

The Road to Change: Mother of the Mountain (Man to Yeti Mother TFTG Preg)

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A Commission for AI

Hector Dawnway has prepared his entire life for glorious battle, but what happens when he fails and loses everything? Wandering up into the mountains to die, he is shocked to find the existence of yetis, long-thought extinct. Perhaps he will find a new purpose among them. Though it's doubtful he'll predict the motherly role they intend for him!

The Road To Change: Mother of the Mountain

Lord Hector Dawnway looked over the carnage of the battlefield. Bodies littered the Greenbright Valley, staining its grass red, turning its small streams crimson. Just five hours ago, he had been confident and stalwart, a commander of his men. He had trained his entire life to defend his kingdom and its people, and to lead them when he succeeded his father to become head of the noble Dawnway estate. He was tall, handsome, with a proud but well-trimmed beard and vibrant green eyes that commanded attention. Hector's body was fit, his skin a lovely olive-tan, and he had known the bed of numerous women - albeit discreetly, in order to preserve his reputation. His men had loved him, and when word had come that the dreaded Demon Lord had arisen after centuries of banishment, his father had sent him out as a valiant commander to defend their northern borders.

Hector had been ready.

Hector had been valiant.

Hector had been intelligent and strategic and brave.

And now his men were dead, injured, enslaved, or worse. He'd possessed no idea of just how powerful the Demon Lord's forces were, not just in the overwhelming nature of their numbers but also in the sheer power of their domination magic. One of the terrible fiend's own succubus generals had taken to the field, swinging a great scythe around and splitting men across their middle, slicing spines and causing bloody carnage that disrupted his lines. He had called upon his men to rally, but then more succubi landed, along with other creatures. Worse, so many were from the capital of Aenir, transformed through Domination magic and now enthralled by the Demon Lord. Men and women who had become gorgons and harpies, minotaurs and serpent-beasts. An entire regiment of scaled reptilian soldiers clashed against his forces, but his men had held . . . right up until the point where the succubus general cast out more of her Domination magic in the Demon Lord's name. Suddenly, Hector's men had cried out, groaning and making all kinds of unseemly noises as

their bodies were warped, their flesh rearranged. In moments, a group of addle-brained ogres, many of them female now, were being released back upon his own lines. His archers had loosed their arrows, but they too were soon transformed, grunting and groaning while the magic remade them into more gorgons for the enemy's legions.

Men had fled. Others were felled. More still surrendered on the spot. Some were transformed anyway, and many, to their horror, became women with exaggerated proportions and reluctant lusts overcoming their bodies. Hector still remembered what his own right-hand man, Garwood, had said after being turned into a luscious-looking nymph.

"Help me! I need to make soldiers! I can't - ohhhhh - I can't stop these lusts! I need to be pregnant with f-future warriors! Mhmm!"

The new woman had fled to the Demon Lord's side, if only because the men on that side were willing to indulge her new compelled desires. Others were not even *that* lucky: some simply became beasts of the land, such as deer, oxen, rabbits, and pigs. Others became rather humanoid versions of the same, a mix of animal and man - or woman - that made the succubus general cackle with glee.

"Surrender now! Surrender or die! Or be changed? Whatever suits your luck!"

His army collapsed, and the only reason Hector wasn't caught was because his allies thought quickly enough to strip him of his gallant knightly armour and put him in more soldierly wears in order to conceal his identity and prevent him from being taken as a hostage against his father. From there, his remaining forces began to retreat, but in the chaos a horse collided into him, sending him flying and then crashing into a pile of corpses that had once been his own men.

He had lain there for hours, and when he had woken, *this* was the sight that greeted him. The battle was done, and the Demon Lord's forces had moved on, continuing to press into the lands of his home. They had been preparing for this for weeks, trying to halt his terrible advance, and in less than an hour he had been routed.

And now he was alone.

"I'm sorry," he whispered, gazing at the deceased upon the battlefield. There were hundreds there, and more whose bodies would never be recovered from the rivers, but the real number of lost would be in those transformed. That number would be in the *thousands*, he knew. So many men turned into monsters, or reduced to being the fairer, weaker sex, humiliated by the Demon Lord's Domination magic.

"I'm so sorry, men," he whispered again.

But only the wind answered him.

He turned to look at the exit to the valley. The remainder of his forces would have fled back to the capital and his own estates to warn his family and the wider kingdom. There was no fighting the Demon Lord, he saw that now. At least, not the way he thought. He had

gained word that his younger brother Melvin was making his way across the continent to confront the villain in person, and he doubted there would be any success in such a manoeuvre after what he had seen. Still, it had to have more success than this horrific failure, so all the Gods grant Melvin speed and protection, he supposed.

But what was Hector to do?

He couldn't return, not with the shame of his failure, not knowing he could be transformed into a monster or turned into some pathetic bar wench desperate to be bred. He had failed absolutely, and for such a level of failure there was only one thing to do.

Slowly, Hector unsheathed his sword and stared at it.

"Time to fall," he said.

He turned the sword around, planting it against his belly, and then fell.

Only for the sword to snap and him to fall into the mud, caked in it. His light studded armour hadn't even been pierced. Somehow, the soldier's wears had won out against his fine noble sword.

"By all the Gods," he said, turning onto his back. "I can't even die right."

It was enough to make him laugh. Tears streamed down his face as he cackled.

So, not a soldier's death then, and not a noble's either. He cast his gaze around, still lying in the mud. In the far distance, he saw the stretch of mountains that formed the divide between the fiefdoms of Targan and the lands beyond.

Perhaps there, then.

Perhaps that was a fitting place to die.

The cold wind whipped at Hector's form. He had shed much of his armour, keeping only that which would aid him in his ascent and provide protection from the sharp ridges of the Ice Teeth, as the mountain range was called. He had bartered away much of the remainder of his coinpurse in exchange for travelling supplies and a warm winter's cloak, not to mention gloves and thick boots for traversal. One might think that this was a contradiction given his personal aim to die, and even Hector couldn't explain all his self-contradictions. He felt a yearning to understand something, be it about himself or about the world in general, but he didn't rightly care if he died or not by this point. That was always his end, he knew, but before death claimed him, he would make it to the top of the Ice Teeth and plant his family's sigil there. Even despondent as he was, Hector Dawnway was not a man to die without some sense of nobility in his heart.

But Gods, it was difficult. Even for his powerfully built body, the trek was hard. He had refused any guidance from the locals who lived near the base of the mountain, and most had

warned him not to go. There were rumours of foul monsters at the top, and some had even spoken that old name: the *Yeti*. Hector had just chuckled.

“Would that such magic and wonder was still in the world, but the monstrous yetis are long gone. But if another monster is there, I will perhaps regain some honour and battle against it. Perhaps reclaim part of my birthright before I am vanquished.”

The locals had just shrugged. He was not *their* lord now that he was in the Targan fiefdoms, so why bother dissuading this crazy man when one could simply accept his coin and fatalistic sayings?

“Fatalism,” he mused, making his way to a great rocky gap that he would have to cross. “Would that it were just a matter of fatality. But so many men became monsters. I failed them. I failed my duties.”

Gods, even that *word* hung heavily upon him. Duty. The constant expectation thrust upon him as the firstborn son of Lord Dawnway of Arlingdale. It had followed him all his life, and often he had been jealous of his sisters and younger brother, wishing more than once that he could swap lives with them. But instead, he was the one who had to be perfect in his father’s eyes. He had to be the most educated, the most skillful with a sword, the most able to command and apply diplomatic strength, to use deception when necessary and to court appropriate vassals and allies to his side. The only thing that kept him on top of it all was the knowledge that he was *good* at it. That he could protect his kingdom and people, and be the one to safeguard the interests of the Dawnway family. Now, that illusion had been shattered. There was but one duty left, the most heavy of all to shoulder.

He ran and launched himself over the crevice, only narrowly making the gap. Hector grimaced, about to fall backwards, only to catch himself at the last second. He breathed a sigh of relief, though he wasn’t sure why. Did he not want to die? Did he not want to be finally unburdened?

“Damn stupid,” he muttered under his breath, shielding himself from the cold. “Damn-”

Suddenly, movement. It was hard to see through the slight blizzard that had begun to pick up, but Hector had always possessed a keen eye, and he was certain he’d caught movement. He unsheathed his sword and held it out before him.

“Who goes there?” he boomed, voice echoing down the mountain. “Be you the monster of the mountain? Come out now!”

Again, that flickering movement. Hector adjusted his stance, trying to be careful of the slippery, snowy environment around him. He moved forward, his eyes darting about, taking in every detail.

There!

He launched forward to grab his foe, only to find out it was much smaller than he expected it to be, a child of perhaps six years old and wearing a thick woolen white coat that covered its whole body. The child squealed in an almost animalistic fashion, and Hector rolled to the side, yelling in shock himself but not wanting to hurt the poor thing. In doing so, he took a bad step, the stones faltering beneath his feet. He tried to right himself but more rock gave way, followed by the ice cracking beneath this poor foundation. Hector yelled out again, reaching to grip a pillar of ice, but that too broke in his grip. With a shocked scream he fell down into the ravine he'd been trying to avoid, the child tumbling with him as the shelf above collapsed. The boy - or girl, it was impossible to tell - cried out again. Hector cursed himself for endangering a child. He had only seconds before his spine cracked against the rocks below, but he used the last of his movement to quickly grab the child and pull it against his chest.

"It's going to be okay!" he yelled.

It was the last thing he imagined he'd ever say, but it seemed a fine set of last words. Saving a child's life, even if from his own foolishness, was a better end than he deserved.

CRACK!

Pain flooded through Hector, but it was all too brief. The man gasped, blood trickling from his lip, the curvature of his spine all wrong. He managed to raise his head, only to be met by the grisly sight of a thin spine of rock poking over a foot out from underneath his ribs. His intestines were thankfully not in sight, but that just meant they'd been torn through, he knew.

"Aghhh," he gasped, barely able to say anything more than that. But the pain was already dulling, the snowflakes falling upon his body. A numbness entered into him, a coldness that told the noble that he didn't have many moments of consciousness left. He shifted his shaking hands and unfurled the child that had been caught in his cloak. He needed to make sure he or she was okay, if only so that he could die with some kind of peace in his heart. Sure enough, the poor thing lifted itself up on powerful arms, looking about in surprise that it was okay. It made a series of small sounds, but its arms moved rapidly, gesturing some kind of joy that he couldn't quite decipher.

"It's okay," Hector breathed, his vision starting to dissipate. "It's going to be okay."

But then the child turned its face towards Hector, and the fallen nobleman saw it clearly for the first time. This was no human child. It was no human at all. Its face was more apelike, and it had two small but prominent tusks jutting out from its lower jaw. Its skin was like leather, and coloured pale grey-blue in tone. The horns that Hector had simply taken to be part of a helmet or hood that the child was wearing were instead actual horns jutting from its head, curled around like a ram's horns. Its eyes were golden and not unkind, but its body was surprisingly muscular despite its small size, moving like an ape, powerful hands at the

end of each limb and sharp black talons jutting from each digit. And yet it was careful in its movements, sniffing the air and making several gesticulations at Hector.

“Are you . . . trying to . . . talk to m-me?”

The creature motioned again. Its body was covered in white fur, not a white coat. Even as Hector’s vision finally began to die away, that image stuck with him. He smiled to himself as his consciousness evaporated.

“Heh, I guess I was wrong. I found a yeti . . .”

Darkness found him like an old friend, and he welcomed it, ready for the end. Just before he expired, something flashed a brilliant green.

Hector tangled with voices, boxing with shadows that lashed out against him.

“You are a disgrace, son. I did not raise you as my heir to fail so.”

“You let us die, Dawnway! We trusted you! You are no true Lord!”

“You are a deathbringer. The ground is stained with blood because of you.”

“You were not worthy of the burden of leadership. You carry nothing.”

“You deserve to die in the wastes, Hector.”

He fought them, attacking each shadow as they savaged him with their words, but each time they dissipated, reforming elsewhere until he was surrounded by darkness, swallowed up by it. He screamed, demanding they stop, but instead they only raised their voices, drowning him yet further. The voice of his father. The voice of his mother. The voice of his officers and his men. Even the women spurned him.

“You are not a real man. It’s a good thing you’ll never sire an heir!”

“We mock you behind your back. We are glad to have never married you!”

“You will die alone and unloved in the cold, empty wastes.”

Hector fell to his knees. He couldn’t fight them all, and he didn’t want to. The words kept on coming: worthless, pathetic, unworthy, ignoble, weak, unmanly, and on and on until he was holding his ears, screaming at them.

“Stop! Stop! STOP! STOP!”

But he couldn’t make them stop, any more than he could hold up the sky or fulfil his duties. How could he silence the doubts when they spoke the truth?

So instead he screamed.

Hector woke, sitting up and immediately regretting it. Pain seared through his side, and he immediately fell down. For a moment, he thought he saw strange movement: a creature that looked like the one he had saved from his own falling mistake. But it was too hard to tell, and too hard to see. Besides, wasn't he dead?

"Wh-where am I?" he managed, his voice a guttural, wounded whisper.

There was a flurry of hand gestures, but he couldn't understand what was being said. Something howled and then grunted, but it made little sense. Besides, his consciousness was fading once more.

What was the point of deciphering it?

He was dead, wasn't he?

The second time Hector woke, his mind had far less fog in it. He was still lying down, still in pain, though much less so than before, and he could make better sense of his surroundings now. He was in a cave, and definitely still in the mountains to judge from the cold, though it was warmer and more sheltered despite the howl of a blizzard outside. Various fires were burning, allowing for light and heat, and to his surprise they were from makeshift sconces on the wall. There were even stone buttresses in the walls, each stone interlocked with the others, not carved but carefully placed. Various markings lined the walls; cave paintings that could have been eons old, depicting large figures in white and smaller ones in muddy-brown. Yetis and humans, perhaps? They seemed to mingle beneath a particular star, dancing around a maypole together before, if he was reading this right, the yetis ascended back up their mountain once more into reclusivity.

Hector raised himself to see a little better. His side was still in pain, as was his lower stomach. Amazingly, he seemed to be alive. He was covered in a thick grey fur rug, one that did a great job of warming him. The beast that produced such a hide must have been a mighty thing indeed, adapted perfectly for the snow.

"How am I alive?" he wondered aloud.

It was at this point that something skittered, climbing in through the roof of the cave entrance and then leaping into the cave itself. Hector backed up a little, looking around for his sword. He realised he wasn't wearing any armour. Not even his boots and gloves, even. He simply had his long tunic and pants on. Still, the creature moved ahead. It was the yeti child again, but he had no idea of its intentions.

"Stay back!" Hector announced.

Instead, the yeti child leapt up onto the bed with something like a playful grin upon its face. It sniffed him, then moved over his body, still sniffing, until it finally arrived at his face. Hector winced, expecting this thing to eat him.

"Is this it, then?" he asked. "Am I to be a meal?"

The child cocked its head, opened its jaw, and then . . . yawned. It collapsed against him, then licked his face twice, seemingly for its own comfort and amusement.

"Get - get off me, you thing! Get off me!"

But he didn't have enough strength to achieve that. The child was slumbering against him, and he simply had to lie down and take it - *literally*.

"What am I going to do with you?" he asked. But the creature sighed again, shifted its impressively heavy weight, and then slept against him once more.

"Great. Just great. Not even a dignified death. Just slow . . . crushing. At least you don't smell too bad. Hardly a consolation, however."

Hector eventually fell back to sleep, though this time, he was fighting against hunger. Hunger, and the prominent weight of a yeti child that had seemingly formed an attachment to him.

When Hector woke next, it was too loud. The creature sleeping on his body jumped off it and skittered off, and suddenly there was a much, much more intimidating figure: a full-grown yeti, male, with powerful muscles and broad arms that evoked a powerful simian build. His face was softer than an ape's, enough to provide a clear expression that was more human-like. His tusks were large, however, and his strength was obvious in his weight and expanse; at least eight feet in height were he to stand up tall.

"Gods!" Hector shouted. He scrambled out of bed, clutching his side and stomach, hoping against hope that whatever had healed him would hold. He tried to find a rock, a weapon, anything to hold off this creature, but even as he found purchase upon a sharp obsidian-looking dagger, ancient in design, the yeti male grabbed his arm, looking ready to rend him to pieces.

"Just do it!" he cried. "Give me the death I deserve!"

The creature howled, but before it could pull him apart, the young child jumped onto the adult's arm and pushed the two apart. It made numerous sounds, gesticulating wildly, moving its arms in a manner that was entirely too practiced. Hector fell back, but couldn't look away. They were *communicating*, both of them shifting their hands in a back-and-forth display. They were using an entire *language*. These were intelligent creatures, not just beasts!

The yeti male gesticulated angrily to the child, who was most likely *his* child. It seemed angry, then frustrated, then concerned, and then, in an altogether too-human way, *resigned*. With a huff, the yeti came for Hector, who readied the knife again. He batted it away with ease, then lifted Hector back onto the makeshift bed, which was like a sown mattress of sorts, he realised, plump with fur and wool beneath it.

“Hey, what are you-”

The male yeti pulled back the tunic and bared his teeth, ripping Hector’s clothing. Panic flooded through the man.

“Hey now, just watch what you’re - stop that!”

The yeti tore open his shirt, uncaring about the fabric, and then he took a step back. As giant as he was, the creature looked shocked by something. The child leapt up onto his shoulder, pointing and gesticulating, making small cooing noises that almost sounded like some kind of argument, like the child was trying to convince its father of something.

“What is it? What’s going on? How did you heal me? Why am I here? Did you do something to my . . .”

Hector fell silent as he sat up a little and observed his naked stomach and side for the first time. He exhaled suddenly, barely able to breathe as he took in the anomaly there. His skin . . . it was furry where he’d been injured. It was covered in thick white tufts of fur, and beneath it a pale blue-grey leathery skin from which it sprouted. The same kind of skin as the yeti father and child who were now examining him.

