

Chapter 23



The
Wicked
Tower

FICTION

Rawly Rawls

The Wicked Tower 23

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"It's me, Fort." Naevia dived to the floor and rolled away from a sword that nearly matched her in length. Lying on her back, she quickly loosed another arrow. Her dead brother stumbled when it sank into his hip but turned after her. Naevia scrambled backward and rose to her feet. She had to dodge around the princess. The heir to the throne stared past her, her body wreathed in pink flame. Minicia's mouth still hung open in that dreadful silent scream. "You're hurting us, Fortinbras," Naevia screamed.



"Draw him this way." Circe limped toward her fleeing aunt. "He cannot answer you. It is no longer your brother." Circe's shield arm hung useless at her side. But with the other, she lifted up her sword. She surveyed the room. Dellia flashed like lightning as she engaged the last three red capes left standing. Tiberius lay at her feet in a pool of blood.

Lady Norbana covered by the door, seemingly forgotten by everyone. The dead giant hobbled after his living sister. Circe willed the gods to strike him. Azure light coalesced around her sword and shot past Naevia. It hit a barrier of red before it could take the thing that had been Fortinbras. Even with the queen gone, her magic gave its protection.

"Do something, Circe!" Naevia ducked and sprinted past her niece. She had come to rely on the tall, copper-haired woman in the short time of Circe's existence. What would they have done had Vel not bedded a goddess? Naevia ran up to the curving stone wall and turned around. She nocked another arrow and watched Circe bend backward to avoid Fortinbras's swiping blade. Circe went with the movement and somersaulted backward. Her left arm spun limply in a circle, following gravity. Her right arm struck out with the sword like a viper at the monster's legs.

Dellia cried out at the same moment. One of her opponent's swords had found a weak spot in her armor. Naevia turned her bow toward Dellia and let fly. Her arrow struck true. After that shot, there were only two standing red capes remaining. Dellia screamed and pressed her attack on both of them.

Naevia pulled her last arrow from her quiver and readied it. Her dead brother bellowed when Circe's sword bit into the back of Fortinbras's leg. The giant toppled to the ground. Circe was on him in an instant, but even his back he parried her attack and knocked her up against a wall. Naevia prayed the evil magic would not repel arrows. She let fly and followed the arrow's path across the room. Just as the creature tried to rise from the floor, he was skewered through the back of the head by Naevia's shaft. He toppled over and did not rise again. Naevia drew her dagger and raced to help her cousin, but Dellia had dispatched the last two guards before she got there.

"I think ... we won." Dellia looked over at Fortinbras's rotting corpse. "I'm sorry about ... him." She turned away and stared at the other body in the room that seemed neither living nor dead. Princess Minicia continued her long, silent scream.

"Me too." Naevia hadn't had time to grieve. And it seemed that time had not yet arrived. She went and helped Circe to her feet. Blood dripped from under the woman's armor and slowly trickled down to her sandals. Naevia was too short to support her with her shoulders, so she simply held Circe's good hand. "How badly hurt are you?"

"I am ... badly hurt. But I shall not ... meet Pluto ... yet." Circe followed her aunt over to Dellia and all three stared at Princess Minicia. They ignored the cowering Norbana by the broken doorway.

"So, what now?" Dellia put her hand on Naevia's shoulder and let her sword point fall to the floor.

"Can we save her?" Naevia's forehead wrinkled in doubt.

"She's like Fortinbras. She's already crossed the River Styx." Circe shook her head wearily. "Lady Norbana, come here." She looked back and eyed the pregnant woman.

"Yes." With trembling legs, Norbana raced over.

"We will focus all our destructive power on the heart of the tower." Circe's hands glowed faintly.

"Oh, I don't know how to do magic." Norbana looked up at the half-deity in awe.



"You came to Vel when he needed you. That was magic, was it not?" Circe's face tightened when she glanced down at the woman.

Seeing it was no time for argument, Norbana kept her mouth closed and concentrated on destroying the heart. She was a little surprised when she found her own hands glowing along with the others.

