

Nareak instructed them around the hazards; traps, magical barriers, and all menagerie of animals he used as protection the further they went in. But soon they reached a small sandstone hut, barely looking large enough for one of them. "Just down in here. Make yourselves at home...just don't touch any of my equipment," he warned them.

Sariah was about to touch an interesting looking doll before she heard his warning and huffed as she retracted a hand. As much as she loathed shamans, she found the trinkets intriguing.

Passing ornate masks and other items, Sariah and Rinea were led down a set of steps deeper into a hidden abode, "Clever," she muttered to herself so only she could hear.

Down a short flight of steps, it opened up into a large room under the sands, tables pressed against the far wall, with several medical instruments, vials and plant life scattered across the surface. "I'll go get dressed real quick." He ducked back into a sectioned off room, blocked by a pair of screens.

Nodding in understanding, Sariah gave a deep sigh of relief as she allowed her form to flow back into her half dragon form.

"He already knows about this, I had to shift so I could defeat his powerful nature-based magic, plus it feels much more like me" Sariah said as she placed her hands on her hips, relishing in the feeling of her chest as it expanded out against the leather.

"Mmh and before you ask, it is perfectly natural for me to have breasts, unlike most that descended from us, dragons do have concealed mammary glands under our scales that become available after a hatchling breaks from its egg. This transformation...exaggerates it a bit," she said with a slight flutter of her ear fins.

Rinea closed her mouth, having just about to ask the very question she answered. She clicked her jaw before continuing "I guess it's just that I never thought I'd ever get the chance to see a dragon. That I could even have the slightest bit in my...well guess bones now?" She asked, sat down on a stool across from Sariah.

Sitting down on a chair, her tail curled in her lap as she waited for Nareak to finish dressing.

"You do, it is faint due to your...state. But your skeletal structure is slightly different; more dense and I can see a faint glow available only in dragons."

Sariah quickly whipped her hand out, grabbing Rinea's bony wrist and pulled the sleeve back. Her hands glowed red hot with the bone hardly even reacting to the heat.

“Our skeletal structures are built to resist heat. Your bone would be charred black or ash if you didn’t have some dragon in you.”

Rinea gasped as she felt the claw clutching her boney wrist, feeling the heat build, she made to pull back instinctively, but was held firm by Sariah’s hand. She watched as the bone merely glowed dull red as it cooled. “Is it bad that even with such things right in my face, I still can’t believe it.” She whispered, looking at Sariah’s hand clenching her wrist with a shy smile.

With that, she smiled and let go of her arm, folding her short, clawed hands back in her lap again as they waited.

It was a long while before the male stepped out from behind the screens, he had flat bones made to protect the front of his legs up to spined pieces of bone that covered his thighs, a flap of scales coming down to cover his own hidden genitalia. He kept his hands bare while his chest adorned a string of small broken pieces of bone. Down his back was a line of vertebrae, taken from a far larger animal, following his own down his tail. Two sets of ribs stuck from either side of Nareak, making his form look even further intimidating.

“And just how did you get hold of those I wonder? My ancestors were very careful to hide the remains of their deceased,” Sariah said in suspicion, recognising some of the bones that adorned him.

“I’ve got plenty of scripture on dragons, through hints and lots of research I was able to find a few burial sites.” He said and poked one of the spines sticking from out of his back. “I only researched into them, but you can believe me when I say though, I didn’t disturb any of your ancestor’s burial grounds.”

“I’d be very interested to hear where exactly you got them from,” Sariah muttered but chose to let the matter drop...for now.

“Every sorcerer’s got to have his secrets.” he muttered and smiled. “I’ve always been curious about dragons, and now that I have a living specimen...and unliving one as well here in my house...” he stepped up, grabbing a scroll of parchment and a piece of charcoal, glancing at Rinea. “You wouldn’t mind my taking some examinations?”

As soon as he mentioned about examining Sariah, she growled dangerously, “Nareak, you promised you would help us. This is not part of the deal and it is wasting time!” Sariah’s hand suddenly transformed into a giant dragon’s claw and arm. “Don’t make me have to

teach you another lesson about crossing a dragon,” she said before flexing the talons, each as long as his arm.

