by them. Even without powers, without flesh, he will have to make it work.

SCENE: THE KING'S BEDCHAMBER

ENOCH: They enter a large chamber, lit with an orange glow from the stained glass lamps. Asmodeus remembers when he and his friends made the brass fittings for those. Three years ago.

The floor is covered with pillows of the finest Egyptian cotton, and sheer silk curtains drape from the ceiling to the floor. Fine goods fetched by other spirits, no doubt.

FX: Door slam

ASMODEUS: (*lower, softer*) Great. Lesson starts now. Do you promise to tell me to stop if you ever feel uncomfortable, at any time?

SOLOMON: Yes?

ASMODEUS: Very good. And I promise to stop when I'm told.

SOLOMON: (*Sigh*) Could you get on with it?

ASMODEUS: I am. Everything I do during this lesson, you can apply to your... intimate encounters.

SOLOMON: And what is that? You have shown me nothing yet.

ASMODEUS: Establish safety and respect your partner. They will enjoy themselves all the more if they feel safe with you. Remember this: Most of the pleasure happens in the mind.

SOLOMON: You're. A bit close.

ASMODEUS: Showing you, still. You make your intentions clear. You tell them, in any way you prefer,

'I would like to touch you. I want to share this with you.'

SOLOMON: I, uh...

ASMODEUS: 'I want to make you feel very, very good. Do you want that?'

FX: Rapid heartbeat

SOLOMON: (*Barely audible*) yes.

ASMODEUS: (*Almost laughing*) No, this is what you're supposed to say to your partner. You're the seducer.

SOLOMON: I know that! But we can't both be seducers!

ASMODEUS: Oh I see. You adapt quickly. Very good. You see this right here? Communication.

SOLOMON: I don't understand how you're so calm and I'm sweating and do you really need to stand so— ah!

ENOCH: Asmodeus takes yet another step closer, still not touching, the glow of his body reflected on the king's face. By now the king will be able to feel his high temperature. Asmodeus leans his head down, letting a warm breath ghost against Solomon's ear. He can hear the mortal's rapid heartbeat and rushing blood. The expectation is his favorite part, really. The king is decidedly avoiding all eye contact, standing stiffly with his hands behind his back. Recognizing reserved body language when he sees it, the angel steps back, and says:

ASMODEUS: Sit down with me. Relax.

ENOCH: Solomon looks doubtfully at his outstretched hands, long and slender and with the potential for both destruction and creation. Asmodeus hopes with his entire being that this will be enough. All he needs is a good look at whatever the king was holding in his hand, but he can't do it like this. Finally, Solomon regains his regal posture and looks up at him.

SOLOMON: I can tell you are skilled at your craft. Just know I am not afraid of you.

ASMODEUS: That's a good start. I don't want you to be.

ENOCH: The king takes his hands, and Asmodeus feels a powerful rush of energy. The otherworldly glow seems to originate from a ring, one of many adorning the king's hand. But this one is unmistakably not of this realm. Too late to back out now. He leads them backwards further into the room, where they sink down onto the soft pillows, cross legged, face to face.

SOLOMON: You're not using some kind of spell, are you?

ENOCH: The angel briefly considers radiating an instant lust frequency. It would certainly be effective, fast and cheap. But even if he could, he's not sure he would. Because where's the sport in that? Mission or not, there is something poetic in bedding your nemesis.

ASMODEUS: No. No magic required.

SOLOMON: Oh.

ASMODEUS: My dear king. Look into my eyes-

SOLOMON: Which ones?

ASMODEUS: No you're good, yeah, just pick any of them. I see you. Listen very closely. All we really need is trust, touch and sweet words. You can make someone fall apart without even touching them if you're really good. Don't you want to see their face light up with the fireworks of total abandon and know that you did that, you gave that to them?

ENOCH: Asmodeus has absentmindedly been lacing their fingers together. He has found what he was looking for, and can now keep an eye on the ring. As for removing it...

