

Magic was always a perilous tool to work with, the slightest mistake could make a spell fizzle, or worse, react in a volatile and dangerous way. There were also the dangers that being a mage brought from outside the craft. People assumed a wealth of goods was up for grabs, if they could only best or deceive the arcane keeper or better still, raid their stronghold while they were out.

Lapis was no stranger to the risks and threats that might be involved with magic, and so she'd taken herself to an isolated area to begin practise of the newest addition to her repertoire.

The kind of people who would raid the blue coloured mew's home were the kind who would be easily deterred by a simple shake of a stick and having their acts witnessed. As such she'd looked into constructing some security with a lighter touch. A golem servant that could be put to use as manual labour, while also having enough presence that interlopers would be chased off by the sight of an automaton running at them.

Of course, for those who weren't deterred it would need to do more than simply chase. Lapis had studied several tomes related to golems, copying details of the text within to replicate the magic later.

At first, she'd been intimidated, seeing that the majority of such creations required metals, stones or harder items like clay, yet she'd found a few more esoteric examples, made of easier and lighter materials. While they wouldn't necessarily last as well or function for robust uses, it was easier to gather and more importantly to test. So she had brought rolls of fabrics and cloth in an attempt to build a small, innocuous golem and then when she had the fundamentals down, it would only require greater quantities.

Testing proved to be quite necessary, the mew's first product detonated violently, the carefully prepared form bursting and sending fluff falling through the air. It took her a few hours before she had something that bore a resemblance to what she wanted, then another turn of an hourglass before she'd managed to get it moving. At least it had reached the point that any failure simply diffused, allowing her to work on and perfect the same creation.

Finally it stood and started to walk around. She clapped her hands in delight. "About time! Alright you," She looked around her spotting a fallen twig. "That's a vital reagent, bring it here for me!"

The small golem looked up at her for a second and then turned and trudged on soft silken legs to the twig, lifting it in simple pincer arms and bringing it back, holding it. She took hold though the golem didn't release the twig, instead lifting off the floor. She shook it a little, puzzled before with a sigh she realised it lacked some fundamentals to think for itself. Would she need to give it orders constantly? Well, at least it was better than nothing. "Okay, release the stick." Its hands spread wide and it fell to the floor, letting out a soft thud before picking itself up to stand, watching and waiting.

The sun was starting to dip and so Lapis gathered her things, she'd run more instructional tests on it at home. "Alright, follow behind and don't dawdle." She told the golem which stepped lively in her wake.

Sunrise came and with it the small golem had retained the magic and its animation, it was a success.

"I reckon I'll keep you around as a cute reminder of my genius." Lapis said to the small golem in the morning. "Now, let's go make you a bigger friend, hmm?" She took a list of tested commands that she'd worked on the previous night, figuring it was better to cover all bases at once.

The golem followed passively, gathering any fresh sticks it spotted and dropping them at Lapis' heels. She didn't pay an abundance of attention, as long as it was keeping up that was fine.

Back to the hillside, far away from danger of collateral damage. The grass still carried a few traces of the failed experiments to show this was the place. "Golem zero-one, gather all the debris, let's have this place tidied." The small cloth automaton trotted to the instruction while Lapis gathered up the materials she'd use to fashion the grander golem.

Being on the small side, herself, it took a few minutes just to spread the large amount of cloth and stuffing around, replicating the conditions of her success on a wider scale. Her eyes flicked to her notes, recanting the words she'd used, mimicking the gestures, shaping the spell.

The cloth flickered and twitched before it began to twist and wrap on itself. It formed stout legs and arms, with a bulky, rounded body. The magic infused stone that served as its core was placed high up on the body, catching the eye, drawing it in and serving as a fill in for the golem's face.

More of the stuffing pushed in, puffing it out, magic infusing the simple cotton to have strength, enough to stand and work with. "Yes, yes. It's working." Lapis hissed, glancing at the smaller golem which had brought a bundle of litter back and was close to stepping into the boundary of the spell. "Zero-one, stop and watch." It said, before with a flourish she let magical energy pour off her, sending her cloak billowing from the resulting force.

The new golem stood, its arms stretched to the sides and then it waited, moving only a little as its creator marvelled. It was easily three times bigger than the mew herself, more than enough that a silhouette of it or its cast shadow would intimidate any thieves in the night. "Alright, now we're talking!" She said, rubbing her hands. "Golem, I give you the temporary designation of zero-two. Now, move to the heaviest thing you can lift that is in our sight and stand beside it." The golem trod in a small circle, the cloudy stone scanning the surroundings, it set off abruptly, walking in a straight line to a small rock, Lapis frowned in disappointment before it stepped over the rock, walking instead to a tree.