He gave a quick step back, raising his hands, dropping the parchment onto the floor. “Simply a few questions. But nevermind my curiosity.” He gave a grin, the frill on the top of his head shuddering slightly. “I’ve seen what you can do with that already.” Nareak said quickly and walked over to a mirror, black as night. Nareak began to growl lowly, his focus directed only to the mirror.

Rinea walked up behind the male, keeping a respectable distance. Her empty eye-sockets locked onto the surface of the mirror, seeing nothing in it, not even the male lizard’s reflection.

“Come here, closer. I need you for this.” He said, gripping her boney hand in a surprisingly strong grip. He began the low growl again, staring into the mirror. She felt a constant electric tingling coursing through her bones as the growling grew.

Sariah stared at the odd duo, her wings ruffling now and then as she watched him work his magic. She wouldn’t admit it but it was impressive, when it wasn’t a spell or element been aimed her way that is.

After a few moments, he turned around to look at them. “I can not see it clearly. I can sense the draconian energy, and a bit of your scent to go along with it, Rinea. I heard the sound of pickaxes on stone and the clattering of carts on rails. The scent of sulfur is there too.” He mumbled, eyes flicking to Sariah and then to Rinea again, letting go of her hand.

Sariah nodded before reluctantly sighing to herself and turned to look him directly in the eyes, or near as with his mask-like features.

“You have helped us...I will grant you one favour, so long as it is quick,” Sariah said. “A dragon always repays her debts after all.”

A grin spread across his face. “Really? It won’t take long, just a few physical examinations and questions.” he jumped up.

“Hold on, you didn’t really give us a location!” Rinea stopped forward, blocking Nareak from stepping closer to Sariah. “What the hell are we going to do with a sound and smell?!”

“She has a point, are you only able to give us a vague idea? Mining could be anywhere, it could be other side of the planet for all we know of,” Sariah pointed out before shrugging. “Looks like we will just have to find us a better shaman to help us with,” Sariah said, playing on his pride, hoping he was

just holding out on them.

The male's tail slammed down on the stool he'd just been sat on. "I can look again real quick!" He said sharply. "There is no one better than I." He growled dangerously, an arc of electricity connected to two bones on his back, lighting up the corner of the room. Grabbing Rinea's clawed hand roughly, he looked into the mirror once more.

Sariah couldn't help an inward smirk at him taking the bait; dragon's were known after all for their cunning. She had to admit though, with his form glowing from his own power and the skeletal look, he was quite an imposing and impressive creature.

The growling started again, growing ever deeper, the arcs growing numerous, Nareak's focus was only on the mirror. Rinea watched on as the electricity sparked more frequently and grew in power, occasionally hitting objects that littered his table, sending them into the air; pieces of paper catching fire. Feeling the strong hand clench her bones tighter, she was forced to pull away as it felt like was going to break her hand.

As the lightning arced out in random directions, Sariah surrounded herself in a reflective dome, the lighting bouncing off to pierce the ceiling.

"Hey watch it!" she shouted from inside her bubble, hearing the faint creak from the tight grip around Rinea's bones.

As soon as it had started, the lightning faded. He blinked and stood up, going over to the parchment he had laid on the table next to Sariah and quickly made a crude sketch of the continent, showing the palace with a large house shape, then drawing a large X on the other side of the desert, where the sands met the mountains. "See, Just like I said, I could find the location of her soul." His voice a deep rumble, a mix between menacing and prideful.

"Yeah, um...are all your spells as...destructive though?" Sariah asked, looking askance at what used to be his lair, now all smoldering and tattered, the ground scorched with the energy.

"Though I must admit, it is impressive for a mortal to exhibit such energy, no doubt drawn from a source I imagine?" she said before dusting her tail and chest off of debris.

