

Dawn's Graduation

Written By: Skabaard

"Dawn," Valorie said dryly, "the ceremony isn't for hours yet, and you're already freaking out." The equine sat at the end of Dawn's expansive bed, her fingers idly playing with the wrinkles in the sheets as she watched the apprentice frantically pace the length of the room. They had been up for at least an hour, and Valorie lounged, fully clothed, while Dawn tugged at her wavy auburn hair in a panic. The apprentice's skirt had been the only thing to make fully onto her body. Her blouse hung open, unbuttoned, and she had managed to pull both of her stockings over one foot. Valorie was waiting patiently to see how long it would take Dawn to realize that the dress she was supposed to wear was still hanging in her wardrobe.

The apprentice didn't slow her steps as she answered. "Of course I am! What else am I supposed to do?! What if-"

Valorie rolled her eyes... the same concerns that had worried the apprentice for the past weeks, no doubt. Dawn had just begun to launch into the list for the billionth time since the date had been set for her graduation when Valorie scooped the apprentice off her feet, plopping Dawn firmly down onto her lap. Valorie could recite the list from memory at this point; she didn't need to hear it again. Dawn protested weakly, but Valorie just squished the apprentice's back into her chest and pressed her lips to the top of Dawn's head until the soon-to-be-wizard stopped struggling with a frustrated huff. Much better, Valorie thought.

Dawn's slender frame felt thin and fragile against the lean, powerful muscle of Valorie's torso, but Dawn's body rested easily against Valorie's full, heavy breasts, and the apprentice leaned back to dimple their pliant mass. With painstaking gentleness, Valorie pulled the forgotten brush from Dawn's fingers and started running it lovingly through the smaller woman's luxuriant hair until it shone golden in the sunlight pouring in through the unshaded window. It gave a breathtaking view of the lush park dominating the center of the Archmage's sanctum.

"I know, I know." Valorie soothed, her lips now teasingly close to Dawn's ear, "Some crusty old people are going to yell at you for a few minutes, Gods forbid." Dawn shook with a suppressed giggle and Valorie smiled. "Sure, this is a big day for you, but there's no reason to worry. You've already passed your tests, and more than earned every ounce of recognition that you're going to get. I think you're worrying for the sake of worrying." She finished with Dawn's hair and laid the brush on the bed beside her before she clasped her hands around Dawn's waist, pinning the apprentice to her chest. "You're too tense, and your pacing is making me seasick. So why don't you do me a favor and take a few deep breaths."

Valorie felt Dawn relax against her even before the apprentice began to do as the equine requested. Valorie breathed in time with the woman occupying her lap as she busied her idle fingers with pulling open Dawn's blouse, baring more than the inner strip of Dawn's cleavage to the warm summer air. Valorie grinned down at the twin mounds of the apprentice's substantial bust, but instead, forced her fingers up to tug the collar of Dawn's shirt back over her slender shoulders. Dawn continued to pull in deep, relaxing breaths as Valorie gradually worked the apprentice's shirt off of her flawless body, until only the thin fabric of Valorie's own shirt lay between them.

With the blouse discarded to the side, Valorie kept telling herself that she was only helping Dawn get ready, but the apprentice's slim fingers tightening around her muscular thigh

was all the extra incentive the equine woman needed. She leaned down again to put her lips close to Dawn's ear and nibbled delicately on the apprentice's petite lobe as she slid her strong fingers around Dawn's shoulders and started to massage the tension out of the smaller woman.