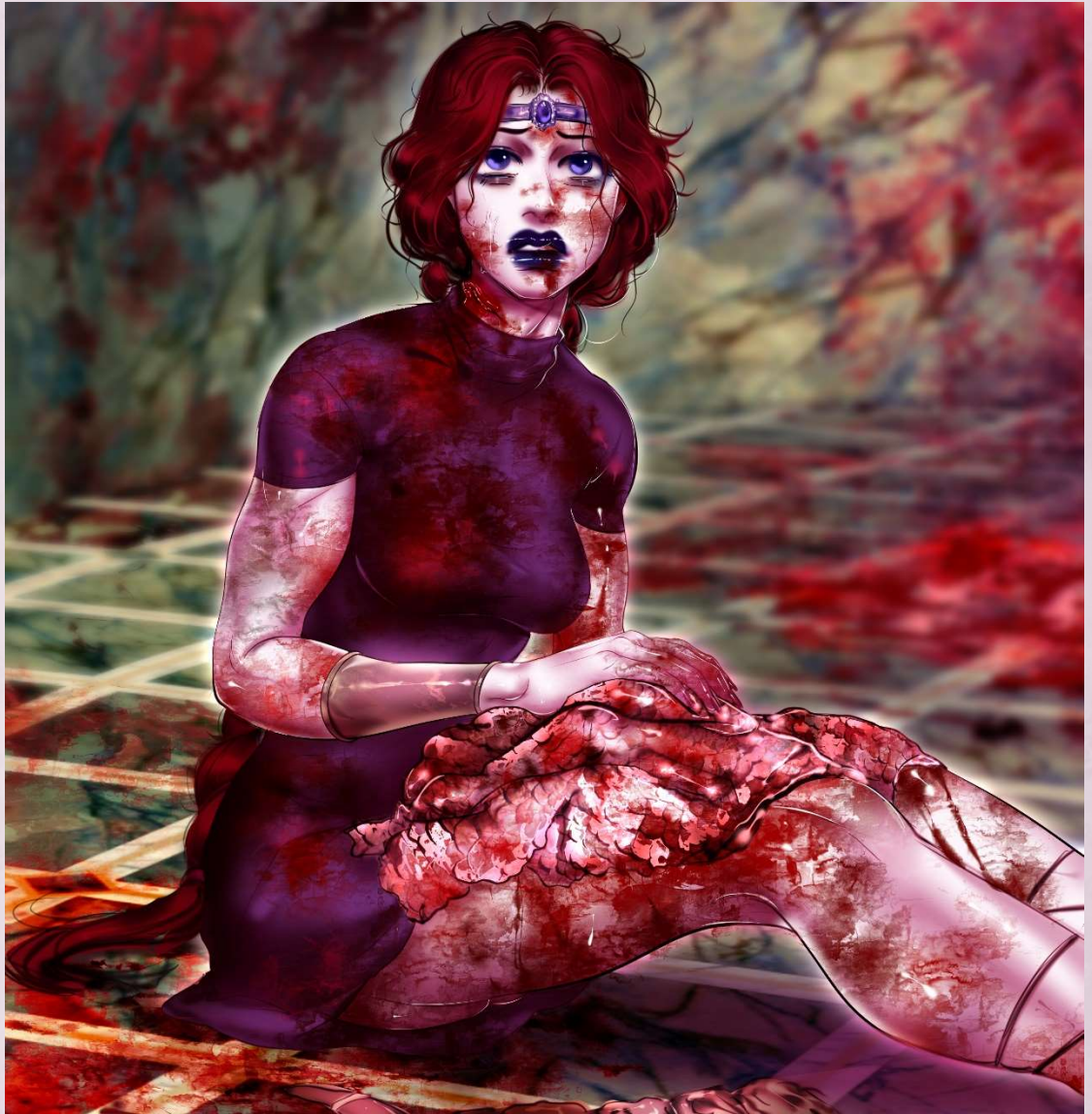
The azure light around them grew until it was almost blinding, and then blazed across the room toward Minicia's tomb. The pink flame that surrounded the princess rose to meet the incoming force with a violent crash that knocked all four women off their feet. When they looked up, nothing had changed.

"A sword worked on Fortinbras, did it not?" Dellia, holding her swollen belly, slowly stood and charged the princess. She was tossed back by the pink flame and slid across the floor back to the other women. From her back she looked over at Naevia. "What now?"

Naevia shrugged and looked at Circe.

"The heart supports the queen. And the queen supports the heart." Circe unlaced her armor. "We must hope that Vel can overcome Valeria. Then we may destroy the heart. In the meantime, we should bandage our wounds. I do not wish to bleed out while we wait."

The other women agreed and rose slowly to their feet.



