

## SANCTUARY

You'd think the mask over my eyes makes me utterly blind. You'd be right. I, surrounded by my close friend Darkness, know all the right ingredient placements by soul.

That's a lie. I don't have a soul. I know all the right ingredient placements by heart.

Ah, that's a lie too. I don't have a heart either. To actually believe that I'm the closest-to-human thing out here in this bar is madness, even though I wear all of my five fingers on each hand and foot. My lashes flutter against the black satin spread over my gaze. I am not just blind, I am anonymous. In this club no one must know my name.

"Hey baby," someone croaks, probably sporting an additional set of bony tongues that often gets in the way of articulating. "I want the cocktail #0156."

My arm shoots out and my fingers immediately curl around the metal throat of the aluminium bottle. As I said, even blinded I know exactly what each of the shelves by both my sides hold. The blood smells fresh and is very thoroughly sucked out of a newborn - a deluxe ingredient. I mix and shake, shake and mix. Perfect ratios are what it's all about and they had already branded the correct measures into my flesh long ago. I serve the cocktail and into my palm, dollar notes are pressed and I don't smile. It's forbidden. It could make one go mad.

"Trashy human," comes from the left, but not necessarily as an insult. "#639 immediately. If it's as good as last time, I'll give you a tip."

When someone's deprived of their vision, the other senses sharpen distinctively. I could distinguish the deepest vibrations of the bass through the floor, smell the sourly sweet sweat pooling in the armpits of the bodyguards standing by the entrance in their tight-fitting suits. On my tongue I had tasted the many different flavours of orchids suspended from the ceiling in flowerpots made from old skeletons hiding in the cupboards. I also know there's someone right in front of me keeping silent, without the need for a shot. Or without the resources to buy one. You don't usually sit on a bar stool here without an order, it's impolite and illogical.

I take the money for #639 with the tip on top and lean forward. There's a faint feeling sitting in the back of my throat: this action is going to shake through some worlds and maybe destroy the others. I carefully fold the impending smirk into my thoughts however the breathy rush of excitement is inescapable; I love to reward myself with a quality challenge especially when served to me on a silver platter. The words leave my mouth and take up the shape of a starting flag:

"And what can I get you, Sir?"

He smells like death and caramel. I never get any solid reply. And when I find my funny silent customer leeching around the stairs of my private apartment later that night, the sickly addictive scent unmistakably filling up the air, my mouth stretches wide into a sneer. With the mask tight over my two eyes, I am limited.

but

i

can

see

you

now