"Did you know," Valorie started in a voice barely above a whisper, "that you're perfect? Absolutely, angelically perfect? You are... so perfect in every way that it almost hurts to look at you." She pressed her lips briefly to the base of Dawn's jaw. "Almost. Every graceful curve, every twitch of each flawless muscle, the way your eyes burn with the brightness of your soul, it all screams your divinity at me until it's all I can hear. I could lose myself in you, for an eternity, and still never even want to find my way out." Valorie worked her fingers down Dawn's smooth back as she continued. "Every second I spend with you is agony, torture of the best kind. My mind burns with thoughts of you, and when you're away, I feel like I could die just to see you again." Her long, equine ears flicked restlessly as she gave a short, quiet laugh. "I'm like an animal around you. It's like mindless, dog-like devotion is almost all I can feel in your presence. I worship the ground you walk on; the air you breathe is blessed to have touched your skin. You're more to me than any distant god, and I don't care what priest hears me say it. I've wanted so much to tell you what I feel. I've thought about what I would say for months, ever since I truly learned what love is. I've tried so hard to put words to the inferno that burns in my soul, but I couldn't. It's not possible, four letters isn't enough. Twenty-six isn't enough. There's no number, image, or symbol I could give that could make you understand what it feels like to have you sitting in my lap with my hands on your sacred body."

She heaved, a slow, heavy sigh to calm herself, resting her cheek against Dawn's before she continued. "You've said you feel the same way about me. And I believe you. But even you can't know what it's like, what it's like to BE me, to BE in love with you, to feel your warmth through my fur, to feel your lips on mine. No one can understand what I feel, because no one else is me, if that makes any sense." She laughed again. "So if I can't comprehend it, I'll do the next best thing. I'll own it. What I feel for you is mine. Mine! It's something that I have to share with no one else. It's my comfort and my joy. It's me. It's all I am and all I'll ever be. Sometimes I wonder if it's all I ever was, and just hadn't realized it yet. If I lose everything else, I'll still have that. Nothing could take it from me! No force on this or any other plane could change how I feel!" She paused, letting her passion burn low as her chest heaved against Dawn's back before she pushed her muzzle up until her lips were a fraction of an inch from Dawn's ear. She slid her hands forward and up Dawn's belly to caress up the ample swells of the apprentice's breasts, resting Dawn's dusky nipples between her thumbs and forefingers. "I love you, Dawn." She said, letting her voice drop low into a barely audible whisper, "Now remember, breathe..." Then she pinched her fingers together, firmly tweaking Dawn's hypersensitive flesh in her unrelenting grip.

Dawn had been shuddering against Valorie's body. She was panting urgently. Her skin was flushed a bright, rosy pink with unchained ardor, and a sheen of sweat shone on her immaculate form. She burned with passion, her body hot against Valorie's, and she had puffed out her chest, letting her breasts, huge on her dainty frame, but full and perky, press eagerly into Valorie's hands. And then Valorie had clamped down on her.

Valorie was grinning manically. For a long couple seconds, the room was stunningly silent. Valorie loosened her hold on the apprentice as she felt each of Dawn's muscles tighten as one. Her back arched as her entire body bent backward like a drawn bow. Her head fell back, tendons standing out against the smooth lines of her neck as her eyes rolled back in their sockets

and her mouth stretched open in a voiceless scream. Dawn held this position for a long time, and Valorie smiled down at her, waiting patiently for the dam to break.

Break it did, and the apprentice gasped in a tremendous breath. Valorie delighted in the sensation of Dawn's lungs filling her tiny chest and pushing her big, soft breasts into the equine's waiting fingers. The apprentice's buds were steel-hard against Valorie's palms, and she ground her hands back into Dawn's chest as an exultant, wordless howl tore its way free of Dawn's throat.

Dawn's muscles fought against themselves, the one's lining her front demanding that she curl into a tiny ball, the ones along her back commanding her to stay the way she was, her back arched against Valorie's broad frame. They met in the middle, instead making her tiny frame thrash wildly as she spasmed in her release. Valorie coolly wrapped her arms around Dawn's waist and chest, bracing the apprentice's body against her own. The apprentice's slim arms flailed uncontrollably as she beat her tiny fists into Valorie's thighs. She was strong, lost in her ecstasy as she was, but Valorie's hard body was stronger. Dawn's hips bucked up again and again as she contorted in a wordless, screaming orgasm that wracked her shapely body. The dark green skirt she had managed to tug up over her plush curves and tight, callipygian rear darkened at the crotch as she came hard, liquid lust practically gushing from her cloth-shrouded womanhood.

