

SIGIL

“Are you *really* sure you want to do this?” Meredith frowned, laying down the thick, leather-bound tome on the floor.

“Of coooooourse!” Kim responded excitedly, bouncing around her large bedroom, rebounding gleefully between the couch and bed. “What’s the worst that could happen?”

“Well, a lot, assuming this actually does anything...”

“Pfffffft, we’ll be fine, Mer! If it doesn’t work, no worries! If it works, it works! And there ain’t no kooky monster thingies gonna be able to stop *us*, right?!”

“I really think you’re overestimating our abilities when it comes to battling against the paranormal,”

“Pshawwww! With your bookishness and my moxie, there’s no way we could lose!” Kim excitedly jabbed at an open page. “Look! Pentawhatzits! Let’s do that one first!”

Meredith silently obliged, quickly chalking out the circular sigil onto the floor of the roo. She waited for a moment, looking back and re-reading the page for any further instruction.

“I guess it doesn’t wo—“

Screaming came from the doorway as a stallion rushed the room. “WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO THE FLOOR!?” he barked angrily. Meredith had never met him before, but his grey coat and black mane clearly marked him as being Kim’s sibling.

“Grey!” his sister happily exclaimed, “We were just... uhh huh...”

The room appeared to be melting. A visible force emanated from the seal on the floor, seeming to displace everything it came near with an incandescent matte redness that engulfed the room and stretched for infinity in seemingly all dimensions. A giant pillar of smoke rose up between them, forming into a roughly humanoid shape before dissipating to reveal a towering goat-like figure.

“Oh my gosh oh my gosh oh my gosh oh my gosh IT WORKED! Meredith, it worked!” Kim screamed, jumping around happily; seemingly oblivious to her friend being paralysed by awe and terror.

“Oh, new toys,” The demon’s voice was deep and slow, somehow echoing from the walls that were not there. “Which one of you to play with first?”

He looked around him. A raven stood with a book, frozen by fear. A similarly rooted pegasus stallion, his grey fur turned a lighter shade of white. A winged mare, bouncing around shouting in glee. He smiled.

“You.”

The demon swiftly scooped Kim up in his gigantic hand; cages of smoke forming around the others that hoisted them upwards and hung them from some unseen ceiling. The demon’s tongue slithered across his teeth as he turned Kim over in his grasp, quietly casting upon her a powerful magic she couldn’t identify. A sickly sweetness flooded her tastebuds, a growing unrest forming inside of her.

The others looked down in horror from their cells as Kim’s body started fattening up, growing as though a tap had been fully opened inside of her. The demon loosened his grip slightly, giving them full sight of her fuzzy body as she blorped outwards over the demon’s hand, gaining dozens of pounds by the second. She screamed loudly as her legs turned to lumbering tree trunks of

lard, chins sprouted out of her face, her rump bulging into blubbery beach balls that sagged as heavily as her precipitately growing gut.

The demon cackled with perverse pleasure as he rubbed a teasing claw over her stuffed stomach, letting her feel the pressure of the immense quantity of fat he was forcing on her body. Kim yelped loudly, trying to bat his finger away with an increasingly saggy hoof. The demon tutted at her indiscretion, pushing his finger hard against her still-ballooning middle. She could feel her stomach emptying itself—and continue to empty itself—every morsel of her biology suddenly screaming for sustenance and respite from this horrid unending hunger. She whined loudly as a monstrous appetite roared to life within, only partially muffled when her cheeks bulked up fat enough to smother much of her face moments later.

“Stop!... Stop that, you asshole!” Grey spluttered, finally finding the courage to intervene. “Leave her alone!”

Despite Grey’s dissenting voice the demon persisted with his mischief, the once little pony now drastically overflowing his giant grasp. Cupping her in his hands he muttered a final curse into her ear, lifting her up to be level with the prisoner cages as he put the finishing touches to his creation. Meredith and Grey were treated

to a close-up view of her accentuated immensity; Kim's once (relatively) lithe form transformed into an overinflated blob of gluttony. She struggled to mutter a word of complaint, her cheeks pressing against her maw, any semblance of speech overcome by a thunderous cacophony of spittle-infused belches that sprayed over her comrades. Almost simultaneously a potent fart exploded from her rear end; combining into a noxious stink around her.

The demon delighted in his handiwork. He held her close to the others, laughing as Kim swelled into an ever more useless blob before them, capable of nothing but spewing increasingly potent gases into the atmosphere; Grey and Meredith's rattled cages and begs for respite ignored. He played with her for a long while—teasing at her distended gut, jiggling her bulging rolls around, forcing her to belch and fart at her companions—before growing bored of the whole spectacle. Finally satisfied and with a knowing grin directed towards his captives, the demon set his creation down, bid them “Adieu!” and whisked himself away in smoke as quickly as he had first appeared.