Hector struggled to get his words in order. “What . . . what did you *do* to me!?”

But the father was already moving rapidly, heading to another ‘room’ of the cave. Sounds of what sounded like kitchen instruments clashing and clanging against one another echoed through the cave. Soon the father returned with thick hunks of meat and numerous strange mountain vegetables. He tore them into pieces, taking the obsidian knife to make finer cuts, then threw them into a pot that was filled with water. He mixed this makeshift stew and hung it over a fire to boil, then returned to the child, who was grinning and making noises that might have been of triumph, or laughter, or hope, or all three.

And then the yeti father did the most unexpected thing of all. He signed a circle that went around and returned to his heart, and then spoke in a low, gruff, yet strangely compassionate voice to Hector.

“Future,” he said.

The fur was spreading. Somehow, for some reason the yeti child had done something, perhaps a paste or incantation or herbalist mix, that had been changing Hector even as it

healed him. His body was still sore and unprepared to move, and he still lacked any equipment to descend down the mountain, but he was growing increasingly concerned. The tufts of white fur *were* his, and the skin below was just like that of the yeti father and child, which he had deduced to be a young girl to the best of his perception. Despite the father's initial frostiness, something about Hector's fur growth had changed his attitude completely, and now he doted upon him like a child, checking his health far too often and serving him that warm, filling stew until a sense of heartiness returned to him. It was delicious, but when he thanked him in a chivalric manner he was accustomed to, the father yeti simply made signs with his hands and some slight grunting noises.

"I'm sorry, I don't understand," he said. "But thank you, and to your daughter for saving me. Once I am well-rested I will head down the mountain and out of your territory, I promise. I was . . . foolish to come here. I will find another place to end my story."

The father didn't seem to understand his words, but he did grunt in some satisfaction, rubbing the fur that now seemed to spring from most of his belly. Hector winced a little at that.

"I don't suppose you know why this is happening? What did your daughter do to me? Is it going to stop spreading? I'd rather not be covered in fur from head to toe if you don't mind, even if . . . even if I don't plan on sticking around in this world for very long."

More gestures, more low grunts, but Hector couldn't make heads nor tails of what he was trying to communicate. Clearly, the yeti language was based on signs as much as anything, though they could truly howl when they wanted to. Hector had a strong awareness of this, because the father and daughter occasionally left the cave, entering out into the blizzard, and howled together, a long tune that was both mournful and joyous in one. It was somewhat melodic, and strangely beautiful, Hector felt. But his concern still remained with the fur, which was thicker and longer, and starting to creep around his hips.

Hector still needed several days of recovery. The father yeti continued to feed him, and he continued to rest, going to sleep without even realising how tired he was, the various aches and pains from his recovery finally releasing their tension as he fell into unconsciousness. But each time he woke, he found himself further changed. The fur was sweeping up to his chest and now covering his buttocks almost entirely. His shoulders were developing their own patches of fur, while the soles of his feet were becoming tough and leathery. His toes were feeling odd, almost stretched, while his chest was getting sore, his nipples occasionally tensing. The changes had gone from a curiosity to a concern to something that Hector was starting to get quite worried about.

"Look," he told the father yeti. "I'm thankful for your hospitality, but I really have to be going. I'm a nobleman of my realm, a disgraced and failed one at that. I shouldered my burdens poorly, and I lack purpose and meaning, but there are some things I won't dignify

even in despair, and turning into some kind of human-yeti is not part of it. Can you please reverse whatever your daughter did?"

The father moved his hands in practised, elegant gestures. He was starting to understand some of the rudimentary ones. The creature was telling him to eat; he needed the food.

"Look, I am hungry. Ravenously so. But that doesn't answer my question. What are you doing to me?"

The father put down his bowl of stew. He shifted his heavy weight, moving on all fours over to one of the cave walls. He passed his hand over the paintings there with something approaching reverence. Hector winced as he got out of his bed. He had to wrap the fur blanket around himself to cover his shame, but he was deeply aware that much of his front was now covered in white fur, and it was spreading around to his buttocks and up the small of his back. He could almost swear he could *feel* the fur continuing to spread.

"This is getting out of hand," he muttered. "I wanted to die, not to become a living rug."

It would be funny if it wasn't so humiliating. Yet another indignity heaped upon all the rest. He exhaled, trying to cover more of his shame, but he stopped when he reached the father yeti. He was still passing his hand over a section of the cave wall where some artful and colourful paintings had existed for what could well be thousands of years. The father made a low howl, and his daughter woke up, looking up and then scrambling towards her father, climbing up his back to get a better view. They 'spoke' excitedly, exchanging hand gestures and low grunts. Finally, the daughter looked around and gestured for Hector to step forward.

"Okay, little one," he said. "I should really think of a name for you. How do you like Annie? I knew a girl like you once. Loved to climb everything."

The girl grinned, then repeated the word, gesturing to herself. "Annie!"

"Yes, Annie! I suppose you really are intelligent."

She gestured for him to join them, so he moved ahead. He felt stronger now, his muscles more resilient. Hell, there must have been something amazing in that stew, because his pecs seemed larger than ever, and his arms were thicker too. Perhaps it was just his slouch as of late, a result of injury and despair, but he almost felt *taller*, too.

The father moved to the side, and Annie gestured up at the cave painting that had them so enamoured. Hector actually gasped a little, taken aback by the beauty of this painting. It was faded in places, yes, and far more simple than the realistic portraits that lined the halls of the Dawnway Estate. But there was passion here, ancient belief and spiritualism that seemed to mean something deeper. It was simple, yes, but not *simple*, in the derogatory sense.

The painting depicted a tribe of yetis sitting in a perfect circle around what appeared to be some kind of mother of the tribe, a larger yeti with a rounded stomach that clearly indicated a heavy pregnancy. She held two babes at her large breasts, nursing the pair of them, and a divine light radiated from above her head. Each of the surrounding yetis had their hands up, clasped together in a strange form of worship.

“Remarkable,” he said. “Is she some kind of deity? A goddess?”

The father shook his head, as if seeming to understand his inquiry. He gestured to the cave painting, then to Hector.

“Same,” the creature said.

This made Hector chuckle. “I’m afraid you’re a little mistaken. Whatever that painting depicts, it’s ancient history.”

Again, a shake of the head. “Future,” he grunted.

“Future,” Annie said.

Something about the way they said it bothered Hector. Their tone had a similar level of reverence that they showed to the cave painting. To the goddess of fertility it displayed.

Hector needed to leave and he knew it. His health was not fully recovered, but his strength was remarkable, though even that was starting to concern him. His muscles had expanded beyond a level of strength he’d ever possessed: his thighs were thicker, his biceps far more pronounced, and his shoulders were broader as well. The fur had continued to spread, and now, to his embarrassment, it covered every part of him except for his head. Now, the fur was getting *thicker* and *longer*, just like that of a yeti. Hector was no fool. He had heard the legends of ancient transformation magic. And he had *seen* Domination magic with his own eyes. This . . . didn’t seem to hold that particular evil, at least, but it made him highly uncomfortable. It did not take a fool to realise his body was becoming more yeti-like. Already, his toes were extending, one digit pushing out to the side to become more like a thumb. And with the growing length and strength of his arms, he had little doubt he might be moving on all fours as much as bipedally soon unless he found a way to reverse this. Even his voice was more growly, his two lower eye teeth thickening and extending, showing all the signs of becoming future tusks

“I must go,” he told the father, who he’d started thinking of as ‘Brooks’, since the imposing figure reminded him of a large soldier he’d once commanded, barrel-chested and strong. “I can’t become one of you. I don’t know what you did, but I have to reverse this, and since Annie here can’t or won’t, I must descend down the mount.”

He covered himself in the fur blanket like a makeshift robe or toga, but given the absence of his other things, he simply trusted in his more leathery feet to serve as shoes, and his fur coat to keep him warm, which it was, strange as it felt.

But Brooks just looked at him with shock, putting up his hands and gesturing a series of signs that Hector understood to mean: *No, you can't go. No. Too dangerous.* He was getting better at reading these signs, and he got the sense that this was partly magical; the more he changed, the more he understood. In response, Hector signed back, grunting as well as he could in the yeti style.

'I must go. I MUST go. I must change back.'

The father moved to block his exit. Hector looked around. He was stronger now, but not nearly as much as Brooks, and he was still recovering a little, his stomach sore, his chest oddly achey. Still, if he could find a weapon . . .

He reached to break off a stalagmite, but before he could rip it from its stem, Annie screeched at her father, imploring him to move. The large yeti alpha male looked chastised, almost. It argued back, but Hector could only make out glimpses of what was being said. Finally, the large creature backed out of the tunnel, allowing Hector to leave. Annie gestured for the nobleman to follow.

"Thank you," he said, gesturing the same with his hands. "Thank you."

More exchanged gestures between the father and daughter, and then Annie was pleading for Hector to follow down the side of the mountain. They were incredibly far up along the range, the Ice Teeth at the top of the world, as they were often referred. He could barely believe anything could survive up here, but now that the weather was clear, he was astonished by its beauty. The air was crisp, cleaner than any he had breathed, and with his new fur he wasn't shivering either. The ranges were gorgeous, and the world extended far below across to a more distant horizon than he could imagine.

"This is a beautiful land you live in," he murmured. "I could almost imagine staying here, Annie."

But then he looked down at himself. At the way his chest was expanding, his hips broadening, his muscles growing to the point where he looked more like a beast than a man. His teeth were getting sharper at the front. Even his face was taking on that leathery texture, smooth yet coarse at the same time, and the same pale blue-grey as the two yetis who had sheltered him.

"Almost," he repeated. "Come on, Annie. Show me the way."

And because the yeti language came increasingly naturally to him, he gestured in her language that same request.

The sky was still clear as Hector descended down the mountain. The cave was still in the distance far above, and it reminded him just how vast these ranges were. They were an entire ecosystem unto themselves, as evidenced by the mountain buffalo and goats he could see moving in the distance, and the snowbirds above. When he tried to take a shorter route down, Annie warned him, and signed that there were much larger things that required a whole pack to take on. At least, that's what he thought she meant, so he decided to heed the warning regardless.

Annie led the way, and it was hard not to find the little yeti to be cute given her size and excited manner. She signed excessively at everything, and while this was a lot to take in, it did help Hector gain further understanding of her language. Still, he wanted to hurry. He had every intention still of passing from this world now that he'd failed his purpose, but becoming a yeti-folk was not exactly the dignified ending he'd imagined. He was distinctly aware that his muscles were still growing, his chest pushing forwards - though the flesh was softer there for some reason - and his hips widening. Already, he found himself leaning forwards on occasion, as if about to move on all fours during tricky parts of the descent or areas where he had to climb again. His stomach growled, still hungry, and he devoured the dry strips of meat that Brooks had given him: he had been hungrier ever since he started changing, taking on a yeti's need for food, no doubt.

"Can't wait to get rid of this damn fur," he muttered, rubbing the soft, slightly curly hair upon his arm. It was thick but not matted, surprisingly silky to the touch, and kept him warm despite the immense cold so far up. "No offence, Annie, but a beard is more than enough for me."

She simply looked his way and smiled before signing. *'Hair is good! Hair is warm! You will get more hair!'*

"Congratulations me," he muttered. "Can't win a battle, can't save my men, can't protect my kingdom or defeat the Demon Lord. But my, I can grow some fur, can't I?"

The fact that his buttocks were entirely covered in fur only made the knowledge more embarrassing. Of course, his genitals were also covered, and harder to find now than he'd like. The cold, it seemed, was keeping them shrivelled more than usual.

He was about to make another remark when Annie grew excited. She gripped him, and despite her small stature he was reminded that she possessed more than twice the strength of a regular man, because she pulled him down towards a value that bordered a cliff edge. It took Hector longer than it should have to realise that this was where he'd fallen: there were still frozen blood splatters from where he'd landed on the rocky spikes at the cliff's bottom, and he had little doubt that if he swept the snow he'd find more.

"This is where we landed," he said. Hector shivered, and not just from the cold. Here was where he was meant to die. "How did I survive?"

Annie made some gestures. *'Important. Come with me.'*

She grunted with urgency, and he followed. His nipples throbbed. They were bigger lately, and seemed to keep on growing. His pecs felt more like slightly fatty mounds than trained muscle as they had once been. Even his centre of gravity was a little off; he didn't appreciate having such wide hips. He'd only appreciated them on the women he'd visited in taverns and brothels while his army had downtime. These were uncomfortably reminiscent of those.

"God, I can remember telling Melvin to look forward to the sight of a woman's hips," he muttered. "How can it be that my tiny brother is on a grand adventure, while I'm being shown simple rocks by . . . by the Black Mountain."

His jaw fell. The cliff face gave way to something magnificent; an intricate carving of the figure from the cave painting: a goddess of fertility. A *yeti* goddess of fertility, her stomach an enormous dome, two yeti cubs at her breasts, and surrounded by potential mates with, well, rather prominent manhoods displayed in an erect fashion.

"This is what I landed near," he said.

He recalled crashing through sheets of ice, and indeed as he looked up he could see how it had been uncovered. It was very likely that the statue had been lost for decades, perhaps even centuries, until the moment he smashed through and then was driven upon the rocks below.

Annie pointed at the statue. "Change."

"I don't understand," Hector said. "Look, you have done me a great service. You saved my life when . . . I didn't deserve it. When I am unworthy of being saved at all. I'm glad you have this now, but unless it can change me back—"

Annie suddenly grabbed his hand with hers, then pulled him forward to where the carving was. Up close, he could see that the swollen belly of the intricate carving had emerald gems inlaid across it, a particularly large one forming the indentation of the goddess' bellybutton.

"I don't - what are you showing me?"

'Touch,' she communicated through grunts and movements. *'Touch and you will see. You are the change. You are the future. Please, father is the last believer of our kind. It is why he stays.'*

It was the longest sentence yet he'd been able to understand fully, and part of Hector imagined it was because of his proximity to this ancient relic. He frowned, unsure over whether to proceed, but Annie's face, strange and different as it was, possessed a great deal

of encouragement and eagerness, and Hector found himself moved by this. Trusting her, he reached out and touched the statue, placing his hand upon its belly and caressing it slowly.

“See?” he said. “Hardly the future. Just - nghh!”

A green light burst from the carving at the exact same time as Hector’s body seized up. The white-furred nobleman grunted, removing his hand from the carving but still feeling a connection to it. He could see one too: that mystical green light shifted and grew, expanding like a magical flame to encompass his body. Hector groaned again as it did so, the strange pressures and sensations flooding through his body. He took another step back, turning to look at Annie, who had climbed to a small outcropping to observe him.

“Wh-what are you d-doing to m-me!?”

She made a flurry of signs. *‘Not me! The carving! You are the Mountain Mother we have waited for!’*

“The what!? No! Agh! Why am I f-feeling this p-pressure?”

‘Father wanted to let you stay! Let you have time to choose to be our future! But the magic would go away and you would not stay with us! I know you are meant to be the Mountain Mother!’

The realisation hit Hector like a falling avalanche upon him. Brooks had treated Hector with reverence and tried to educate him, but had been trying to *convince* Hector before he took him here. And like a fool, the nobleman had assumed Annie was leading him back down the mountain, when she wanted him to change even further before he knew what was going on. He’d put his trust in a hopeful child!

“You monster!” he screamed. “You stupid little - ughhh!”

The pressure rose, causing him to screw up his face and pant. It was growing and growing, and if it didn’t release soon he felt like he might die, so great was its power. He staggered again, pressing his body up against the other cliff-face opposite the carving, taking in its magnificence and terror. Finally, it grew too much.

“N-no! I don’t want to ch-change! AAGHH!!”

The pressure gave way, becoming a massive flood that seemed to hit Hector everywhere at once. His muscles swelled, aching and growing and becoming mightier than they had ever been. His hips cracked wider, expanding until they were positively maternal and then some. The man howled, and halfway through it became the valiant howl of the *yeti*, wild and melodic at the same time. He tried to form new words, but his tusks erupted in size, making him slur any speech. His entire form was growing, his arms extending, his spine changing so that he could stand bipedally and on all fours with natural ease. The fur coat he already possessed thickened, the hairs longer and more able to shield him from the snow. His fur blanket fell to the ground, but when he tried to pick it up he did so without thinking using his left foot; it had become another hand just like the ape-like yeti people.

“Oh G-Gods! Ohhhhhh!”

Something was wrong with his voice. It was fading, squeaking, but also more feminine than it should have been, softer than Brooks’ low growl. He wondered why that was, and soon received his answer, because the pressure that had been mounting in his chest then proceeded to unleash itself. The changing man howled as two fatty mounds on his chest formed and then expanded. He gripped them with his expanded hands, but they continued to rise like dough, larger and larger and larger, nipples throbbing and expanding, until it was undeniable that he was developing a pair of very, very large breasts. Pleasure bloomed in his chest, a reluctant bliss at this goddess-like growth. He gripped his enormous bust, but even his enlarged hands could not fully encompass their size, and the furry hills overwhelmed them. They felt heavy and full, and yet he could not resist fondling them as the changes continued to ripple through his body.

“Ohhhhhh!” he moaned, voice softer than he’d imagined. “Mhmmm! Ahhh!”

Annie was already in the distance, taking to the hills.

“C-come b-back!” Hector managed, but speech was more difficult now, intonation far less natural. He found himself signing and grunting, adding little howls of desperation, but the child was already running back up the mountain, leaving the changing man at the mercy of the unwanted ecstasy that followed.

His breasts finally reached their limit, each easily the size of his own expanded head. His stature was immense now, easily nine feet in height, which put him taller than even Brooks, but the changes weren’t finished yet. With panic, the former nobleman realised that the pressure was heading south. He grunted an alarm, moving his hands automatically to gesture for aid, but no help could come in time. He held his crotch, his penis already so small in proportion to his immense body, completely hidden in his fur. Suddenly, something *opened* within him, an expanse that tunnelled through him and caused such fits of ecstasy that Hector fell to the ground, howling. His manhood receded, falling back into that expanse, and as he tried to stop it his fingers brushed against his new wet opening, which throbbed with want.