The smell of sweat and desire filled Valorie's sensitive nose as Dawn kept writhing in bliss. With a sign that thought perhaps had not been completely obliterated from Dawn's mind, she fought against Valorie's grip, trying to turn around. Valorie loosened her hold, and Dawn's sweat-slicked skin slid along Valorie's fur as she spun to face the equine. Dawn's eyes were still rolled back, staring up at the heavens as if pleading, and they squeezed shut as she came again, screaming what Valorie thought could have been her name as the apprentice wailed incoherently.

Dawn pushed, and Valorie let herself fall back, pulling the apprentice down with her. As her body stopped to rest against Valorie, Dawn clutched desperately at the equine's shoulders as she viciously humped herself against Valorie's abdomen. Valorie felt hot wetness seeping through her shirt as Dawn's spurting pussy soaked the apprentice's skirt with fragrant, musky fluid. Dawn's nails raked through Valorie's sleek, chocolate brown fur as they slipped under the equine's collar. The apprentice tore at Valorie's blouse, buttons popping off, one after the other as Dawn thrashed, apparently desperate to remove the fabric that stood between her skin and Valorie's warm fur. Valorie laughed and helped, finishing the apprentice's task with a single tug, and tore off the filmy cloth of her clingy bra with controlled strength.

Burying her clenching hands in the warm flesh of the equine's chest, Dawn frantically scraped her crotch over whatever ridge of firm muscle Valorie presented her with as she shrieked with agonizing euphoria. "Like what you see?" Valorie teased, barely heard over Dawn's screaming, "I'm not as perfect as you, but they're nice and soft, big enough to give you something to hold on to, hmm?" In answer, Dawn shuddered in another orgasm, burying her face in the silken mounds. By virtue of being more than half-again as tall as the smaller woman, Valorie's breasts were larger than the apprentice's head, and Dawn took advantage of that, rubbing their velvet softness across her face as she spasmed against the equine's unyielding strength. Dawn's mouth lolled open and in her trembling, her teeth scraped harshly against Valorie's chest. "Ah!" Valorie chided, "Teeth! Watch the teeth!"

"Fuck!" Dawn screeched in response, "Fuck! FuckfuckfuckFUCK!"

Valorie chuckled, "Maybe later, if you're well-behaved and promise not to bite anything." Dawn gibbered wordlessly and continued to grind herself into the hard muscle of Valorie's body. The apprentice rode out her endless release with the equine's hands cradling her to Valorie's

chest, and what seemed like an eternity later, Valorie's soothing words made it into Dawn's blissed out mind. Aftershocks still rattled their way through Dawn's form, the apprentice's lean muscles still clenching and unclenching rhythmically to the beat of her throbbing, soaked womanhood.

Valorie worked her down slowly, forcing the apprentice to breathe calmly and steadily, in and out, until Dawn had melted into her chest, limp and languid, beads of sweat dripping from the tiny woman's body to mat Valorie's fur. "Gods' Blood, V-Valorie." Dawn stammered, "Please, please put that in your book. I... I want to read that. I want you to tell me that every day when I wake up. I need to hear that in your voice. Oh, Gods, Valorie. I love you so much. F-fuck!"

"I know." Valorie returned confidently, "Now hop up, so we can actually get ready, hmm?" Dawn groaned, but slid jerkily off of Valorie's body. The equine sat up wincing at the stiffness in her loins. Valorie grunted; she was surprised she had managed to stay in her pants. It had been a close call. The black fabric was constricting her uncomfortably, and she throbbed fitfully as she struggled to regain control of her desire.