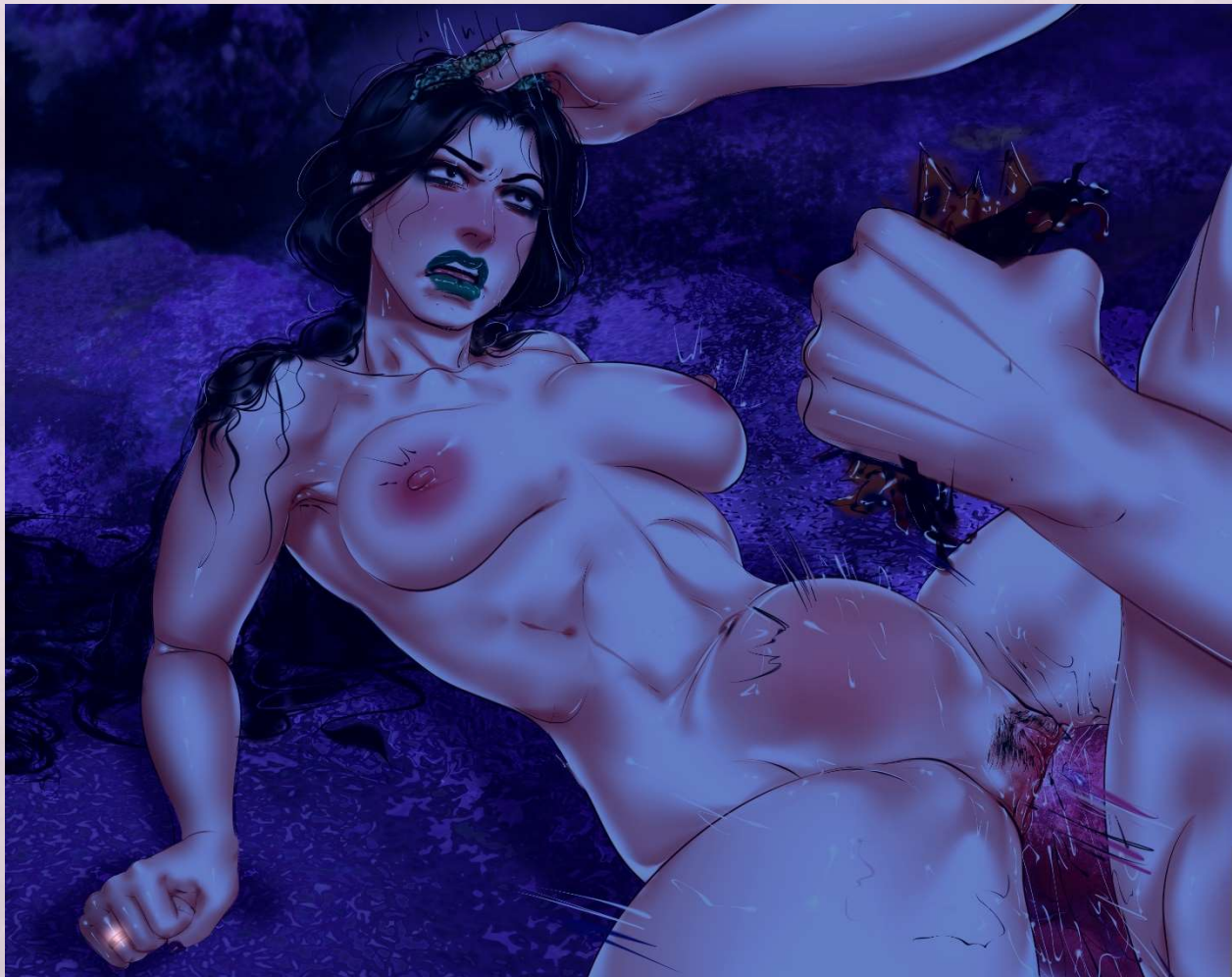
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The hatred, surrender, and ecstasy written on Valeria's face urged Vel on. His hips moved faster. He punished her pussy with long, powerful strokes. The dryad song had a fast beat and higher pitch. He almost felt he could hear words in the melody. He gazed up from Valeria's twisted face to the trees all around, half expecting to see faces. What he saw instead, was a circlet of wood dangling from a nearby branch. The thing seemed woven from maple, with a black stone set in the front. Still humping her, he reached his long arm for it and grasped it. For a split second, he did understand what the dryads sang.

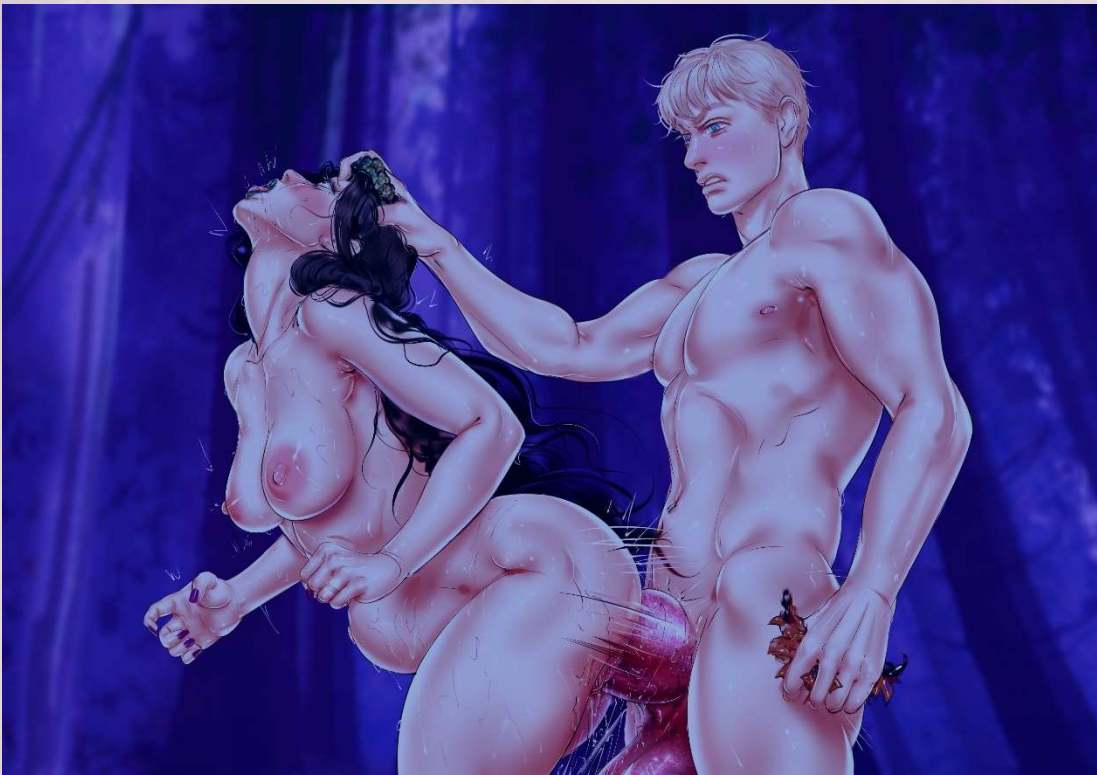
It was a story of the forest's skill at devouring the poisons of men. If given a chance, the trees would leach from the soil the pollution of humanity's greed. If Vel could replace the copper crown with the maple circlet, the dryads might lighten the shadow on Valeria's soul.

"Put ... this on." Vel tried to remove the copper crown, but found that it wouldn't budge from her black hair. He could see that it wasn't affixed in any way. It simply wouldn't budge. "Take off ... uh ... uh ... uh ... your crown ... and put this ... on."

