
Spies and Spells
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To Fuck And Eat Me,
It's a Good Thing I Learned This Resurrection Spell


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a Vore Isekai

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Book 7: Spies and Spells

The magic pulsed through me, but it was wrong, tainted.

Spies and Spells

Aria and I crouched at the entrance of the alley, watching the dragons come and go. The gurgle of the fountain at the center of the square almost covered the constant moans emanating from the building across the street.

“Dragon brothels,” I muttered under my breath. “Who knew they would be so…lucrative?”

Aria’s tail brushed against my leg as she leaned further around the corner, her bulbous belly leaking over the waistband of her blue silk skirt. Her smirk was barely visible through the shimmering veil she wore over her nose and mouth.

“Just look at their merchandise,” she said, drooling. “Wouldn’t you be tempted?”

A pair of dragons lay on cushions under the bright red awning that led into the brothel. To enter, one would have to walk between them, passing beneath the male dragon’s sculpted chest and the female’s enormous bosoms. There was also a kobold, pleasant and plump, and a catlike Corrupted with stripes like a tiger. They both wore outfits similar to Aria’s: a sequined bra, a skirt, and a veil. The piece de resistance was a human male. He sat between all of them like a Buddha on his lily pad, smiling at the passing dragons who eyed him hungrily.

I glanced at Aria and felt a flicker of jealousy. I quickly suppressed it as I pulled her back into the alley.

“What, what, what?” she complained, brushing off her skirt. Her belly shook whenever she moved, full and round and gurgling. The kobold Bast brought her hadn’t lasted long. “I was only going to take a peak.”

“Bast told us to stay put,” I said. “We aren’t allowed to wander in the City of Dragons. Literally anyone-”

“-can eat us,” Aria finished, waving her hand. “Sure, that’s what Bast told us, but she also said that it wouldn’t be a problem if we wore

these ridiculous clothes. I look like a belly dancer and you look like a whore, so we're good, eh?"

I looked down at my bare chest and resisted the urge to cover myself. I also wore a veil, like Aria, but where she wore a skirt, all I had was a flowing pair of bright green harem pants with slits cut out for my hips. At least I was starting to develop some muscles.

"These clothes mark us as servants," I reminded her. "Servants can still be swallowed."

"Yeah," Aria snorted, leaning against the wall, "if someone wants to insult Bast. Let's see how well that works for them."

She waved a hand in front of her face. Sweat was beginning to bead against the lip of her stomach. The City of Dragons was built high on the top of the mountainside, but that mountain happened to be a volcano that kept the temperatures constantly steamy.

I wiped sweat from my own brow and crouched beside Aria. She raised an eyebrow at me.

"I wonder how much it is for just a bed," she said.

"We aren't leaving the alley," I murmured.

Aria threw her arms around my shoulders. Her breasts and belly squished against my back as she nuzzled my neck.

"Why?" she whispered. "Scared I'll eat ya?"

As a matter of fact, I *was* scared that she would eat me. Ever since I'd lost my last resurrection spell, I had felt naked and exposed, vulnerable to the ravenous wiles of my traveling companions. I kept edelweed on me constantly. The sooner Bast returned with the ingredients for the spell, the better.

Aria knew that. It was probably why she was fucking with me.

"Oh, but I'm so hungry," she said, stretching so that her breasts enveloped my neck and ears. "That snack earlier whetted my appetite and now I want the real deal."

She snickered as I squirmed.

Six days. That was how long it had been since we stepped through the portal and ended up on the outskirts of the City of

Dragons. Bast hid us in a cave while she performed reconnaissance. The fall of the Labyrinth was the talk of the town. The whole city had been mobilized to find the culprits and any newcomers were to be treated with extreme suspicion. From what Bast said, some dragons wanted to thank us. Some wanted to eat us. All in all, it had been a nerve-wracking week leading up to our first foray into the city and all the more so considering Aria and Mable's pent-up…energy.

Aria spun me around and pinned me to the wall. She lowered her belly into my waiting lap and held me close, nose to nose.

"I hope you know that as soon as you cast that spell, I'm eating you," she said, licking my cheek. Her stomach gurgled convincingly. "You've been such a fucking tease these last few days, acting like a frightened deer. I wanna let you run so that I can chase you down. Damn, that actually sounds so hot."

I cupped her stomach in my hands and let my fingers wander over the sweaty curves. Aria purred, humping my thighs.

"You'll have to fight Mable for me," I said. "She's been hornier than ever, even with all of the treats that Bast brings back. Edelweed, or 'full tour' as you call it, only makes it worse. She's addicted to digestion."

"Is that wrong?" Aria asked, nibbling my ear. "Wanting to melt you?"

It was bait and I knew it. As Corrupted, Aria and Mable couldn't control their impulse to eat me and my compliance was partially what had earned their loyalty. Understanding *why* they did it didn't make it any less painful, though, so they had done their best to *acclimate* me to their stomachs. Even the heat of her belly in my lap was enough to make me rise.

Aria blinked, satisfied, and reached her hand into my pants to seal the deal.

"Nope," I said, holding her arm.

Her impatient scoff was half playful, half sincere. She pulled back on my thighs, almost dumping us out into the square.



“Why not?” she asked. “I get the ‘no eating’ policy, but why can’t we have sex?”

“Because,” I said, scooting us back into the shadow of the alley. “For one, we are in public. For two, it’s never just sex with you and you know it. For three, I’ve been holding off Bast for the entire week and if she finds us here fucking, she’ll turn me into a shit crystal faster than she did the drider.”

Aria rolled her eyes, but she didn’t challenge me. If Mable and Aria were horny, Bast was ravenous. All dragons were. The noises coming from the brothel continued to crescendo as a steady stream of dragons flowed in and out, wearing their heavy stomachs like fashion statements. Sometimes their servants would reappear with them. Sometimes the dragons’ bellies came out larger than they were before.

I had learned in the last week that Bast was big for her species, about a head taller than most of the females and two heads taller than the males. I had also learned that they could shift forms.

“Do you think Bast looks like that in her dragon form?” I asked, changing the subject as a huge, purple dragon lumbered past the mouth of the alley. Her red underbelly scraped against the volcanic slate that made up most of the city streets.

“Probably,” Aria said, suppressing a belch. She had given up on trying to seduce me and was taking it out on the kobold slush in her stomach. Her hands stirred the contents from the inside, squashing and kneading. “Maybe a little meaner.”

Dozens of servants followed behind the dragon, bowing. Dragons and attendants alike scurried out of her way as she passed. When one unlucky cat girl bumped into her forepaw, the purple dragon snapped her up, swallowing her without even missing a step. The dragon the cat girl was accompanying simply shook her head and moved on.

“Jeeze,” I said as the bulge of the cat girl traveled down the purple dragon’s throat. “This place is brutal.”

“Indeed,” came a growl from behind us. “Which is exactly why I told you to stay hidden.”

Mable peaked around the corner of Bast's leg. She was wearing an outfit similar to Aria's, but hers was pink and fit a lot tighter around her rotund hips. She shot me a small smile as Bast pulled Aria and I by our collars back down the alley until the square disappeared from sight. By the stomping of her paws, I could tell she was in a bad mood.

"Nobody in the city will sell to me," Bast snarled. "It's the fucking business with the labyrinth. Some dragons are treating it like the end of the world and some are saying that it saved the city, but one thing is clear: somebody snitched.

"But nobody saw us arrive," Mable said, stumbling to keep up with Bast's long strides. "You said so yourself. How would anybody know you were involved?"

"Because she just happened to arrive on the same day that the Labyrinth's entrance became mysteriously available," Aria said. We passed out of the alley into a side street flanked by tall buildings. Bast looked left and right, but there was nobody in sight. "The opening of the Labyrinth meant that somebody defeated the drider and a dragon couldn't do that without help, so there are a few implications. One is that a dragon actually *got help* which is damaging to their pride."

Bast snorted, but let her continue.

"The second is that someone is deliberately sabotaging the Monster Queen. From what I know, half of dragonkind sides with the Monster Queen and the other half actively opposes her. The drider was a warning—a dragon eater at their doorstep to keep them in line. Now the drider is dead."

I looked at Bast's broad back. She had never mentioned the Monster Queen before or any allegiances other than her own. Would she continue to travel with us if she knew about our quest? Would she kill us if she found out?

"So that's why they won't sell to Bast," Mable said, hooves clattering over the cobblestones. I grabbed her arm as she almost tripped, her bulbous hips nearly knocking me into the wall. "They're

afraid of repercussions from the Monster Queen and her followers. That's why everyone's on edge."

"Correct," Bast growled, throwing out her arm. We were approaching a busy street corner. A long, feathered dragon glanced at us as he passed. "Which is why you all need to shut up. Heads down, eyes down, follow right behind me."

"Where are we going?" Aria asked as we lined up with Bast's tail.

"To see a friend of mine. She might have what we need."

Aria looked back at me and raised an eyebrow. *Friend?* She seemed to be saying. *I didn't know that Bast had friends.*

I shook my head. Best not to agitate her further.

The streets of the City of Dragons were paved with glittering black stones. Steam rose from precarious crevices, hinting at the magma below, and servants jumped or dodged the cracks while dragons strode over them, immune to the danger. The deeper we got into the heart of the city, the warmer it became until the sweat on my brow evaporated on contact with the dry air. Everywhere we looked, dragons roamed.

"Eyes down," Bast reminded me.

Onlookers stopped to regard us as we passed. Despite Bast's order, I raised my head slightly, in awe of the sheer size and variety of the city's denizens. There were small dragons in their true forms with snouts like wolves, flying or running along the rooftops. There were huge, lumbering dragons with armored bellies that dragged in the street and sleek, elongated dragons with regal horns in the shape of crowns. When Bast had described the city to me, I had believed dragons to be rare, isolated creatures. The truth was that here, they were as populous as humans.

A black, western dragon licked her lips as her hooded pink eyes turned to mine. I quickly bowed my head and scurried forward, getting as close to Bast as I dared.

"Lysander."

The call came as an alarmed squeak. I looked back to see that one of Mable's hooves was stuck in a crevice. Her skirt had caught on the rock and she was perched precariously on the edge.

"Shit," I whispered, running to help her.

She took my arm gratefully as I braced myself, bearing her weight for the few, vital seconds it took her to extricate her hoof. By the time she was released, however, I had lost Bast in the crowd.

"Come on," I said, taking Mable by the hand. "We need to hurry, or–"

"Are you lossst, little ones?"

A shiver ran up my spine as an enormous paw settled on the cobblestones in front of me. I looked up in the glowing green eyes of a dragon with a long, snake-like neck. Strands of seaweed dangled from her horns as she lowered her immense snout; a single protruding fang longer than my forearm. Plates of black armor adorned her breast. She was in her true form and the power exuding from her was palpable.

Mable trembled as I placed myself between us. A quick glance over my shoulder yielded nothing.

"Our master is the next street over," I said. "We are simply catching up to her."

"Yess, yess," the dragon hissed. Her breath had the rancid quality of swamp gas. A black tongue licked at her chipped fang as her tail wound behind us, cutting off our exit. "Have you considered…alternate employment?"

A clawed forepaw drummed at her stomach. Unlike her chest and shoulders, her belly was a smooth black plane. An oddly shaped bulge caught my attention. I gulped as I recognized the shape of a kobold skull lodged beneath her pudge.

"No, uh, no," I said. "Our employment is fine, thank you. Really we should go."

Her tail tickled my calves. Her hooded eyes told me that I wouldn't be going anywhere.



“My offer is generousss,” the dragon said. Her snout moved closer, saliva dripping from her thick, black lips. “I think you’ll enjoy your new quartersss.”

I reached into my bag for my spellbook. I didn’t know what I was going to do or *if* there was anything I could do, but I wasn’t going down without a fight. The muscles in my shoulders tightened as I felt a hand on my back. Mable brought out her own spellbook, stepping to my side.

The dragon chuckled, amused.

“Very well,” she said. “I only intended to eat one of you, but if your obstinance has earned you both a place in my ssstomach.”

Her head reared back.

A white blur shot through the crowd.

FWOOMSH!

Wings battered us backwards onto the cobblestones. I fell, toppling on top of Aria who attempted to catch me, then crashing to the floor as Mable fell into us both. Bast stood in the center of the street, her fist raised to the dragon who had been about to swallow us.

“They’re mine,” she snarled. “Mine, Priscilla.”

“Bassst,” the dragon mused. “How preciousss to sssee you again.”

The crowd had parted around the pair. Dragons watched from windows and rooftops as servants struggled underfoot. So much for staying under the radar.

Bast spread her arms wide and planted her feet. From behind, she looked larger than life, muscles bulging as she bared her fangs up at the looming dragon. In comparison, however, the black dragon blocked out the gray sky, the tips of her wings an umbrella of shadow that covered the whole street.

Seconds passed in tense silence. The crowd began to whisper.

“Will you not adopt your true form?” Priscilla asked.

Her voice was sibilant; taunting. Bast’s jaw was locked and her eyes were narrowed to threatening pinpoints. Aria pushed me off of

her and scrambled to her feet. I heaved Mable up as well, cowering behind Bast.

“I don’t need my true form to deal with the likes of you,” Bast said. “Swamp dragon filth.”

A low ‘oooh’ shot through the crowd. Priscilla smiled, drawing her head higher.

“Brave talk for a coward hiding beneath her mother’s wingsss,” she said. “But your mother won’t sssave you now, will she? That nasssty business in the Labyrinth, I sssuppose. Your sister—”

She got no further before Bast’s fist barrelled into her stomach. Saliva splattered the street as Priscilla lurched forward, mouth ajar.



“What was that about my sister?” Bast asked.

The solid smack of the second punch drew a gasp from the crowd. Priscilla’s long neck hung above us, face pale, no longer

threatening as her knees shook from exertion. A river of drool doused us as she retched. I threw my arms.

"Ew!" Aria yelled as a kobold skeleton clattered from Priscilla's teeth.

Mable held the skull, goggling at it, while Aria and I kicked the rest of the bones into the crevice. The crowd fell silent as Priscilla's knees finally buckled.

WHUMPH!

Bast stood beside Priscilla's limp body, fists clenched, teeth bared. The only sound was that of her claws as she walked over to the dragon's tail and picked it up. Slowly, she put it to her lips.

"W-wait," Priscilla groaned. She pushed herself up onto her elbows and collapsed again. Whatever Bast had done to her, it left her unable to move. "Wait, wait, think about what you're doing."

"You've insulted me," Bast said, sweeping her arm toward us. "You've threatened to eat my servants. You've denigrated my family. There is only one place for the likes of you. I will return your crystal to your parents. They should have raised a smarter child."

"Bassst," Priscilla hissed, clawing at the ground as Bast placed her tail on her tongue. "Bast, we are of the same faction. The Fangs…they won't let you get away with this!"

A strong bob of Bast's throat pulled half of Priscilla's tail into her stomach. Bast used both hands to heave the other dragon backward, swallowing her up to her hindquarters. Nobody said a word. Nobody came to help. I stared at the faces in the crowd and saw reactions ranging from awe to delight, but there was no pity in the eyes of the dragons.

"Help me you foolsss," Priscilla begged. Her back talons raked at Bast's skin, but she only succeeded in tearing Bast's bra. It fell to the floor, the skin beneath unmarred as Bast took both of Priscilla's legs and gulped them as well. The vast difference in their size only made her stomach more impressive as it grew. "Help me!"

A bunny girl stepped out from the crowd. Her nose twitched, fluffy tail trembling from the cut in the back of her skirt as she approached Priscilla.

“Her servant,” Aria whispered.

She and Mable watched, wide-eyed, as Bast dragged Priscilla’s stomach into her own. Was that a hint of envy I detected in Mable’s expression?

The bunny girl servant walked up to her master’s maw. Her hands were clutched to her chest; her knees knocked together as she stood tall.

“Clementine,” Priscilla gasped. Bast was folding her forearms into her mouth. Her stomach was already thrice the size of her body. “Clementine, do something!”

The bunny girl looked at all of the dragons on the street and spat.

“I hope it hurts,” she said. “When you’re digested.”

A snarl and a snap of Priscilla’s jaws made Clementine disappear. The bulge traveled down her throat even as Priscilla traveled down Bast’s, her muzzle sticking out of Bast’s maw for a brief moment before a raucous gulp packed her away.

“Servants,” Bast roared.

“I think she’s talking to us,” Aria mumbled as we hustled toward the dragon, careful to avoid the crevice.

Bast stayed standing though her stomach extended well past the point of physical probability. The walls strained further than I had ever seen them, skin and muscle packed tight around the jagged shape of her gut’s occupant, still squirming, bathed in searing acids. Would it take long for Bast to digest her? Surely a swamp dragon would have some resistance to acid.

Only when I was close enough to feel the heat rising from her body did I spot the microscopic signs of strain on Bast’s body. Her arms were folded, claws digging into her chest as she ground her teeth. Tiny shudders ran up her legs. She was leaning back on her tail, using it as leverage to keep her balance while every muscle in her

overworked torso contracted around her prey. She was going to collapse soon—of that I was sure.

"Yes, Your Grace," Aria said when we got to her side.

Bast glared down at her.



"Belly rub," she said.

"Of course."

"You, too," Bast growled at Mable.

Together they lowered her onto her ass. Bast's stomach towered over the crowd. All eyes were on Priscilla's outline. They were waiting to see it vanish. They were waiting for Bast to fulfill her promise.

"Not you," Bast said as I approached the wobbling tower of flesh. Leaning back, she propped her stomach on her thighs, spreading them so that I could see the wetness staining the center of her panties.

Eating made Bast horny; the bigger the meal, the more it took to slake her lust, but surely she didn't expect me to…

In front of an entire crowd?

A sudden spurt of stage fright washed over me as I stood before her. There were at least a hundred people watching, waiting. Many of the hungry eyes had turned to me. I tugged at my veil, paralyzed.

Mable and Aria began to rub Bast's gut from the sides. Priscilla continued to thrash, shaking the meaty walls of her prison.

"Bast!" she roared. "Bast!"

All it did was pour air into an already strained gut. Bast drew her head back and belched at the crowd, releasing an enormous torrent of gas as her stomach squeezed tight around her prey.

BBBrrrUuuuuUUUUUuuuuuuuuuuP!

"Lysander."

It was an order. Aria looked at me from under the side of Bast's gut and nodded toward Bast's crotch. A prickly sensation crawled across the back of my neck, torn between the heat of lust and the cold shock of embarrassment. Bast's thighs quivered as she labored to contain her meal. It was up to me to spur her digestion.

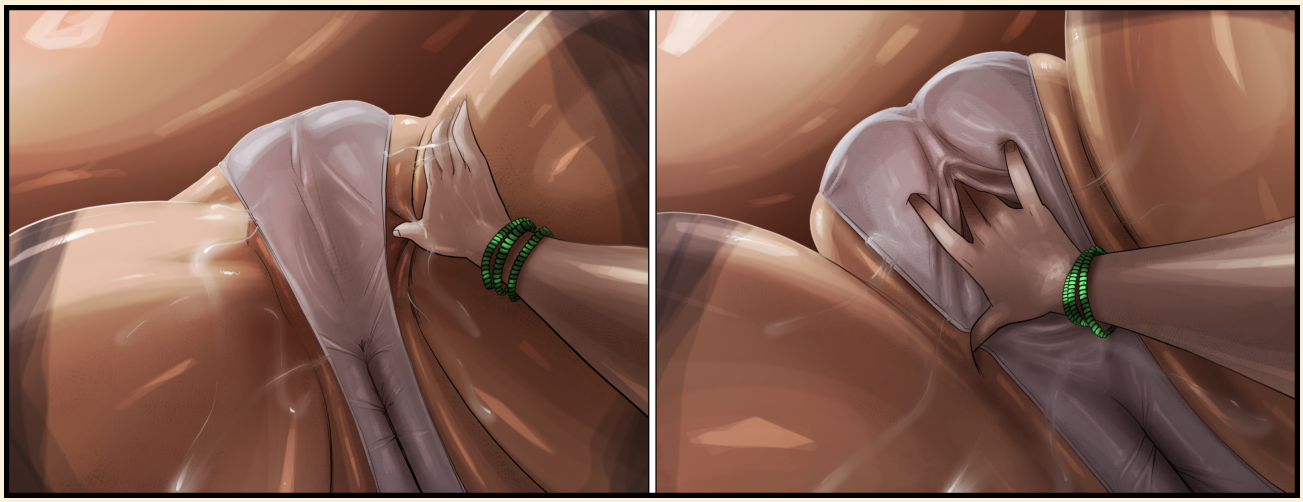
I was going to have to fuck her in front of this crowd.

The smell of sweat and sulfur surrounded me as I stepped between her legs. Her massive stomach lurched above me, gurgling, groaning, sending a thrill through my spine. I placed a hand on the warm skin of her thigh. I was aware of the waiting crowd. I was aware of Bast. I was aware of the tightening in my chest, the hedonistic urge to throw myself into the moistened slit beneath her panties. I took a deep breath of her lust and let instinct course through me. I knew how to please Bast. I just needed to convince the audience.

I started with her clit. The dragon shook as both hands cupped the swollen bud through the white fabric of her panties. How powerful she seemed in that moment, capable of crushing me simply by turning; how powerless she seemed as another stroke brought about a groan and the shuddering, blissful release of acids. Priscilla shrieked as

Bast's stomach began to fill. The gurgles grew heavier, a reward for my indulgence.

It wasn't enough.



My cheeks flushed as I knelt between my master's thighs. Kneeling, I was only tall enough to brush against the bottom of her stomach and my lips, slightly parted, were level with her saturated waistband. I took it in my teeth and pulled it back, tasting her on my tongue. A great gust of heat emanated from her slit as the crowd gasped, but their voices seemed far away, muffled by the moment. The smooth walls of her labia caressed the back of my knuckles. My tongue found her clit.

What am I doing, I thought as I licked and Bast responded. *I'm face deep in a dragon's pussy with over a hundred hungry predators staring right at me.*

I pulled back the clitoral hood and licked the bulb, aware of the taste, aware of the stomach hanging like a boulder above me. The *shlick, shlick, shlick*, of Priscilla's scales sliding across the acrid walls overwhelmed my senses. Bast's breath hitched. Her hips bucked. She wasn't close, but the groan she gave was as sweet as honey and it made me want more.

I slid a hand inside of her and she nearly took my arm. Despite how large she was, how *deep* she was, the first third of her vagina was the most sensitive and I made full use of the knowledge, stroking and sliding, running my hand along her slickened walls.

The churning was getting louder. Liquid gurgles filled the street as silent eyes watched me please my dragon lover and I am ashamed to say that I was proud of every shudder I could coax out of her; every moan and murmur. Elbow deep in her pussy, I brought my other arm into play, plunging in parallel, lapping at her clit like there was no tomorrow. Her hips lifted—a herculean task considering the weight of her stomach—and the growl Bast gave filled me with need.

I could have kept licking. It would have done the trick. I could have picked her open, my arms the key and her cunt the lock, but hubris and lust had me riding high and besides, she was so wet, so *unbelievably wet*, that the sweltering nook called to me and I felt the urge to fill her completely. Without thinking, I let my face slide lower, joining my arms and shoulders at the entrance of her cunt as my foot found a groove in the cobblestones. Bast's stomach howled as she shivered around me. Closing my eyes, I slid into her.

Heat. Pressure. A moment of disorientation as I slid too far and lost the entrance, Bast clenching and closing around me. I took a gasping breath of humid air. Somehow my pants had found their way around my ankles and my cock was stuck between the pulsating walls, the overwhelming weight of Priscilla settling on top of me as the roar of digestion filled Bast's innards, nearly deafening me.

Heat. Vibration. I was losing sense of sensation as I slipped deeper inside. The walls clutched me and I clutched them, unable to breathe, unable to think, aware of Bast's bucking, her braying, the increasing frequency of her contractions. Her cunt squelched around me, sucking, clenching, and my cock got buried in the folds.

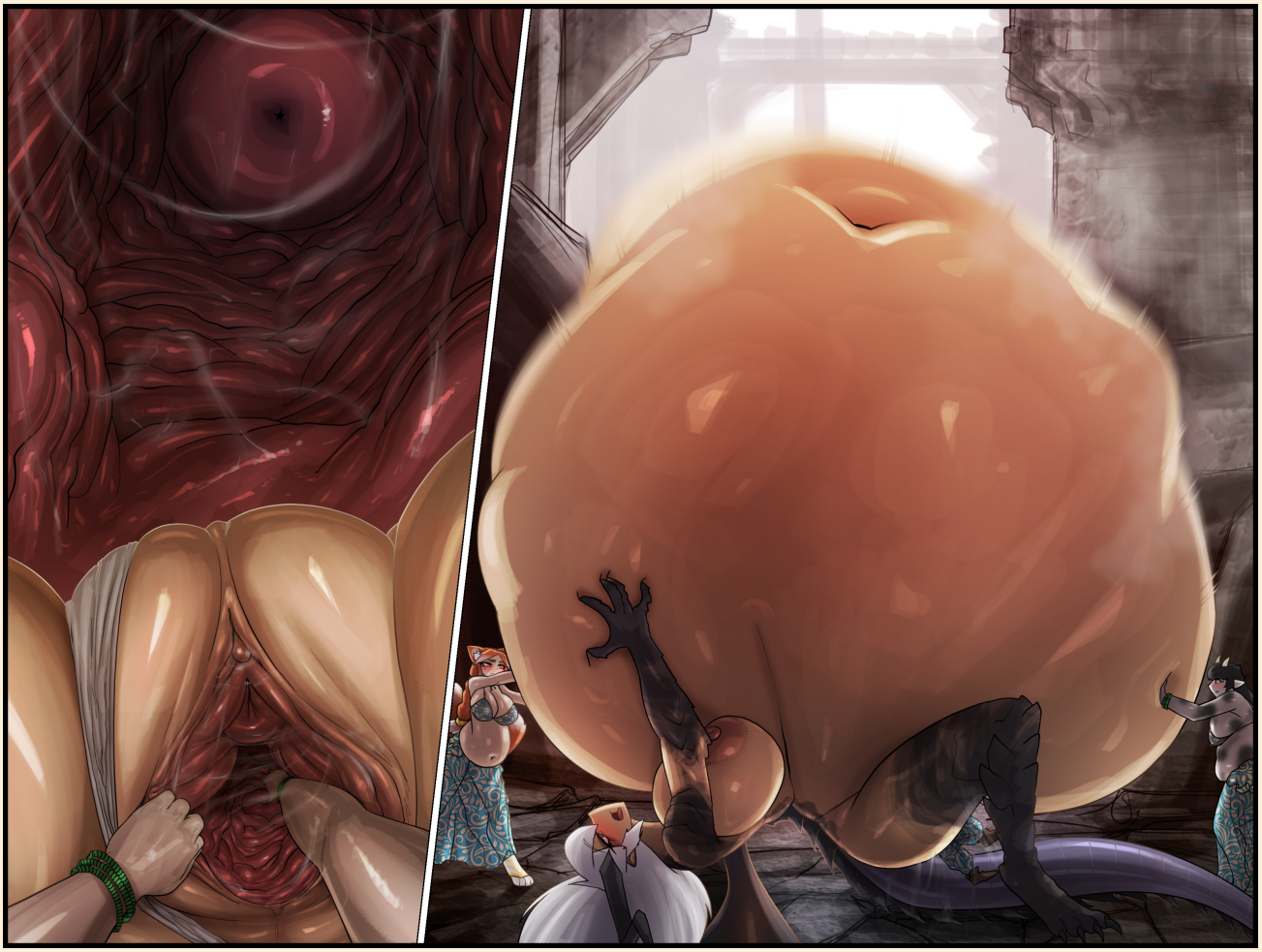
Would the dragons know that Bast's servant came deep inside of her? Would they notice the subtle shift in her breath as she realized?