“Mhmmm! MWWAAHHHHH!!”

The new yeti woman - now entirely female - howled with a mix of despair, shock, and unrivalled pleasure. Orgasm after orgasm hit her, causing her to pound at the snow with her fists, her massive bosom wobbling on her chest. It was all so foreign, so very wrong, and yet the pleasure continued anyway. Finally, it was all too much, and for the second time in this very place, Hector began to pass out.

This time, she saw the green light fade. She also caught sight of a large yeti male bounding across the snow towards her, his movements hurried and fearful. Hector, despite herself, couldn’t help but smile.

She hadn't realised how *handsome* the yeti male smelled.

For just a few waking moments, Hector assumed it had all been a dream. Two things made it very clear to her that it hadn't been, even before she opened her eyes. The first was that she was thinking of herself automatically as female, which should certainly not be the case. The second was that she felt a distinct absence between her tree trunk-like thighs, and two massive fleshy weights on her chest.

She jumped from her bedding with alarm, hooting and hollering and howling, making all sorts of inhuman noise. She was back in the cave again, the one belonging to Brooks and his daughter. The fires burned, the stew boiled, and to her absolute horror she was a full-grown yeti female now, cursed by the magic of the carving. She clutched her head, feeling two large horns that curved like those of a ram's. She hadn't even remembered growing them. She'd been too preoccupied with her enormous . . . breasts.

She took in the sight of them, humiliated at their size. They were larger than any pair she'd had the pleasure of enjoying upon a tavern wench or lady in the red light districts while on campaign. No, these were huge and maternal, yet perfectly formed; rounded and full and barely sagging at all. Even with their thick white fur covering, they obviously produced a great deal of cleavage, and they were topped by large dark grey nipples, which had wide areolas.

'No, no, no, no!' she hooted. *'This can't be! I came here to die, not to become a monster!'*

Something squeaked, and she looked up to see Annie watching her from a little alcove in the cave. Hector launched forward angrily, not used to her massive strength and size. Annie dodged her grasp easily, but the new yeti woman turned around, though her wide maternal hips slapped against the rock a little painfully.

'How could this happen?' she grunted, gesturing wildly. *'Why would you do this to me?'*

The yeti language came to her easily now, as if it had been the language she had been speaking all of her life. It only compounded her anger, which left Annie shrinking

'We need you!' the girl replied. *'You are the Mother of the Mountain we have been waiting for! Not many believe, but when I saw you start to change after you fell . . . I knew I had to save you. You grazed the sacred carving that had been lost for so very long. Father tells me stories of the Mother of the Mountain; she is meant to save our kind when we are so few.'*

Hector growled, snarling like an animal. She shifted closer to Annie, looming over her, striking fear into the yeti child. Everything about the new yeti woman's body felt wrong; too big, too strong, too female, too . . . maternal. It filled her with rage.

'And you turned me into this for your own wishes? What about what I want?'

'You said you wanted to die. If you could bring life-'

'Why would I want to do that!?'

Tears flooded the child's eyes. *'Because we are DYING!'* she gestured.

Hector's anger evaporated in the space of that single statement. The new yeti paused, then lowered herself down to see Annie eye-to-eye, even if her hanging bosom was a very strange sensation.

'You are dying?' she said.

Annie nodded, then gestured and grunted. *'Father doesn't like me to know too much, but there are so few of us left. There was a great war in the past where lots of us died. We came back to the mountains to survive, but lots of humans started to hunt us. That's how I lost Momma.'*

Her gestures became slow and sad, and something about it tugged at Hector's heart, though she couldn't quite tell if it was having a female form, one that had maternal . . . feelings, now. Still, she felt the need to brush the child's fur lightly.

'I'm sorry. I didn't realise.'

'Father says we shall be the last generations, unless the Mother of the Mountain returns. She can bring the nuwatu back from destruction.'

'Nuwatu?'

Annie gestured to herself. *'Me. You. Father. We are Nuwatu.'*

Hector sat down and gave a wan smile. *'We called you . . . "Yeti."'*

She spoke the line, her new voice like that of an authoritative queen of the snow. It sounded oddly pleasant, strangely.

Annie giggled at this. *'That's a silly name.'*

'And what of you? I called you "Annie"'

She giggled louder. *'That's a very funny name. My nuwatu name is Taela.'*

Hector found herself regarding the girl, observing her cute features and wide golden eyes. *'That is a very beautiful name. My name is "Hector."'*

This time, the giggle became a cackle, one filled with simian hooting.

'That's the silliest name yet!'

Hector looked down at herself, at her voluptuous yeti body with its wide hips, broad body, and magnificent breasts.

'I suppose it doesn't fit anymore, does it?'

Hector caught the scent of Brooks before he actually arrived back in the cave. It was a manly musk that her new body responded to far more than she would have liked to admit, leaving her to take in a deep breath. Her nipples automatically distended a little, and when the male yeti did enter, Hector beheld his impressive stature and strength, his masculine gait and prowess. It was hard not to be deeply amazed in a way she hadn't been previously, and that concerned her. Just how much had her very mind - her attractions - changed with her body?

But whatever awe she possessed was nothing compared to Brooks. He was dragging the carcass of a large snow reptile creature, and had a small gash upon his arm from the clear fight he'd had to win this victory, but he dropped it immediately upon seeing Hector. His golden eyes were wide, his jaw dropped, and he almost seemed to sway a little on all fours. Hector had experienced subservience and awe before as a nobleman; peasants and servants alike would treat her with such. But this was the first time she had ever felt like a *God* in the eyes of another.

A Goddess, to be precise.

'You are more beautiful than a spring's first light,' he gestured.

Hector swallowed. She had not expected such poetry from Brooks, nor for her body to feel so warmed by it, and by his presence too.

'Your daughter changed me,' she said.

'Yes, she did,' Brooks replied, turning an angry glare upon Taela, who hid behind Hector. *'She was not supposed to do this. She was to lead you down the mountain. I told her that the Mother of the Mountain must choose her fate, not be forced into it. I am very sorry.'*

Hector took another deep breath. Damn, but this big yeti man smelled so good. Strange to think she was even bigger than him now. The two stared a little more at one another until the new yeti female realised she was actually checking him over, observing all his lovely muscles and brute size. She broke off eye contact and looked at the cave paintings instead.

'I forgive your daughter,' she said. *'She understood more than I thought. I told her that I came here to die, and she wanted to save me and your people. The Nuwatu. I can . . . understand wanting to do anything to save your people. I lost mine, in a way.'*

At this, Brooks drew closer. *'I am sorry. We Nuwatu know of the Great Suffering. We have lost many. I had hoped, when I saw your changes, that you would . . . stay.'*

'Do I have to, now? I'm not a yeti. Sorry, Nuwatu. Even if Taela wants me to be.'

Brooks shook his head. *'Worry not, you should change back. The magic spreads, and then it recedes, according to the legends. But . . . it will take time. You will only become the Mother of the Mountain if you choose it. Then it is permanent.'*

Hector breathed a sigh of relief, her huge furry breasts rising and falling. She noticed Brooks noticing this, and tried to push down the instinctive feelings of pride it produced.

'That's good to know. I didn't come here to become a Nuwatu, no offence.'

The yeti grunted, clearly taking *some* offence. *'There are few of us left, and so scattered. I howled that the magic is real, but none replied.'*

'Good,' Hector said. *'I'd rather go back down the mountain as a human.'*

'To what end?'

That made Hector pause. To what end indeed? She'd come up here to die, to expire, to find some fitting end. And instead of dying, she'd been transformed into a yeti female. Was it a sign? How could it be? It was a ridiculous fate for a nobleman. But then again, she'd already lost everything, so why not her body as well?

'I . . . don't know,' she admitted. *'I have no purpose.'*

At this, Taela perked up. *'You can find one with us! You might love being a Nuwatu!'*

'Daughter . . .'

'I mean it, Father! She can learn our ways! She can learn the Ancient Songs like you taught me! You always say that however few of us there are, we were here, and we had purpose. We can show her!'

At this, her father grunted something approaching approval. He turned to look at Hector, and once more the former male found herself lost in those beautiful golden eyes. The male yeti was not a big speaker, but he seemed a man, and a loving father. It made her body . . . respond. Not that she was going to acknowledge *that*.

'You could learn our ways,' he grunted, before looking away, a little embarrassed. *'If you wished.'*

Hector considered this. It wasn't like she could do much else until she changed back. And besides, at least it would be *something* meaningful.

'I wish,' she said.

The yeti male smiled, and something in her broke. It was a far sweeter expression than she thought him capable of.

'One last thing,' she gestured. *'What is your name?'*

He smiled again, and this time he spoke. "Partak."

It was a very lovely name. It suited him.