"Fuck ... ugh ... you." Valeria looked at the wooden circlet with loathing. She could tell it meant to harm her. "I would ... never ... wear ... oh ... oh ..." The nineteen-year-old's unnaturally long cock found a secret deep inside her that released a wave of pleasure. "Eeeeeiiiiiiiiiiiiiii." The orgasms were building in intensity, a ladder of rapture. She feared for her mind thinking of the ecstasy that might wait at the top. She felt him pull out of her, eliciting both relief and a desperate desire to have him back inside. She stared up at him, gasping, the mercurial tendrils of his heat flowing through her core. When he flipped her onto her stomach, she did not run. When he mounted her thighs, she did not try and squirm away. She waited for his entry. And when he slid back into her sopping pussy, she shuddered with joy.



“Take ... off ... your ... crown.” The slap of Vel’s hips on her ass was a steady percussion to match the dryad song. When she shook her head, he grabbed the crown and pulled her head back so that he had complete control of her. If it wouldn’t come off, he might as well use it. He was usually so gentle, but this was a time for something less than kind.



“May ... Pluto ... have you ...
oooooohhhhhhhhh.”
Valeria came again. Her whole life people had treated her with exaggerated deference. Even her consort. She had never dreamed anyone would overpower her body and mind the way that abomination did now. But she was still the queen, and she would not relinquish her crown to him.

The way her back tensed and arched culminating at her

rippling ass was too much for Vel. “Well ... then ... I will ... sow your field.” Vel didn’t know why the queen hadn’t had children. There were rumors that it was lack of desire. But he had wondered at her ability. Or maybe her consort was barren. He suspected he might know the answer soon. He was ready to try out her womb for himself.

“Eeeeeiiiiiii.” Through the haze of her orgasm her mind rang alarm bells. But she allowed him to complete his task and felt his warmth spread inside her. This was bad. Very bad. She felt his weight collapse on her, pinning her to the forest floor. Her mind cleared. Good gods, he was still stretching her as he rested. She needed to take advantage of his post-coital exhaustion. Tiberius always needed a nap after sex. Maybe her chance for escape would arrive soon. She would roll the slumbering man off her, dislodging him. Then, she would see about finding the exit to the accursed wood. “Oh ... no.” Impossibly, his hips moved again. “But ... you ... already ... aaaahhhh.” She groaned. She would have never thought a key so big could fit her lock. But he hit another perfect spot inside her. Her mind unwound again. “How ... can ... you ...?” Another orgasm overtook her.

All around, the trees sang their approval.

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The tower had not yet collapsed. Cassia trailed Merope and the woman's rescued husband as they descended the stairs. The fact that the tower still stood did not mean failure. It was anything but dispositive, Cassia told herself. Her remaining children had to rescue the princess *and* then find the heart of the tower. That could take time. She prayed for them. Voices echoed up from a lower level in the tower. She stopped. The voices belonged to more red capes. The queens' reinforcements had arrived. "Merope, come back," Cassia hissed at the woman. She turned and hustled back up the stairs holding her swollen belly. Her shoulder, with the bolt still embedded, ached. She glanced back and saw her servants following her. They made it to the landing above them and tried the door. But it was locked.

"What do we do?" Even though Merope was on the threshold of giving birth, she supported her husband with her shoulders. He had apparently been the subject of torture. "We have to hide."

"Yes, or ..." Cassia thought about using her magic to blow the door down, but she was so weak. What reserves did she have left? She turned it over in her mind. They were escaping the wrong way. She could do no more for Vel. She judged that she had enough power in her for one final spell. "Come to me. Hold my hands." Cassia grabbed their hands and concentrated very hard on returning to Day Star's home.

"What are we going -" Merope began.

"Quiet ..." Cassia wished very hard. The tower around them faded away and all three fell through darkness.

With a series of thumps, the bedraggled trio landed on a stone floor. Merope screamed when she saw the horrific display of the broken Discordia looming over them. The goddess changed from beautiful to dreadful and every shade in between.

Cassia looked up, blinked, and fainted.



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The guttural moans and screams gave Vel confidence. Valeria could be faking, of course, but he didn't think so. He understood more snippets from the dryad tune. The trees encouraged him. He thought he knew what to do. He stopped his hips and left his cock partway inside her. After a few moments, she rocked her butt back at him, trying to get him all the way inside again. But he moved his hips to keep no more than half his penis buried.

"What ... are you doing? If you're going ... to do it ... do it." Valeria's frustration mounted. She needed to recapture that feeling. She thrust her ass back, but he wouldn't fuck her. And then, there was a sudden emptiness as he pulled out. "Oooohhhh ... noooooooo." Her vagina without his presence was a new feeling to loathe.



Vel moved off Valeria and lay down on his back. The moss tickled his skin. They were now no longer in contact. The mixture of their cum gleamed in the starlight on his tower of a cock. He didn't want her to try for murder again. Nor did he wish to chase her down should she flee. But, as she watched him from her prone position, he thought he'd taken an acceptable risk. There was deep longing in her eyes. "You have only ever served yourself, Valeria. Now you serve something outside yourself. Tell me what happened to you when the old tower fell."

When Valeria glanced at his face, hatred returned to the lines around her mouth. But when she looked back at his penis, her visage softened. A war raged inside her. When the war met its armistice in her mind, she crawled toward him and gently handled his cock. "My uncle hoarded Discordia and Pax's power, but he had not harnessed it. One of his many failures happened when the old tower collapsed and crushed me." She had a compelling urge to take Vel into her mouth, but she resisted. "On the far side of the mortal world, I refused to

take the downward path. So, I sat under a black, starless sky. A satyr, traveling some unknown road in the between lands found me and took pity on me. He offered to send me back, should I need vengeance upon my uncle for my death. I accepted." Valeria pumped Vel hard with both hands now, barely aware of the story flowing from her lips. "He told me he would need to give some of his life in the effort of resurrection. And when I came back to the world of the living, Cesphea was the product of my joining with the satyr. She was made from some of him and some of me. I love her as more than a sister, because she is partly me."

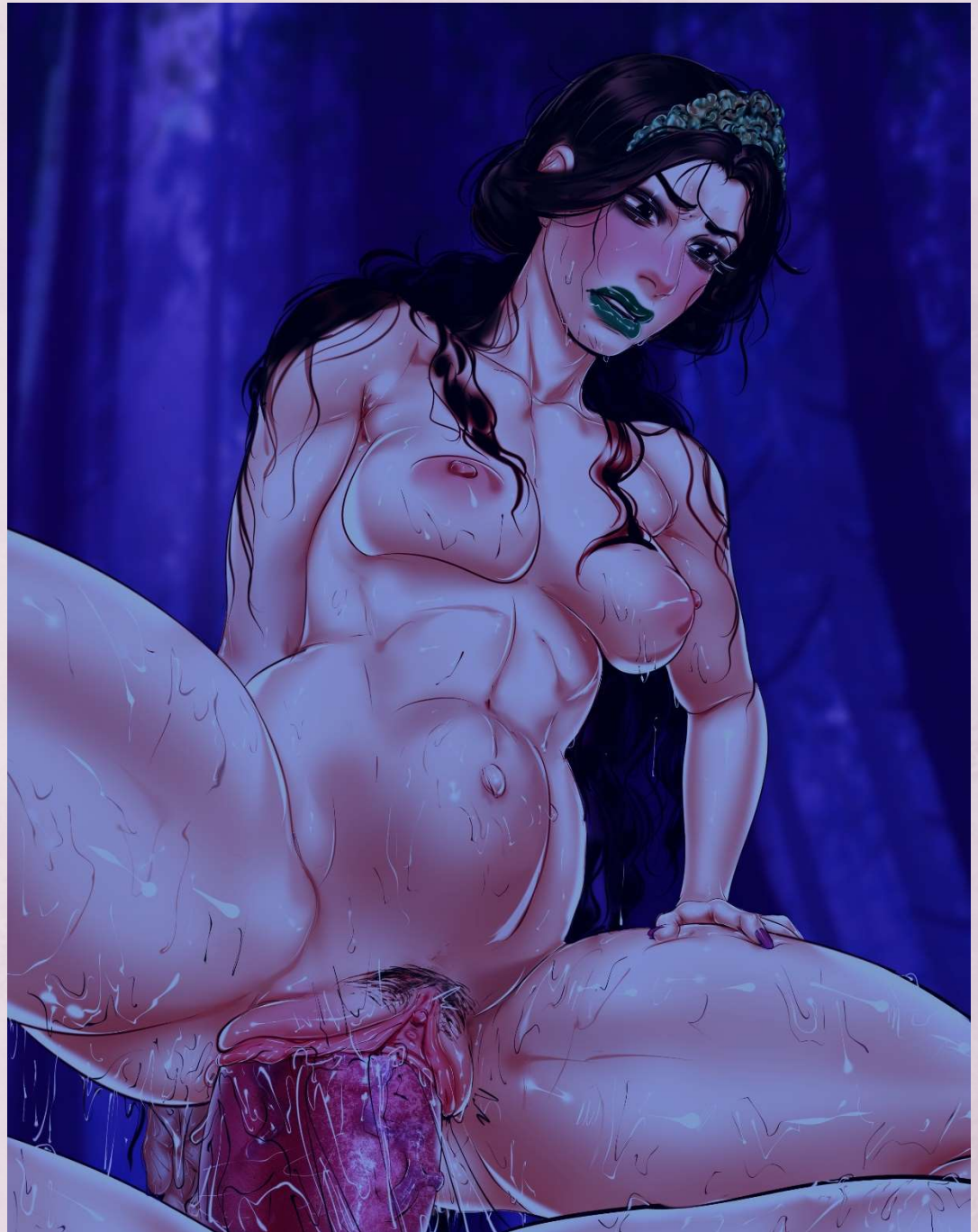
Vel thought that vain and horrific, but he didn't say so. "Climb on. Feel me again."

"Yes." Valeria's pussy ached for Vel. She straddled his hips and placed the cockhead at her entrance.

"Aaaaaahhhhhhhhhhh." She sank down on him. This was a defeat. She could see it as clear as day. She had impaled herself. Something welled inside her. It wasn't tenderness, but maybe something very much akin. "What about you? How came the gods to ... ugh ... touch you."

"A story for ... another time." Vel grabbed her tits and manipulated her so that her hips bounced up and down. Her strokes were so long she nearly dislodged him at each apex. "Instead of swapping stories. I want you ... to admit ... that your search for power ... turned hollow. You wish for ... something more ... fulfilling."

"I will not ... ugh ... be your ... breeding mare." It was obvious to Valeria where he wanted this to go.



"I think ... you will." Vel tugged at her breasts and pulled her face close to his. He was not gentle with her. Her sweat dripped onto his chest. He looked into eyes that rolled slightly and failed to focus on him. "I can hear it ... in the trees. You will wear the maple circlet ... and ... ugh ... give yourself to me ... and my new kingdom."



"I ... am ... queen," Valeria squeaked. Her voice trembled.

"We shall ... see." Vel released her breasts and let her lean back on him. She sounded like a wounded coyote when she came.

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Bandaged and armor-less, Naevia, Dellia, Circe, and Norbana worked at barricading the door with detritus from about the room. As the task neared completion, Naevia eyed the bodies laying where they fell. Would Fortinbras stay dead this time? She eyed the hole in the wall they had made with the rocketing door.

"I see your gaze, Naevia." Circe slumped to the floor and rested her back against the barricade. "You are wise. We should toss the bodies out. Particularly those two." She nodded at where Fortinbras and Tiberius lay near each other on the floor.

"You think ... they'll rise again?" Dellia sat next to Circe and gave a long, exhausted sigh. She rested her head on the woman's bare arm.

"I think it is possible," Circe said.

"Come, Norbana. These other two cannot help." Naevia walked slowly to her brother's hulking form. "I cannot move him alone."

"Oh, gods." But Norbana was beyond complaint. She moved tentatively to the body and mirrored Naevia by grabbing him under the armpit. She shuddered when she caught a glimpse of his cloudy eyes staring at the ceiling.

"One ... two ... three ... pull." Naevia tugged on the mass and Fortinbras lurched a little. Together, the bedraggled, pregnant women dragged Fortinbras to the hole in the wall. "You ... were ... not the most ... supportive brother," Naevia grunted. "A bastard ... really." As they passed the heart, the pinkish light from Minicia's flame gave Fortinbras an even more ghastly complexion.

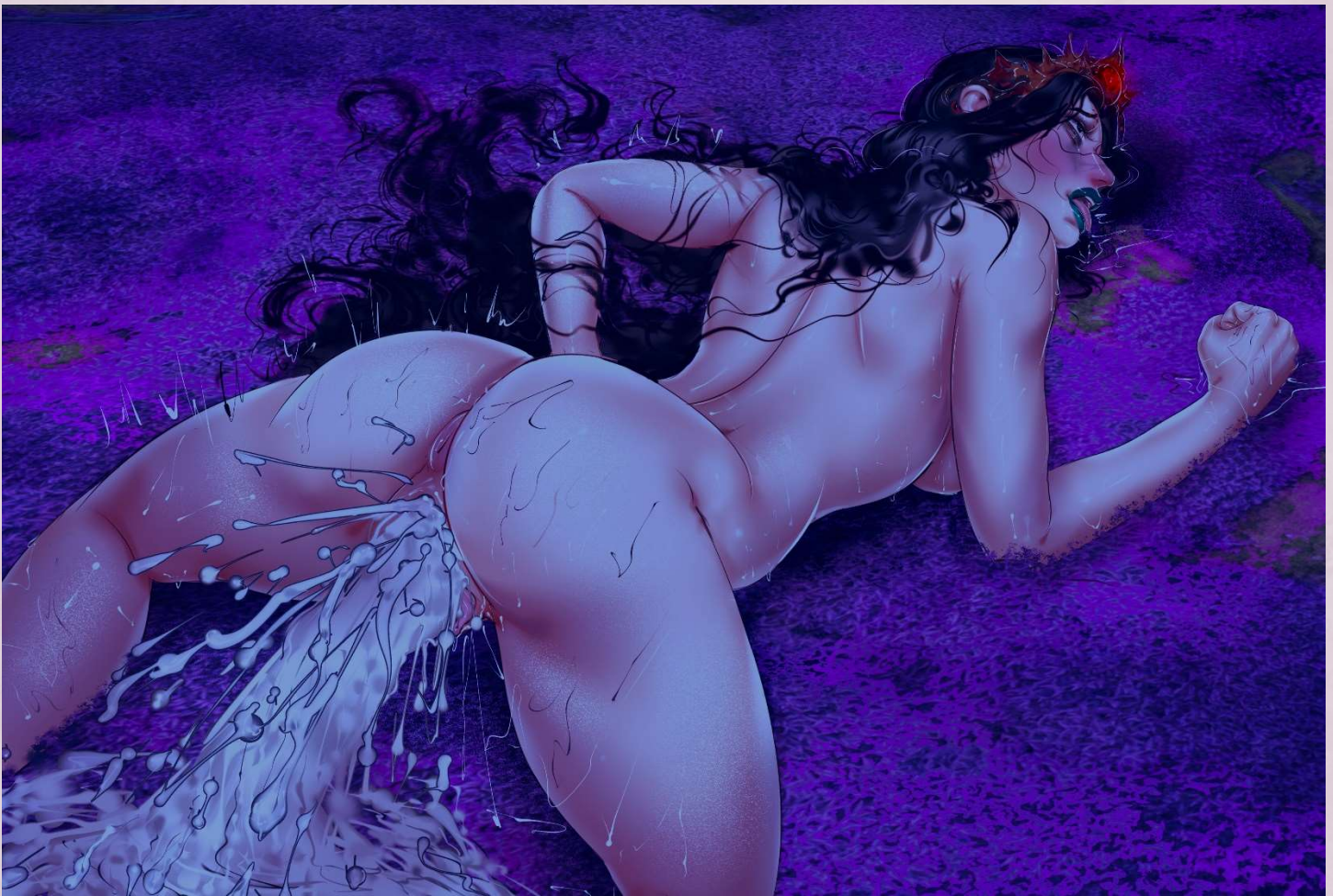
They arrived at the edge and Naevia looked down at the clouds parting around the tower below. "But you ... deserved better ... than this." She got down on the floor with Norbana and they both pushed with their shoulders against Fortinbras's side. The giant inched out over the edge and gravity took him. Naevia scooted her head out into nothingness. The wind whipped her hair as she watched her brother tumble through the air and then disappear into the mist. She moved away from the broken wall and nodded at Norbana. "Thank you. I think ... the Royal consort ... should be an easier task."



