

This deleted scene, one I really liked but it didn't make the final cut for [Darkness Undone](#). It happens in chapter 15 the day after Eve's steals the scroll from the museum and is on her way to the gallery, but she makes this detour first.

Eve picked up the small box of clamps she needed for her sculptures, then took her car keys and bag off the counter, and came to a grinding halt when she found him waiting at the open door.

It was pointless saying anything, especially when he had *that* look on his face. One which spelled trouble if she said a word. Shutting her mouth, she walked out of the apartment.

When she stopped besides her blue mini, he stared at her like she'd lost her mind.

Unlike normal people, she couldn't take public transport, because the risks were too great. A crowd meant opening herself to too many emotions. Summer was far too hot to wear gloves all the time.

Reynner strode over to his Porsche parked on the opposite side of the street. Opened the passenger door and waited. As far as the debate of wills went, she wasn't winning this one.

"Where to?" he asked once they were in the car.

"The gallery, I need to check in with Eric. But first there's something else I must do." She gave him directions to an address downtown.

The street bustled with the lunchtime crowds. Reynner pulled into a loading bay and parked alongside several Harleys, their longhaired owners lounging against their bike. They turned at their arrival.

"Why are we here?" Reynner asked, his gaze on the hair salon squeezed in between a tattoo parlor and haberdashery store.

Eve couldn't resist. "I'm getting a tattoo."

He turned those impossibly dark blue eyes at her. "No, you're not." Absolute certainty.

"Why not? You have one on your chest," she said sweetly and was surprised at the flash of anger that crossed his face.

"You are not getting a tattoo, Eve." He started the car again, looked out his side window to ease back into the traffic.

"Wait—wait," she grabbed his arm. His muscles tensed, like coiled steel beneath her fingers. "Fine. I'm not getting a stupid tattoo. Why would I want thousands of pinpricks on my skin when I don't like pain? This one I need and it terrifies me, but it has to be done."

He turned to her, that granite expression didn't soften. "Explain. It had better be good, or we're leaving."

"Just so we're clear, you're not my father, brother or uncle—" she ignored the narrowing of his eyes. "If I wanted a tattoo, I will get one. I don't need you or anyone else to tell me what to do. But since you're so determined to know why, I need this ear re-pierced, which for some strange reason seemed to have closed when it healed." She touched her right earlobe.

His gaze dropped to her ear, lingered. “Very well—and just so *you* know, I mean it, Eve, no tattoo of any sort marking your skin.”

She rolled her eyes at his edict. “Why? Because my magic will die?”

“No, I don’t like you marked from anyone—wait here.” He got out the car.

She frowned, trying to understand what he meant by that as he circled the hood and came around to her side.

A group of Hells Angels leaning on their bikes and watching them distracted her. Their jackets dripped with studs, motifs and few wore chains on their leathers.

Men with a beer gut should never wear leather, or a vest without a shirt at least, she thought.

The bikers eyed Reynner up and down, sizing him as he opened her door.

They may emit the aggressive vibe, but Reynner’s scariness went deeper, was rooted in his soul. The man was the epitome of a badass. She ought to know.

Eve stepped out of the car, straightened her top as Reynner cut a quick glance around him, as if scanning the street—he probably was. The man was ever vigilant. According to him, demoniis only trawled the streets at night, since their sensitive red eyes couldn’t stand the sunlight. So, who was he looking for?

Darkreans? Had to be.

An eerie shiver slid down her spine. Hell no, she didn’t want his enemies capturing her.

The bright sunlight had her squinting. But she was aware of several women and a few men who’d stopped dead in their tracks. She couldn’t blame them. Reynner was unnaturally beautiful.

A sense of surrealism washed over her. Here she stood, right in the middle of Grand Street with an angel. A sublime moment for sure.

Unable to put off what she had to do, Eve stepped past Reynner and one of the leather-clad—a younger guy with tats and bright blue eyes winked at her. She ignored him. Sure, men flirted with her, but she never encouraged them, mainly because it would lead to nowhere.

A hand on the small of her back startled her. Eve cast a curious look at Reynner and found him leveling a lethal stare at Winker. He didn’t voluntary touch anyone. Her, he did, but only when she provoked him. Deciding not to read too much into that action, Eve entered the parlor.

A tall, dark skin, heavy-set baldheaded man—his body a canvas for his ink—looked up. A smile broke out. “What can I do for you?”

Reynner stood silent beside her, he expression inscrutable. Her stomach knotting, Eve touched her right earlobe. “I want this pierced—the hole closed.”

“No problem.” He cut a longer stare at Reynner before he opened the door adjacent to the front desk and waited for her to enter.

“This won’t hurt,” he said, picking up a blue gun from the shelf against the wall.

“Yeah, right.” Heaving a shaky breath, Eve entered the smaller room with the reclining chair. Her fingers colder than the arctic, she didn’t sit but leaned against it.

Reynner stood at the entrance. Watching.

The moment the man touched her lobe, Eve shut her eyes, better she didn’t know when it occurred. At the sharp pinch, she yelped.

“Eve—” Reynner was at her side, looking ready to annihilate the poor guy.

“I’m fine—I’m fine!” she hastily reassured him. And forced her clenched fingers to let go of the chair. Her face burning, she gingerly touched her fiery earlobe and brushed the stud there. “It hurt.”

Warily, the man set the gun aside. “It’s done.”

Moments later, Reynner ushered her outside and saw her into the car. Eve pulled down the sun visor and peered at her red lobe. Uh, she had to put up with a few days of discomfort. Hopefully, it would heal before her showing.

Reynner got in beside her and shut his door. Then he reached for her and gently cupped her chin, angling her face to his, with his other hand, he touched the sore ear. Warmth streamed out, soothing the pain. “There, this should help.”

“I don’t understand how this closed,” she said.

“When you hurt your ear in the club, I healed it.”

Of course, now it all made sense.

His thumb caressed the pulse beating on her throat. Eve realized just how close they actually were—a breath away from a kiss.

Midnight blue eyes met hers, at the intensity of his stare, her throat dried up. She was surprised he hadn’t heard the racket her heart was creating, slamming against her ribs.

Abruptly, he dropped his hands and started the car. A tic pulsed on his jaw as he eased back into the traffic, Eve watched him, pain seeping through her.

Whatever internal war he fought, seemed to be winning as his features locked into granite.

“Reynner?” She touched his arm, and didn’t care if he put the entire damn world between them. Expression tight, he turned. Oh, she knew she was pushing him, she saw the heated spark in his eyes before the hateful shutters came down.

“Thank you.”

After a terse second, he nodded. then merged with the heavy traffic, heading toward the gallery.