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“K...im?” Meredith stuttered. She was visibly trembling, her feathers unplanned and in disarray. They were, at least, back in Kim’s room.

The mare didn’t respond. Breathing was suddenly so hard. The air was heavy and difficult to process. Another rancid fart burst forth from her rump.

Kim had ceased swelling without the demon’s touch, but it was too little too late. Her short frame was left burdened with an additional eleven tonnes of weight, a significant portion of her bedroom now occupied by her own body. Unnaturally viscous, dirty sweat had already started to pool around her, oozing slowly from every square inch of her stretched flesh. Her stomach roared loudly, demanding satisfaction, but she had no means of sating it.

“Kim!” Meredith shouted, pushing the mare’s cheeks out of the way so she could speak clearly. “Are you okay?!” Kim opened her mouth to respond, a thick, guttural belch coating the raven’s face in malodorous slobber. Embarrassed, she tried to apologise, but she could barely utter a syllable before she uncontrollably sprayed droplets of dribble down her front. Meredith stumbled backwards as she tried to clean herself, forced yet further away from the pony by another putrid eruption. Grey—similarly dishevelled—arrived then too, despairing at the state of his sister.

“She can’t talk,” Meredith explained, still wiping herself down, “the demon must have done something to her,”

“Well crap,” Grey sighed, trotting over and pressing a hoof into the wall of flesh that now constituted his twin, a modest burp popping out in return. “Is she okay? I mean... other than... *this*?”

The raven just shrugged, “No signs of distress but, well, it’s a little hard to tell,” a loud grumble interrupted proceedings, “she might be a little hungry,”

“Alright,” Grey turned to leave, “I’ll sort out eats, you try to, I dunno, un-demon curse her or something, Book Lady,”

“It’s Meredith,” she corrected.

“Whatever!” he shouted, leaving.

Meredith dutifully took to the books, searching the ancient text for anything that could help their situation, finding little of use except for cautionary pictograms on the pages following their demon-summoning pentangle. The book’s author had evidently returned undamaged enough to provide a warning.

Grey returned a short while later, carrying a pair of paper bags bulging with hayburgers. The room had gotten notably more humid in the time that he had left, the stench of stale farts lingering in the air. He paused for a moment. "You don't think she's gonna explode or something if we give her food, right?"

"Nah. At least, I don't think so. Nothing in the book about it, anyway,"

"Alright," he shrugged, leaning up against Kim's bulging front. Slowly he removed the waxy paper cover of the first burger, smooshing it roughly into the space between her cheeks and holding it there. At first, nothing happened, but the burger was slowly engulfed after some seconds, a few stifled burps accompanying it. He started unwrapping another. "Any progress on making my sister *not* be a disgusting land whale?"

Meredith rolled her eyes. "The book was a bust so I looked online. We never got the demon's name, so finding anything useful there was difficult, so I instead looked at different ways of helping Kim, and I foouuund..." she tapped her phone screen a couple of times, "this!"

She pointed her phone towards Grey. He squinted at it from halfway across the room, failing to make out anything in particular. “What is it?”

“This scientist devised a way of making cyborgs without all the invasive surgical processes. Now I know cyborgs are all ‘footnote in history’ at this point, but it *will* give Kim a way of communicating with us, which is more than we have now,”

Grey pondered for a moment. “Hey Kim, if you’re fine with being a cyborg for the rest of your life, burp,”

The pony blob responded a thick belch, another burger being deposited into her mouth while it was open.

“Eh,” he shrugged, “good enough for me,”

“Right...” Meredith frowned, “I’ll get on that,”

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A formal rapping at the door indicated the arrival of their guest. Meredith—having found a few minutes to tidy up her discordant feathers—hurried to the front door, leaving Grey with his sister.

The doorway was filled with a pale brown bat. He had a short stature, compensated by his wide berth; if not for the still ongoing Kim incident his significant weight would probably be more impressive. He wore metal goggles across his eyes, a dim orange glow emanating from them, a dirty lab coat loosely draped over his body. A duffel bag hung lazily from his shoulder.

“Err... Alex?” Meredith asked.

“Indeed I am,” he said, allowing himself inside. “Where’s the young woman you told me about? You’re Meredith, I presume?”

“Yes, upstairs, please,” she motioned toward them, the bat already taking his slow, lumbering steps up the first flight. “There was... there was an incident... I shouldn’t go into it, really... we think you can help us... thanks for coming on such short notice!”