SOLOMON: So show me, spirit.

ASMODEUS: Are you sure? Because I can show you a world of techniques, the night is long.

SOLOMON: Yes, yes, go on. You talk much and do little.

ASMODEUS: Remember the step, we talked about this: State your intentions, make sure your partner wants the same thing. You will want to keep your eyes on them. You are past modesty by this point. They may look away, but you want to stay focused on them, signaling that you know what you are doing.

ENOCH: He lifts one of Solomon's hands to his mouth, and kisses the wrist. It is almost too light to be noticeable, but the effect is powerful. The king's breath hitches, and the angel takes the opportunity to study the magical ring closer.

ASMODEUS: Moving on to the hands. There are many nerve endings in the human hand, angels are no different. Enjoy it to the fullest, taste it. Enjoy the reaction from your lover.

ENOCH: Speaking against the skin of the hand in between kisses, Asmodeus can see the magical ring clearly. To the untrained eye, it appears to be gold. Its four stones are arranged around a six pointed star, all fixed into a circular disk. He wonders where it came from. Who could have crafted such an advanced instrument? He will have to let someone more experienced have a look at it when this is all over.

SOLOMON: What reaction might that be?

ASMODEUS: Huh?

SOLOMON: You said "enjoy the reaction from your- my, lover." How will I know I am doing it right?

ASMODEUS: The precious sounds they make, the red color of their cheeks, and the rapid beat of their heart. Look at your handsome face in the mirror! You're doing all of those things now.

SOLOMON: Careful what you insinuate. I'm imagining you as a woman.

ASMODEUS: That's all well and good, but you're going about it the wrong way. Connecting on that level is beyond gender or whatever you call it. Because when you know how it feels to be seduced successfully, you hold the tools to bring her to the heavens. That's what I'm about to show you. Do you understand?

SOLOMON: Not fully, but perhaps I will.

FX: doorbell chime

ENOCH: Not now! Sorry, prophets. It seems some time has passed.

ASMODEUS: Encourage them to touch you. Tell them what you like best about their appearance, like-

SOLOMON: Your wings are magnificent.

ASMODEUS: Go on, touch them. Get used to the texture.

SOLOMON: That's... oh. Are all angels as wonderful as you?

ASMODEUS: You are forgetting yourself again, dear king. Save it for your future wife.

SOLOMON: Yes, of course. Only practicing.

ENOCH: The angel gently caresses the king's cheek, ending with a sharp claw under the chin.

SOLOMON: Ha. You've got. Claws.

ASMODEUS: I can't hurt you. Unless you want me to.

FX: doorbell chime

ENOCH: I'm busy! And they're kissing. Somehow. Wow. I didn't think— that's—. I mean, this part wasn't written down anywhere. That's fascinating. Asmodeus extends his black wings to an enormous size, enveloping them both in a feathery cocoon.

FX: doorbell chime

(The BG ambience from Solomon's bedchamber stops. We are pulled back into Enoch's office)

FX: zoop/door open

ASHA: Greetings, voice of God! I came to ask—

ENOCH: Not a good time! Come back later.

ASHA: Metatron, we are late for the— What are you watching?

ENOCH: (SHRIEK)! Oh FFFFF...feathers. Asha! (scrambling to cover the vortex of events with his

back) As in, I mean, hello to you, Asha, not that I'm watching... you. Haha. Don't come barging in like that!

ASHA: I rang your so-called "doorbell" thrice before entering. Whatever purpose this ritual serves I do not understand, but I followed it as you have requested of us. Shall we?

ENOCH: Right. Angel hangout. Yeah, I... think now is a good time for a coffee break. Oh don't look at me like that, Ben. I wasn't GOING to narrate... that.

Right. Talk to you soon, prophets.