"People and lizards alike are unlikely to come in to a territory fraught with danger. So naturally I have destructive spells, that's not to say that I don't have calm and helpful spells." He said and cast a restoration spell on her wound for an example. "The source though is another of my own secrets."

Her skin tingled from where a light bit of scorching her shield had failed to deflect before nodding her appreciation.

“So we are looking north side where the sands start to thin out huh?” Sariah said as she looked, bordering dangerously close to the human territory where the lizards were in conflict with.

“If there was another mirror near to the area that was safe I could use it as a waypoint and use the mirror to transport us two across...but as it is, it looks like I will have to run the risk of carrying you both since we don’t have mounts.”

“It would be convenient, yes,” Nareak said with a swish of his tail. “Only way would be to search the area physically. But that could take days searching for a possibility, that and we’d be where need to be anyway.” He gave a course chuckle. “So guess that means I can get a more hands on examination of your full powers?” He said with sudden excitement at the idea of riding her.

“I do owe you I suppose, but no examining of my tailvent or other off limit areas got it?” Sariah said in half humour, half seriousness.

“When can we get going?” Rinea chimed in, walking up to the pair of them. “I’m ready to be back in the flesh.” She said with a chirp.

“I think there was something about questions involving the dragons before we go.” Nareak grinned and swayed his thicker tail, the bones that made his armour clacking together.

“We can do that on the way!” Rinea hissed sharply and made to the entrance of the enchanter’s home.

Sariah nodded to the pair. “She is right, the sooner the better. And they probably have already discovered us missing and out searching for us. I doubt they know of the hidden passage, but still, can’t be too careful.”

“I’ll be right there,” the male spoke quickly and darted behind the screens again, some shuffling sounding. He came out a moment later, behind Rinea, wearing a large triangular shaped mask, looking like a shrunken skull of a dragon’s head depicted in so many books. The jaw flapping as he lifted his head to watch Sariah begin her transformation.

First she needed to move a good bit away from the shaman’s hut, otherwise she would squash it with her size.

“Here,” Sariah said as she stripped off, bundling the leather armour up and handed her spear to both

of them. "These would get ruined in my change so hang onto them."

She gave them both a cheeky show of her large chest, the nipples standing up on display before turning around with a cheeky sway of her hips as she ascended up the stairs and out, back into the scorching sun.

Glancing around both ways, making sure there was no one about, she nodded to herself and sighed. It had been a long, long time since she had assumed her true dragon state.

Rinea gave a gentle nod as she was handed the leather armour and the spear, she put the weapon on her back while holding the leather gear close. She could still feel the residual heat from her coming off the leather. She couldn't help but stare at Sariah's naked form, the large bouncing breasts attracted most of the skeletal lizard's attention. Her jaw clicked slightly as she watched the voluptuous hips sway as Sariah's spread her wings.

Using her wings, she flew a good bit away from the male's place, landing a good quarter mile away before deciding this would be enough space.

Closing her red eyes shut, she summoned all her focus before her form began to creak and crack as her chest receded and suddenly fell to all fours with a grunt. Her wings grew and grew along with her bulking and expanding form, her neck lengthening, the hands and feet spreading into powerful paws, the limbs becoming stockier and tail lengthened as her entire form sprouted out in all directions. By the time she was done with her transformation her scales glinted like fire in the sun, and was the size of a small village, her legs long and strong and towering over everything else easily a good 40 foot tall.

A surprisingly gentle rumble of laughter rolled from her throat as she flared her giant wings, seeing them gawk openly at her form. A single swipe of her tail would easily demolish the facade hut of Nareak's.

They stared, both of their jaws hanging open as the change took place. By the time they got over the initial shock, she was fully changed into the large dragon form, standing in the shade of her massive wingspan.

Nareak was quick to begin writing down on a length of paper he'd brought out with him, his long tail waving in excitement. Finishing, both he and Rinea ran up to her. "I never thought I'd live to see the day!" he said, taking a walk around her, examining every inch of her giant form that he could, making notes where he needed, occasionally using a limb as something solid to write on.