“What is it? Stroke? Paralysis? Lost limb? I mean I get that my work is great and all, but I can’t solve every Tom, Dick and Harry’s ailments, that’s what doctors are for, you know,”

“Err... not any of those,”

“Well, whatever it is better be worth—“ he paused, “Oh,”

Having approached the top of the stairs Alex could now see clearly across into the bedroom, and to the bloated, sweating owner within. Grey poked his head around the corner, “Hey matey,” he sing-songed sarcastically, “Hurry up and fix my damn sister already,”

Alex practically jogged up the rest of the stairs, entering the room and walking around a little, figuratively (and, most likely, literally) sizing up the scale of the problem. “How long has your dear sister been binging on buffets to get so large?”

“Oh about twenty, twenty-five minutes maybe? I dunno really, not many clocks in hell,”

The bat viewed Grey sceptically, “Riiiiiiight...”

“Can you do anything for her?” Meredith questioned.

Alex launched into a fast-paced analysis. “Well, the standard, basic neural implant and visual computer system looks to be possible given the relative ease of access to the cranial area, but other than that I don’t think I have any bionics heavyweight enough, pardon the pun, to deal with someone this large. Anything

surgically invasive is, of course, out of the question, but—“ Kim’s rear exploded with another disgusting fart, the furniture-rattling from the force. “...I might have some nanobots for that,”

“Just... just get on with it, alright?” Grey sighed, trotting out of the room.

Meredith shrugged apologetically. “Need any help?”

Despite her offering, Meredith could only feel helpless as Alex worked; the bat technobabbling to a degree that she could understand the words but not their meanings. The entire operation was fairly simple too, taking barely more than ten minutes to position the goggles around Kim’s head (and, most problematically, cheeks) and activating them. Mostly he just spent the time admiring Kim’s sheer size; it was rare that he met anyone that so clearly outweighed him.

“Gimmie your phone,” She complied silently. Alex tapped at the screen a couple of times before handing it back, “You can use this app to communicate with Kim, check her vital signs, and locate where she is—I mean, if you manage to lose her, somehow,”

“How did you get past my passco—“ A loud grumble interrupted Meredith.

“Oh yeah, one more thing...” Pulling a hypodermic needle out of his bag, he proceeded to extract a dribble of liquid from a vial, jabbing it into the obese pony’s gut just as the grumble erupted into a... surprisingly tame toot.

“Jeez, ya couldn’t have done that sooner?” Grey said, suddenly at the door now all the hard work had been done, “What was that anyway? Some crazy cyber nanobot juice that can cure cancer?”

“No,” Alex replied flatly, “just a strong antacid. They come in useful after large meals,”

Grey noticed the bat gently caress his overweight gut as he spoke. Alex blushed as he caught himself, withdrawing his wing quickly.

“Aaaaanyway, you’ve got the app,” he pointed to Meredith, “you’ve got the goggles,” he pointed to Kim, “and you’ve got to deal with this,” he pointed to Grey, flashing a snide grin on top of it. “Ping me if you have any problems! *Au revoir!*”

He took one last glance at the heaving pony blob before heading downstairs, letting himself out. Meredith quickly went to double check the door before returning.

“I guess we’ll try the thing?” She prodded at her phone screen.

“Kim? Are you okay?”

Kim wheezed, a sustained but weakened series of belches pushing out of her maw. Text started appearing in the app:

I AM OKAY. HUNGRY. VERY HUNGRY.

“Can you get something for Kim to eat?” Grey rolled his eyes. Meredith looked him down, “Now, please?” she said with unnatural terseness.

“Fiiiiine!” Grey trotted to the kitchen to raid the cupboards. Meredith turned her attention back to the app, scanning the details available. Kim was weighing in at about eleven and a half tonnes with fat making up about 98% of her total mass. Her body temperature was running very hot, which Meredith tried to compensate for by turning on the ceiling fan. Lost for things to do, she laid into Kim’s side and wrapped her friend in a gentle hug.

THANK YOU, the app displayed.

“We’ll get the bastard,” she muttered, her voice cracking as she held back anger, “We’ll get him to fix what he did to you. He’ll regret this,”

DON'T GET HURT.

Meredith read the words on the screen and laid there quietly, pondering revenge; the uneasy silence broken as a stacked food cart clattered through the doorway. "...Bad time?"

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"That's a TERRIBLE idea!" Grey shouted, wings spreading upwards in defence. He was leant against Kim, in the middle of feeding her when this argument broke out. "We could just end up like *this*!"

"Well, what plan do you propose, Grey!?" Meredith screamed back, gesticulating outwards, "We have no way of fixing Kim other than with diplomacy! I've read and re-read the book and that's the only way this demon ever agrees to *anything*; nothing else will work!"

Grey grunted in frustration, rising steadily in tone until he relented. "Fine! I don't have an alternative idea, but if we're gonna go back in then I'm at least going prepared this time! Go draw your runes and pentawhats or whatever. I'll be back," He stepped down from his sister, stomping out the door and down the corridor where he

slammed the door. Meredith rolled her eyes and re-opened the demon book, carefully copying the pentangle that had brought them this misery onto the floor.