"Lysander!"

CRUNCH!

At first I thought she might have crushed me. Fear made my eyes snap open as the walls relaxed, releasing their grip on my body, but a quick inspection showed that I was alright. No, it was her stomach that

had collapsed inward, a fact which I came to appreciate as the liquified weight of it settled on top of me, the slorching and sloshing erotically transparent through the thin barrier that separated us. A clench pushed me out and onto the cobblestones. I lay there, disoriented, as the crowd cheered.



“Lysander, are you okay?”

It was Mable. Her spotted face hovered over me, blurry against the backdrop of Bast’s receding belly. I wiped the slime from my eyes and sat up. Mable took my hand and pulled me to her breast.

“You’ve got to be more careful,” she said. Her heart was beating fast. Her grasp was gentle, but firm. “Why did you go inside of her?”

“Got lost in the moment,” I managed, clearing my throat. The fear came only after the fact. I could have died.

Mable clicked her tongue.

“You’d think you’d be more careful without your resurrections.”

Was it just me or did Mable sound slightly peeved? Jealous, perhaps. I'll admit that I hadn't spent much time with her since we had arrived in the City of Dragons. I hadn't realized how much my avoidance must have hurt.

All eyes were on Bast now that she was churning through Priscilla. Bringing my head up, I planted a quick kiss on Mable's lips.

"I'll be more careful," I said.

She smiled and shook her head.

"Really now," she said. "What am I supposed to do with you?"

"Ack!"

Aria rolled between Bast's legs, massaging her wrists. The bubbling belly behind us somewhat sheltered us from the crowd.

"Fucking hell, my wrists hurt," she said, glaring at me. "I hope you had fun in there you little pervert, giving me that whole speech about how we can't have sex only to fuck Bast in the street ten minutes later."

My mouth flapped open. The sheer nerve of her!

"Like I had a choice!" I said.

Aria snorted.

"No, no, I suppose not," she said, though she still sounded angry. "That was a power move. People have been suspicious of Bast, questioning her intentions, but now that she's put a rival in her place, she's reestablished herself in the pecking order. We're just playing the role of good servants. I wonder how fast the news of this is going to spread through the city. I really hope this friend of hers has what we need because I have a feeling this is only the start of something."

Before I could ask what she meant by that, another wet crunch signaled the complete destruction of Priscilla. Bast's stomach shrank to only twice her size as she packed the dragon into the furnace of her intestines.

"Oh, we better get out of here," Aria said, rolling away from Bast's ass.

We had to stay close to our ‘master’ lest we get snapped up by any hungry onlookers, so we all had front row seats to the ritual of Bast’s digestion. Her eyes were closed, head back, elbows planted on the ground as a wretched grinding, popping noise rang out from her stomach. Boiling acids poured over the remains of Priscilla, melting what they could and compressing the rest until the whole slurry entered her bowel’s forge. Bast’s stomach began to glow red. I figured it was from the heat until Bast placed her hand on it and chuckled.

“You’re not getting out of this that easily,” she said. “Stay down until you’re finished, soul and all.”

“Aria?” I whispered.

“Don’t ask me,” she whispered back, arms crossed beneath her breasts. “Olivine never did this shit.”

The glow eventually faded, followed by a sharp crack, a grunt, and a strained buck of the hips as a red gem the size of a rolling pin slid out of Bast. Her stomach now back to a manageable girth (about thrice the mass of Mable, Aria, and I combined), she heaved herself up onto her feet and held the gem to the light. A kobold in a veil scurried out from the crowd. She knelt before Bast, eyes lowered in supplication.

“Priscilla’s house will want this back,” Bast said, tossing the gem to the kobold. The kobold fumbled it, squeaking as it nearly cracked on the ground. “If Yasmine has a problem with what I did to her daughter, she can challenge me to combat. If not, then she can fuck off.”

She turned to the crowd.

“And if anyone touches a single hair on my servant’s heads, they’ll answer to me and my family. They’re mine. Mine!”

Silently, the street cleared until only our party remained. Bast looked down at us, folding her arms as if expecting a challenge.

“That was amazing,” Mable said.

Bast smirked, distracted.

“It was nothing,” she said, though by the way she braced herself, the weight of her stomach remained cumbersome. Half of Priscilla seemed to have been deposited on her tits and tummy. The other half went to her thighs. “I dealt with a miscreant. Come now. We have work to do.”

She turned to walk away and my mouth went slack. I guess plenty of Priscilla went to her ass and tail as well.

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“Bast! How are you, how are you, how are you!”

Our party stood on the threshold of an unassuming shop located in one of the city’s back alleys. Closer to the mouth of the volcano, the heat radiating from the black stones was enough to make Mable pant with exertion. The voice, surprisingly bubbly, came from a golden door knocker in the shape of a minotaur’s head. Bast had knocked using the ring in the minotaur’s nose.

“Let us in, Claudia,” Bast said. “The hour grows late.”

She looked at me and then looked away and I felt a familiar heat creeping up my neck. I really had eaten her pussy in front of a crowd of people. Her pussy had eaten *me* in front of a crowd of people. Were there…draconic implications to that?

I looked around at the cramped, stone buildings surrounding us. The windows were dark, growing darker by the minute as dusk settled over the city like volcanic ash, but that didn’t mean nobody was watching. A rat scurried over the cobblestones. Somewhere in the distance, smoke began to rise from one of the squat houses.

“Isn’t this place kind of squalid?” I asked.

Bast flicked my arm and jerked her head toward the door knocker. Right, Claudia (whoever she was) could hear us through it.

“Not all dragons live in castles,” Aria whispered as footsteps approached the door. “Bast’s family is very rich. Others? Not so much.”

The door cracked open to reveal a rotund Corrupted with narrow pink eyes. She had white fur, small, round ears, and a wet, black snout. A single fang bit into the skin of her bottom lip as she bowed in her apron.

"Come, come," she said. "There is much to be done."

When she turned her back I saw the sweep of a long, tan tail brushing against the back of her legs. Was she fully Corrupted? If so, I couldn't place what animal she was. Her short, white curls hid her ears and her green cotton dress hid her paws if she had any.

The woman led us down a narrow corridor lined with torches. The corridor was large—large enough that Bast didn't have to crouch—but the walls were dingy and made of stone and the spiral staircase the woman was leading us to was bathed in shadow. The sound of glass clinking drifted up from below.

"You may proceed," the woman said, bowing. "I shall feed and find shelter for your servants until you return."

"They come with me," Bast said, ignoring her as she stepped onto the stairs.

"But my master-"

"Oh, let them come down, Sorrel," the voice from the knocker called up the stairs. "I'm sure they won't mind a bit of mess."

Sorrel shook her head like she severely doubted that, her short ears twitching in irritation. Was she an albino skunk? Maybe a weasel.

She caught me staring and licked her fang. I hurried after Bast down the stairs.

The smell of smoke assailed my nostrils the further underground I traveled. I winced, rubbing my nose, then frowned as both Mable and Aria gagged. Their senses of smell were better than mine. Sorrel walked behind us, unaffected. The air grew hotter, hotter, until my veil, still damp from its time in Bast, brushed brittle against my cheek. Mable's hooves dragged. I lent her an arm for the final few steps where a great wooden door blocked our path.

"Welcome to the master's Arcanium," Sorrel said.

Bast was the first into the strange, circular room. It looked like an inverted tower, with windows cut in slabs in the stones and stairs winding deeper underground. A large pentagram dominated the center of the room, but it was crowded, half hidden behind stacks of books and a desk as tall as I was. A dragon in spectacles bent over the desk scratching at a scroll. Her branching, purple horns poked through the rim of a blue wizard hat.

"Bast!" she cried, standing and stretching. "It's so good to see you again!"

Claudia was a head taller than Bast, but less imposing by dragon standards. Everything about her had a slender, stretched out look to it, from her arched back to her bird-like legs. A blue cloak covered her crooked spine, shifting as she loomed above us, smiling.

Her top fangs were missing leaving only a jutting pair of orcish bottom incisors.

"Claudia," Bast said.

She hugged the scrawny dragon, careful not to crush her as Claudia stood on tip-talons, nuzzling her neck. When they pulled away from each other, Claudia looked down at Mable, Aria, and I. Her eyes were a vivid, acidic green and behind them I sensed a calculating intellect…and pain.

"Please," Claudia said, gesturing at the stacks of books. "Sit anywhere, anywhere you like. It's been so long since I've had guests that I…how long has it been, Sorrel?"

"Three and a half years," Sorrel said, pulling chairs from a hidden closet. Despite the dishevelment of the room, the chairs looked recently polished. "Vencer came by to inquire about a ritual."

"Vencer, yes, hmm. I guess it has been quite some time. Tea?"

"No, Claudia, I'm in a hurry," Bast said.

My ears perked. That was news to me. Bast's leg was tapping, her eyes constantly roving the dirty walls. Multi-colored dust covered some of the windows. Most were empty, but a few seemed to lead away into dark tunnels.

“Hurry, hurry?” Claudia said, scratching her head with her too-long nails. “It’s been how many years, Bast! At least a few if Vencer was my last guest. How’s Olivine? I believe she had some interest in the-”

“Olivine’s dead.”

Bast said it matter-of-factly, but I saw her shoulders raise. Aria lowered her head, frowning at the pentagram.

“Oh dear,” Claudia muttered. “Your parents?”

“I’m on my way to see them now,” Bast said. Her leg pistoned against the ground. What was she nervous about? Was she really leaving? “Do you have ingredients for a resurrection spell?”

“I do, I do,” Claudia said, leaning over the desk, “but Bast, my friend, it doesn’t work on–”

“It’s for the boy,” Bast snapped.

Claudia flinched, pulling away. The pain on her face redoubled as she coughed into her elbow. “Ah, yes, I have some gold dust I could spare and I’m sure I could scrounge the rest,” she said, shifting through the scrolls on her desk. “Sorrel, could you gather the…ah, she’s already gone to the cellars. Diligent, she is. I can’t pay her what she’s worth, but she’s stuck with me, yes, or stuck with my research at least. Um, erm, your parents you say? Are you sure that’s wise with the…?”

She nodded at us. Bast’s lip curled.

“They’re not coming,” she said. “Could you watch them until I get back?”

“Hold on,” I said, raising a hand. “You’re leaving us here?”

It was hard to explain the panic welling in my throat. Bast’s eyes were distant, her claws digging red furrows in her thigh. I recognized the look. It was the same look I probably wore the day I told my father I had quit college—apprehension mixed with petulant determination.

“You’re leaving them here?” Claudia gulped. She had crossed in front of the desk, almost stumbling into Aria. The kitsune scoffed and brushed at her skirt. Neither her nor Mable seemed affected by the

news. I stood next to an incredulous Claudia, both wringing our hands in a way I was sure looked pathetic.

"Yes," Bast said, rearing over us both. "I am. Is that a problem?"

"No problem," Claudia whimpered, licking her lips. "What's a favor among friends, eh?"

Bast walked back to the stairs. I wanted to grab her arm, to beg her to let me come. As dangerous as the city was, I felt safe by her side, but here, in this arid basement with the nervous witch-dragon? I hadn't realized how jumpy I was without my resurrection spell. Now that I had something to lose…there are just so many ways to die in this world.

Mable slid her hand into mine and the warmth of it returned my courage. Bast lumbered up the stairs as the rest of us turned back to Claudia.

"So, ah," she said, scratching her throat. "Tea?"

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The four of us sat at a rickety table next to a shelf that Claudia was obviously using as a bed. Paper littered the floor of the room and spiderwebs grew in swathes in the corners. Nobody had said a word in the last ten minutes. We all slurped tea from chipped glasses, bowing our heads toward the table.

"So, uh, Claudia," I said. "You study magic?"

"Oh yes," Claudia said. "Magic of all kind."

Aria kicked me under the table, imploring me to stay silent, but the awkwardness was killing me. Claudia kept scratching her horns, tearing off shavings with her claws.