Dawn huffed a steadying breath, pulling up at the hem of her skirt to her knees. The insides of her shapely thighs shone wetly, and there was a light plip-plip as she dripped her feminine fluids onto the floor. She sighed heavily, but looked coyly up at Valorie as she ran a light hand along the pulsing stiffness that had overfilled the equine's tortured pants.

Valorie lightly slapped the apprentice's probing fingers away. "None of that now," she cautioned, "or we'll be late to the party, just give me a minute to get myself under control." She figured it would take much more than a minute, but Dawn needed to clean herself up again anyway. She smiled at the apprentice, "Don't worry, I've gotten much better at keeping my pants on around you. All the practice, you know." Dawn rolled her eyes and sashayed over to the wardrobe, peeling the rest of the way out of her drenched clothes as she walked. Valorie felt her eyes traitorously begin to rove over the apprentice's body, from her thick, swaying hips to the curves of her plush, hand-filling breasts that swelled out around her svelte frame. Dawn peeked over her shoulder at Valorie, smiling slyly as she whispered a spell that pulled her mixed fluids from her body, leaving her glorious, auburn hair splayed out over the elegant lines of her smooth back. Dawn's smile broadened and Valorie closed her eyes, her strong hands white-knuckled on her knees as the fabric of her pants started to tear loudly. "That's not fair." Valorie mumbled under her breath.

She heard Dawn's giggle. "Practice makes perfection, right?" the apprentice quipped blithely. Valorie gritted her teeth in determination, but the beast between her legs wanted what it wanted, despite how hard Valorie tried to convince it otherwise. It surged powerfully with every beat of Valorie's quickening pulse, nowhere near full size, but stiff and restless. The room echoed with Dawn's light, musical laughter and the sounds of shredding cloth. Valorie fell backwards onto the bed again, flexing her thighs enough to tear herself free of her confining pants. She almost cried out in sudden relief. She didn't have to have her eyes open to envision her turgid length arcing through the air to slap heavily against her abdomen.

It was hot, full of blood, and getting fuller. It already prodded urgently at the undersides of her suddenly heaving breasts, sliding through the trail of Dawn's sweat as it slipped into the steep valley of her cleavage. She was maybe half-hard, and she had to shift her hips to keep it from poking at her face. She couldn't get Dawn out of her mind. She could hear the apprentice humming softly as she busied herself with her preparations, studiously ignoring the writhing

beast on her bed. Valorie's nostrils flared with each heaving breath as she fought a losing battle against her rising ardor.

It felt so good, her bulging girth pushing her breasts apart as it swelled powerfully. She was so, so big, and getting bigger, she had to move her head to the side to allow her flared, equine tip to extend outward. She couldn't even self-suck, she was so enormous. She curled her hips up to keep its hardening length resting on her chest. It would pull even its great weight into the air, she was so strong, but she wanted to feel it. She kept her hands at her side, not touching it, but she didn't need to. It throbbed unstoppably against her chest. Her breasts were unforgivingly soft and silky against it. She couldn't stop herself. Her own musk filled her lungs, and she dipped out her tongue to lap against a huge, throbbing vein that pulsed against her cheek.

She whined, pushing her big, muscular ass into the air to help gravity keep it against her. Her saliva left a cool patch on otherwise torturously hot skin, tight with blood and lust. It twitched furiously against her, rock-hard, angry at her for not giving it what it demanded. If she could just keep her hands at her sides, she could do it. It would get tired and go away, like an enraged bear, or a screaming summer storm.

Her fingers clenched into desperate fists when she felt something wet and comparatively cool run languidly over her cock's tremendous, flared head. She had to fight to open her eyes against the deliriously enticing sensation. Her member's pale, but lust-darkened flesh shone with tension as it pulsed insistently between her breasts, the blaze of white fur that dipped down into her cleavage framing its girth on either side. Aside from its adamant hardness, it was unmolested, until Valorie realized what Dawn was doing.