INTERLUDE: REC ROOM

FX: mobile transmitter booting up

ENOCH: (*Whispering*) Hi. It's me again, Enoch. The Metatron. I'll never get used to saying that. Well! I thought I'd bring my mobile transmitter and give you another tour of our recreation room. I say room, but it's more of a space. A bubble in time where angels can just relax and blast their radiance without holding back. Let's see what my colleagues are up to.

FX: portal noise, followed by faint murmur & ambience

ASMODEUS: (Malevolent laughter) Yeah yeah guys you totally missed the best part—

ENOCH: (*Gasps*) Oh.

ASMODEUS: I had his knees on my shoulders, I was right up in there—

BODIEL: Good grief.

ENOCH: Hi everyone.

BODIEL: Uhm. Hello Lord Metatron.

GABRIEL: Good day, sir.

ENOCH: Just so you know, I am transmitting, so you might want to... ehm.

ASMODEUS: (in the bg)—and and the guy was holding onto my horns for dear life, like this! And I was like— (*ANY kind of noise, the weirder the better*)

ENOCH: (ahem)

FX: (murmur dies out)

ENOCH: So how about the Almighty's outburst earlier, huh? Yikes, am I right? So about that. I guess I'm partly to blame. And I'm sorry about that.

(silence)

ASMODEUS: I just remembered I have somewhere I need to be. See you!

ENOCH: I brought a fresh pot of coffee?

ASHA: Haha... coffee, huh? Good stuff?

BODIEL: Good heavens will you look at the time.

ASHA: What time? Don't be ridiculous.

BODIEL: Got to go! So much to talk about, so little time. Byeeee.

FX: Pour coffee

ENOCH: Oh. So many had to leave all of a sudden. Well, more coffee for us!

GABRIEL & ASHA: (constipated laughter)

ENOCH: Come, gather round and grab a cup. One for Zadkiel, here you go Gabriel.

FX: Clinking in silence

ENOCH: And now, follow my moves.

FX: (beat of silence, just cups stirring)

ASHA: Mmmmm. Good yes?

ENOCH: This has been great. I should get back to that transmission.

GABRIEL: Good thinking.

ASHA: Yeah, yep.

FX: mobile transmitter shutting down

SCENE: THE PERFECT HEIST

ENOCH: I lied. That was NOT great. Not even God can help me find my place among the heavenly host. Eternity scares me. But I can't worry about that now. The vortex is beckoning. You deserve to know the rest, prophets.

Needless to say, Asmodeus has taken care of Solomon in a spectacular way. The king burrows his face into the angel's silky smooth feathers.

SOLOMON: (*deep inhale and shaky sigh, like he's been crying*) Thank you, thank you Asmodeus... very valu- (*ahem*) valuable lesson.

ASMODEUS: There's more where that came from.

SOLOMON: (*amused, getting drowsy*) You're absolutely delightful but I have my limits.

ASMODEUS: So, shall we book the same time tomorrow, dear king?

SOLOMON: Please, call me Solomon.

ASMODEUS: Aw, but you like it when I—

SOLOMON: No, hold on. I want to ask you something before I fall asleep.

ASMODEUS: Shoot.

SOLOMON: (*like he's been high out of his mind, the experience is difficult to put to words*) Well, there was one point where I saw... I don't know. Unformed events, I think. I saw so many things. And I understood them, but not anymore. Is that... is that normal?

ASMODEUS: Yeah, I opened up your mind a little bit. You seemed like you could take it so I went for it. You good?

SOLOMON: Ah, I... yes. (*positively smitten*) I suppose I should get used to the unusual, with you around. (*Yawns*) Will you stay?

ASMODEUS: (*the gentlest smile in his arsenal*) Of course. Sleep well.

SOLOMON: (deep sigh, at total ease, sleeping like a baby)

ASMODEUS: (...) King? Salami? Hah. Dumbass. (*low, to himself*) Okay. I'll just take that hand of yours aaaaand get that nasty ring off of you. Care-full-y. Won't feel a thing.

FX: rings jingling. Reversed magical whoosh bass noise.