Sorrel had returned from the basement and was standing at attention in the corner of the room. It took everything in me not to ask if the resurrection spell was ready.

"I thought dragons had their own magic," I said. "Bast seems to look down on what she calls 'human magic'."



A wry smile wrestled itself onto Claudia’s lips.

“She does indeed,” Claudia said. “Ah, but that’s the opinion of most dragons to be honest. The arcane arts never held sway with the species to whom magic comes inherent, but there are some curses that even dragon magic can’t touch and it’s the study of those that I am most interested in. Mine, for example, and yours.”

She tilted horns at Aria and Mable. They sat bolt upright in their chairs, suddenly alert. Tea dribbled from Mable’s cup.

“You’re studying Corruption?” Aria asked.

“The Monster Queen’s curse,” Claudia confirmed, sweeping her tail against the makeshift bed. “Yes, yes, I’ve been studying it for some time. It started as a side project, something I started when I found Sorrel on my doorstep, but the deeper I delved into my research, the more perilous the obstacles became. I believe the curse is magical in origin. All magic that is done can be undone, I believe, but to do so, one must learn to replicate the original effects.”

Mable and Aria looked at each other, then at me. Replicate the original effects? Was she trying to create more Corrupted? I leaned forward in my chair, trying to keep my tone casual.

“Have you made any progress on this end?” I asked.

“I think you mean, ‘have I found a cure’,” Claudia chuckled. “I wish I could say that I have, smooth one, but as evidenced by Sorrel’s condition, I must say that I have not. Though, if we’re being strictly scientific, I have found a way to alleviate the, ah, symptoms.”

“Which symptoms?” Aria asked.

Mable’s stomach growled. Claudia pointed at it.

“Those symptoms,” she said. “The overwhelming hunger. If Corrupted don’t eat humans, then they have nothing to fear from them, no? But prejudices run deep. Many humans still believe that Corruption spreads like a disease, but in all of my studies I have found that it’s more or less random. Proximity to Corrupted will not make one Corrupted. Bedding a Corrupted will not make one Corrupted. Anyhow, when I presented my findings, my colleagues laughed me out of the room. ‘What was the point of curing Corruption?’ they

asked. Furthermore, studying the matter put me on the wrong side of the Monster Queen's allies. Our relationship with the Queen is already tenuous. Some thought that by seeking a cure it would turn downright adversarial."

In my journey through the dungeon, I had never really thought about each species' relationship with the Monster Queen. Obviously Mable and Aria (and a majority of Corrupted) hated her, but as far as I knew, the Monster Queen was the progenitor of most of the species we had encountered in the dungeon. Did they revere her as a god? A myth? Actual royalty? From what little Bast had told us it seemed that half of dragonkind wished to overthrow her while the other half sought to do her bidding.

"You said you wanted to replicate the Monster Queen's magic," Aria said. Her eyes were downcast, but her tail was erect and alert. Mable also sat forward in her chair. "Have you–"

"Not at all," Claudia said quickly, waving a claw. "Though, interesting enough, I have found that Corruption comes in several forms—a byproduct of the Monster Queen's tainted nature. In fact–"

Sorrel cleared her throat.

"Best to keep some secrets, Lady Claudia," she said.

"Right you are," Claudia said, sinking back into her seat. She took a sip from her tiny tea cup and coughed. "Anyhow, you had a question, smooth one?"

I did, but I wasn't sure if I should ask it. Ever since we had arrived in the City of Dragons, Bast had been on edge. She wouldn't tell us about her parents. She wouldn't speak of the Monster Queen. I had been wondering if she was still feeling the trauma of losing Olivine, and yet I was certain that there was more to the story.

"Earlier there was a dragon," I said. "Priscilla. She and Bast got in a fight and before Bast swallowed her, she said they were on the same team. Which team is that?"

Claudia's neck twisted as she set her teacup on the table and in that moment it occurred to me that I might have stumbled onto a

dangerous topic. Aria must have thought the same. The kick she delivered beneath the table was hard enough to make my eyes water and even Mable looked uncomfortable.

Claudia stood. Hunchbacked and crane-legged, she was still several times larger than I.

"Sit," Claudia said as I tried to stand. She paced the room, cutting an impressive shadow in her cloak and wizard hat. Her claws scraped against the ancient carpet. A finger tapped the side of her jaw. She whipped around, pointing at us. I felt a whoosh of static.

She'd cast a spell.

"What is your relationship to the Monster Queen," she asked, first to Aria.

"I want to kill her," Aria said simply, then covered her mouth. The crooked finger turned to Mable.

"I'm grateful to her," Mable said. Her big brown eyes were locked on my own. "I hated her before, but now that I've found someone who doesn't care about my condition, I'm just…grateful, yes."

Aria's head swiveled between us. My cheeks went bright red. So did Mable's, but she held herself proudly, almost daring someone to say something. Aria's expression turned venomous as Claudia pointed at me.

"I hate her for hurting my friends," I heard myself say. "I intend to kill her if I can."

Claudia's finger dropped and I shuddered. What just happened? Had we just signed our own death warrants? Claudia's face was gray and her knees wobbled as she clutched the back of her chair. Sorrel grabbed her arm and helped her to the bed.

"Those are satisfactory answers," Claudia said. "As for your question about Bast, human, the answer is complicated and I am feeling quite weak right now. I'll have Sorrel show you to your room. We will talk about this tomorrow."

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The room Sorrel led us to was actually nicer than Claudia's. An immaculate bed had been made up with sheets and a comforter and the mattress, when I sat on it, felt like a cloud. After Sorrel closed the door behind her, Aria waited for a minute. Then she went to the door and checked to see if it was locked.

"Not locked," she said, returning to the bed. "That might just mean that the creepy weasel is waiting for us at the end of the hall."

"Is that what she is?" Mable muttered sleepily. We had all been sleeping on straw mattresses in a cave at the outskirts of the city. Mable had spread herself out in the middle of the mattress, stomach splayed on either side of her as she continued to digest the kobold she'd had for breakfast. "I thought she was a stoat."

"Is there a difference?" I asked.

"Stoats are bigger and have longer tails. I guess she could just be a big weasel."

"Who the fuck cares?" Aria hissed, grabbing me by the shoulders. "How are we going to get out of here?"

I bit my cheek as Aria's stomach bounced against my chest. Like the rest of Claudia's quarters, the room was dangerously hot and our proximity was starting to make me dizzy. There was a jug of ice water on the dresser at the end of the bed. I reached for it and filled a glass. Aria continued to glare at me.

"I think Claudia's on our side," I said. The water was cool and comforting and it cleared my head somewhat. I held the glass out to Aria and she scoffed. Mable sat up for some water.

"You think?!" Aria said, shaking me. "For all we know she could be a spy! What was that boohoo story about a curse? I've never heard of the Monster Queen cursing anyone aside from…you know."

She gestured to herself.

“Bast wouldn’t have dropped us off with her if she thought we’d be in danger,” Mable muttered, handing me the empty glass. “You saw her fight that dragon.”

“Bast doesn’t know about our quest, dumbass! When Tiberius—”

Aria pinched her forehead. Mable didn’t know about Aria’s previous party and the events surrounding their dissolution. Tiberius had been kicked out of the City of Dragons for saying that he would defeat the Monster Queen. Olivine’s family—Bast’s family—had disapproved.

“Let’s just say that Bast’s parents are fans of the Monster Queen,” Aria said. “*Big fans*. Obviously, Bast has gone against their wishes by breaking the Labyrinth, but she did that to get revenge for her sister, not out of hatred for the Monster Queen. Now we just blabbed to a random dragon that we intend to *kill* the Monster Queen. Oh, and by the way, fatso, don’t think I’m going to forget your whole ‘I’m grateful’ shtick!”

“Fatso!” Mable cried, sitting bolt upright.

“Aria!” I said.

Aria threw her hands in the air and stomped around the room. I’m sure she would have stormed out if it wasn’t for her conviction that a spy was waiting in the hallway. Her tantrum reminded me of the day that she realized Bast had eaten the Kobold Queen. Her anger was no excuse for attacking Mable, though.

“You’re heated,” I said.

“You think?” she asked. Her tails bristled out on all sides. I tried to take her hand, but she tugged it away.

“This is about more than just our blabbing to Claudia,” I said. “You’re angry about something else. Something to do with Mable and I.”

It was a hunch born from the dozen or so nasty glances she had shot us in the past week. It seemed like every time Mable came close to me, Aria glowered.

The kitsune spun on her heel, putting her hands on her rotund hips.

"Something happened with you two," she said.

Mable blinked guiltily. I tried to keep a straight face.

"You were lovey-dovey before the drider, but for fucks sake, now that you're on your last life, you treat Bast like your personal bodyguard, Mable like your girlfriend, and me like some dangerous pet that's constantly threatening to bite you!"

I opened my mouth to say that she *was* constantly threatening to bite me, but that didn't seem prudent and Aria wasn't finished. Her tails flared out further as she stomped toward me. Mable scooted between us, holding up her hands.

"The only reason you want to stay here is because you're blinded by your need for that stupid spell," Aria threw over Mable's shoulder as the cow girl struggled to keep her from throttling me. "Without it, Mable and I are just a little too wild, huh? A little too liable to digest you, huh? You think that feels good, fucker? You think it feels good to be treated like that?"

"Calm down!" Mable shouted.

"Shut up, fatass!"

WHUMP!

Mable's forehead rebounded off of Aria's stomach, winding the kitsune. Aria stumbled back and Mable gasped, clutching her snout as I tried desperately to collect my thoughts.

"Stop it!" I screamed as Aria came flying at Mable.

The two looked at me, shocked. I stood on the edge of the bed.

What Aria said about me being scared was true. I had maintained my distance, assured by Bast that I'd soon recover what was quickly becoming my signature ability. I knew that Aria was getting impatient, but I had figured that there was a time limit—a set point in which our relationship would be rectified—and I hadn't considered her feelings or my own.

I thought I was in the right because their Corruption was uncontrollable, but that was false. Even if they ate me, I still had edelweed. I could still comfort and accommodate them and instead I iced them out. Mable understood. Unlike Aria, she hadn't digested a dear friend. Aria was just as scared about what she'd do to me as I was and all I had done was confirm her suspicions.

It must be hard to be back here in the place where she met Olivine. I just didn't see it before because I was worried about myself.

Aria and Mable were waiting for me to say something. I took a deep breath.

"I'm sorry," I said. "You're right, Aria, and I'm sorry."

She folded her arms and sniffed, but her eyes were wet. Mable let go of her and got her a cup of water.

"What are you sorry for?" Aria muttered, taking the cup. She pushed it to her lips, hiding her face. "I'm being an asshole."

"I'm sorry for my skittishness," I said. "I'm sorry for avoiding you. I'm sorry that I'm not stronger or braver or more capable. Ever since I learned that spell, I've been using it like a crutch. All of my solutions seem to involve getting eaten and that's…probably not a productive way to continue."

"You are brave," Mable said, leaning in. "And if you didn't have that spell when we met, you wouldn't be here."

That was true enough, but I needed to address Aria's concern. I looked at Mable and a silent understanding passed between us. Stepping off of the bed, I walked up to Aria and took her face in my hands.

Her eyes were like pools of gold. I wove my hand through her amber hair and held her close to my chest.

"I'm not afraid of you," I said.

"You should be," Aria whispered into my shoulder. Her hands hung loose at her sides and her tails finally fell flat. Her temper was draining away. "I will eat you."

“Sure,” I said, “but that’s what edelweed is for. I’m not afraid of being digested by you, Aria. I’m afraid that, because I am weak, I’ll stumble into some dragon’s maw by accident and end up leaving you and Mable alone. And Bast, though I admit it would be nice to know where her allegiances lie. I might have overcorrected by keeping away from my companions. If you’ll let me, I’d like to fix that.”

Aria’s mouth caressed my throat.

“Does that mean what I think it means?” she asked.

“Yes,” I said. “Sex is back on the table.”

My back hit the mattress so fast that it made my head spin. Aria and Mable stood over me, drool coating the corners of their lips.

“I’ll take top,” Mable said.

“I’ll take bottom,” Aria said.

Okay, so they had clearly discussed this beforehand because the precision with which Aria pulled down my pants and Mable tore off my veil was uncanny. The plump cow girl’s thighs settled on either side of my head, her stomach blocking out the torchlight, as Aria straddled my hips. It took two strokes of her thumb to get me hard. I had already been halfway there.

“Am I, uh, taking edelweed tonight?” I asked as Mable spread her cunt with two fingers. The pink, dripping interior lowered over my mouth.

“What do you think?” Mable giggled, burying me in my second monster pussy of the day. She sighed as my tongue got to work. Aria was taking longer on the tease.

“I noticed that he failed to answer one of my questions earlier,” she said, addressing Mable. Her tails brushed against my swollen head, causing me to buck. She was keeping me tantalizingly out of reach. “What’s going on between you two? Are you dating now? More than friends, less than lovers?”

Mable’s pussy spread over me, her weight pinning me to the mattress. I almost couldn’t hear her response.

“He told me he loved me.”

Aria had just grabbed ahold of my cock and was teasing it with her thumb. Her grip tightened. I gasped inside of Mable.

"Oh?"

"And I love him."

If Aria gripped my cock any harder, I was afraid she'd tear it right off. Luckily, she retracted her hand, allowing me minimal comfort as her thumb continued to play with my shaft.

"Well," she said. "Well, well, well."

"You love him too, right?" Mable asked.

The question was so blunt that I sputtered. Mable shifted, replacing my mouth on her clit. A twist of her hips made it clear that I should keep licking.

"What?" Aria said. "Love? Ew, no, I was just wondering if all of this was okay."

"Hmm?"

"The sex! Jeeze, Mable, you can be so dense sometimes!"

"I don't know about that."

It was…kind of funny to hear Aria on the defensive for once. I could imagine Mable's smug smile, though I couldn't see it past the jiggling contours of her overstuffed belly—a sight which was quickly making even Aria's gentle thumbing an unbearable turn on.

"I don't love the human brat," Aria snapped. "He's got a mediocre cock at best, but it's the only one available."

Hey, hey, hey, friendly fire! Mable pressed down harder to keep me from leaping up in indignation.

"Sure, sure," Mable said, "but I'm happy to share."

"Share? Oh, so this belongs to you?"

Now Mable's tail wrapped around my cock. The fluffy tip tickled as she kneaded the swollen shaft and I let out a gasp that was consumed by her thighs.

"What do you say, Lysander? Does this belong to me?"

I don't…oh jeez…*oooooh!*



I came with my face buried deep in Mable's pussy. By the sound of Aria's yelp, the arc of it had hit her in the chin.

“That was…you are…that was mine!” Aria roared as Mable giggled. “I’ve been waiting all week, damn it! Now I’m going to have to wait until he’s hard again.”

“You don’t have to wait,” Mable said. “There’s an easy trick to it.”

Oh?

“Just threaten to eat him.”

Oh…

I didn’t like where this was going. I had expected a confrontation, maybe a competition like when they fought over me after the drider. I guess that moment had inflated my ego, because this impending tag team was making me blush like crazy.

Mable lifted her stomach and looked at me beneath her. Her hands pushed into the curves of her belly, jiggling it, pressing it in, then letting it spill out into a huge, erotic ball of white and black fur.

“What do you say, Lysander?” she asked. “Do you want me to eat you?”

“Hey, hey, hey! Didn’t you just say you’d share?”

A second stomach joined the first, this one pale and soft and furless. My eyes were drawn to the crease where Aria’s belly met her hips—an erogenous zone for her that was fun to play with…and kiss.

Goddess, when I had become such a pervert?

Their stomachs mashed together overhead. I couldn’t see anything. Were they making out? Wrestling? I wanted to jar my head to the side, but Mable’s thighs wouldn’t let me. A whimper wrenched itself from my throat. The apprehension was torture! I heard a satisfied chuckle from both of them as I grew hard against Mable’s ass.

“See?” Mable said.

“Neat trick,” Aria said. “Definitely useful.”

Oh, those sneaky bitches.

“I’ll show you another one,” Mable said as I moped, closing my lips in protest. “Go ahead and mount him and let’s see how fast we can make him cum.”

This new, bolder Mable was going to be the death of me. She had learned a lot from our time in the in-between—the liminal space where Cres had sheltered us before the drider—and her confidence seemed to stem from the ease at which she could make me cum. Now she had a dozen tricks up her sleeves; a dozen tricks which might prove terrifying in the devious hands of a certain kitsune.

"He likes to be squished," Mable instructed as Aria mounted me once more. This time she didn't wait to tease me; the warmth of her cunt sheathed me to the hilt. "Belly is best if you are currently digesting, then ass, then boobs. If your stomach is empty, it goes ass, boobs, belly."

"I've noticed that," Aria concurred, letting her own soft belly slap against my chest. Mable rubbed herself on my face, wetting it to her satisfaction. "Do you think he had a fetish for stomachs before meeting us, or do you think he developed it in our company?"

"I donsh't have a fetish for shtomachs," I murmured into Mable's cunt. She pressed her weight down, silencing me. Aria began to move her hips.

"I think it's because of me," Mable said proudly. "Mine was the first he ever experienced."

Fucking hell! I wriggled both of my hands free from beneath Mable's thighs and spread them so that I could breathe. Pinned to the mattress, I had no agency of my own, and the girls were taking full advantage. Was Mable actually teasing me?

"Full stomachs are best," Mable continued. "But after about an hour of digestion, right when they begin to get soft. Have you seen him looking at our bellies the morning after a big meal? I think he wishes they'd always stay like that: soft and round and perfect for him to shove his hands into."

The heat was spreading from my face to my neck and shoulders. I don't think I've ever been that flustered in my life. What was Mable saying! Who was she and what had she done with the innocent cow girl I met in the ruins?

“You know, I think you’re right,” Aria said. She ground her hips into mine, milking me hard. When she pulled up, her stomach slipped away from my chest, only to come down with a heavy *plap*. “He hardly looks at me when I’ve got a flat stomach. Have you seen him blush when you’re right in the middle of digestion and there’s a particularly good *slosh*? I just wanna take his head and shove it deep in my gut so he can listen to it while I make him finger me.”

“His blush is so cute,” Mable agreed. “It stirs up an appetite.”

“Oh, you made him twitch! I think he liked that!”

Last life or not, maybe it was best if I died right here and now. Mable was working herself against my face while Aria pounded away, their gurgling stomachs doing their best to cancel the sound of skin on skin and the creak of the bed frame beneath us. I had to take power back somehow. It couldn’t be through words. What about…

“Eeep!”

Mable’s thighs squeezed my head as Aria jumped, startled by the sound.

“What’s wrong?” Aria asked.

“He started licking like crazy,” Mable moaned, grasping for my hair. She found it and stuffed my face deeper into her cunt as I applied my tongue to everything within reach. “He’s eating me up!”

“Hope you know that’s a turn-on for him as well,” Aria said. “He’s getting h-harder…hmm…that’s not…mmmmm!”

I had managed to wrestle my arms back beneath Mable’s fat thighs and grasp onto Aria’s hips. Tilting my waist, I began to match her strokes, the pounding of our thighs outpacing the shudders of Mable’s nearing climax.

“He’s taking revenge,” Aria panted.

“I don’t mind,” Mable breathed.

“It’s making me hungry.”

“S-same!”

My arrogant contentment at silencing the pair lasted only a minute as my stamina began to wear against the constant movement.

These girls were *heavy*. Mable seemed to have no problem mashing my face into her clit regardless of my ability to breath and Aria responded best when I thrust hard enough to lift us off the mattress—an impressive feat given the 100 pounds of kobold gurgling inside of her. It was a race now: my endurance vs. their insatiable lust with a surprise third contender.

I was about to cum.

"Oh Goddess, oh Goddess," Mable cried, tremors running through her body. Her stomach shook and quaked, threatening to collapse on me.

"Fuuuuck," Aria hissed, dragging her claws across my sides. "I need this."

Removing my hands from Aria's hips, I grabbed hold of Mable's ass and held her tight as I delivered the finishing blow. She came, pushing my face deep into her quivering pussy, crushing me with her thighs. Aria leaned back, going for the kill, and at the last moment I replaced my hands on her hips and dragged her down, connecting us as I came, nudging her over the edge.

"*Haaaaaaaaaah!*"

The weight of her body receded as she fell back on the bed, splattering semen on the sheets. Mable released me, though she stayed sitting on my chest, panting and gasping, her face glowing with pride.

"That was wonderful," she said. "Wonderful."

"It was okay," Aria said from where she lay with her head over the side of the bed. Her tails flopped down on the mattress beside me, still twitching. "6 out of 10."

I couldn't respond even if I wanted to. My body was sore from its inadvertent pounding and I didn't feel like I could lift a single finger. If they let me, I'd have fallen asleep just like that, but unfortunately, I had withheld too much from my ravenous Corrupted and once was never enough when the hungerlust struck.

Aria passed something to Mable. Mable lay my spellbook on my chest.

“No,” I said.

“Come on,” Mable said. “Please?”

Ugh, the way she batted her eyes; she knew what that did to me. The thing they were asking for, though…I wasn’t sure if I could withstand it.

“You need to practice,” Aria said.

“It’s not a matter of practice,” I said, trying to sit up. Mable’s bulk made it impossible, forcing me to flop my head back on the pillow. Her stomach had shrunk somewhat during our escapade. *Pity*, I thought, snorting at my own joke. “We don’t know exactly what the spell does.”

It had appeared in my spellbook the day that we stepped through the portal into the City of Dragons. I assumed it was from Cres—the spell was written in the same, shimmering gold lettering that the resurrection spell was written in—but how and why it had appeared was a mystery. My best guess was that she had inserted it while we passed through the in-between—the liminal space between portals.

“How are you supposed to learn if you don’t practice?” Aria asked, batting her eyes. It was less cute when she did it, though I can’t say it didn’t produce an effect. “Come on, loverboy, you owe it to us.”

“Owe you?!” I blustered. “Who exactly set you free from the Kobold Queen, huh?”

“And then kept me collared for another month so that I had to follow all of your demands,” Aria countered, shooting me a fanged grin.

“I. Didn’t. Know. The. Command. Phrase.”

“Stop. Being. A. Pussy.”

Ugh. The book was already open to the spell and the girls wouldn’t let me be until I tried it. I shimmied up to the headboard and looked at the door. Weren’t we worried about Claudia being a spy ten minutes ago?

“I’ve jinxed the door,” Aria said. “If anybody enters the hallway, I’ll know.”

That wasn't going to help us if a squad of dragons decided to break in, but then again, if that happened, *nothing* would help us. I sighed and fingered the spell. The word came automatically to my tongue.

PRENGU.

A glimmer suffused my body. The air tasted sweeter; the bed felt softer. I could count the feathers in the mattress beneath me and hear the sound of Aria's breath across the room, hoarse and excited. I sat up in bed. My limbs felt as light as flame.

"It's disorienting," I complained, blinking.

The whole room was lit with sputtering torchlight, but suddenly I had to squint. It was all too bright. I could see every bristle of Mable's fur and hear the slorch of her belly as she crawled toward me. I took her in my arms, pulling her to my chest.

She weighed hardly anything.

"It's an enhancement spell," Aria said. "Strength, speed, durability—I don't see why you're so hesitant to use it."

"Because of the drawback," I moaned as Mable kissed my neck.

Her lips were so warm and so soft. It sent electricity shooting through my spine.

I could only handle the enhancement spell for three minutes. Any more than that and steam would rise from my body and my bones would threaten to turn to molten lead. As it stood, even a minute had me exhausted for an hour afterwards and the one time I got up to three, I slept for the rest of the day.

No time to bitch, I guess. The spell has already been cast. Better make use of it.

Mable hooted as I took her beneath the hips and lifted her off the bed, princess style. She felt as light as a sack of grain; lighter, in fact, as I spun her around to face me. I kept expecting to feel strain, to feel weight, but despite the evidence of her massive belly mashing against my chest and my hands sinking into her thick thighs, it was hardly an inconvenience. I'd have to do this fast if I was going to get to Aria in

time. The kitsune was waiting with her arms crossed, foot tapping on the hot stone floor.

“Ready?” I asked Mable.

“Ready,” she breathed.

Her legs hooked around my back as I kissed her, feeling her tongue on mine, taking space and conceding it just as happily. My head spun with the giddiness of it. I felt like a teenager with herculean strength. Mable’s lips tasted sweeter than air and I couldn’t get enough of her, especially as her hips found mine, connecting, coming together with a loud and satisfying slap.

PLAP! PLAP! PLAP!

“Oh mercy,” Mable muttered against my lips, eyes shut tight. “Oh mercy, mercy, you taste so good.”

There was no time to work with, so I had to work fast.



PLAP! PLAP! PLAP! PLAP! PLAP!

Our stomachs were mashed together, hers soft and doughy and mine hardened from weeks of rough living. I wanted to push into her warmth, to meld with it, to hold her so tight that I sank into her body. My hands dug furrows in her hips as they became a blur. I pressed her up against the wall and fucked her until she dragged her nails across my back and screamed my name.

I left her dripping and delirious on the bed and turned to Aria. She was sitting in a chair, waiting for me.

"I don't need all that," Aria said, holding out her stomach. "I just want you to help me mulch the rest of this kobold. He's sticking around way too long."

I took a deep breath and walked over to her. Every step felt like a mile. My brain could only parse half of what I was experiencing and so time flowed like a slideshow. How long had I been maintaining the spell?

I knelt in front of Aria and took hold of her stomach. The walls were smooth planes of silky skin, filled to the brim with meat and bones. They bubbled against my palms as I curled my fingers around them. I gave it a squish and Aria moaned.

"That's nice," she said. "Deeper, hun."

Hun? I found a bone amidst the slurry and pulverized it between my palms. It disintegrated into mush as Aria shifted in her chair, drooling, bending, hips thrusting toward me. In a flash of inspiration, I picked her up and sat in her place.

When I set her down in my lap, I reached around her sides and continued to kneed her belly, only this time I was sheathed in her, privy to every clench and contraction.

"Oh fuck, Lysander, this is…*goooood,*" Aria groaned.

More crunches shook the skin of her stomach as I squeezed it from the top, the middle, the sensitive underbelly. With every crack, Aria clenched, and when she clenched, I pushed myself that much

deeper, hilting my throbbing erection so that each squirm kneaded around, bringing us both closer to the edge.



Aria put a hand behind her neck and found my head, turning to kiss me. As she did, pain flared in my hips. My time was almost up.

"I have to release the spell," I said.

"Don't you dare," she hissed.

