

Chapter Three

Jequirity

“Attractive, but only for so long...”

The temple to the gods, stood near the center of town, carved from red wood and oak, a huge round window, coloured with blue, green, red, orange and yellow dyes, was placed at the top, just under the overhanging roof . The outside had a beautiful garden consisting of a few apple trees, cherry trees, and pears, all bearing fruit so ripe and deep in their natural colours, that anyone who would pass by could not help but to reach out and grab one. The flowers where simple and neatly kept. Roses of white, red and pink grew along an wooden arc, smaller flowers of Tulips, Star Gazers and Tiger Lilies grew alongside the Roses; along with the occasional Dandelion. A fresh water fountain carved of white marble the water always gushing out, lay before the entrance to the temple. Stone slabs, some cracked lead down from the fountain to the entrance of the temple. Behind the temple lay a similar garden of fruit bearing trees, vegetables ,herbs and grain; all grown for anyone who would need it.

Inside the temple, large pillars of red wood and oak gave to the structure of the temple. The floor made of stone. Large pillars of stone and marble, caked in wax form years of build up of dripping candles , lined the walkway to the altar(where half the candles burned brightly). The scent of the temple was of old wood, lavender, and sandal wood.

Inside the temple of the gods, a young deer, named Zita walked slowly towards the alter. Her was brown with white spots that ran down her back, her eyes a golden yellow. She wore a simple robe, dyed a deep purple, lined with a simple red strip that ran down the side. Zita Held an offering of flowers and incents in her hands. She chanted as she walked trying not to wake her sisters and brothers that slept below the temple. Zita would do this often as she could not sleep sometimes at night. Once at the altar she removed the old, dry flowers and placed in the new freshly picked Roses, Lavender and Star Gazers, freshly picked from the garden. Zita emptied the ashes of the burned incents in to a small wooden bin and lit the new ones. She sat in front of the alter and meditated.

³ Ω σ Ω ŭ Ω σ Ũ P † σ † § Ś ~~Deersaw~~ Images of fire, a Hooded figure, some sort of liquid, like a shadow but more fluid and thick flowing down a stone floor, symbols that were not clear drawn out in white chalk on a floor, chanting, the room turned blood red. Metallic colours flashed before her. She broke her mediation, took a few deep breaths in and just sat there; trying to figure out what she saw. *What was it ? what does it means* She thought. Zita stood up, walked back down the stairs and returned to her bed, she passed by the four beds of her brothers, all of different species, one was a cat, X † ŭ σ Ũ Ÿ o X † σ ° o † Ъ † o † ő ő Ω ú X † ŭ σ Ũ Ÿ o X † σ ő P † Ő ≡ Her bed was to the left of where her sisters slept there were three not including herself ! X ŭ P Ũ X † ŭ fur was black and white , a fox with amber-red fur and a skunk . She took out a blank book and

recorded her vision. She looked around before she fell back asleep, none of her sisters nor brothers were awake. She lay her head down and fell asleep.

Shade tossed and turned in his sleep, his tail lashing, he growled and barked, and talked; none of it made any sense. He threw off the blanket. Ani woke immediately, she took a deep breath in startled by { ' † Š Š σ o Š σ ú P Š σ σ Ω Š σ σ { ' † Š Š { ' † Š Š X † ≡ Š Й but it was no use, he was too far passed out to respond. Ani stood up, out of their bed and grabbed the blanket, she wrapped Shade in it. Frustrated, The Vixen walked over to their pantry, she pulled out a small glass jar containing a white, milky liquid and poured it in to a small hard clay cup. She did not light any candles or did not remove the dark cloth covering the trapped light in the plain glass bottle the Arc-priestess of the temple of the gods gave her. Ani knew her way, and the location of the potion in there cabinet. Walking back to hers and Shad Š σ ő Š Š σ ' Š oxé some again Óshad P R O ° violently, he kicked off the soft blankets and his fur stood on end. Shade opened his eyes, and they rolled back, only showing some yellow of his iris and ú ' Š X ' Ω ú Š ů ůbrid of reality Šl Š σ dissolving, The fabric of reality is dissolving ... The fabric ... of ...re... ality is dissolving He stopped shaking, closed his eyes and re opened them. The Fox awoke five minutes later.

- !!Ω'Ω

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down in to the clay cup. His whiskers twitched as the sent filled his nose.

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Shade took the cup in both paws, and drank of it, slowly, its bitter taste, with its chalky texture almost made Shade want to gag. He extended his arm out to give the cup back to Ani.

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Ani ignored him. She took the cup from him and placed it on a old wooden table. Shade laid his head back down; Ani sat next to him

before the effects of the bitter, chalky, potion took effect. As soon as The Fox fell asleep, Ani stood up and walked over to the window, she pulled up a chair and just stared out the window. The Vixen gazed at the stars in the night sky. After a while she rejoined Shade in their bed.

