

*Yes, Yes. I know its late I take full responsibility, but here is the chapter... FINALLY*

Burning in hell ch. 4

Punishment

Tasha woke up to the feeling of strong arms around her, a soft quilt covering her bare torso and the cool air of the room caressing her long legs. Quietly, so she wouldn't wake the owner of the arms, she pivoted in the bed and studied the peaceful features of her lover.

He looked so gentle when he was asleep, Ethan. Like he wouldn't hurt a fly. She knew that that was false though. He was a Guardian. He killed strigoi for a living.

He did.

She felt silent tears roll down her cheek as she remembered what could - would - happen to him. "The same," Dimitri had said.

At some point her eyes closed and her tears turned to outright sobs because the next thing she knew the arms tucked securely around her body came to life and held her tightly to his chest.

After a minute later her sobs and apologies slowed down and she finally gained control of her actions. "Sorry," she sniffed.

He exhaled deeply, "Tasha, you have every reason to be like this right now, in fact, you're stronger than any one should have to be, in this situation anyway."

She looked up into his deep green eyes, and saw only understanding and acceptance there. No anger surprised her even though she knew he knew the outcome.

"You know I know I should regret so much more about what we did but right now I only remorse losing you at the end, though to be honest I know that it's more than enough of a punishment for what I did." as she finished the sentence Tasha felt a salty tear start its descent down her cheek, but was stopped by Ethan leaning forward and kissing the tear away.

"Don't cry love, we'll be alright," he murmured, "Though I don't expect Rose and the gang to bust us out, huh?" She made the sound of something between a laugh and a sob.

A few minutes later she had another question for him. "Why are we going to trial anyway, we've pretty much confessed." She paused, "well I did anyway," and though the sound that left her mouth was something akin to a giggle, she felt nothing but grief for the turn of events in the ballroom. Christian, Mia, Rose. All of their futures she could of destroyed. She would have, in fact she had, tarnished Christian's reputation to a level that not even Lissa could fix now. Tainted Mia's life to one filled with death and loss. And Rose she'd killed.

Luckily for her, Ethan answered her question before she got too lost in her grieving thoughts. "It's not going to be a trial based on guilt or innocence, so to speak. It will revolve around what

punishment they see fitting; royals have plenty of different ways to carry out execution - many in front of a crowd like old times."

They lay there, huddled in each other's arms, until Tasha broke the silence. "And," she paused for a moment to collect her thoughts, "that trial starts today."

"Yeah," he replied softly, "it will be carried out like a regular trial; we'll be asked questions and everything." Great, Tasha had never liked questions but knew she owed a lot of people after what she did so she kept quiet.

Just then a guardian knocked on the door. She came in, unabashed to the sight of the two of them, naked, in bed. But then after what Ethan said last night, a scene like this might have been a regular occurrence. If this whole fiasco could be called a regular occurrence.

"Natasha Ozero, Ethan Moore," both Tasha and Ethan winced at hearing the loss of their titles. "You are to return to your cells and prepare for your trial," she announced in a clear voice.

She paused for a moment before continuing, "Mr Moore will have an hour and Ms Ozero could be anywhere from an hour to three so please be ready and presentable at all times."

She left then and four guardians moved to replace her we barely had time to redress and say goodbye before we were ushered out the door. I had just turned left to my cell, away from Ethan, when I heard the faintest whisper.

"Good luck."

*Next chapter should hopefully be the trial. I will get it up as soon as I can.*

*ilyxx*

*kat*