Now she was rocking as well, working herself around my cock, using the rotation of her hips to take us closer, closer. The pain was immense now, but so was the pleasure. I kissed Aria twice and she gasped in surprise. We came together for the second time that night.

NIXT.

It was like somebody had just tripled the gravity. Aria yelped as my grip fell away from her hips, sending her sprawling on the floor. She turned to glare at me, but I was falling as well; I face-planted on her belly and she kept me there. I probably would have suffocated if Mable hadn't come and pulled me off of her.

"Oh dear," she said. "I think we overdid it."

"For once, I agree with you," Aria said, picking herself up. "Let's get him into the bed."

Mable picked me up in the same way that I had done for her only moments earlier and laid me down in the center of the mattress. Everything ached. I tried to raise my head, to ask for a glass of water, and the request came out as a parched croak. Mable grabbed the pitcher and brought me a glass. She tipped the water down my throat and some life came back to my limbs.

"That spell will be useful in the future," Aria said. Her skirt had been hiked all the way to her elbows. She pulled it back down, laying next to me. "You lasted nearly five minutes. Maybe soon you'll be able to pick up Bast."

"Don't tease him," Mable chided. She lay on my other side, resting her head on my shoulder. Her stomach bumped my arm as she cuddled close. "He needs to sleep."

"You're drooling."

"So are you."

Uh oh. Mable and Aria were looking at me from both sides and in my current state, there was nothing that I could do to stop them if the hungerlust spilled over (hungerlust being the term that I had made up to describe what Mable called "wanting to fuck and eat me at the same time). My only hope was that jealousy would prevail—Aria wouldn't let Mable eat me first and vice-versa.

Except, oopsies, I had failed to account for their newfound partnership. Mable gave my right cheek a sloppy kiss. Aria nibbled my shoulder.

"Hey," I warned.

"He tastes really good," Mable said. Her stomach folded over my own as she leaned in closer, smelling my hair. "Smells good, too."

"I wanna bite him," Aria agreed.

"Please don't," I said.

"And we have him all to ourselves," Aria said, stroking my arm. "Bast isn't here to bully us for trying to swallow him. There's edelweed in his bag, right?"

I could only watch as Mable slid off the bed and went to rifle through my pack. She came back with a handful of green leaves, dipping the mattress as she climbed back on. Aria, who had been licking my cheek, looked down and smirked. I closed my eyes and prayed they didn't notice.

"Is he…hard?"

I groaned.

"Knowing that you're going into one of our stomachs gets you that hard, huh," Aria said, cupping my balls. "It's like you're handcrafted for this world. I bet you can't wait to cast that resurrection spell to see us all fat from eating you. Is that what you want, Lysander? Do you want to make us…bigger?"

I kept my eyes closed. Maybe if they thought I was asleep, they'd go away.

“Is that true?” Mable asked, nudging me. Her stomach jiggled as she lay my hand on it. “How big do we have to be for you to be satisfied?”

“You’re both the worst,” I said. “Aria, I understand, but you, Mable?”

“Hehe.”

Mable took hold of my shaft. Both her and Aria brought their stomachs close to my ears, making me listen to them churn through the last of their meals as they brought me to a forceful climax.

“Maybe we should stop,” Mable said.

In response, Aria shoved a fistful of edelweed into my mouth. I tried to spit it out, but she plugged my nose and held her hand over my lips until she felt me chew and swallow. At least Mable was thinking straight.

“Well, it would be a waste to stop now,” Mable said, biting her lip, “now that he’s eaten the leaves.”

For the love of–

Before I could even think of an exasperated comment, Aria’s lips parted. My stomach dropped as I stared into her throat, watching it widen. I clutched the sheets. Mable took hold of my feet.

“Hey now,” I said.

Aria’s teeth clicked shut right above my nose. She laughed as I flinched, rubbing my cheeks with her thumbs.

“If I were a nicer girl, I’d just feed you to Mable,” she said. Mable was on all fours, raising my feet to her lips. “But I think we’re gonna tug-of-war for it. You’ve kept us waiting for a week, big boy, and now we’re ravenous.”

She snapped her teeth again, then opened wide.

This time there was no escape from her gullet. Her humid breath pooled against the fabric beneath my head, her throat a slimy, dripping chasm leading to familiar depths. After the unbearable heat of Claudia’s home, her tongue was almost tepid. It lapped my chin, my neck, tasting, slurping, sponging the sweat off my skin. She sheathed

my head in her mouth and sucked. When she pulled away, a long string of saliva connected us. She brushed at it and chuckled.

"Look at that blush," she said.

Meanwhile, Mable was lifting my ankles. She waited for me to look at her, still dazed from Aria's maw, before she placed my heels in her throat and bent, dragging her body over mine. The meaty hood of her gullet clamped against my toes, but she didn't swallow; not at my calves, nor my thighs, nor my hips. She crawled up the bed, filling herself with my body until the smooth walls of her throat gave way to the rancid, doughy confines of her waiting stomach.

"Mable!" Aria shouted.

The cow girl's nose was flush with my cock. She winked as her tongue slid between my legs to lap at it. Aria, not to be outdone, positioned herself at the head of the bed. I was barely given a second to compose myself before her gullet slid over me, locking me up to my shoulders.

It wasn't the most comfortable experience, being swallowed from both sides. Teeth dug into my back and thighs; flat, wide molars from Mable and sharp canines from Aria as she growled, the sound a roar within the damp corridor of her lubricated throat. My head was thrust past her ribcage where the pounding of her heart mixed with the slurry of sloshes and bubbles contained within her stomach and for the first time since we started I wondered if her stomach was empty yet before finding out suddenly and disgustingly that it was not.

SPLORCH!

"Ew, Aria!" I shouted, then regretted opening my mouth.

Her stomach was putrid, messy from devouring its previous occupant and still filled with simmering meat. At least Mable had the decency to evacuate her first stomach before shoving me into…into…*ahhhh*.

Now Aria's tongue joined Mable's at my waist, slurping my cock like a snowcone. Her tongue was longer and wetter, but Mable's was wide and sticky and her mouth was a furnace cupped around my

balls. I bucked in Aria's throat, unable to move. I couldn't bend my knees, nor my arms, nor even cry out lest my face be subsumed by the slimy, overripe walls of Aria's stomach. Aria moaned, sending a thrill through my spine, but Mable, pushing from the bottom, had the advantage. With a quick thrust, she pulled my cock into her mouth. Two strokes had me over the edge.

I came against her uvula.

"Mmm mmm," Aria said.

No fair.

"Hmm hmm."

Ha ha.

Great. Now they were having a fight while I was sitting there like a double-headed dildo. A warm heap of glop slurped against my cheek as the contents of Aria's stomach churned around me.

"Mmph!"

A hard knock resounded through both of their bodies. Mable cried out in pain; Aria in triumph. Mable's lips receded to my thighs as Aria's replaced them, taking my cock for herself. Had she just…headbutted the cow girl?

"Mmm mmm!"

No fair.

"Hmm hmm."

Haha.

Touche, Aria, touche.

Aria took more space, claiming my ass, my thighs. Mable had to retreat all the way to my calves as she nursed a bruised forehead.

At my knees she made her last stand. The clenching winch of peristalsis had pulled my feet out of Mable's stomach and into her throat. She locked on with her lips and gullet, refusing to retreat.

"Mmm."

Move, Aria said.

"Hm!"

No, Mable retorted.

“Hhmm mmm eem hmm.”

I…couldn’t really catch that one and apparently neither could Mable. She tilted her head in confusion: an interesting sensation when my legs were lodged deep in her windpipe. Suddenly, a slurp. A tug. A flurry of movement. Mable’s mouth clamped tighter than was comfortable, pressure from all sides causing us both to cry out. What was happening? Aria was moving forward, but Mable wasn’t retreating.

Aria was eating Mable!

“Hhmm hmm hmm!”

Mable’s mouth came free with a pop and there was a glorious second in which I could wiggle my toes before Aria threw her head back in righteous conquest, letting my legs slide down her gullet to join me in her stomach. It locked around me, finally full.

“Get fuuuuuuuucked,” Aria belched.

She threw herself back on the bed, jostling me inside of her.

“No fair, no fair, no fair!” Mable said. “You actually swallowed my head! Now I’m all wet and…and sticky!”

“Oh? And do you think you have it worse than Lysander?”

Aria drummed her stomach smugly. Mable sputtered something incomprehensible, then grunted and joined her on the bed.

“At least let me play with him,” Mable said.

“I will if he’s not too busy playing with himself,” Aria chuckled.

There was not a damn chance of that! I was so tired and bundled so tight that even as her flesh oven contorted me into a pretzel, I could only wriggle like a worm. Thank the goddess for edelweed, because dying like this, *especially* inside of Aria would have been humiliating.

“How long do you think it’ll be until you…you know,” Mable whined.

She pawed at Aria’s stomach. It didn’t make it any more roomy.

“Eight hours, give or take,” Aria sniffed, arrogant in victory. “You can have him in the morning because girl, he’s going to be



moving through me all night. Hehehe. Hehe. He…Mable? Mable, what are you doing?"

It was difficult to tell from Aria's innards, but by the shifting of the mattress it felt like Mable was crawling to the end of the bed. Aria's legs were suddenly pulled out from under her. I braced myself as the stomach lifted from below.

"Mable, don't you dare," Aria gasped. "Mable doooo*oooh why have I never had you do this before?*"

SLURP! SLURP! SLURP!

An avalanche of sodden flesh collapsed around me as Aria clenched. Her spine bent, hips tilting, bucking, hands and feet clawing at the sheets while Mable ravished her with her tongue. A sudden, sinking feeling caught my attention just as Mable pried Aria's legs apart and kissed at her thighs.

"Really?" I asked as my left foot plunged into Aria's intestines.

"I. Was. Already. Digesting." Aria whined.

"Who were you calling fat earlier?" Mable asked. Her horns pricked me through the bottom of Aria's stomach. "Hmm? Hmm?"

My other ankle found the knot of Aria's intestines and slipped inside. Her bowels clenched like a conveyor belt, dragging me forward.

"You won't get Lysander tonight," Aria said. Her breath was coming in winded gasps. "There's no point to this."

"It's not a point," Mable said. "It's a punishment."

"I don't know what you mean*ohmygod*."

The slurping renewed with vigor and didn't stop until my torso was lodged firmly in Aria's intestines. I sighed, cracking my neck one last time before my head was swallowed. At least the girls were finally getting along.

***



It might have been the middle of the night when Aria released me. Deep underground, it was impossible to tell, but by the time that

Aria squatted groggily over the dirt floor of the lavatory, my body was a mass of knots.

"Hrrrk!"

PLOP!

"What the hell are you doing?" I muttered as Aria kicked dirt over me.

She looked behind her, eyes half-closed. She was swaying on her paws.

"I don't…I dunno," she said.

"You wanna go back to sleep?"

"Mmm."

That was all she left me with before she slumped out of the room. The pins and needles of feeling returning to my limbs was nothing compared to the pain of my bent spine. I propped myself up on an elbow and twisted. The pop was both satisfying and excruciating.

"Fuck."

A single, sputtering torch illuminated the lavatory. In its glow, I could see the raised seat of the stone toilet that Aria had used before releasing me and a basin filled with brackish water. I dragged myself over to the basin and washed myself off the best I could. When I was finished, I followed the shadows into the hallway, looking left and right.

"Aria?" I whispered.

There were several doors set in the wall of the hallway. Torches flickered intermittently, but the spaces between were dark and the ends of the hall veered into unknown corridors. My bare footsteps echoed as I walked. I stopped at the first doorway and listened.

Nothing.

Mable snored like a chainsaw, so that wasn't our room. I walked to the next door and pressed my ear against it only to feel a chill run up my spine. I looked back toward the end of the hallway. There was a white figure there, watching.

“Jesus,” I said as Sorrel stepped into the light. “You scared me.”

She approached wordlessly, her apron rustling around her furry thighs. In what was quickly becoming the theme of my life, I realized at the last minute that I was still completely naked.

“Would you like a towel?” Sorrel asked.

Her voice was husky and warm, but her eyes were cold. She held out a towel and I took it, wrapping it around my hips. How had she known I needed one?

“Thanks,” I said. “Look, I really need to get back to–”

She put a finger to my lips.

“Your spell is ready,” she said.

I gulped. Sorrel was a predator. If Claudia was working with the Monster Queen, then maybe Sorrel was trying to lure me away so that her master could question me, but if that was the case, then why hadn’t she done so earlier? Claudia was presumably stronger than two Corrupted and a human. Was she being cautious? Waiting for backup? If only I had my resurrection spell…

“Sorrel,” I whispered.

She had turned, expecting me to follow her.

“Hmm?”

“Claudia…does she work for the Monster Queen?”

It was a gamble. Mable and Aria had no love for the Monster Queen, but that didn’t mean that all Corrupted hated her. I braced myself to run.

Sorrel’s chuckle surprised me. She shook her head, scratching her furry stomach through her apron.

“Claudia hates the Monster Queen more than it would be safe to admit in this city,” Sorrel said. “Her deformity is a curse and the cure has been unavailable to her for some time. It was a reminder from the Monster Queen that dragons are not above her governance. Claudia has asked that I assist you as discreetly as I can. She trusts you and the fox. The cow…not so much.”