ASMODEUS: (*sigh of relief*) (*held back whispered laugh*) (*His vocal effect is back to being large and rumbling*)

ENOCH: He immediately feels the curse lift, and has to bite his tongue not to let out an inhuman squeal of delight. They're free, all of them! He did it! Ring in his hand, Asmodeus gets up to sneak out. But, something yanks him back like a rubber band. He looks back only to see the king sleeping soundly, collapsed onto one of his precious wings. Peacefully snuggling it.

The perfect seduction, the almost perfect heist, and he's stuck. He sits at the edge of the bed, hanging his glowing head like a wilted lamp. All this trouble, ruined by a lovesick and frankly heavy human. What's worse, he hears someone at the door. The guards will be here to check up on the king any time now, and when they do, he'll wake up. Then it's game over, and this will all have been for NOTHING-

FX: a metal clatter, door opens

NAAR: Are you done?

ASMODEUS: Naar! Come in. Sssh. He's sleeping.

NAAR: So are all the guards, the drugs hit them hard. Woah heyyy!

ASMODEUS: You know what we did. What did you expect?

NAAR: That you cover him up before you tell me to come in!

ASMODEUS: What for? (sigh) There, pillow. Happy?

NAAR: And what took you so long!? It's almost sunrise!

FX: distant zoop

ASMODEUS: Really? (looks outside) Well, guess I was enjoying myself.

NAAR: Absolute degenerate.

ASMODEUS: The best.

SEIR: (*Grinning widely*) Good job, slut. (affectionate)

NAAR: AH! (*startled*)

ASMODEUS: Seir! Long time no see. Wait. When did you get here?

SEIR: Just now. Hundreds of spirits just came back to hell, they told us everything. I came as soon as I heard.

ASMODEUS: Were you *watching*?

SEIR: No, but I bet I'll never hear the end of it. I'm here to escort you back home.

ASMODEUS: Right. About that. Listen, I got his ring, broke the spell and everything, but... (*winces*)

NAAR: But what? Let's go! Everyone's already left!

ASMODEUS: Can't. Got my wing stuck, look.

NAAR: Ooof. He's even drooling on it. Bummer.

ASMODEUS: Seir, take the ring. You should both get out of here. I'll figure something out.

NAAR: Hey, listen. We'll come back for you. See you soon, young prince.

FX: Naar's crackle fades away

SEIR: Are you serious? Oh honey no. You've been stuck here too long. You can just go foof, zoop, you know, the uh, the thing. (*With every foof and zoop we pan the sound to illustrate his movement*)

ENOCH: Seir is moving around the room in bursts, to the human eye looking like he is gone one moment and appearing the next. And Asmodeus remembers that he can, in fact, navigate more than three dimensions. He moves between the threshold of angles where Solomon is not occupying his wing, and ends up next to Seir.

SEIR: Come on, let's go home. There's gonna be a party, a hearing, a bunch of workshops on occult safety, and a couple of rituals. Not sure what order. Also your parents want to talk to you.

ASMODEUS: (*Groans*) Don't tell anyone I forgot a whole set of dimensions.

SEIR: No problem. All those degrees of freedom, easy to forget when you don't use them for a couple of years.

FX: Low humming sound, flash.

ENOCH: The angels are gone, as are most of the other hundreds of spirits that worked under Solomon. It's a quiet dawn. The king scratches his belly, and slumbers on.

SCENE: HELL AFTERPARTY

ENOCH: Prophets, I am receiving a signal from... oh. I'm not supposed to be able to see... here. It's crowded. This place, it's... The walls are covered in writhing meat. Shadows bend and distort in a dizzying way, while entities of all shapes and sizes are having a party of epic proportions. The spirits no longer imprisoned under Solomon, have finally returned home.

FX: fire, whips, screams of agony(?), obnoxious trance music

BUER: And then you killed him, right?

ASMODEUS: Nah, he'll die on his own, and besides, I'd already disarmed him.