Shade was not without nightmares, he dreamt of night, the darkness, the glow of a distant light, the pain, the blood, The burnt out torches, the dagger, the fog, the stone chalice, embodied with ribbons of gold and silver, the scarlet cloth. The pain he felt was surreal, but in his dream it felt *real*. He fell to his knees, his paws on the ground and back bent. The cold damp stone floor made Shade shiver. The Fox vomited, some of the vomit clung to fur around his muzzle, he spat and vomited again and spat once more. He stared at the pile of vomit and wondered was it truly worth it? he thought to himself was this real? Was any of it real? Or just a dream, a nightmare, perhaps?

After a while of not been able to make anything of it; she just thought of it as nonsense, just a thought during his episode of shaking. The Vixen closed her eyes and fell asleep. After a while of looking out the window, Ani joined Shade in their bed.

Quite, you idiot. Do you want them to hear?, the guards? Do you want to break the illusion that this place is haunted? Insonitor hissed and bit off each word in anger.

Xojon walked to the source of the voice, the candle illuminated safe house as he walked. A short stocky and muscular bull stood in the corner awaiting him, he was half naked, his belly and chest all scarred. a cloth tied around his waist with a sai with razor sharp points hung from his belt. The light from the candle did not reflect as well as it normally would on anyone, or anything else. This made it harder to

safe to travel. Not with all the blasted guards. . snorted. Xojon just grunted and stood there.

Did *father* said. He walked over to the table, his hoofs made a slight click-clacking sound as he

walked. The light from the candle still oddly sawn on him. The Bull opened Xojons rump sac, and carefully took out the Destroy Angel . He walked back over to the corner he was standing in and bent over, his Sai rose up and started to slide out of the belt. The bull paid no mind to it, he tucked the mushrooms in to the small sac, took out a even smaller sac of coins and tossed it to Xojon. Xojon caught the sac, the coins made a clinging sound.

reflected light around him, no hardly visible, The Bull walked out of the safe house. Only a few hours till

dawn were left. Xojon dropped the coin sac on the table, walked over to the bed and laid down. He was slightly to tall for it, as his feet hung off it, he fell asleep within minutes.

Dawn was about to break, the sun started to peek over the horizon, and so the changing of the city guards happened.

his body now made it harder from anyone to see, especially in the light of day. He walked past the bodies of the two thefts that Xojon killed earlier, without a doubt he knew that murder was the work of Xojon. The Lace-monitor never really took the time to hide any evidence that would suggests that he was the one behind it. The Bull just snorted and stepped over the bodies. He walked over to the sewers drain, lifted the heavy cover and slid in.

The sewers were a preferred method to get around the city unseen, for those who were not athletic using the enrolment around them to their advantage. Although few would ever travel through the sewers as the stench was enough, alone to denture anyone for going in. Never mind the false rumours, that so many believed to be true, of twenty foot feral rats, monsters, giant snakes, and slimes that could consume one whole.

A narrow walkway, on both sides of the sewer, made of rough stone stretched in many directions. Some going far out, away from the city, some leading to a bigger basin. Some slanted holes in the walls lead to various privies, both inside and out, both never used, abandoned for years and some most frequently used. Some were used for draining bath water, but to know for sure, one would have to know where they stood. Not an easy task, for someone who never used the sewers before. The walls and parts of the walk way were covered with a green slime. A low running steam of dirty water ran down throughout the sewers. The stench was horrible. He knew the way to he had to go, carefully and slowly he walked as not to slip in to the water below. He looked down and kicked it in to the water. The rat made a sound of displeasure and quickly swam out and scurried off in to the dark.

. ı P Ş ı ≡ ă thick wood door, reinforced with iron bars and spikes. He grabbed the chain ring hanging from the chain, it felt cold in his hand. The door slid open slowly, making a hissing sound at it air Ş σ Ō ı μ Ş Ś Ū o ŭ Ψ ú ı Ş ŭ ú ı Ş o σ Ω Ś Ş . ı P Ş ı ≡ X ı P ≡ Ş Ś Ω Ω ° o tough yank, he moved it tail to the side. The door closed slowly behind him. A few touches aliened the walls to going up a narrow stone stair case, that lead to another, thinner door. . ı P Ş ı ≡ Ś Ω σ μ Ş P P Ş Ś magic from around his body and walked up the stars. As he approached someone on the other side opened the door, before . ı P Ş ı ≡ Ō ŭ Ÿ P Ś Ş Φ Ş Ω ú Ÿ o Ω ú ı Ş ı ı Ω Ś P Ş