Ah, that's why Sorrel didn't want to return me to the group; Mable's allegiance was in question. That was fair, though I knew that Mable was no more amiable to the Monster Queen than I was, but if I had already been punished by the Monster Queen, I would also make triple sure before trusting an outsider. Apparently content that I'd follow her, Sorrel turned and bustled down the hall.

The shadows grew longer the further we trekked into Claudia's lair. The hallways twisted, amplifying the sound of our footfalls. Sorrel would occasionally look over her shoulder to make sure I was behind her.

About a minute into our journey, a crash made us both jump. Something had fallen on the floor beside me.

"Oh," I said, picking up the leather journal. "My spellbook. It teleports to me if I get too far away from it."

"Useful," Sorrel said, the fur on the back of her neck falling flat once more. She rummaged in one of her apron pockets and brought out a flat notebook. The cover looked like it was made of bark. "Mine is cursed to protect it from thieves. Thanks to Claudia, I have collected over three dozen spells."

"Anything good?" I asked.

There was that funny look again, like behind those yellow eyes, she was laughing at me. She flipped to a page and cleared her throat.

"Hedonis."

An uncomfortable feeling washed over my skin. There was a…an itch in my brain that was hard to identify. My body seemed at once too large and too small, made unwhole by the spell. Claudia had something that could complete me, or maybe I wanted to complete her. My attention turned to her fluffy belly poking out of the corners of her apron. I wanted to take it in my hands. I wanted to bury my face in it. I wanted to slide between her thighs and fill her in every sense of the word. When I shook my head, the feeling faded. An unfortunate lump had formed against my towel.

"What was that?" I asked.

“My favorite spell,” Sorrel said. She had heavy, hooded eyes that made even her normal expressions appear sarcastic. “It inhibits rationality, the only thing that separates man from beast. It makes humans more like…us. What exactly did you feel when I gave you a taste of the wild side, Lysander?”

“Nothing,” I lied. “I just felt uncomfortable.”

“Pity.”

Sorrel smirked and pushed open a door to our left. It led into a small, square room with sagging shelves. The shelves were lined with sealed jars. Odd objects floated within them, obscured by shimmering, green liquid.

A tattered rug covered the middle of the closet. Sorrel pulled it aside to reveal a trapdoor.

“I’ve already prepared the ingredients,” she said, tugging on an iron ring. The trapdoor came open in a plume of dust. “You just have to cast it.”

“Er, right.”

I looked back out into the hallway. Shouldn’t Aria be here for this at least? I really wished that I had Bast, but given the circumstances, it might be best that I didn’t. What was taking her so long? Why did she have to leave without telling us what she was doing?

Sorrel was already halfway down the ladder. I licked my lips and got on the rungs, wincing as the trapdoor shut above us, leaving us in the dark.

“Feel it out,” Sorrel whispered. “It’s a long way to the bottom.”

I put a foot down, half expecting to have it slide into Sorrel’s gullet, but instead it found the next rung, then the one after that. I descended through the shaft, happy, at least, that our plunge into the heart of the mountain was resulting in cooler temperatures. We must have been moving away from the volcano’s heart. At last my foot found solid earth and a torch flared. Sorrel was standing in front of a

pair of double doors. A symbol carved into the ancient alder stopped me in my tracks.

A circle, crudely gouged into the surface, its edges uneven and rough. The top half of the circle held the faint outline of a face, human in shape but distorted, the features stretched and smudged as if the carver's hand had trembled. Below, the other half twisted into something grotesque, a gaping maw with jagged teeth, something between animal and nightmare, its form barely contained within the bounds of the circle.

Encasing it all was a serpent, its body thick and sinuous, coiled tightly around the circle, the tail disappearing into its own mouth. I could almost see the scales ripple, could almost hear the faint hiss as it devoured itself. A jagged line ran from the top of the circle to the bottom, like a crack splitting the symbol in two, but the break didn't separate; instead, it seemed to merge the human and the beast together in a spiral that refused to end.

I reached out, my fingers hovering just above the wood, feeling a chill radiate from the carving. The symbol was raw, violent, scratched into the door in a fit of madness. I couldn't tear my eyes away from it, even though every instinct screamed at me to turn back, to leave whatever lay beyond that door undisturbed.

"What is this?" I whispered.

"Come," Sorrel said.

She pushed on the doors and they began to open. I took a step back, shaking my head.

"No," I said. "What is this? What is that symbol?"

Sorrel's lips pursed. In the torchlight, she looked more animalistic than ever.

"It's the Embrant Sigil," Sorrel said. "It's the symbol of the Monster Queen."

I took a step back, preparing to flee, but before I could make a move, Sorrel's paw shot out, her fingers dancing in the air as she whispered something under her breath. A rush of warmth flooded my

veins, a heady, intoxicating sensation that dulled the edges of my fear. I knew this feeling from only moments before. In hindsight, I wondered why I had ever trusted Sorrel after she revealed a spell targeting my greatest weakness—**hedonis**.

My resolve crumbled like dust. I couldn't resist her as she turned and pushed open the doors, the symbol splitting apart as they creaked open. Inside, the sanctum was dimly lit, flickering torches casting long, eerie shadows. The walls were lined with grotesque statues, each one more monstrous than the last, all in various states of transformation—human faces contorted into snarls, limbs twisted into bestial forms. This was a shrine to the Monster Queen, a place of corruption and despair.

The **hedonis** spell made me see it differently.

The darkness seemed to pulse with a strange allure, the statues almost beautiful in their grotesqueness. I followed Sorrel deeper into the sanctum, my footsteps light, as if I were gliding.

She led me to an altar in the center of the room, her movements fluid and confident. "You came here seeking a resurrection spell," she said, her voice low and persuasive. "I can give it to you. All you have to do is trust me."

My thoughts were muddled, the part of me that knew better buried under the spell's influence. I reached into my towel, pulling out my spellbook. It was the only thing I had left that could bring me back from the brink of death, and I handed it to her without a second thought.

The moment she touched it, she recoiled, her paw sizzling as if burned. Sorrel hissed, her eyes blazing with fury. "A curse!" she snarled, tossing the book back at me. "Cast it yourself, Lysander. Now."

Fear gripped me, but I couldn't refuse her. Not under the spell. Not when my greatest desire was so close, the ingredients weighed out on a set of golden scales in the center of the sanctum.

"You don't work for Claudia, do you?" I asked.

My teeth chattered as I spoke. I raised a hand to my jaw and found that my whole body was shaking. Sorrel slipped out of her apron and pulled her dress up over her head. Her silver fur shimmered in the torchlight.

"No. Not really."

"The Monster Queen–"

"Saved me," Sorrel said, spreading her arms wide. She looked up at a statue depicting a woman clawing at her skin. Claws broke through the woman's nail beds, rending her flesh, but instead of muscle and sinew, the flesh parted to reveal fur and scales. "Powerless, I toiled as a slave to lesser nobles, too scared to run and too cowardly to take my own life. I prayed every night for a solution until one morning, I woke to find my teeth sitting strangely in my mouth. Fangs, Lysander, and claws; tools to grasp my salvation. At that moment I realized that humans were never meant to be civilized. Don't you feel it, Lysander? The thrill of letting go?"

My head was pounding, throbbing with the beat of distant drums. I clutched at it, crouching, letting out a small moan. I knew. I knew the thrill of letting go. It was the thrill of kissing Mable for the first time, of an open gullet, of a darkened gut. It was freeing Aria and sleeping with Bast. It was the hedonistic whisper that I had ignored in my past life; the promise of change.

I wasn't thinking rationally. I had to snap out of it. Sorrel swayed toward me, her hips and tail bobbing in tantalizing unison. She crouched before me and lifted my chin with a claw. Her yellow eyes flashed as she licked my neck.

"The Monster Queen has turned her eyes upon this city," she whispered. Another lick dissolved one of the delicate threads tethering me to sanity. I clutched at Sorrel's sides, digging my hands into her supple fur. "You have no idea what you've caused, you and your friends. The drider kept the dragons in check. Now they're free to do as they like and Lysander—"

Her lips caressed my ear.

“—they’re hungry.”

I pushed Sorrel away. I had to leave. The chamber door was only a few steps away, but when I turned, Sorrel grabbed me by the hips and turned me. I kissed her before I knew it. Her black lips spread over mine and liquid fire flowed through my veins.

“You have no clue,” Sorrel whispered, mounting me. Her hips ground against the towel. “Poor Lysander. The cow and kitsune, are they your friends? Did you know them before they received the Monster Queen’s gift? Do you intend to save them? Or, let me guess, have you been fucking them silly and wallowing in guilt? What would you say if I told you that She could absolve you? What if I told you that this,” she slammed her ass down on my erection, “is perfectly natural? Recite the spell, Lysander, here in this shrine. Let yourself be reborn.”

With trembling hands, I opened the book to the page with the resurrection spell. The familiar triangle symbol stared back at me, a beacon of hope, my connection to Cres. If I cast the spell, I could indulge Aria, Bast, and Mable. I could quell their hunger. Wasn’t that better than salvation? And who was I? A hero?

As if!

Snap out of it, a voice screamed in my head. It was my last bit of rationality, calling from the void. *You’re under the effects of a spell! Snap out of it!*

Sorrel pushed a claw beneath my towel and stripped it away and that little voice fled along with all over thoughts as the warmth of her cunt dispelled the last bit of sense that I had. With the taste of her on my tongue, I held the book up to the light.

I had never cast the spell before, but the words were already poised on my lips. I didn’t recognize the language even as I spoke it and to transcribe it would only taint it further. In the throes of elation, bathed in the smell of sex and the arcane, I sang the words that would free me. The energy in the room pulsed. Shadows rose around us.

Then came a presence. An awareness. I felt it as an itch on my neck, a tension; it was the feeling of looking into the ocean in the middle of the night and knowing that somewhere in that black pool there was life and it was watching me. Sorrel shuddered in fanatical ecstasy. She clenched around me, biting, scratching, pain and pleasure rising as moans rang like church bells. The triangle symbol on my wrist was beginning to warp, curling into a serpentine shape, breaking into three pieces. I watched it in horror, in bliss, as the ink bled off the page and etched itself into my skin.



Sorrel grabbed my face. She brought her mouth to mine. I stared into her fevered eyes and took her hips, arching into the climax and melting into her furry body as she pushed me to the stones, panting.

The magic pulsed through me, but it was wrong, tainted. I could feel the resurrection power taking hold, but it was twisted, just like the

symbol. I had fallen into Sorrel's trap, and now, my very soul was marked by the Monster Queen's corruption.

"Things are going to change quickly now," Sorrel panted. She brushed the hair from her eyes and sat up. "This city is on the brink of war. Your friend, Bast, has gone to convince her parents not to participate, but it's a fool's errand. The Fangs of the Crown are mobilizing. Soon, the City of Dragons will fall and the Corruption will spread through the lower levels and the Queen shall reward me handsomely."

I was only half listening. I couldn't tear my eyes away from the symbol on my wrist. What had I done?

"Ah, guilt," Sorrel said. She stood and a spurt of cum soaked the inside of her thigh. "What a disgusting emotion. What a human emotion. Don't worry, Lysander–" she nodded at the symbol, "–the Monster Queen will soon purge you of shame."

"What do you mean by that?" I whispered.

Sorrel laughed.

"You'll see," she said. "With each resurrection you use, you'll see. Now, shall we pick up where we left off?"

I needed to leave. I needed to leave this place. I tried to stand and Sorrel pushed me down with a paw. She stood on my chest, crushing me.

"My my," Sorrel said. "What's the hurry? Off to your fox and your cow girl? You're so eager to be digested. How fortunate it was for them to have found such willing prey. I'm jealous! No, no, I can't have you running off to tell Claudia about me. I'll be playing the perfect servant right up until the Fangs kick in her door. I can't wait to see that hunchbacked freak slide down someone's gullet. Ooh, are you hard again? Such endurance! Let's see if that cock feels just as good in my ass as it did in my cunt."

My spellbook was still in my hand. Sorrel was turning, hovering her enormous, fluffy ass over my chest. She spread it with two fingers, letting the cheeks clap as they snapped shut. I wanted to leave.

Why wasn't I leaving?

"Curious?" Sorrel asked.

She squatted over my nose. Her pucker was right in front of my mouth. Without thinking, I kissed it and Sorrel's taste reignited me. I needed to leave. Instead, I put my face in her ass. She sat down slowly, engulfing me in her cheeks.

"My, my, how obedient," Sorrel said with a wiggle. "Can I get some of that tongue? Mmmph, yes, that works. I see why you needed that resurrection spell. You have no self-preservation instincts at all, do you? Just a lustful beast. I don't mind. Now that I have you pinned here, would you mind telling me why your book burned my hand? Is it a protection spell? A curse? Oh, oops, your mouth is a little busy. Keep licking. Deeper…deeper…"

The salty ring of her pucker was spreading over my mouth. If I didn't move, she'd consume me. She was too heavy to lift. Spellbook in my hand, I cast the only spell I could think of.

PRENGU.

Immediately I knew something was warped. Like the twisting of the resurrection symbol, the magic felt *wrong* as it flowed through me, flooding my limbs. When Sorrel put her hand on my cock, the sheer sensation of a single finger was enough to make me arch my back in agony, but as the back of her claw slid over the shaft, I spasmed, spraying her chin.

NIX-

The counterspell died on my lips as Sorrel pushed my head into her ass. Mouth buried in her pucker, I kicked as she rubbed my balls, forcing me to erupt on her thighs.

