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Reyadh Rahaman

"Would you like some tea, sir?" offered Oz, one of my skeletal butlers. He was a bare skeleton with naught but a mustache composed of wispy shadows and a sharp goatee of black iron. He proffered a silver tray laden with two granite mugs. One with a bubbling dark green liquid, which popped on occasion. As a particularly large bubble burst, Oz introduced it, "Swamp moss from the Amazon steeped in the black waters from Styx, upon the fifth circle..." he then trailed off before rotating the tray deftly to point the other one at me, just as a few sparks jumped from its yellow contents. "...and the bile of a lightning fiend from the far east, kindled with sparks birthed from torture implements in use upon the eighth circle..."

"Hm..." I pondered, but while doing so, Reginald drifted into my field of vision. He winked at me before staring at the yellow fiend bile. I smiled knowingly before responding to Oz, "I'll take the swamp juice." I then proceeded to take the mug of dark green liquid and sip it with relish. After enjoying the strong, plant flavour I continued, "throw the other mug onto Reginald." I then downed the rest of the boiling swamp moss and Styx water before placing my mug back onto the tray.

Nodding at my command, Oz doused Reginald in the yellow bile, which caused a small cluster of electrical explosions to briefly illuminate the room. After the light dissipated, Reginald quivered happily in gratitude. "The lab is ready, sir," Oz then informed me with a curt bow before excusing himself. There were apparently chores to be done.

Refreshed and ready to experiment, I led Reginald to my cottage's laboratory. Just beyond the front door, where Oz was waiting, was a small atrium of blackened stone lit by floating orbs of yellowish-orange light. They illuminated a single hallway which led to three doors. One on either side and one at the end. Reginald and I entered the one on the left, which put us into the place where all of my experiments on this level of Hell took place.

Within, just as I had left it, was a human man, clad in a torn and bloody brown robe. His ankles and wrists were bound by dark manacles that were staked to the ground with black iron pegs as long as his forearms. "Mr. Predator," I said to the bound man, "So nice of you to join me!"

"P-please, let me go! I'm innocent! I'm not what you think I am. I'm just another lost lover, wind-swept by the hurricanes of the second circle. All I did was-"

"Silence!" I hissed as I extinguished all light from the room. The only visibility came from Reginald's subtle yellow sparks and the violet aura of the Void Heart. "I know what you are, scum. But you won't be such for long." I paused before chuckling darkly, the dim contrasting light likely illuminating my form in a sinister manner, "no human down here is innocent. For innocence is like a flickering candle in the wind. It can be snuffed out in a sudden gust, never to return. But, you know all about that, I'm sure..."