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When the tall, young man came inside her for the second time, Valeria thought she might lose her mind entirely. She had urged him on, riding him like a common harlot. No, that wasn't right. No common harlot could bury all that cock in her cunt. She rode him like an exceptional harlot and screamed bloody murder when his seed filled her.

Even after his second climax, he wasn't done. She let him lift her as he stood. All the while, she was still impaled. He held her ass firmly with both hands. The maple circlet was in his right hand and it pressed into the flesh of her left cheek. Her feet flopped at his sides as he hammered her. She was a normal-sized woman of the Surround, but he handled her like a plaything. She *was* his plaything and no longer loathed him the way she had. Pleasure was corrupting her mind. They stared into each other's eyes. The damnable music all around them built to a crescendo.



"Place ... the copper crown ... on my head." Vel could see her expression had shifted. There was only ecstasy and confusion. He had driven the hate from her.

"Will you ... uh ... uh ... uh ... give it back to me ... after?" Valeria was not used to bargaining. This sounded ridiculous to her own ears. She knew that without her scepter and crown, her connection to the heart would be severed. But did that matter? She was already cut off by the beguiling forest.

"No ... uh ... uh ... uh ... I will not." Vel brought her down onto his cock with added determination. He watched her eyes roll.

“Yes ... yes ...” What did it matter? She would still have her magic without the connection. She still had her power. She would take the crown back later. By force if necessary. She released the charm that bound the metal to her head. “Take ... it ... oooohhhhhh.” She sang along with the forest’s music as another orgasm battered her mind. She had no idea how many it had been.

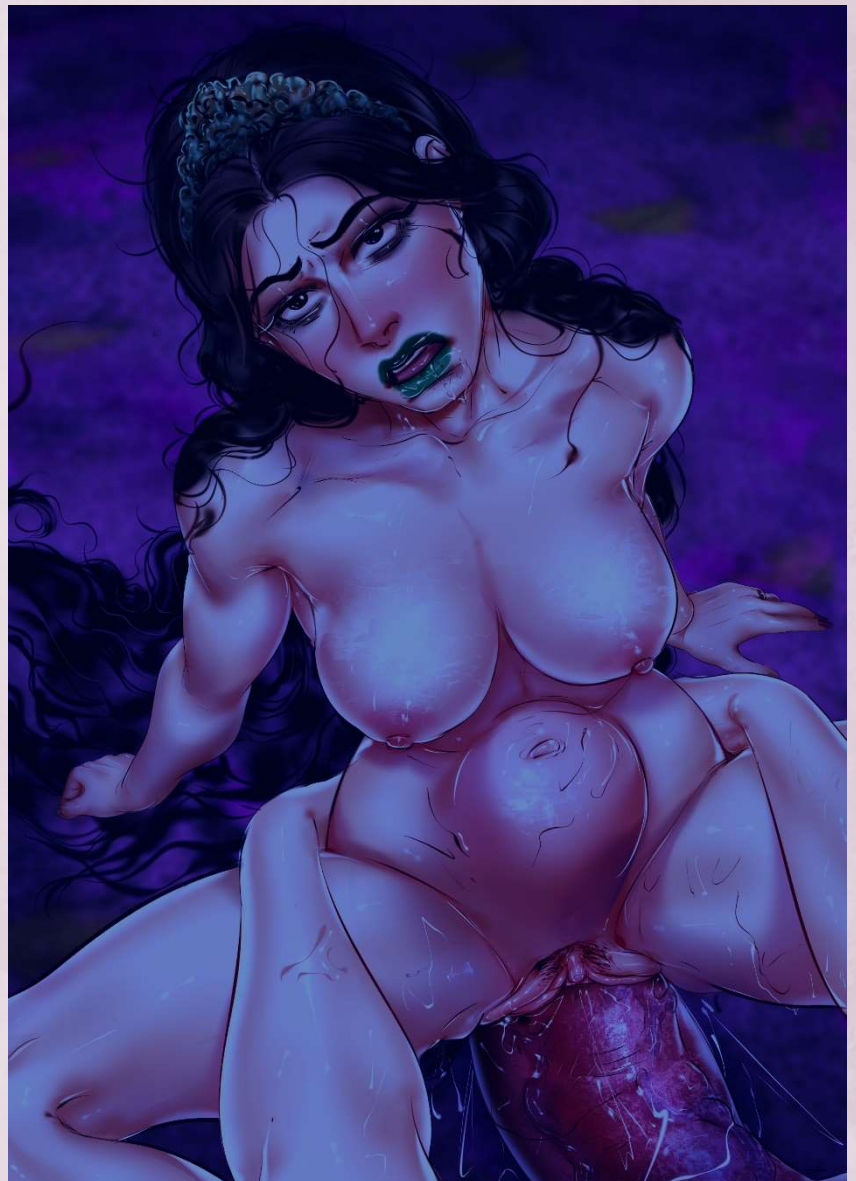
“Thank you.” Vel released her ass with his right hand, but still held her in the air with his left. He reached up and plucked the crown from the climaxing woman. He placed it on his own head. Nothing seemed to change. They continued humping. Then, he placed the maple circlet on her head, with the black gem right at the top of her forehead. She screamed louder and flung her head back. Her whole body shook wildly. Vel gripped her butt with both hands so that she wouldn’t buck right off his penis. He stared, amazed, as pink flame rose from her open mouth and formed a cyclone into the forest canopy overhead. It faded, and azure light flooded into her mouth from the trees around them.