Swinging her great head around, the bone white horns easily could skewer an elephant straight

through, bearing two rows of them. And her twin fins glinted like ruby's in the sunlight. She couldn't help a dragon's chuckle at their expression, a sort of "houf houf" sound punctuated by a wash of breath that oddly smelled sweet for the fire she could spit out.

"Just...I still can't believe it...even when it's right in front of me." Rinea mumbled and placed a bony hand on Sariah's foreleg, "An-And we're really going to fly?" She asked curiously, her long tail swaying back and forth, occasionally hearing Nareak mumble to himself as he stepped out from underneath her backside, eyes looking up over her soft scaled underbelly.

"**YES,**" her voice rumbled out like thunder, her feral muzzle made talking hard and slow. "**HURRY!**" she said, growing impatient as she gently picked them both up together in her fanged muzzle, placing them just at the base of her neck.

Rinea jolted at the deep voice, even to her undead earring, it was ridiculously loud. The male continued to make notes until he was picked up with Rinea. "He-Hey! You're soaking my work!" He said in her muzzle before they were dropped onto Sariah's back. "I never imagined our ancestors were so gigantic. They described them in the tales, but I always thought it to be exaggerations!" he scribbled down quickly and excitedly.

As Sariah took off with a powerful flap from her wings, the surrounding sands got displaced by the gust kicked up from her wings. Her wings defied the enormity of her form as they left the ground behind with beat after powerful beat that seemed to generate their own small hurricane before with an angled beat, they sped off in the direction of the mine. Her form began to shimmer like a mirage and then, she went as transparent as glass as she became invisible. Problem was, it gave her two occupants a good look at the ground rushing below them as she sped off for the northern sands.

Rinea yelped as the scales she'd just been riding on seemed to disappear, her arms quickly finding purchase on Nareak's form, her tail lashing all about. "Wh-why? Do we have to have you go invisible?!" She shrieked in panic just able to be heard over the great wind.

As they flew, she seemed to establish a psychic connection with them in this form, feeding them images from her mind.

She fed an image of them, her form and the sun, how she would be like a moving, glowing beacon for miles around with them a tiny spec hard to see from afar. And then an image of Rinea's bony spine turning yellow and a mirthful rumble like thunder from her great chest.

Nareak didn't seem to be attentive to Rinea's panic, his tail lashing around in excitement as he looked through to the sands below. "AMAZING! How is it you're able to do that? I've heard of changing scale colour but turning INVISIBLE?!"

"I still can't believe it." Rinea repeated the phrase, finding it hard to think beyond the disbelief. "As half...will I be able to do all of this, Sariah?" She asked after a while of watching the land speed under them, speaking loudly to be heard over the deep breathing alone, let alone all the wind rushing past. Even so, she didn't think either could hear her. Letting go of Nareak, her boney digits worked across the invisible form of Sariah, relaxing as she grew accustomed to the feeling of flying on seemingly nothing. "What makes you so giant"

Sariah didn't need to hear her words, even if they were not dragon or all dragon, just been in touch with her enabled them to share thoughts with her mind.

Showing them a picture of a regular dragon, little larger than a house and then herself, the image of herself dwarfed the normal forms before drawing the words above the mental image saying "ANCIENT."

He was quickly scribbling down messy notes onto the piece of parchment. "What do you do to keep the energy in this form?! What kind of skills do you have, what about sexual appetite..." He kept spouting questions, seeming to have no real path of thought, or being bothered about interrupting the two females himself.

As he bombarded her with questions over the rushing wind, she gave him a mental smack to tell him to be quiet. She needed all her focus since it had been so long, she was a bit rusty with her navigation and flight pattern as her tail helped her adjust for the tilt of the wings.

Nareak gave an audible grunt, feeling as though he'd actually been slammed in the head. Giving a groan, he quit his line of questions and did his best to scribble what he could with the strong winds.

"How long have you been around?" Rinea asked quietly, not wanting to entice the male into another string of questions. "Are you just a long lineage of the ancient dragons? Or are you one from...early on?" She looked at her own bony hands, seeing if she couldn't transform like Sariah had into the smaller half form. Though if she did, it wasn't nearly as noticeable.

She showed her seven old lizards, each could live to be a hundred years so she was showing Rinea she was seven hundred years old before showing a picture of her form and writing LAST below, a tear trickling from underneath her clear eyelid.

Rinea hung her head, claws gently teasing over the leather in her hands. "I-I'm so sorry...." She mumbled before Nareak interjected once more.

"Right there!" Nareak shouted at Sariah, pointing towards the mountains just below them, looking at the map once more before gesturing to a little bit of grass creating a cul-de-sac from the desert into the mountains.

Angling her wings, she gave a slow, swooping descent to the ground, aiming for a huge boulder. It wouldn't hide all of her, but it would hide her head and some of her body as she changed back to her bipedal form.

Coming in with a spray of sand, she landed a little awkwardly as she accidentally ejected her passengers, sending them headfirst into the sand before her form began to creak and crack once again, condensing back into her lizard form,

Both lizards gasped out, slamming into the hot sand, the mask that Nareak wore flew off, landing a few feet away from the pair. Rinea rolled over to watch Sariah change back, her tail waving back and forth wildly. She felt a small spark course through her body as she stared. Quickly she shook her head and pushed the armour out, holding it for Sariah as she came forward. "H-Here's your armour!" She chirped, doing her best to not look at Sariah directly.

"Thank you very much Rinea," Sariah said, stretching out as her lizard bones popped and creaking as though not used to such a transformation. Redressing in her armour, she slipped the soft leather back on, she peered round the large boulder, seeing where the sands gave out eventually to dry land.

"You're welcome." She paused as she regained some of her composure. "Sariah...I have so much to thank you for. Saving me, Protecting me and helping me get my life back." She mumbled while Nareak cursed in the background, pulling the mask back on and combing his claws through the sand, seeming to be looking for his displaced paper. "I don't think I could ever repay you." Rinea continued, looking up, her tail brushing against the shaft of the spear still held onto her back.

Smiling as she watched the male Shaman scabble around in the ground, she plunged her hands into the sand, suddenly coming up as huge, dragon limbs as the sand filtered out through her claws until a parchment of paper slipped out onto the floor before with a series of cracks, her arms reverted back to the more slender appearance.

Nareak grumbled lightly, uttering a short thanks as he grabbed the paper, brushing off lingering sand

before rolling it up and slipping it into a pouch he kept on his waist, his thick tail slowly swayed back and forth as he turned to the mountains while the females spoke among themselves

“You don’t have to mention it Rinea, after all this could be mutually beneficial,” Sariah said as she extracted the spear from her back and slotted it back in the custom holster. The spear she had wasn’t of a typical design. It was far more robust and deadly than the standard issue spears handed to the soldiers. It glinted red in the sun, more a red blade with a point than a traditional spear and capable of standing up to the heat she could generate through it. All other spears just melted when she tried channeling her magic through them.

“Y-Yeah I suppose you’re...hm right. But there’s not a whole lot I can do for you, Sariah.” Rinea said, her gaze looking up the length of the spear. “I’m undead, I don’t have very many skills aside from my innate thievery. What could I ever give to you?”

Sariah just shrugged, petting her smooth head as she passed by, finding herself unable to give an accurate answer. Was it kinship? Was it because of possible answers of her own to find? She couldn’t say for sure.

Rinea gave a small chirp at the feeling of Sariah’s clawed hand touching the top of her head, flinching before she shrank a bit, glancing away with a shy murmur when they were called on by Nareak.

Arching a scaly brow at Rinea’s odd reaction to her gentle touch, she approached Nareak as he called for them, tail wafting side to side as her large hips swayed in her gait.

His deep voice boomed out over the sands, echoing in the valley between the mountains. “I can feel your soul further inside these caves. Along with one other.” He said, pulling the gnarled looking staff off of his back, an azure glow appearing in the maw of a crude lizard’s head carved from quartz.

“Stories tell of undead that roam this mountain range, miners that were cursed for digging into the land.” He grinned, “any adventurer that came here simply never returned. Takes some guts coming here on your own.” Nareak said seeming to speak to the being he sensed inside the mountains.

“Well, lets check things out shall we?” Sariah said as she wandered up to the cave and threw her spear deep into the cave.

Closing her eyes, she seemed to focus on something before whistling, only to the other two’s

surprise a demonic looking wolf with a mane of fire came stalking out of the cave, pausing to give an interested look at the new ones with his mistress before moving on.

As it came up to Sariah, it gave a soft slurp along her thigh and nuzzle into her belly before with a pet of the demon's head, shifted back into her spear.

"What, didn't you know Hellhounds teeth were made of red metal? Was able to save this one from complete extinction and transfigured him into my spear about 300 years ago. Quite loyal too, if I lose it he returns back to me," she said with a smile running her muzzle before clearing her throat.

Seeing the beast leap out, Rinea jolted back in surprise at the Hellhound. Nareak quickly pulling his sheet of paper out and scribbled; his curiosity making him far less surprised than Rinea. "And how did you come to meet this beast?!" he asked curiously as it lapped her thigh before turning back into the spear.

"Oh come Nareak, let's leave some mystery shall we for now? After all, what we are in is just a truce of mutual interests right now," Sariah said, her tone slightly icy, her attention returning back to the cave.

"Demon tells me there is the scent of a dwarf inside the tunnel but nothing that could kill us by inhaling. Though I would be mostly immune to most toxins and well, Rinea is already dead so that only leaves our shaman at risk."

Tail swaying, she led the way inside the cave, "Try not to be too scared okay you two?" she said, a playful edge to her voice.

"I've been playing with most common toxins since I was a hatchling." He said as he peeked into the cave, giving a deep breath. "Besides, I can make it rain and stop anything from being airborne." He mumbled and thrust the head of his staff down the dark passage.

"That's somewhat impressive," Sariah said in a slightly sullen voice but just seemed to clam up afterwards, the tip of her spear glowing a bright red to help illuminate the dank, dark passage. It was obvious she wasn't used to opening up, and that she had a lot of dark secrets she didn't readily cough up.

Rinea took point quickly, her claws clicking lightly on the stone of the mined out tunnel. Wooden beams held the ceiling from collapsing as they went deeper. She cocked her head to the side, hearing the growing sound of a pick against stone, a thickly accented but obviously feminine voice seeming to speak to herself, but it was coming from lower in the cave system.

As they ventured deeper into the cave, a whistling and singing could be heard faintly, echoing around the abandoned mine.

“Someone is definitely here, we’d better...” Sariah paused as she suddenly felt the ground shift beneath her claws, “shit...”

The lizard skeleton drew her dagger, gripping it tightly as she continued forward, when she felt the ground under claw give way, a sharp yell of surprise and the undead lizard tumbled down a long shaft. Her body bouncing off of the walls with sharp yelps and sickening cracks. Sariah and Nareak’s legs were taken out by Rinea’s tail, the length dragging them with. His voice coming out in grunts and curses as they fell and soon hit the floor with a heavy thump and crunch.

Sariah tried using her claws to halt her descent, but to no avail as the stone and earth gave way around her, raining more down below them before just managing to land clear in an undignified heap from the rest.

“WILL YOU WATCH WHERE YOU’RE GOING!!” He shouted at Rinea, voice echoing off of the walls. Using the staff to stand back up, one of the ribs that decorated his body had broken off, ending in a sharp point. He grumbled and looked around the area when his eyes fell on the dwarf standing right in front of them, making him freeze in place.

“So, what do we have here huh? A ragtag trio of lizards coming to chase a poor, hard working dwarf off what they claim to be their grounds, or maybe you are competition?” a female voice with a heavy accent sounded from somewhere near them. Suddenly an axe was pressed gently against Sariah’s long, slender neck in threat. “Either case you three better have a good excuse, otherwise I’ll have three nice lizard heads for my home wall.”