BUER: You've gone soft, Asmodeus.

ASMODEUS: There's a whole fallen army down here that would disagree with you, Buer. They'd say that (*overly dramatic*) "living with guilt is a fate far worse than death."

SEIR: No, come on, we're really not that melodramatic anymore.

ASMODEUS: If you say so.

SEIR: I know, I know. I meant, MOST of us aren't melodramatic. (*lower*) Say, that thing you took. Did you...?

ASMODEUS: (*low*) I don't have it anymore. Gave it to my parents for safekeeping.

SEIR: (*low*) This is a disaster. Can't wait to find out who's behind it.

ASMODEUS: (*low*) Let the kings worry about that, politics isn't my scene.

SEIR: (low, but getting hissier and louder) That's the thing, what if it IS —

BUER: Riiight, seeing as you two are getting intimate in the corner I'm going to leave...

SEIR: Yeah! Asmodeus, you, bad bad entity! Utter rascal! Get your tendrils off of me!

NAAR: There he is!

ASMODEUS: Naar! What are you going to do now that you're free? Iceland right? Should do you good, soaking in the lava. Stay in the volcano while you're there though. If you stare into the darkness too long you'll go funny in the head.

NAAR: Ah, I... I promised ZikZak I'd find them. I'll fly back and forth across the oceans until I do. Perhaps I'll find more spirits in bottles, if I'm lucky.

ASMODEUS: Huh. Good luck. Maybe I'll join you eventually.

NAAR: And you, little prince, I suppose in the meantime you will go back to your... loose living?

ASMODEUS: No, no, I've been annoyed at myself too many times during this whole escapade. I'm going back to the Academy.

SEIR: Good on you, Asmodeus. Give Michael a hard time for me, okay?

ASMODEUS: Oh I will definitely give him a hard time if you know what I mean.

NAAR: How...? (*shudders*) Never mind. I'm glad you're going back. I'm proud of you.

ASMODEUS: Do you think we'll ever see each other after this?

NAAR: Sure we will! But let's not worry about that tonight. I have some exquisite sandals right here that have been aged on a double shift on a hot night. Care to indulge with me?

FX: lighting wood

SANSENOY: There will be no more indulging. Asmodeus was just about to leave.

SENOY: Another time, perhaps.

ASMODEUS: Ah, Senoy, Sansenoy, Semangelof. Not very good blood hounds. How come you never found me when I actually needed you to?

SENOY: We did not think a mere mortal could mask frequencies like that.

SEMANGELOF: Unheard of. Better to not get caught in the first place.

ASMODEUS: Now listen here—

SANSENOY: You never did complete your occult safety 101, did you?

ASMODEUS: Uhhh...

SEIR: This is a private afterparty, you guys can't be here. Hell residents only!

ASMODEUS: Yeah, you're not supposed to enter hell without an invitation, damnation or an approved guest pass.

SEMANGELOF: We know your law. As the celestial search unit, we were granted temporary access to acquire you.

SENOY: A missing student is a very serious matter. A princeling on the run, even more so.

SANSENOY: Samael was most helpful.

ASMODEUS: (Defeated) Yeah, I'll bet. I'll come with you... Hey Naar.

NAAR: I know. See you around, little prince.

ASMODEUS: Yeah. I hope so. Bye.

FX: music fade out

SCENE: OUTRO

Something tells me that this is not the last we've seen of Asmodeus and Solomon. This was only a thread of a much larger tapestry.

Like the sands of time, the tables do turn.

There's something universal about being trapped. And I'm not talking about being squeezed by narrow dimensions. I mean trappings of the mind, which is equally real. It happens to all sentient beings. Whether it be routine, loneliness, responsibilities or even having too much freedom of choice. The road ahead is not always that obvious.

When you want nothing else but revenge, it may lead to a much better outcome, far better than you ever imagined, if you instead choose love and sympathy.

Be not afraid.

END OF EPISODE 12

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