"Fantastic!" Sorrel laughed. "It appears that even your magic is tainted!"

What had I done? What had I done?

Her intestines parted like water, sliding easily over my neck and shoulders. Sorrel beckoned and my body responded to the pressing of fur and the folding of flesh. I fit inside of her perfectly, seeking her



warmth, moaning in the darkness and squirming like a snake. The spell had long since faded, but my will had been repulsed. I let Sorrel eclipse me.

What followed was a winding journey through her bowels. My skin glowed, luminous against the pink walls while I shuddered. Sorrel heaved me into her arms and held me there, something deeper than magic connecting us, something primal and secure. Great, gulping motions brought me closer to her stomach.

Closer, closer.

I murmured an apology to Cres. She had chosen me and I had failed her, but in a way, what was she expecting? The thought brought shame and the shame brought clarity and too late I snapped out of my stupor and faced the present for what it was: another imminent death in the guts of a Corrupted.

Sorrel laughed as I thrashed. Her stomach was heavy on top of me, pressed down into her bowels under the weight of simmering acids.

“I thought this would be far more difficult,” she said. “But you have no resistance, do you? That’s alright, my pet. Don’t be ashamed. This is freedom, really. You don’t have to think about what the future holds. All you have to do is digest.”

A rush of liquid splashed against my face as I was squirted out into her stomach. Fear sank her teeth into my throat—I couldn’t breathe! It was the fear of drowning; the fear of digestion. It was shame and lust and gluttony—yes, gluttony—or possibly greed or some other sin that sent me sprawling into her gut like a diver rising from the sea only to find himself surrounded by sharks.

How can I explain myself in a way that could make you understand, Cres, that you’ve chosen the wrong person for the job? I had more in common with the Corrupted than I had with the humans in this world and now I was one of them—tainted, at least; unholy.

Sorrel spun me around the room in her stomach. Her acids stung, as I knew they would, and my enhancement spell was fading. Before it

did, I put up a halfhearted battering, kicking and fisting the sodden walls until pain forced me to cancel my **prengu**. That's when Sorrel cast her own spell.

I didn't hear the words, but I knew the effects immediately. Her stomach began to fill with glowing liquid. I was going to be digested.

"Welcome to your new life," Sorrel snickered as the liquid covered my head. It fizzed against my skin, but there was no pain—nothing but the throb of her stomach churning my numbed body into mush. "I'll see you on the other side."



***

There was no visitation from Cres before my resurrection. I woke up on the floor of the shrine with Sorrel standing over me, her belly heavy with my freshly digested corpse.

"How do you feel?" she asked.

What a stupid question. I felt…

Hmm.

There was supposed to be something there. Some emotion. I *remembered* feeling scared and confused, awash in self-loathing, but when I tried to conjure the righteous indignation I should be experiencing after digestion, my body drew a blank. I stood and brushed my knees off. I was naked.

That was fine.

"How do you feel?" Sorrel repeated.

I looked at her with no urgency whatsoever. Her white fur ruffled beautifully against the crease of her belly button, layers of pudge protruding in a tempting mass of flesh and fat. I grabbed a handful of it and shook. Her belly groaned.

"Hey now." Sorrel's lips spread into a flirtatious smile. She put her hands behind her back, swaying from side to side. Her stomach swung like a pendulum. "Aren't you going to say something?"

Something about her smile pissed me off. It took her stomach in both hands and squeezed it hard. Sorrel moaned as something cracked. Wetness spread between her thighs.

"You're horny," I said.

"Of course I am," Sorrel said. "I'm digesting."

I grunted and looked at my wrist. Part of the snake had filled itself in. Unlike the previous iteration, this one seemed intent on completing itself.

"What have you done to me?" I asked, taking a threatening step toward Sorrel.

"There's a mad glint in your eyes," Sorrel said, the smile never leaving her face. "Oh, Lysander, the Corruption has already taken hold of you. I knew you were special ever since you tricked the Queen

of the Kobolds and seduced Rhysa's daughter, Bast. You escaped the realm of the fairies. You've killed the dragon's greatest enemy, the drider."

"How do you know all of this?" I asked, taking another step. I didn't know what I would do when I got to her. Fuck her? Fight her? Feed myself to her again?

The room was spinning. The statues sneered down at me, taunting me, and I was sure they were staring at the snake on my arm. Laughter bubbled within me and I didn't know why. I clamped a hand over my mouth, but it didn't help.

"The Monster Queen has many spies," Sorrel said. She sat on the plinth of one of the statues and spread her legs. "When the last human came to the City of Dragons, he made the bold claim that he would kill the Monster Queen and in doing so, sealed his own fate. The Monster Queen might have turned a blind eye if not for the dragon that he won to his side, Rhysa's other daughter, Olivine."

A sharp crack perked my ears. My heightened senses detected a slight influx of air. Someone had just opened the trapdoor, but Sorrel, lost in her monologue, hadn't noticed.

"What does this have to do with Olivine?" I asked. "Who are the Fangs?"

"The Fangs of the Crown are the Monster Queen's subjects," Sorrel said. She clutched at her breasts. "Rhysa being one of their most ardent patrons. When Olivine left, it presented a test of loyalty. If she did nothing, the Monster Queen would question her fervor, but if she sacrificed her own daughter…"

A low, familiar growl came from the mouth of the trapdoor. I had to keep Sorrel's attention. Sorrel smiled as my fingers covered hers, massaging her breast while my other hand pushed on her thigh. Fuck, she was wet.

"Olivine stole the key to the Labyrinth because she knew her parents would look for her," I said.

“The key was left unguarded,” Sorrel said, stroking my hair. She locked her legs behind my back. I placed my cock to her slit. “Rhysa knew that her daughter would look for it; knew she’d step through the door. The Monster Queen is the architect of the Labyrinth. Olivine was delivered straight to the drider’s chambers and Rhysa secured the Queen’s favor.”

Claws hit the stone at the bottom of the ladder.

“You don’t work for Claudia, do you?” I said. “You work for–”

“–my mother.”

And there was Bast, larger than life, standing in the doorway. For once, her face was calm, and that was scarier than fury. Steam rose from her skin in delicate whorls as Claudia shuffled in behind her. Aria and Mable came next, hiding behind the dragon’s tails.

“Give up, Sorrel,” Claudia said. “There’s no escape. Tell us what you know and you shall be banished to the Labyrinth. Run and you will suffer the consequences.”

Sorrel wasted no time. With a snap of her fingers, she snuffed out the torches. There was the sound of stone groaning and fleeing footsteps, but with a click of Claudia’s tongue, the torches reignited and Sorrel, halfway down a secret passage, was lassoed back into the room by invisible forces and deposited at the crooked dragon’s feet.

“And here I thought I taught you better,” Claudia said, crouching beside her servant. Sorrel glared at her, unable to move. “The countercurse is simple, but you never were good at casting without your spellbook.”

“Lysander!”

Aria and Mable rushed into the room, but Bast stopped them with an outstretched arm. She approached me silently as I stood next to the altar. Without a word, I showed her my wrist. She shook her head and snorted.

“That won’t be easily remedied,” she said. “How do you feel?”

I looked up at Bast, stout and stalwart, and simultaneously felt the urge to cry, to hug her, and to bury my face in her cunt.

“Like a wild animal,” I said.

Bast’s lips quirked.

“Ah,” she said. “That’s not so bad.”

Bast stepped aside and let Mable and Aria swarm me. Mable pounced, crying her eyes out, and even Aria, hair wild from sleep, gave me a short squeeze, shuddering as she noted the statues around the room.

“I woke up and you weren’t there,” Mable said. “We had to go and get Claudia.”

“It’s my fault,” Aria said. “I was so tired that I…I just returned to the room and fell asleep. I never thought…I should have…”

“It’s not your fault,” I said, patting her head. As I put my fingers through her hair, I felt the urge to kiss her, so I did. Aria blinked in surprise. Mable tugged at my elbow, jealous. “Yeah, yeah,” I said, kissing her as well. Her lips tasted sweet. They parted slightly for me and I pushed deeper, taking her tongue, letting the warmth of it comfort my troubled mind.

“Did you miss me that bad?” Mable asked when I pulled away.

She was blushing and it took me a second to realize that I only ever kissed her like that when we were having sex. The troubled feeling returned.

“Where were you?” I asked Bast. She had been staring at Sorrel with that same, level expression. I almost wished she’d yell. It was impossible to tell what she was thinking.

“Visiting my parents,” Bast said.

“Did you know…?”

“That they worshiped the Monster Queen? Yes, I knew.”

“And Olivine?”

Bast bared her fangs.

“I should have,” she growled. “Mother…it’s the kind of thing she would do. Claudia sent me a message as soon as she discovered you were missing. Things are accelerating. We need to leave the city.”

I nodded. That was fine by me. It meant that we wouldn't get to experience everything that the City of Dragons had to offer, but if that saved us from getting in the middle of a war, so be it. Claudia was inspecting the secret passage that Sorrel had been about to use. One of the statues pulled away at the base, revealing a long hallway.

"This leads outside," she said. "Smells like the west face. What do you want to do with Sorrel?"

The stoat lay bound on the floor, invisible strands of magic tethering her hands and feet. Bast glowered down at her, nudging her with a toe.

"What should we do with her, Lysander?" she asked.

I cracked my knuckles in response.

PRENGU.

The tainted feeling washed over me. It didn't matter. All that mattered was the strength the spell lent me as I bent and picked up Sorrel. It was as easy as picking up a bag of flour. She squirmed when I tucked her under my arm, but she didn't speak.

"Claudia," I said.

Claudia made an unzipping motion with her finger and Sorrel spat.

"There are ancient laws that forbid you from harming me," she growled at Bast. "I am your mother's servant."

Bast pulled her panties down around her thighs and turned around. Mable and Aria each pulled aside a cheek as I lined Sorrel's head up with Bast's asshole.

"Fine," Sorrel said as her nose kissed the sweaty mouth of Bast's pucker. Her face was brave, but I could feel her trembling. "Lysander, you'll soon know the full implication of the Monster Queen's curse. The Corruption will spread. Bast, you will be hunted. Everything you hold dear will come to ruin. This is not the end. This is–"

"Shut up," I said, shoving her head into Bast's rectum.



She went up like a suppository, sliding with ease, and when at last her feet disappeared between Bast's cheeks, the dragon

straightened herself and patted the bulge the stoat made.

"You need to leave," Claudia said, handing Sorrel's spellbook to Aria.

"I know," Bast said. "Thank you, old friend. I'll look into your curse. Should we find anything on our travels, we'll write to you."

"Much appreciated. Go now and be at peace."

Bast ducked into the tunnel, followed by Aria, then Mable. Mable held out a hand to me and I cast one last glance at the evil shrine before heading down into the stone passageway. The hallways twisted and turned and nobody said a word, not at least until we saw the bright mouth of the exit, daylight pouring through the crag. Bast turned to us.

"This passage should lead you out of the city," Bast said. "Follow the path down the mountain and into the Dragonwood. From there, make your way south to the border. A sphynx by the name of Myrr guards the gate. She is a neutral party. Answer her riddle and she'll allow you to pass. Fail to answer and she'll eat you."

"And where will you be?" Aria demanded.

"You can't leave us," Mable said.

They looked at me, expecting me to join in, but I shook my head.

"She has business to attend to in the city," I said. "It will be dangerous for the three of us. You've seen how powerful dragons can be."

Bast gave me a soft grin.

"I'll catch up to you when I can," she said. "For now you need to run."

We emerged from the tunnel into a blinding wall of light. My eyes squinted against the brightness, the cool, damp air of the cave instantly replaced by the dry, oppressive heat outside. For a brief moment, the weight of our escape lifted; the city, its chaos, and its war seemed like they might finally be behind us.

Then I saw them.

Dragons. Dozens of them. They lined the rocky clearing like silent sentinels, their scaled bodies gleaming in the harsh sunlight. Some perched on jagged outcrops, their wings half-spread, while others stood with coiled, tense postures, their eyes locked onto us. Each one was a force of nature, massive and imposing, their presence suffocating.

My heart dropped into my stomach, every muscle in my body tensing. There was no way out.

At the forefront of them all stood their leader, a demi-dragon, towering over us at ten feet tall. Her golden-scaled arms and legs glinted in the sun, the light catching on her jagged horns, giving her an almost ethereal, otherworldly glow. Her features were impossibly beautiful, sharp, and cold, carved from some ancient and austere power. She didn't need to speak; her presence alone was enough to command attention, to demand submission.

I glanced at my companions, each of them frozen in place, the same realization dawning on their faces. We had walked into a trap.

The golden dragon's eyes, bright and unblinking, fixed on me, and for a moment, the world seemed to still. Her gaze was a weight I couldn't shake, an invisible hand pressing down on my shoulders, forcing me to acknowledge her. I couldn't tell if she intended to kill us or something else entirely.

"Leaving so soon?" she asked, her voice low and resonant, each word like a strike of thunder. There was no warmth in her tone, only a cold, calculated authority.

I swallowed hard, trying to find my voice, but the words wouldn't come. My thoughts raced, desperate for a way out, a plan, anything that might turn this around. But surrounded as we were, there was no escape. Not this time.

That's when Bast stepped forward.

"Hello, Mother," she said. "I challenge you to a duel."





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