It would take weeks for Hector to change back, possibly over a month. It was a confronting notion, but it wasn't like she was doing much else with her life, and it would give her a new perspective before she passed. Now, instead of dying in the snow, Hector spent her days

running along it, following an excited Taela and a more somber Partak as they showed the new yeti female their ranges. The sights were beautiful already, but coupled with Taela's enthusiasm, they took on a new delight, particularly since Hector could now climb up pillars of stone and cliff-faces with ease, able to see the top of the world in a way no human ever could. She had to marvel at her body. Yes, it was very, very female, but it was also powerful and brilliantly adapted to this mountain life. She was able to hunt alongside Partak, who showed her the hunting grounds where they catch the 'keraps', which were the smaller lizards used for their most delicious stews. To Hector's surprise, the yeti folk also had forms of agriculture; they shepherded mountain goats and snow sheep, and apparently some yetis even learned the arts of eagly - which was falconry but with much larger birds. They used them for hunting and sending messages, but Partak made a number of apologies.

'It is not my skill. I am a hunter, not one to use eagles.'

It made Hector's heart melt a little to see him feel self-conscious.

'Well, to judge from your scars, you are a mighty hunter indeed.'

Again, that rare flash of a smile, which left her feeling self-conscious in turn.

'Come,' he told her. *'Taela and I will show you a most magnificent sight. We must climb.'*

He took her higher and higher, further than Hector had ever gone from their cave, right to the top of one of the tallest spires of the Ice Teeth at the top of the world. The male yeti had brought a satchel filled with rations, and he carried little Taela on his back, though sometimes she transferred to Hector.

'She is more comfortable, Father! I like her fur! It's so beautiful!'

Hector hooted some laughter at that. The burden of a single child on her shoulder was far less than the endless duties of being an heir to an entire realm and a leader of men. She climbed with ease, admiring her own body, and even revelling in it. It was so much more powerful and wondrous than a human form, and something about the different nature of it made her feel disconnected from her despair. When they reached the summit, Partak helped her up the last part in a rather gentlemanly display. He showed her the best perch, and she took in the view of the world once more, far below.

'Magnificent,' she said.

'No, that is not it,' Partak said. *'Here.'*

To her surprise, and perhaps his, he placed a hand gently underneath her chin and raised her head up. It was a remarkably intimate sensation, one that left her body shivering. Once again, that need throbbed within her, instinctive but real. The yearning of a Mother of the Mountain that she simply had to ignore.

Which became easy when the clouds parted perfectly above, and the sky *opened*. Hector gasped at the sight of the dancing lights, the constellations shifting and moving, the

stars alight with brilliance as hues of bright green, blue, and purple wove like ribbons around one another. No, like a river.

"A Great River," she spoke.

At this, Partak looked at her with amazement. *'How did you know?'*

'I . . . just did.'

Taela jumped excitedly upon her lap. *'The songs, Father! Let us sing the songs!'*

'I don't know that Hector will-'

'I want to hear,' she said.

Partak paused, then nodded. He rose, holding his daughter in his arms, and the pair began to sing, raising their voices to the stars above as if in offering to the gods. It was beautiful. Not professional. Not perfect. Not like the endless and dull ballroom performances Hector had attended and hated. No, this was *real*. Flawed and *real*. Full of passion and odes to their people.

She found herself crying just listening to it, the sheer *purpose* and beauty in it, and soon she found herself singing with them, even if she didn't know all the words. It was an unburdening, one that released so much tension within her. It fell away, all the horrors of war, all the guilt stored within her, all the contempt she'd possessed for her duties, how they weighed so deeply upon her, making her question her every move in life. How much she felt *trapped* by it all.

Who could feel trapped here?

Finally, the song ended. Still, they stayed there for a long time, staring at the stars. Partak told her the story of one of them, which was the first Nuwatu to be granted life before returning to the sky at the end of its life. She asked him to tell her another story, and then another, and then another, and soon he was opening up, telling her the entire history of their people, and even the purpose of the Mountain Mother, all while Taela slept clinging to Hector's left arm. She found herself, rubbing the girl's back, a maternal motion that came easily to her.

'Wait, are you saying that the Mother of the Mountain will give birth to generations of yeti? She will be some sort of super mother?'

Partak nodded. *'She is most holy. Her mere presence will restore the fertility of our other women and mothers. She will help unify our people, who have warred. She will return the warmer springs so that our food supply will increase. And she will birth many.'*

Hector chuckled. *'And you wanted me to be that? What, I just swell up with children?'*

Nuwatu could not blush, but Partak did rub the back of his neck. *'No. You would . . . take a mate. One who you felt was worthy.'*

Hector paused, briefly taken aback by this. A lot of clues came together. Partak had lost his mate years ago, and Taela clearly yearned again for a mother. This was not just

about their people. The pair of them were lonely, wanting to be fulfilled. They had each other, but . . . something was missing.

Hector knew that feeling well. So instead of joking again, she took Partak's hand in hers and gave it a gentle squeeze.

'If I did decide to stay, Partak, I would choose you.'

'You have not met the other males. Some are mightier.'

'No. It would be you. Only you.'

And then, because it felt just right, she rested her head against his shoulder, nestling against him. He was warm, comfortable, and Gods did he smell nice. But this was about more than just her body. There were two wearied, lonely souls who had lost so much now sharing something of one another, *with* each other.

It was a moment Hector never wanted to end.

Another couple of weeks passed. Hector learned more of the Ancient Songs, and even accompanied Partak on a hunt, though he was far too preoccupied with making sure she was safe, which was oddly endearing. They cooked new foods, they explored and showed her more of their territory, and Partak even retrieved her some painting dyes so she could learn the Nuwatu arts and apply them; she found their style hauntingly beautiful. And all the time she found herself closer and closer to Partak, warming herself to him, loving every moment she got to chip away at his stoic nature to reveal the manly hunk of a total *goofball* that he was beneath.

None showed this more than nearly a month after her changes. She had a snowball fight with Taela, and the little girl hooted and hollered with glee as they each got the best of one another, until finally both were hit from the side by two massive snowballs, and Partak himself was revealed to be the culprit, finally joining in on the fun.

'Father!' Taela cried. 'You never play snowfight with me!'

'You were never a true match! Now you both must face me!'

At this, Hector laughed, picking up Taela and dodging her father's throws. She skidded behind an icy bank and then directed the daughter to run to the side while she flanked Partak from the other side. On her signal, Taela launched over the bank and flung snowballs upon her father while Hector retreated, having drawn Partak into a trap. The powerful yeti hooted with laughter as he was overwhelmed by the unexpected onslaught, until finally he gave an amusing signal for surrender.

'How did you learn to fight like that?' he asked her in the aftermath.

Hector helped pull him from the snowpile they'd half buried him in, all while Taela giggled and continued adding to it.

'I was in the . . . how to say?' she gestured, before switching to more sluggish words. "Army. Fighting men."

There was no proper way to communicate it, at least on a scale that made sense to the Nuwatu people.

'I'll do my best to explain on the way back,' she said. *'For now, I suspect Taela is in need of a nap.'*

Indeed, on the way back, the little girl slept on Hector's back, slumped over and clinging to her fur like a baby monkey on her mother. It made the new yeti woman feel quite maternal indeed, and something felt *right* as she traversed the snow valleys of the Ice Teeth with Partak at her side.

"Army is . . . for fighting," she said. Hector explained it as well as she could, sticking her chest out proudly when talking of her triumphs, then sagging when she talked of her ultimate defeat. She explained that she was a proud man, but also a man weighed down and suffocated by responsibility, her father a domineering man who expected her to be perfect. It had made her life . . . difficult to bear. And the loss to the Demon Lord's forces had snapped something inside of her.

Partak listened to her, only ever gesticulating to ask for an elaboration on some point or another, or to confirm something. His silence was comforting, full of understanding, and by the time they were back in the cave she found herself wiping her eyes of tears. Partak helped her, rubbing her flank after a moment's hesitation, and then wiping away her tears as well.

'It is behind you, now,' he communicated.

'I know.'

'I can put Taela to her nook.'

She shook her head. *'I want to do it this time. I'm just emotional. Not used to being a female.'*

He chuckled. *'You make a beautiful one. You have perfect hips and a large chest. Other Nuwatu women would be jealous.'*

It oddly made her feel quite warm. She liked the way he admired her curves, as embarrassing as it was to admit to herself. Still, she had to wipe away a few more tears. Partak caressed her cheek, stroking her gently.

'Here, you can be free. If you choose it.'

His words stung, but not for the reason they would have over a month ago. Her fur was starting to recede lately, she'd noticed. It was lacking its usual thickness, and one patch

on her left shoulder was starting to look bare, her leathery skin turning pink and soft once more. The magic, she knew, was starting to fade again, just as Partak said it would.

'I can't choose it,' she told him. 'I'm meant to be a human man.'

'You found the carving. It has been lost for great ages.'

'It was an accident.'

Partak shook his head. *'Nuwatu do not believe in accidents. There are the stars, and their destinies. But if you choose, you can return.'*

'Then that's what I choose,' she said, though that seemed to sting even more. The truth was, the last month had filled her with such freedom and joy that part of her dreaded becoming a human again. Even being female wasn't so bad; her yeti instincts made her occasionally feel proud of her childbearing hips and large mammaries, perfect for nursing babies, not that she intended on such. And yet still . . . it was not a body to be ashamed of. Even her nakedness was starting to seem *natural*, her furry figure divine and beautiful in its own way, her face soft and feminine, yet still that of a Nuwatu.

'I understand,' Partak said. He lowered himself to all fours, his language a bit more defeated. *'But thank you.'*

'For what?'

'For giving hope. For making Taela laugh. She never knew her mother. You give her good memories. And . . . you have given me good memories too, Sewa.'

He turned to leave, but Hector caught his arm with her foot-hand. She turned to look at him. *'Sewa?'*

At this, he became a little embarrassed. *'It means 'First Flower of Spring.' If you stayed, I thought it would be a good name for you.'*

He shuffled away to his own quarters within the cave, leaving her to take in the beauty of his words, the hidden poet behind the masculine hunter. She placed a hand over her heart, pressing against her large breast.

"Gods," she intoned. What else was there to say?

Hector chewed that name over in her mind as she moved to Taela's little nook. She brought the child from her back and held her in her arms. A path of human skin was growing on her left arm. The magic was definitely receding.

"I'm sorry, little one," she whispered in her old human tongue. She placed Taela up in her little nook and then pulled a blanket over her. "I wish I had . . . a daughter like you."

As she moved to step away, Taela reached out a hand and gripped Hector's. Her eyes weren't even open, and it wasn't entirely clear if she was even properly awake or in some kind of slumber. But what she said next changed everything.

"Momma," she said, shifting a hand in such a way as to indicate the concept in Nuwatu as well. "Goodnight, Momma."

Hector stayed there for some time, watching the little girl sleep. It was hard for the former nobleman to quantify what was going on inside of her, because she herself couldn't truly understand it. But something had pierced her heart. Had broken through the protective shell she'd erected around it, then ignited a furnace of love within its workings. The Nuwatu woman took a deep breath, staring longingly at the young yeti girl. The maternal instinct she possessed towards this girl went from a trickle to a river to a veritable *flood*. She patted the girl's fur, caressing her gently.

"Thank you," she said, before repeating the same in the yeti language. *'Thank you.'*

Hector left the girl's area of the cave, and carefully lowered the strips of cloth that served as a bulwark of privacy. The yeti woman exited the cave and gazed at her reflection in a nearby sheet of ice. She'd examined herself before, but always in the context of shock, surprise, embarrassment, or just plain amusement at her fate. This time, she examined her reflection with pride. She was strong. She was beautiful, in an inhuman way; motherly and wild, fierce and adaptable. Her breasts were large yet perfectly formed, her dimensions utterly womanly while still possessing the freedom of a yeti. Of a Nuwatu.

'You are radiant', she told herself. *'And perhaps . . . you have a purpose still.'*

It wouldn't be as a lord, nor as any kind of nobleman. That life was behind her, and in truth, Hector had never liked it. The burdens had been too much, and the pain of her failed battle too great. She didn't want to deal in death anymore, and now that included her own as well. There was a path, a destiny, a purpose that could be filled with life. With *redemption*.

If only she was brave enough to accept it, and the love that came with it.

She sagged again. She wasn't sure she was worthy or deserving of second chances.

It was at that moment that she smelled a lovely masculine scent. Partak took up residence beside her, staring at her reflection in the ice. She noticed his gaze lingering on her rear and then her breasts, which made her smirk a little.

'You are becoming human again,' he noted, pointing out the human skin on her arm.

'Yes,' she replied.

'That is good.'

'It should be.'

Silence followed, neither quite knowing what to say. Finally, Partak broke it.

'Stay,' he said. *'You do not need to be Mother of the Mountain. But stay.'*

She turned and gazed into his lovely eyes. *'Why? Why would you want me?'*

This time, he didn't break off his stare. *'You are a good Nuwatu. You are . . . wonderful.'*

'I am?'

He nodded. *'You bring life to our lives.'*

Hector turned and looked out to the horizon, staring down the mountain side and to the great expanse of land below. The stars were coming out, and if she focused she could make out the light of the human fiefdoms and villages dotting the valleys. It was all so far away, and in more ways than one. Down there, her hope had died. And here, it had been revived.

"Come," she spoke, gesturing for Partak to follow. The yeti did so, trailing after her as she moved to the area of his cave where he slept, on the far side away from his daughter. With some confusion, the powerful male entered his own 'room', gazing at Hector, unsure of what was happening.

'I will stay,' she said.

At this, his body language changed entirely, and he couldn't prevent the broad grin across his face. *'You will?'*

Hector smiled. *'Yes. I wish to stay. I wish to learn how to be a Nuwatu. This is . . . where I am meant to be. I cannot live a life free of burden, but perhaps this is the burden I was supposed to shoulder. A burden I can love.'*

'I do not understand.'

'Perhaps this will make it clear, Partak,' she said, moving closer to him and pressing her large furry breasts against his muscular chest. *'Make me your Sewa.'*

That seemed to make her mate finally understand. His reticence up until this point had been remarkable, but now he embraced her, and she him, the two gripping one another upon the floor of his decorated cave space. There was little here - just floor rugs, bedding, and various carvings, but it was more than enough for her in that moment. She moaned, grunting as he felt her breasts and squeezed them together. The sensation was heavenly, and even better when he kissed her, nibbling at her neck and using his strength to grab her hips and lift her. She was larger than him, but his display of strength was deeply attractive. Her nipples throbbed, but this time she didn't shy away from the feeling. Hector - no, Sewa - moaned as he sucked upon them, squeezing her breasts at the same time. She gave herself over to him, and in doing so allowed herself to enjoy feeling his muscles. Her womanhood moistened, then became wet with arousal not long after, causing her to moan yet further. Partak was quick to take advantage of this: he stroked the lips of her vulva with one of his feet-hands, rubbing her clitoris and causing her to nearly holler.

"M-more," she managed. "M-mount. Mount m-me."

"Beautiful," he said back, before turning her around so that she was pressed up against the wall. Sewa reached a hand back and stroked his manhood as it exited his sheath. She was astounded by the size of it; meaty and thick and long, far bigger than *any* man's member, even a mighty orc's. And yet it only made her crave it all the more.

"You want this?" Partak intoned, his voice low and full of lust, yet still checking one last time for her consent.

"Hurry," she moaned back. "I want it."

She spread her stance wider, leaning over further to present herself to him. Her heart beat nervously within her powerful chest, but instinct told her how to position her body. She guided his enormous cock to her entrance, rubbing it against her vulva in order to wetten his tip. Then, when both of them could handle no more, she allowed him to slide inside of her.

"Ahhhh!" she moaned, her breath hot and steamy as he entered, entered, *entered* into her. He was massive, stretching her walls to the point where she was concerned she might not be able to take him. Thankfully, she could, her wet pussy absorbing his heft and squeezing around it, already tugging upon his cock, ready to milk it. Partak grunted satisfaction, letting loose small groans until he was all the way inside of her. Hector could scarcely believe it; she was being *penetrated*. She was being fucked, mounted, and *bred*. The last thought filled her with even stronger arousal. The idea of helping save the yeti - the Nuwatu species - was tantalising, but even more to know that she could do it by becoming *pregnant* with them. As a nobleman, she would have found it distasteful and appalling, but she had left behind that life. She was not Hector, she was Sewa, and more than anything she wanted to be the Mother of the Mountain, with Partak as her loving mate and Taela as her daughter whom she could give so many little siblings to.

"M-mount me!" she gasped as Partak started to thrust into her. "D-don't stop!"

Words were difficult for yetis, but never more so than during sex. She panted, caught up in the primal lust. His member was so huge within her, and his long arms reached around to fondle her massive breasts, heightening her sensitivity. Her nipples protruded as he pinched them, his touch delicate despite his claws and strength. She pressed her hips back, letting him hold them and thrust yet harder, in and out, in and out. She was grateful to have such a maternal body. She would need it. Already, she could feel how deeply her fertility ran, how primed her form was for growing life. She wanted that. She wanted it more than anything. To bring life, not take it. To be free of noble restrictions and instead celebrate life in its purest form. And as Partak continued to thrust, driving her to ever-greater heights, the glorious female Nuwatu found herself on the very cusp of that dream as her body shed the final physical remnants of its humanity.

"Yes! YESSSS! HWWAAAAAAA!!!"

Sewa let loose a long and magnificent howl, one that carried through the cave and out into the wind outside. She hoped it did not wake Taela, but something told her that yetis were heavy sleepers. Besides, she couldn't stop herself; the howls kept on coming with each brilliant climax. Partak howled with her, his massive cock twitching within her body and then unleashing a torrent of his seed. She felt it pumping into her, pumping *hard*, his semen warm

and sticky and *wonderful*, coursing into her womb to ensure she fell pregnant. She climaxed several more times just from the sheer delight of feeling it rushing into her, and he in turn throbbed inside her passage, more of his ejaculate pumping into her. It was the most magnificent sensation Sewa had ever felt, and more fulfilling at that. She gasped, scraping the cave wall with her claws, groaning as he came one final time, and she with him. She lost count of how many orgasms she'd experienced; it had felt like an eternity of them.

It was only after a long time that Partak finally pulled himself out of her, causing her to gasp again. She turned around and embraced him, the pair lowering to the rugs upon the floor. She pulled his face into her large breasts, suffocating him in her pillow expanse, and then they lay in that post-coital bliss for even longer. They separated a second time to examine one another, and she could tell that Partak was trying to make sure she hadn't made a mistake, though he couldn't keep that lovely smile off of his face. She signed assurance to him.

'Don't worry,' she said. 'That was exactly what I wanted.'

He breathed a sigh of relief, then rose a little, only to bow deeply for a moment. *'You are my Tagista. My mate. You are mine.'*

She had a good notion of what a Tagista was - a wife or official spouse in their culture. His mate. And she was his. She signalled back.

'And you are mine. I wish it. And to be part of your family, with Taela.'

'She will be happy. And . . . does this mean you will be the Mother of the Mountain?'

She hooted in amusement, then lowered a hand to her belly before signing.

'I already am,' she said.

'You know already?'

Another hoot, a wider grin. *'A mother can tell,' she said.*

Motherhood. What a beautiful concept. Sewa embraced her husband - her mate - and kissed him, the two holding one another before the fire in his room. She had begun her journey here with the purpose of dying.

Now, instead, she had found life.

Sewa was blessed not just with one child, but two, just like the painting. Her belly grew immense and heavy, her young seeming to fight and box within her. Taela was fascinated, of course, constantly jumping about and trying to feel her new mother's belly, and Sewa allowed her. She too found it fascinating; she never quite imagined her life would take her from being the heir to a noble estate to becoming a very pregnant yeti broodmother, but even as her tiredness grew and she relied upon her magnificent mate to bring her food and

keep her comfortable, she never wanted to change back. Even on those nights where she would wake from all the kicking in her womb, and sometimes alarmed herself at how strange it was that she would be giving birth down the line - and many more times after that when she was impregnated again! - she didn't regret her choice. She loved to lay on her side and caress her swollen form, marvelling at the life growing within her. Sometimes Taela would fall asleep against her belly, and in the night, Partak would sleep right up against her back, one arm holding her stomach protectively. Of course, his hands often snuck up to her breasts as well, which had grown significantly yet again, ready to nurse their children. For now, Partak helped take care of that. Breastfeeding a handsome male yeti as a precursor to passionate, primal sex had also not been on her list of life expectations, but she rather loved doing that too. Besides, it kept her from being engorged.

Of course, by that stage in her pregnancy, other Nuwatu were coming to visit, the message that the Mother of the Mountain had returned finally spreading among their dying kind. The fact that a fertile spring had come over the mountain range, with select valleys and recesses sprouting enough food to sustain larger herds of sheep, goat, and other life, all pointed to her blessing being real. Partak told this to various other families and clans that visited, and few resisted his reading. No yeti had, apparently, been pregnant with twins for a whole century, and now here was Sewa, a former human turned broodmother, just about ready to burst with her own young. She felt a little awkward displaying herself before the rest of her new kind - they were told the story of her origins by Taela and Partak - but while there was initial hesitance because of her status as a former human, all that changed when the next miracles occurred: other yeti females began to fall pregnant. It was a revelation for the Nuwatu, who had been struggling with infertility ever since their race was greatly culled.

'It's all thanks to Sewa!' Taela declared. *'All thanks to my Momma!'*

Her new daughter's words brought tears to Sewa's eyes, and it was not just the emotional state of pregnancy that caused them either. She couldn't imagine a life without Taela, nor her father. They had become a bonded family, bringing hope to the future, with two little hopes in particular growing within her.

Of course, they didn't feel so *little* when finally labour arrived. Sewa found herself surrounded by yeti spectators during her birthing pangs. The women had brought her to a sacred place; a great cave further to the east where hot springs could be found. She had greatly enjoyed those hot springs while swollen with eleven months of pregnant belly, as to her shock and initial frustration, she found out that Nuwatu gestation takes an entire year-long process. But the women were practised, and the clans were gathering, and it was clear that this was to be Sewa's sacred space as a semi-divine figure for their people, not just bringing fertility and life, but forms of defence and knowledge of the humans should they ever turn on the yetis again. It was here where her contractions first began, and numerous

yeti families and surviving clans flocked. By Nuwatu tradition, she was accompanied by her closest family; Partak stroked her fur while she squatted and pushed, and Taela was also with her, gesticulating encouragement. But others surrounded further out on a great ring of rock, hooting and howling their own positive reinforcement, and then joining in ancient singing together; the great Song of Birthing. Sewa had imagined this a private affair, but quickly forgot the crowd; the music lifted her up and allowed her to push through the twelve hours of pain until the moment finally arrived. The former male was astonished, feeling more female than ever as she was forced to push the first of her babies out through her distended vagina. Partak helped catch it, lifting it to her breast and severing the cord with his teeth. It was a baby girl, a sister for Taela, but even as she latched to Sewa's milk-filled breast, the next was ready to arrive, and soon she was howling and pushing again, giving birth to a boy. She cried, and the crowd cried with her, overwhelmed by the hope and joy she had brought into the world. None were prouder than Partak and Taela, however, who helped her lay down upon the bedding prepared for her, raised so that she could feed her two babies. They were already slightly furred, and the most beautiful things she had ever witnessed.

"Mine," she said aloud through her tusks, beaming with pride. "My future."

It was a number of years later that the first human visitor arrived to see the yeti folk. Since that day, their numbers had flourished. The yeti mothers were able to breed properly once more, filling the ranges with their young, and their herds were magnified ten-fold to support them, as were their grains along the thin slivers of fertile soil that were now ready to till once more. As for Sewa, she was greatly pregnant again, already ten months along with two to go, this time with *triplets*. This was her fourth pregnancy - she had been bred just weeks after each birth, a fact she now revelled in, as it was just what her body wanted, and she as well. As Mother of the Mountain, she had remarkable fertility, and had never birthed fewer than two children, though the last set being *quadruplets* had been quite the surprise, not that Partak minded. He was such a passionate mate, and Taela never lost her excitement at being surrounded by so many siblings. For Sewa, this was now her life entire, and she wouldn't give it up for the world.

Which was why a human entering their most sacred space was a great concern to all. Their defences had been ready. The yetis had crafted their weapons and bolstered their protection for any incursion. At least, so they had assumed. But the sight of a beautiful brunette in a noble cloak, her hair framed by a diadem that signified royalty, and completely unguarded at that, was not something anyone expected. When the yetis moved to attack her, she simply raised her hand and whispered some words, and their weapons dropped

from their hands. The scent of Primal Magic was upon her - the old magic that was sacred, and tied to the Mother of the Mountain. And so it was that some of the yetis pulled back, recognising this as another sacred figure. The fact that she was clearly pregnant aided such an assumption, her belly round and full of life.

Partak still clenched his spear, however, ready to protect his mate. Taela was behind him, having grown a little and mastered the bow just as Sewa had helped fashion them. But Sewa herself was fascinated by the appearance of this woman in her cave. There was something familiar about this lady who had somehow manifested through a portal directly onto their mountain, and could withstand the extreme cold despite having only a simple, yet regal, cloak as protection. The Mother of the Mountain sniffed the air, trying to ascertain who this figure was. The smell was so very familiar, yet so different . . . no. It couldn't be.

"Hello!" the woman said, her voice sweet and melodic. Her eyes were a vibrant green, so very familiar to Sewa. "I am Queen Melanie of Astrea. I mean you no harm. I have come alone, without my husband, though he awaits word from me. For years now, I have been searching for someone who went missing. I have finally tracked his whereabouts here, to the top of the world where your people, apparently, have survived. I am joyous to know this, but my incantation informs me that among you, somehow, has survived a human. His name is Hector Dawnway, and he is my eldest brother. He would know me as Melvin before my change. He, well, he may not quite recognise me in this state."

She rubbed her belly, smirking with a bit of self-amusement. The other surrounding yetis largely looked at one another, having barely understood what she had said.

"Can you understand the common tongue? Oh drat, I don't know if I can form a translation spell with such an unknown species. Um . . ."

It was at this point that Sewa strode forward, cautioning her mate to stand down. She clambered on all fours, her belly almost scraping the ground, her breasts full of milk; she had been nursing continually since that first pregnancy. She shifted right up to the apparent queen, barely able to believe what she was seeing, then halted before her, dwarfing the woman with her massive nine feet of height. She reached down and rubbed her swollen belly, mimicking Melanie's own movements. Then she actually laughed.

Melanie chuckled awkwardly. "My, what a grand mother you are! Just radiating Primal Magic, fascinating! Er . . . is there something funny?"

Sewa hooted with laughter, then reached to softly touch Melanie's pregnant stomach, which the woman allowed.

"Hello former brother," she intoned slowly. "It seems we've got a lot to talk about."

And if her new life wasn't perfect enough as a yeti broodmother, it was all worth it for the shock on Melanie's face.

The End