“What’s ... ugh ... happening to - gggggppphhhhhh.” Valeria gurgled and choked on the blue light. She expected fear and death, but elation filled her heart. The warmth spreading from Vel’s touch turned fiery and lit her nerves. She was so overcome with the rapture of it, that she barely noticed him erupting inside her for the third time.

Vel shook and shuddered. He nearly dropped her as he came, but instead pulled her violently to his hips and left himself buried to the hilt. When he was done, he slowly pulled her off and dropped her to the forest floor. The circlet stayed on her head, seemingly fixed there as the crown had been. He had a sudden fright and reached up, but the copper crown lifted easily off his head. He rested it back gently on his blond hair. His cock slowly deflated as he staggered to a nearby fallen log and sat. He was not surprised when Valeria began groaning and reached for her belly. It swelled and swelled. The magic of the place had a firm grip on her. “So, do I leave you here? Or take you back with me?” He caught bits of the dryad song. The words urged him to take her, to use her as proof of his rule. Vel didn’t much like it, but if she was truly tamed ...

“Ohhhhhh ...” Valeria writhed in the moss. Her belly had stopped growing. She thought she felt a kick from inside. Her child was greeting her. She had traveled maybe two thirds of the way to full term in ten minutes. She stared down at the stretch marks on the globe of her belly. “You are the father ... the father of my child ...”

“Very well.” Vel stood. “Let’s see if we can find the exit.”



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The sound of red capes cutting and battering the barricade was frightful. The four women had decided they couldn't leave until the heart was destroyed, but they didn't know whether they had another fight in them. They stood on either side of the barricade, swords drawn but hanging by their sides. A large timber fell to the floor.

Something changed in the room's light. Naevia was so focused on the impending breach by the guard, that it took a moment to place it. "The flame is out!"

At that instant, Minicia's scream found its voice. All four women turned toward the tower's heart. The wretched sound pierced into their very souls.

"Do we ... save her?" Norbana had to yell to be heard.

"She is already dead." Circe's hands glowed with the azure light. She didn't know how much power she had in reserve. She prayed it was enough to take out the heart. Another timber fell from the barricade. "All of us, now," Circe yelled. All four women had a diminished glow about their hands. "One ... two ... three."

Blue energy shot across the room. In a flash, Minicia folded in on herself, bending and bending. The very air in the room warped, until with a final pop, Minicia and her scream were gone. The tower rumbled and dust fell from the ceiling above.



"We did it." Naevia slumped to the floor, her back against the wall. She wished herself out of the tower and back to Hekate. But nothing happened. "I'm spent. I can't ... leave." She looked at the other women.

"Me too." Circe nodded.

Dellia sighed and slumped to the floor. "I can't go either. Norbana?"

Lady Norbana shrugged her shoulders. An azure circle filled with darkness opened before her. "Sorry," she said, and stepped through it.

"Wait!" Naevia stood as quickly as she could. "You can take us with ..." But the circle closed and disappeared in an instant.

"Well, that was fucking selfish." Dellia shook her head. "At least we destroyed the heart."

Naevia sat next to her cousin and niece. They held each other as the tower shook and the barricade fell. There was now a hole in the doorway big enough for a man to climb through.

"You did it." From out of nowhere, Vel stood above the women, his hand possessively on the back of Valeria's neck.

"Oh, Vel." Even in that awful moment, a smile spread on Naevia's face. But that quickly gave way to a quizzical look as she took in the sight of her naked brother wearing a patinaed copper crown. The equally naked and very pregnant queen, and the circlet on her head with its glowing black stone further mystified Naevia. "You ... freed the heart of the tower from its flame?"

"I had help." An arrow whistled past Vel. He moved himself and Valeria up against the wall, out of the line of sight of anyone shooting through the barricade. "Why are you all still here? It's done. We should leave."

Naevia held up her hands which glowed very weakly. "Our power is spent."

The tower lurched. There was the sound of something crashing overhead.





The floor canted, and Vel fell against the wall. “So, we die here?” Vel pulled his sister into his arms. “I have always loved you, Naevia.” “And I you, *Your Grace*.” Naevia leaned up and kissed him on the lips. Another loud crash and the room lurched further at an odd angle.

“I can help.” Valeria looked up at her new master with wide eyes.

“What?” Vel broke the kiss and looked at the former queen.

“I have some of the dryad magic in me now. Take my hands. With our combined power, we can leave.” Valeria held out her hands. Vel took one and held his sister tight. Circe took the other.

“I don’t trust her.” Dellia stared, incredulous.

“But you trust me.” Circe clasped Dellia’s hand and closed her eyes. She concentrated everything she had on returning to her mother.

A crack sounded above them. But when the ceiling caved, it crushed no one. The five of them had all disappeared.