Her eyes went wide in marvel, she dare not let it uproot the tree, yet the fact it thought it could was more than promising. “Wonderful. Zero-two, return to me and accept my instructions.”

Minutes passed with her commanding the golem, giving it orders to carry out, reading them off from her list. From simple things like cleaning in her wake, to more complex things like staying out of her direct path when it wouldn’t interfere with other orders. Last thing she needed was a giant servant constantly in her way when working. Then she settled on a few more security minded ideas, establishing patrols it would take and several other orders besides.

“You are to capture and contain any that intrude on my domain. Should they flee across the boundaries, you may chase as long as you remain in sight of the house. Should they make it beyond that, return and patrol again. I should reiterate as before, your methods are to be a deterrent. Secure and controlling but not damaging or dangerous unless strictly necessary or otherwise unpreventable.

When you have captured an intruder, keep them occupied until I command you on what to do with them.”

The rest of her orders supplemented that as she set out a few extra parameters, alerts it should give if certain things showed up, versus those it should handle on its own. She tested a few of the commands that she could before asking it to demonstrate capture on zero-one. Cloth strips detached from its body and arms, shooting toward the small golem. They snared and wrapped it, taking all of a few seconds given the size difference and complete unresisting subservience. When the lesser golem was covered, it began pulling until Lapis interrupted. “Oh, novel, well, that’s good enough, release zero-one. Designate zero-one as an ally, and with that, it’s home we go.”

Lapis was thrilled, everything was going so well, infusing her with more confidence than she’d had in a long time. As she approached her home and pushed open the door, she was already thinking about what work the golems could do that would let her relax.

Her foot crossed the threshold of the door, then she heard a few strange ‘vwip’ noises and rustles of cloth on cloth. Smooth silken bandages snagged around her arms, legs and across her chest from behind, trying to reel her in. “W-what the-?!” She demanded, trying to brush and shake the bandages, jumping a further step into her home before managing to turn around. Another wave of bandage clipped forward, directed toward the mew’s face. “Zero-two?! What are you doing? Cea-mmph!”

A wide coil hit her in the mouth, clogging her jaws and then wrapping swiftly. Her brows widened, she had instructed it to do that when apprehending spell casters but it should only look

for intruders! Unless- a chill stole over her, in all her instructions she hadn't forgotten to exclude herself, had she?

Her left hand glowed as she tried to conjure up some spellcraft, only for another wad of bandage to fill the palm and then wrap around her fingers, tangling them and balling them up. The golem stepped closer, more cloth flicking out to connect with the ones already landed, snaring over the top of Lapis' outfit.

"Phh mhh dhmm!" She tried to command, both her hands nullified with the fabric then tracing up her arms and over her feet. The swishing material twitched as it started to pull her in, closing the distance between them.

A wider swath of stuffing and silk stretched forward, shooting for her head, dropping over the top of it and then tucking in as the golem sought to contain the 'intruder' by the most secure means. The bandages formed a full body wrap, like a mannequin of soft fabric which the thicker more solid sheets wrapped on top of, she felt the bandages twitch as threads were merged together, anchoring her into the wider layers. "Ghhh hmmmph! Zhhn whmm, zhmm thhm! Dhhchtmh!"

The fresh commands were too confused by the cloth layers to register, and so the golem worked as it had been previously ordered. Its arms were now brought into the mix, grabbing Lapis around the shoulders, pulling her off the ground and slowly spinning her as more cloth built up a soft yet firmly entrapping layer.

Fabrics trapped her arms behind her back, then forced her legs to touch together with her tail pushed between them. The golem adjusted its grip, holding her shoulders in one hand and below the thighs in the other, before it squashed and compressed, balling the mew up into a foetal position. "Wmmh??" She squeaked quietly before the thick soft waves pushed out, bundling her into a compact, confined and quite controlled package.

The golem's heavy hands pushed their subdued target against the bulk of its body, where the belly would be, squeezing it in like a soft hug before the front parted, revealing a hollow inside the padding into which it deposited Lapis and her plush coating before sealing up as strong as the weave with which it had been crafted.

The mew was stuck, trapped inside the security system she had just created. She tried to recall her wording from before. With a groan that could barely be heard outside the soft muffling enclosure she remembered: The golem was to keep all intruders occupied until Lapis herself ordered their release...

She was really in it now, and unless the golem ran out of energy on its own, it might be a while before anyone even thought to try a rescue.