The stallion returned within the minute, looking uncomfortable. She didn't question it, concentrating on finishing all but the last short lines of the summoning circle.

"Ready?" she asked.

"Ready," Grey said.

READY, the app chimed.

Anxiously she drew the last few lines. The room smearing into redness as the chaotic demon realm overcame the bounds of this earthly bedroom and displaced the inhabitants from linear time.

The demon seemed surprised to see them, a quick smirk growing as he knelt towards Kim, "Ooooh! Back for seconds already, little one? And here I thought you'd be full!"

"Demon!" Meredith shouted, stepping forward, "We have come to bargain!"

The demon turned to her, looking her down with a sneer, “And what do you have that I could possibly want, mortal?”

Meredith blanked. “Err... this book?” She held up the large tome of spells.

“Nah, pass,”

She twitched uncomfortably. “Oh... err... hmm... I didn’t actually bring anything else with me. I’ve got a ton more books back at home if you want some?”

“I’m not interested in books, beaky,” the demon, unimpressed, “I’m interested in *people* and *manipulating them*. That’s kinda my whole schtick. Did no one bother to write about *that*?”

Meredith receded, starting to burn hot red under her black feathers. She fucked up.

Grey gasped in exasperation. “Screw this noise, time for Plan B,” He spread his wing, a concealed kitchen knife dropping free. He picked up the handle in his mouth and launched skyward, aiming to find a vector of attack. The demon watched the pegasus buzz

around with increasing impatience, violently swatting the stallion out of the air and smashing him into the ground in a crumpled heap.

“Poor show, mortals, even for your pathetic kind,” He motioned in turn to the trembling, disquieted raven, the broken, aching stallion, and the bloated, immobile mare. “I suppose I should reward you for effort, though,”

Grinning, he cupped Kim’s body in his hands and lifted her close to his face. His gaze pierced hers, and softly he began to speak. “You are fat. You will get fatter. Your hunger shall know no bounds and know no end. Every ounce you gain will be with you until the end of all time,” He laughed as he saw her struggle, tears forming in her eyes, “And you shall adore every one of them,”

The influence of those words took almost immediate effect. The tears cleared, the struggling stopped. Meredith’s phone started to vibrate rapidly, the app spewing out dozens of messages from Kim.

MORE FAT. MORE FOOD. MORE WEIGHT. MORE. I WANT MORE. I NEED MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE.

In acknowledgement of her new desire, the demon wiggled his fingers into her, filling her with enough accursed magic to engorge her to nearly double her size, obscuring her features almost entirely as she swelled to an immense, dirty grey blob.

Cackling at his influence, the demon placed her down next to her brother, in turn lifting Grey up by the wings to his eye line. "As for you, you'll be stuck with her; duty bound to care for your fat slob of a sister for as long as she lives," he pondered for a moment, "And you love it. You *want* her to be larger; you lust after weight and anyone who has it, and you'll never be able to articulate why..."

"Noooooooo..." Grey groaned as the demon set the still-dazed pegasus to the ground, turning to Meredith.

"Now, what to do with you," He pondered, looked around for inspiration. Spotting the summoning book next to her, giddy, he picked up the book in one hand and Meredith in the other.

"You seem to be the troublemaker here, so, I'm going to hide this book," he explained, "away in your library. If you try to locate it to, for example, try and stop me, you shall be met with a fate akin to your fat friend over there. So unless you want to end up another mindless lardball, you'll stay out of my way, capiche?" The raven nodded slowly, tears streaming down her cheeks.

The book vanished in a puff of flame and he set Meredith down with the others. The demon staring them all down one last time before vanishing into flames, the demon realm melting away as the trio were returned to their normal reality.

Everybody was silent.

Meredith was the first to make a move, choking back tears as she got up to embrace the sheer wall of Kim's bulk; whispering apologies to her incapacitated friend. Grey slowly pulled himself into a sitting position, quietly trying to account for any major injuries he might've sustained.

Kim was humongous. Meredith, who was tallest of the three before, could no longer see her face. The birdhorse blob was planted on her wide gut, spanning almost all the room between floor and ceiling and spreading to all four walls that held them; every inch of her filled completely beyond reprieve or distinction.

Meredith's chokes eventually descended into cries, an extended silence evolving as everyone seemed to avoid discussing what had just happened. Kim eventually broke the silence herself; a gurgling, powerful belch exploding outwards from somewhere atop her mass, shaking the room and jolting the app back to life:

MORE FOOD. MORE. MORE. I'M SO HUNGRY. I NEED MORE. GIVE
ME MORE. MORE. FEED ME. FEED ME MORE. MORE FOOD. MORE
FOOD. MORE. I'M SO HUNGRY. FATTER. MORE. MORE. MORE.
MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE.
MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE.