

Purification

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Dawn gave the pair of dragons a pointed look as they stooped through the doorway into Daryn's study. "Next time, love birds," she said with a hint of amusement, "try not to shake the building apart during your, ah... exertions."

The Archmage gave his apprentice the satisfaction of seeing his embarrassment. "Yeah... sorry about that," he said as his gaze swept around his suddenly cramped study. "We may have gotten a little carried away with ourselves."

"Speak for yourself." Clara said as she gently jabbed the dragon in the ribs with an elbow.

Daryn just rolled his eyes and glanced at Dawn who was seated in a chair next to his sturdy wooden desk. He felt a twinge of disappointment as he realized he was going to have to rebuild his home from the ground up to accommodate his new size. The dragon let out a dejected sigh as he lowered himself to the ground to sit cross-legged across from his apprentice. "Alright, Dawn," he said to the young woman seated in front of him, who still needed to crane her neck upward to look into the Archmage's eyes, "fill me in on what's happened."

Dawn spoke quickly and in smooth, analytical tones as she explained to the Archmage everything that had happened since he had left to pursue the man who had stolen from the Southcliff vaults. Clara listened with rising worry, eventually taking a seat at Daryn's side as Dawn continued. Daryn barely breathed as Dawn began to delve into the more arcane aspects governing what was seemingly going wrong with the world and Clara could make neither heads nor tails of it, but the Archmage nodded occasionally in acknowledgement, gesturing for Dawn to continue.

"To be honest, Master," said the young woman as she finished her report, "I'm very worried. It seems to be happening everywhere and no one can explain it. Already, frantic parents have come with their newborns, begging you to "cure their deformities.""

Snorting derisively, Daryn said, "I trust you gently explained to them their folly."

Dawn just cocked her eyebrow. "I told them what you would have told them."

Daryn barked a harsh laugh. "So not gently, then," he muttered. The dragon gave his apprentice a warm smile. "Good." He filled his lungs with a deep breath, holding it for a span before releasing it slowly. Rising to a stand, he started to pace the length of the room with long strides. "You said that the increased reports of rape died out only a week after they had begun?" he asked. Dawn answered in the affirmative. The Archmage nodded before continuing, "Which means that whatever caused the jump in rape reports either ceased, a case I find unlikely, or people stopped reporting them, a possibility I find disturbing." He slowed, his brow creased in thought. "Why? How? Birthrate, gender ratios, mass suggestion, what could possibly..." Daryn's voice died in his throat as he froze, his expression one of worried suspicion.

He turned to his apprentice. "Dawn," said the dragon, his deep voice full of poorly concealed concern, "I need you to go down into the vault. I won't fit through the hallways that deep. On the third pedestal on the left after you enter the room there is a book bound in white leather. You need to bring me that book."

Dawn's face paled in fright at the request, but she nodded and rose, making for the door. She had a hand on the wood when Daryn's tail slipped in front of her, blocking her path. "Wait," he said with a puzzled look, "someone is coming." Daryn relaxed slightly as his wards identified the person making their way up the path to the entrance of his home. A genuine smile split his

face and he glanced at his apprentice. "It's Valorie. We should-" He cut himself off with a short, sharp gasp as he sensed something vile press in on his consciousness and his wards screamed alarms in his head. "Good Gods..." he said in a near whisper, "Something is terribly wrong. We... come on, she needs help!"

Daryn was on his feet before either Clara or Dawn could voice their confusion and out the door before his apprentice realized the dragon had swept her from her feet and now carried her bodily under his arm. The Archmage ran through the familiar hallways of his labyrinthine home, determined to beat Valorie to his front door. Clara, sensing the golden dragon's worry, followed in silence, having to use her wings where possible to keep up.

They soon arrived in the ornately decorated foyer, Daryn depositing his apprentice gently back on the floor. The disheveled woman gave a loud huff and jerked her robes back to some semblance of order. She accepted Daryn's apologetic look with a nod. At the same time there was a weak knocking on the heavy wooden door.

"Maybe you should answer it, Dawn" said the Archmage gently. "Opening the door to a dragon might be a bit shocking."

Dawn nodded as Daryn moved to the side of the room, motioning for Clara to follow him. Approaching the door, Dawn gave the Archmage a concerned look. Something had Daryn worried, and that prospect frightened Dawn, but he had said that Valorie needed their help, so she pulled the door open. She gave a shocked gasp at what she saw. "Gods, Valorie! What's happened?"

Valorie stood shakily, leaning heavily on the door frame. Her clothing was a mess of ruined tatters, stained with fluids of every description. Her fur was likewise matted, and it looked like the tall, equine woman had been through hell and back. The only thing that still looked presentable was the long, green cloak that was pinned around her shoulders, and that Valorie was currently holding over her crotch as if she was restraining something. Her shoulders slumped when she saw Dawn standing in the doorway. "I... I-I'm sorry." she muttered with a pained whimper. "Please help."

With that, Valorie's eyes slid shut and her muscles went slack as she toppled forward into unconsciousness. Dawn let out a yelp of surprise as Valorie started to fall into the room, but Daryn quickly moved to catch her. The Archmage nodded to Clara, "Help me get her to a bed. She's been through an ordeal I can't even begin to imagine."

Awareness returned to Valorie with agonizing slowness. Her entire body ached, every muscle protesting its overuse, but for the first time in weeks, she was somewhere safe and warm. The split second of comfort was ruined however, when the ever-present need throbbing from her loins crashed into her, and she groaned audibly, sliding her eyes open a slit. She lay in a large bed, big enough to hold her bulk. The only light present in the darkened room was a thin globe of pale blue light that floated over the surface of a small table. The weak radiance illuminated Dawn, who was seated in a chair at the table, pouring over the contents of a small book.

Hearing Valorie and taking notice of her weak movements, Dawn quickly shut the book and rose, moving to kneel at the bedside. "Relax Valorie." she said with calm assurance, "We've got you. It's alright."

Valorie shook her head vigorously. "No, you don't understand." she said emphatically. "You've got to get away from me. Please, I don't want to hurt you like I hurt the others."

She tried meekly to rise from the bed, but Dawn held her down with a hand on her shoulder. The Archmage's apprentice nodded, a look of worry on her face. "Okay, Val, don't

worry. I just couldn't leave you alone." She gave Valorie's shoulder an affectionate squeeze before she stood and returned to the table, scooping her book up in an arm. "Just stay there and try to relax. I'm going to tell the Archmage that you're awake." She went to the door and opened it a crack, letting a thin beam of light lance into the room before she paused, saying, "I promise you. We are going to find out what has happened and how to set it right."

The door clicked closed behind Dawn, leaving Valorie alone in the dim blue light. Valorie let out the breath she had been holding, also releasing the tension that had been holding her body rigid. The last few weeks of her life were a blur. During her seemingly endless march, she had only really been away of two things, a grim determination to reach the Archmage, and a burning, overwhelming need to bury herself into anything with a pulse. She had thought that she would never reach her destination, but now that she finally had, she felt as if she had only put the people she cared about in danger.

Grunting through the stiffness in her sore muscles, she sat up, the thick blankets she had been under sliding free of her bare chest. She dully realized that she was nude. So they knew that much of what had happened, at least. She buried her face in her hands; she had no idea where to begin. Blinking in surprise, Valorie noticed the dimly glowing orb hovering over the table start to slowly shift its color, from a pale blue to a warm golden light. It steadily brightened, the radiance banishing the shadows to the far corners of the room as the door opened slowly.

Bending almost in half, a huge golden-scaled dragon squeezed his wide frame through the doorway. Valorie gasped and quickly made herself decent before he managed to straighten, the tips of his thick, black horns nearly grazing the high ceiling. "Sh-shit! When did he get a pet dragon?!" she shrieked.

The dragon chuckled, a deep reverberant sound, much like his voice, as he smiled and said, "Technically? Hmm... maybe... seven... eight hours ago? Just don't let Clara hear you call her a pet, or she'll have both our hides." He paused, looking thoughtful, then glanced down at himself and laughed. "Oh! You mean me. Well, I suppose the answer is the same." He lowered himself to sit next to Valorie's bed. "Hello, Valorie. It has been a while."

Valorie's mouth dropped open. "Gods, your eyes, they're the same as... It really is you! What? But how?"

Shrugging, Daryn answered, "It's a long story. I'm still not really sure how it happened, and miraculous transformations are a hobby of mine." He gestured to Valorie. "I'm more interested in what happened to you."

The equine woman let out a long, shaky breath. "I... I fucked up, Daryn." she said, looking crestfallen as her ears drooped. "I still don't know how badly, but it's very, very bad." She shook her head forlornly, but froze and sucked in a breath in shock when she realized that, for once in nearly three weeks, the omnipresent impulses that had been pouring through her from her "addition" had ceased. Tears sprung to the corners of her eyes. "Gods..." said Valorie, overjoyed, "I-It's... It's gone."

Daryn solemnly shook his head. "Not gone, no." he said, taking Valorie's hand in his own. "Just being held at bay, for the time being."

Valorie looked at him, eyes wide in surprise. "But... How can you-" Daryn poked a finger at his head. "Y-you can feel it?" she asked slowly, and the dragon nodded. Heedless of her nudity, she launched herself at the dragon, whose eyes widened in surprise a split second before she bowled him over, knocking him onto his back. Valorie shook with unrestrained sobs as her arms clung desperately around Daryn's neck.

She wept shamelessly into the dragon's shoulder for what seemed like forever. Daryn laid in silence and wrapped his arms protectively round Valorie's body, trying to ignore the heavy mass of her equine phallus as it pressed awkwardly into his stomach. He let her cry until she had no more to give, leaving his scales damp with her tears. Still sniffing, Valorie took a steadying breath before speaking. "I... Daryn..." she started hesitantly. "I... I could really use your help."

The dragon casually wiped away a tear from the equine's cheek as he sat up, pushing Valorie up with him. "Come on now, Valorie." he said as he draped her blanket back over her shoulders. "You needn't have even asked." Valorie rose to her feet, adjusting the blanket around herself to preserve what dignity she had retained as Daryn likewise stood. The dragon gestured to a wardrobe pushed against one wall. "Your clothes were torn to ribbons, so in the interest of time, we spun up a completely new set for you while you were out of it. We'll be outside when you're comfortable enough to give us your story."

Valorie gave Daryn an embarrassed smile and nodded, thanking him profusely. The dragon just returned a toothy grin and stepped out, leaving Valorie once more alone with her thoughts. Without having to resist the primal urges that had been consuming all of her focus, she was filled with a giddy energy that easily counteracted her fatigue. She went over to the wardrobe, throwing it open after she discarded the blanket on the bed. She perused the wardrobe's contents; it was nearly full of clothes of every shape and color, all seemingly made to fit someone of her stature. Valorie smiled. Dawn had been keeping busy, at least.

Selecting something simple in colors not too garish, she quickly dressed herself. A loose, dark grey shirt slipped easily over her chocolate brown fur, and a matching pair of pants hugged her muscular legs, her delightfully flaccid member making an intimidating bulge in the fabric. Valorie grimaced. She couldn't help but think that, perhaps for now, something less restricting would be best. Removing the pants in favor of a long, green skirt, Valorie took the opportunity to prod experimentally at the shaft that dangled heavily from her loins. She felt her finger touch it, but didn't mourn the loss of the wave of staggering arousal that would have accompanied even the slightest stimulation only a few moments ago.

The long, golden brown horse tail that hung from above her rear made the skirt sit awkwardly on her wide hips, but she soon had herself clothed and she only took a few seconds to readjust her ponytail before stepping through the door into a large sitting room.

The space was dominated by a pair of dragons. Daryn, his golden scales reflecting the light around the room, was sitting with his back to a wall, his legs crossed and his head bowed in concentration. The other dragon, very obviously female and unabashedly nude, sat next to him, his hands in hers, her scales gleaming metallic silver as her tail coiled lovingly around the Archmage's.

So taken aback was Valorie by the sight of a second dragon, that she didn't notice Dawn sitting in the corner of the room until she leapt from her chair and rushed to the equine, wrapping her arms around her waist and squeezing with everything she had. "Oh, thank the Gods you're up and about!" she cried, muffled by Valorie's shirt. "I thought I was going to go crazy worrying."

Valorie gave a genuine laugh, the first she had in weeks, and lifted the smaller woman easily into the air in her strong arms until Dawn's vibrant amber eyes met the equine's own, bright green. Dawn wheezed out a short breath as Valorie hugged her tightly, fresh tears welling up in her eyes. "Oh, Dawn," Valorie said in a shaky half-whisper, "I've missed you so much. I wish I'd never left, then none of this would have happened."

At this, Daryn stirred, his brilliant sapphire eyes sliding open to focus on Valorie. "Speaking of what's happened, Valorie," He said thoughtfully, "let's hear your story." The

dragoness sitting next to him gave Valorie an analytical look, her vivid emerald eyes tinted with concern.

Gently lowering Dawn to the ground, Valorie sighed heavily and seated herself in a chair that looked like it would hold her frame. "Well," she began slowly, "I suppose it started with a contract given to me by Baron Kedrinn. He paid half up front and his information sources checked out, so I accepted." Valorie continued, omitting nothing as she detailed her journey into the jungles to the south, and her encounter in the pyramid. She dredged up every memory she could, however irrelevant it seemed, and Daryn's face took on a pained look as he listened intently. Dawn was openly crying as Valorie explained her experiences with the dryad.

"After I got away from Salixia is when things really went to shit." Valorie said stoically as she continued. "It was like whatever that... creature had given to me had gotten a taste, and it became absolutely insatiable. I tried..." her voice cracked, and she swallowed noisily before she continued. "I tried so, so hard to ignore it. It got to the point that even the slightest touch would set it off. You all saw it." Valorie let out a shaky breath as she struggled to maintain her composure. "Hung like a horse... a very... very well endowed horse." she continued, her voice full of bitter irony. "But you haven't seen anything. Sure, it starts off normally, but if you try to ignore it, it just keeps getting bigger... and bigger. It fills your body with this... throbbing, until you're so horny you can't think about anything but getting off."

She hid her face in her hands, burning with shame. "I tried..." Valorie continued with quiet grief. "Gods, that poor woman. She couldn't have been much older than twenty. I had been staying off the roads. I swear I didn't want to hurt anyone." she spent a few seconds breathing deeply, trying to calm herself. "I was in this little stand of trees and there she comes out of nowhere, a basket of mushrooms in her arms, and I just jumped her. It must have been as big around as my leg, and she screamed."

Valorie looked up, full of sudden energy. "She took it all. Do you understand me?! She took it all! It was bigger around than her waist and longer than her body, but she took every inch! And that's not even the worst part! Sure she screamed, but not because she wanted me to stop! Fucking Ichor! I don't know where it all went, but she begged me for more!" Valorie slumped back in her chair, suddenly exhausted. "I... she was laying there in a puddle deep enough to almost swim in when I got my head on straight." She let out a harsh, bitter laugh. "I guess she was still up for seconds, because I had to run out of there before she was the one to jump me."

She held up her hands in a gesture of helplessness. "And that's pretty much the way it went. I'd manage to walk for a couple days before I'd go crazy and turn into some rutting animal with a dick bigger than a person until I found someone to let it out on. Then I'd have to run from them when they managed to stand up again."

Valorie let out a defeated breath and she seemed to deflate as the weight of her experiences pressed down onto her shoulders. When she spoke it was in a barely audible whisper. "I'm afraid. I don't know what that thing did to me, but it knows. I could feel it when I woke up and Dawn was right there. It wasn't even hard, and I could barely hold myself down." She glanced at Daryn's horrified apprentice. "It knows I care about you, Dawn. It knows you're different, and that makes it so much harder to fight off. It wanted you so bad it hurt. It wants me to shove your face into the dirt and stuff you full, over and over again, to drown you in a lake of cum, to change you so that you would be nothing but a tool for my pleasure."

Clenching her teeth in defiant rage, Valorie's tendons popped loudly as she balled her hands into fists, pounding them into the arms of her chair. "I will see the world torn to pieces

before I let that happen! If there's nothing that can be done, I will see myself dead before I hurt you, Da-"

Valorie was cut off when, like a bolt of lightning out of the blue, the dragoness seated next to Daryn moved, her tail striking solidly against Valorie's cheek with enough force to knock the shocked woman to the ground, chair and all. The equine struggled to regain her bearings when a pair of strong hands seized her by the shoulders and lifted her bodily off of the ground, slamming her back against the wall with her feet dangling a foot off the floor.

Valorie blinked the stars out of her eyes, coming face to face with the snarling dragoness. Behind her, Dawn looked shocked and terrified, while the Archmage possessed an expression of grim determination. Valorie looked back to the dragoness as her eyes narrowed dangerously, their pupils nothing but predatory slits full of unconcealed anger. "Listen to me, girl!" the dragoness growled low in her chest with enough volume to hurt Valorie's sensitive ears. "I am only going to say this once for you."

"You have, at the very least, the love of these two people, these people who have already committed themselves wholly to helping you. I've only recently realized I have someone like that in my life, and you have two without even trying! Yet here you are, questioning their devotion! First of all, these two people would tear the world apart just to help you, and either one of them could probably manage it! How dare you threaten them! You are no friend at all if you think that their lives would somehow improve if you were to disappear!" She slammed Valorie's back against the wall of emphasis. "Secondly, and I am going to try to be gentle here, THIS IS NOT YOUR FAULT! The second you blame yourself for events beyond your control, you rob any good that can come of it of any meaning! You are nothing but a spoiled whelp if you think that the Gods plan the universe around you! If it wasn't you, someone else would have taken that contract and then what position would we be in?! You at least had the sense to come here to get help and warn us! I'm not going to pretend to understand completely what has happened, but you are obviously important! If you were dead, what help could you possibly be to anyone?!" Her eyes narrowed further in seething anger. "Now, they are going to try to move the heavens to help you, but if you so much as think about harming yourself out of some short-sighted sense of "heroism" I will find you and make you wish you were dead! Do you understand me?!"

Valorie nodded, eyes wide with terror. "Good." said the dragoness as she unceremoniously dropped the equine to the ground. She turned and stalked toward the door her tail flicking angrily through the air behind her. She paused as she passed the Archmage, "Calidus, do what you can before I decide she's too stupid to be helped."

The Archmage nodded serenely at the dragoness's receding form as she left the room. "Of course Clara. I couldn't have said it better myself."

Valorie looked up in confusion as Dawn moved to stand over her. She landed a hard open-palm slap across Valorie's cheek. "You're lucky she got to you first. I wouldn't have been so gentle about it." She spun and hurried from the room, following the dragoness.

Daryn chuckled as Valorie staggered to her feet. "Wow," he said with poorly hidden mirth, "you are in so much trouble. I've never seen Dawn that mad at anyone but me before. Come on; let's get you to a ritual room so I can take a closer look at your... condition."

Valorie stayed silent as she followed Daryn, who stood smoothly and led her out of the room into a long hallway. Struggling to break the awkward silence, Valorie pulled in a hesitant breath. "Listen... I just... I just wanted you to know... I... Damn it all."

Daryn stopped and turned to face her. He took a knee to compensate for their difference in size as he placed a comforting hand on Valorie's shoulder. "I know, Valorie." said the dragon

in a soothing tone. "Something is going on and we're all worried. I can't even imagine what you've been through the past couple of weeks. Just know this. We are here for you, and as long as Dawn and I still draw breath, you won't ever have to be alone." He stood with a laugh. "You might not have a choice if Dawn has anything to say about it. She really does care about you, you know"

Following Daryn as he started walking again, Valorie let out a noisy sigh with a dreamy smile. "I know. I don't know what I did to attract someone so wonderful, but it must have been a mistake. She's too good for the likes of me."

A stream of thin grey smoke drifted from the dragon's flared nostrils as he snorted. "I have a feeling she would disagree."

Valorie huffed a short laugh. "She would disagree just to spite me. But what does she know? She's bound to find someone else who suits her more, especially now that... this has happened."

It was Daryn's turn to sigh heavily. He stopped, ushering Valorie through a door that they both needed to bend to get through. "What does she know? I'd wager more than you give her credit for." They were in a room similar to the one Valorie had first been given her new body, dominated by a large stone slab. "Can I tell you something, Valorie?"

The equine nodded, taking the proffered seat on the slab as Daryn leaned casually against the wall. The Dragon idly scratched a golden scale on his arm with a razor sharp claw as he gathered his thoughts. "Valorie... I've walked this world for more than two centuries, and I can count the number of people who have treated me like a human being on my fingers. Magic may be seen by the general populace as miraculous and wonderful, but people who use it are seen with fear and unease at the least. We are hated by some, distrusted by most. Wizards, especially, can live for quite some time; magic and crippling loneliness usually go hand in hand."

He frowned distantly, remembering. "The focus required by our talents tends to make social living difficult, if not impossible, but, contrary to what many people believe, we're not emotionless constructs. If anything, we tend to feel emotions more deeply than those without any magical talent." His brows drew together in thought. "I still haven't figured out how dragons can handle it. Everything is so intense to them." He blinked and shook his head, getting back on track. "What I'm trying to say is... Dawn has feelings for you, and that has meaning beyond what you might expect."

Valorie raised a questioning eyebrow. The Archmage lifted his hands in a gesture of appeasement. "The fact that she let that happen, and let you return those feelings, means that she trusts you, probably more than anyone else she knows. She didn't have as rough a time as me, but trust me; she knows what loss really means. I won't be the one to use "love," but she does care deeply for you. For a wizard to let someone into their lives like that is a decision not easily made." Daryn fixed Valorie with a serious stare that made the equine swallow nervously. "You do that brilliant young woman a grave disservice by questioning her judgment in so personal a matter."

A blush of shame burned through the equine's dark brown fur. "I... I-I didn't know." Valorie stammered. "I'm sorry... I care about her too; that's why I'm so scared. What's happened horrifies me. All those people... I don't know what's happening out there because of me, but what terrifies me the most is that she might get hurt because of it." Her look hardened as she glared up at Daryn, her mouth set in a thin line of grim conviction. "No, I'm not going to do anything to myself that might stop me from seeing this set right, because I will NOT... under ANY circumstances... let anything hurt her."

Daryn's teeth showed in a smirk. "That's good enough for me. What about you, Dawn?"

The Archmage's apprentice suddenly appeared out of thin air in the corner of the room. "How?! How could you possibly sense me?" She stepped over, climbing up to sit next to Valorie on the slab. "I was perfectly invisible, and my aura was suppressed so much it almost hurt!"

Daryn's mouth split into a full smile. He tapped the end of his snout. "Well, you still had to breathe, so you let air through your shield." He shrugged, waving the tip of his tail playfully under his apprentice's nose. "I don't want to say that you smell, but... I can smell you, even through Valorie, who, no offense, could use a bath."

Dawn let out a rebellious huff as she wrapped her arm protectively around Valorie's waist. She turned and looked up at the equine, her expression suddenly apprehensive. "Daryn is right though. I... I do love you. Sometimes I wonder if I have since I first saw you, standing nervously in the waiting room more than a year ago. You are kind and compassionate, beautiful and-" Dawn jabbed Valorie stiffly in the ribs, "absolutely, shamelessly stubborn! But oblivion take me if I don't love you anyway, you big, stupid, wonderful woman."

Valorie's face scrunched up with a mix of emotions. "Dawn..." she said softly, "'I love you too.'" doesn't seem like enough. I don't know what else to say..."

The Archmage's apprentice leaned into Valorie, as if to lend her confidence. "You don't have to say anything else, Val." she murmured in a voice equally soft. "But after all this is over, I will tell you what you can do." Valorie looked confused for a moment before her ears perked up and she mouthed a silent "Oh."

Sliding off the slab, Dawn landed lightly on her feet and moved to the opposite side of the huge stone, leaving Valorie between the two wizards. Daryn clapped his clawed hands together in preparation. "Alright then, go ahead and lay down so we can get this over with."

Doing as requested, Valorie asked nervously. "Wh-what's going to happen?"

Daryn took a knee next to the slab, looking into Valorie's eyes with concern. "To be honest, Valorie, I don't know. I don't know if it is going to be physically painful, but I can almost guarantee this is going to be unpleasant. I have to stop blocking its impulses to cast this spell, so I'm going to still you, like I did when I shaped you. As an extra precaution I'm also going to physically hold you down to prevent you from doing anything you will regret."

Valorie nodded sharply in acceptance. Daryn acknowledged it with a short nod of his own before continuing. "Remember, Valorie. Whatever happens, Dawn and I will be there for you." Dawn voiced her agreement, taking Valorie's trembling fingers up in a comforting hand.

Valorie took deep, smooth breaths as Daryn stilled her body, inhibiting her ability to move her extremities. With a whispered phrase, semi-transparent bands of force appeared and further secured her body to the slab on which she lay. Doubly immobilized, Valorie looked up at Daryn, who took a step back from the slab, and with a whispered apology, relaxed his efforts to shield Valorie from her corruption.

Valorie's entire body tensed as a reality-shaking wave of lust-fueled desire crashed into her, obliterating any resistance she had hoped to put up. Her vision blurred as she lost focus on the world around her, her awareness filled only with blinding need. Valorie gasped in ragged breaths as the beast between her legs, finally able to make itself heard, began to awaken.

Dully through the haze clouding her thoughts, Valorie could hear someone singing, in a deep, resonant voice, words that Valorie could not understand. She paid it no mind, focusing instead on the powerful, pulsing sensations emanating from her cock as its hardening length tented the loose skirt that hid it. She whined as the fabric dragged across her sensitive flesh, causing jolts of pleasure to rocket up her spine. It wasn't until a second voice joined the first that

she returned her focus to the world around her. The voice was high pitched, but rich and melodious, and it tugged at Valorie's memories.

She looked over at the source of the beautiful sound, and froze at what she saw. Valorie recognized the young woman standing next to her, eyes closed, singing a haunting melody that complimented the deeper voice perfectly. Valorie remembered that she knew the woman whose fingers were still wrapped around her hand, but her name was unimportant. What was important was that she was the most alluring creature she had ever laid eyes on.

Wavy auburn hair flowed luxuriantly over petite shoulders, framing a face possessive of fine, delicate features. A pert, almost dainty nose sat above a pair of full, soft lips that danced elegantly around the strange words leaving her mouth. Heavily lashed eyelids fluttered open, revealing crystalline amber eyes that gleamed with intelligence.

Below the woman's slender shoulders hung ample breasts, full and perky as they pressed proudly against the thick fabric of the woman's simple robes. The woman's plush hourglass figure swayed gracefully through the air as she sang. Her svelte waist dragged Valorie's eyes down to her hips, which stretched the well-fit fabric contemptuously around their width. Valorie knew that there, nestled between the woman's shapely legs, would be her perfectly formed womanhood, tight and begging to be filled. Just the proximity to the object of her desire caused a wave of frantic energy to shoot through Valorie's veins, and she gave a labored groan as her swiftly swelling member redoubled its efforts, finally pushing free of the confines of Valorie's skirt as it reached ludicrous proportions.

Valorie had never wanted anything as much as she wanted to leap from where she lay and bury the woman's thin frame beneath her. The robes would be no barrier, and Valorie would have the woman's nude body to herself. Valorie's heartbeat thundered in her long ears; she would make the gorgeous creature before her scream for more. She strained, trying to lift herself from the surface she lay on. She growled in frustration when her body did not respond to her commands.

Focused intently on her eventual prize, she let out a strained grunt as she tried desperately to overcome whatever was preventing her from moving. Valorie's lips pulled back from her clenched teeth in a ferocious snarl as she put everything she had into breaking free from her entrapment. The woman's fingers closed more tightly around Valorie's hand when she felt it move, but she showed no outward awareness as she sang.

As the harmony filling the air drifted into silence, Valorie saw the woman finally look down at her, leaning in close and whispering into her ear. "Just hold on, Valorie." she said quietly, "It's about to start."

Valorie wanted desperately to reach out and touch that beautiful face, but she instead gasped sharply as an odd tingling washed over her body. Like the sun burning away a morning fog, clarity dawned on Valorie as the haze of lust was forcibly pulled from her mind. She blinked rapidly and looked at Dawn in confusion. "Wh-what's happening?"

Dawn rested a calming finger on Valorie's lips. "I'm not entirely sure myself." she said, her voice low, as she gestured towards Daryn, whose eyes were tightly shut, his face etched with strained concentration. "But whatever he's doing, it's using more energy than I have ever seen called into action before. Deep breaths, and try not to move. It might disrupt the spell."

Valorie did as she was told as another wave of pins and needles passed over her, quickly resolving itself into a surge of blazing energy the swelled within her. There was a battle taking place inside of her body, rhythmic pulsations of searingly hot power pushed relentlessly against a greasy black tide that was slowly forced back.

The equine shuddered despite her best efforts not to. She hadn't realize how disgusting it had felt, being host to whatever it was, but the difference between the two forces fighting it out, using her body as a battleground, was like the difference between night and day. Confidence bloomed in Valorie's core as the cleansing energy worked its way through her body, starting at her extremities and moving gradually toward her core.

Steel-hard as if in defiance, the oversized organ sticking from Valorie's crotch had reached its full, ordinarily extraordinary size, but as the line of fire tracing along the inside of Valorie's skin forced back the well of slime, it began to throb larger, its mottled skin growing unnaturally dark. Valorie whined in discomfort bordering on pain as she began to feel the corruption within her fighting back.

Daryn growled audibly as the progress he had been making ground to a halt. The dragon was already breathing heavily, and he sucked in huge breaths as he said, "I'm... so sorry, Valorie... but this is where it starts to hurt... maybe significantly." Valorie gave him a short nod as Dawn moved closer, keeping her hand wrapped around Valorie's and resting her other gently on the equine's sweat-dampened forehead.

The Archmage stepped forward, placing both of his hands on Valorie's abdomen, and closed his eyes once again in concentration. The line where the energies inside her met suddenly jumped back and Valorie let out a strangled grunt as the heat within grew rapidly in intensity. Hotter and hotter it blazed, until it physically burned Valorie's insides as it scorched away her corruption with a curtain of blinding fire.

Valorie wanted to scream, but her muscles were locked up in agony and she could barely breathe. She could hear Dawn speaking urgently into her ear, but she couldn't process the words through her pain. As much as it hurt, Valorie was still able to take a small amount of satisfaction as the inferno swept away the poison that tainted her body. Her mind reeled from the horrible maelstrom that raged around her core as a dreadful pressure began to build within her.

As the searing sheet swept into her crotch and began to travel up the length of her swollen rod, it twitched powerfully and throbbed even thicker. Condensed enough to visibly glow with a soft golden light, the energy that the Archmage was using to cleanse Valorie's body swept along her member towards its tip, taking the darkness with it, leaving behind ordinary, mottled skin.

Steeling himself, Daryn raised his arms off of Valorie, hands palms upward as if lifting a great weight. Suddenly finding her voice, Valorie let out a strangled scream as the pain and pressure build to one final climax when the pale radiance reached her tip. The world seemed to freeze for an eternity as everything seemed to hang in the balance before Daryn added a primal roar to the cacophony in the room. He jerked his hands upward, adding the final impetus to his spell and forcing the energy within Valorie to complete its duty.

There was a flash of blinding light and a crack of deafening thunder and Valorie's bloated cock began to deflate. As it lost volume, a thick, inky black liquid oozed steadily from its tip. The fluid floated almost lazily up through the air as it formed a gradually growing sphere. Valorie groaned as her thick, equine member receded back to flaccidity. Eventually it stopped, having returned to its normal size, and a pitch black orb floated gently above her, nearly the diameter of her head.

Daryn's shoulders sagged with fatigue, but he stared defiantly at the gleaming liquid sphere that hung before him. He rallied his flagging strength for one last act of magic. He muttered strings of words under his breath, gesturing outward to the orb and demanding that reality bend to his will. The air around him shuddered for a moment, then he relaxed and let the

orb fall heavily into his hands, now encased in a thick layer of transparent crystal. He set the heavy sphere down on a low table against a wall and looked down at Dawn and Valorie, who was panting heavily, her trembling body recovering from its ordeal.

The dragon barely had time to flash the two a warm smile and mumble a barely audible, "It worked!" before the toll taken on his endurance crashed into him and his knees buckled, sending his massive frame tumbling to the ground. He distantly heard Dawn call his name, but it didn't matter. For the time being, the fog of unconsciousness threatened to overtake him.

Valorie gasped as she watched Daryn fall heavily to the floor. She tried impotently to move, unable to not because she was still held down, but because her shaking muscles were still gripped by the memory of the blinding agony she had experienced. She struggled to flop limply to her side as Dawn rushed to see to her master's condition.

Unable to shift the dragon's mass, Dawn made sure that the Archmage was going to be alright before she returned to Valorie's side. "He'll be fine." she said confidently, "He works himself senseless all the time." She took up Valorie's hand again, who was finally able to return the affectionate squeeze. "Are you okay? Is it... gone?"

Valorie wiped the tears from her eyes. "I... I-I think so." she said shakily, still trying to catch her breath. "I feel... clean, finally." She squeezed her eyes shut. "Gods' Blood, it felt awful." With Dawn help, she rose unsteadily to sit. "It's still there, though." she said uncomfortably.

Dawn laughed with a volume surprising for her thin frame. "Let's keep it to one miracle at a time, Val. At least now it's completely benign, if still extraordinarily large."

Recovering sluggishly, Daryn stirred, his eyes fluttering open. "Good gods!" he said, shaking his head to clear it as he sat up. "That was horrid." He looked over to Valorie, his expression suddenly panicked. "I-I'm sorry, Valorie. I should have known I couldn't have done it gently. Gods... it must have been torture. Please forgive me. I promise you I would never have done it if-

Valorie cut him off with a swipe of her hand. "Daryn, shut up. I don't know what you did or how you did it, but I would have walked through Hell and back just to feel normal again." She hugged Dawn tightly to her side, her voice shaky and on the verge of tears. "If I trusted myself enough to move, I'd kiss you. Once again I find myself more deeply in your debt than I can imagine."

His breathing slowly returning to normal, the dragon shifted to lean heavily on the smooth stone slab. "Please, none of that again. I feel like I've told you a hundred times that I don't play that game." He chuckled as he stood slowly to his feet, once more towering over the two women. He stooped and wrapped his arms around them both, easily lifting them both off of the ground as he straightened and started moving toward the door. "Besides," he said happily, "it's not as if I could have let that travesty against you stand." He stooped sideways through the door, carrying the two into the hallway. "Now let's go. I need to see to some things."

The crystalline sphere floated gently up from its perch and followed Daryn through the halls for a short time before it veered from his course, taking a staircase that led deeper into the Archmage's complex. Daryn continued on his way, carrying the two women despite their protests, until he entered a huge, finely decorated chamber whose walls were lined with packed bookshelves.

Daryn gently lowered Dawn and Valorie to the ground before he moved to a bookshelf, taking in its contents with a critical eye. "It's very late. You two need food, then rest." He paused, turning to look at Valorie. "Maybe a bath wouldn't hurt either." He pulled a book from its place

and started a stack on a low table. "I need to know more about what we are going up against, but I'm badly needed here, if what you and Valorie say is any indication."

The stack of books on the table steadily grew as the Archmage plucked several more books from a shelf and casually tossed them behind him. A cushion of force caught the books in mid-air and gently deposited them on the pile. "I need to know as much as possible about the temple where Valorie found the idol. Somehow whoever built the pyramid found a way to trap this entity. They must have left a record of how they did it somewhere." He breathed a tired sigh as he lowered himself to the ground in front of the table, facing Dawn and Valorie, who had seated themselves across from him. "Dawn, after you are rested, I need you to go south to that temple to find anything that might help us set this right."

Valorie's mouth gaped open as Dawn nodded in acceptance. "I understand, Master." said the young woman with calm confidence. "Valorie can show me the route she took in the morning."

The equine stammered incredulously. "What?!" Valorie nearly shouted in disbelief. "Y-you can't just send her out there alone! It's not safe! Gods' Blood, there are people fucking in the streets! What... what if there are others like me out there? What if someone catches her off guard? You can't..."

The Archmage held up his hands, urging Valorie to calm herself. "First of all," he said smoothly, "Dawn is more than capable of taking care of herself. Second of all, I never said she had to go alone, just that it was crucial that she leave as soon as possible."

"Well, then I'm going with her." Valorie said boldly, as if daring the dragon to contradict her.

Daryn acceded the point with a slow nod of his horned head. "To be honest, that would take me feel more comfortable. I suppose I just assumed you would want to stay so that I could..." he paused, gesturing toward Valorie's crotch, "finish the job, as it were."

Valorie hesitated at this, frowning in thought as she considered her options. "Well... whatever you did worked, right? I'm not going to go crazy anymore?" the dragon voiced an affirmative and Valorie easily made her choice. "Then I'm going with her. I'm not going to let her out of my sight until this is over."

The Archmage's golden scales glittered in the magelight as he shifted, favoring the two women with a sincere expression. "Good, you shouldn't. She has a tendency to get into trouble greater than even my own." Dawn grumbled her protest and Daryn chuckled warmly. "Now you two should get something in you then get to bed. You've got a long journey ahead of you."

Giving a determined nod of her head, Valorie stood with Dawn and made for the door. She halted as she passed by the sitting dragon and wrapped her arms around him in a hug. "Thank you." the equine said softly, "For everything." She slipped off of him as he showed razor-sharp teeth in a genuine smile. Valorie rejoined Dawn by the door and left with the apprentice, shutting the door softly behind them.