Clad in only a lacy pair of crimson panties and matching bra, Dawn was lounging in a chair on the far side of the room. Clutched lovingly in her hands and pressed gently into her lips was an opaque, faintly glowing scale model of Valorie's titanic, equine length. "Cheater!" Valorie moaned shakily, and Dawn's eyes just glimmered impishly as she pushed the tip of the luminous toy between her full, pillowy lips. "F-fuck!" the equine cried as the ghostly sensation of Dawn's warm mouth enveloped her. Dawn stroked her lovingly from afar, each of the apprentice's slow, languid movements mirrored and sized up to match Valorie's elephantine length.

Valorie bucked her hips against her will, trying to bury more of herself into Dawn's ethereal embrace to no avail. She was Dawn's, and blinding, liquid need crystallized in her veins. Dawn slurped at the toy noisily, rolling her wrist back and forth casually, burying Valorie in the sensation of being sucked off by a giantess. Valorie pounded her balled fists on the mattress, hissing in ragged, needy breaths. Dawn's fingers briefly teased at her breasts through her bra, dimpling her soft flesh seemingly for Valorie's benefit while her tongue whirled around the equine's sensitive tip. Valorie tried to keep from swallowing her tongue as she arched her back, grunting as a heavy dollop of pre oozed from her tip to smear on the soon-to-be ruined sheets.

Valorie could hardly think. How did she get this good? Dawn teased expertly at her with no effort, slowly feeding more and more of the glowing toy between her full, gorgeous lips. Dawn's first time was with Valorie, and the apprentice had certainly never attempted oral before. Valorie moaned loudly as Dawn pulled her from her mouth with a wet pop, answering as if reading Valorie's mind. "I've been practicing," she murmured privately, "I've been wanting to try it like this for a while, but I wanted to make sure it would be good for you." She stroked Valorie with dexterous, ghostly fingers as she paused for a second before whispering, "Does it feel good? These thin, little fingers blown up around that little bit of stallion you've got between your legs?"

Fuck yes, Valorie wanted to scream. Fuck yes, now put me back between those sexy lips! Instead, all that came out was a strained groan as Dawn squeezed her fiercely for a moment, causing a thick spurt of precum to issue forcefully from Valorie's enspelled member. Dawn smiled warmly, Valorie's words evidently not lost in translation. "Good." the apprentice responded quietly, "I wasn't sure how it would feel on your end." She dipped her head back down, and Valorie was once more buried in Dawn's glorious, wet, hot, gently sucking mouth. Dawn worked her with her fingers, lips and tongue for a long moment, building energy slowly, and Valorie thought she was about to burst.

Dawn pulled away again, letting her hands keep Valorie enraptured, but teasingly, just at the limit of pushing the equine over the edge. "I'm glad you kept it, Val." Dawn said with genuine happiness, "Not just because it's fun to play with, but because it gives me hope. If you can embrace something born of such horror, and make it your own, then the world will be alright in the end. I know it." She teased at her breasts again, and Valorie saw Dawn's panties begin to darken with fluid as Dawn shuddered rapturously. "You're not the only one who's gotten used to something forced upon her." Her smile lowered, and she raised the glowing toy to tease its tip between the gently heaving swells of her huge, round breasts. "I could cum again. Just like this, just rubbing my skin. Everything feels so good. That's why I have to wear skirts, and almost never wear things like these." She gestured to her colorful lingerie. "Anything touching my tight, little mound is enough to drive me crazy. Even the softest cloth grinds and rubs so nicely. I just can't help myself. Some days, just walking is enough to make me start to drool all over my legs. My thighs get so slick when they rub together I have to keep spelling myself clean... especially when you touch me. I don't even have to move, then. Just your fingertip on my arm is enough to make me scream your name if you were to leave it there, so warm and gentle."

The apprentice's crotch was soaked again, clear lube oozing through the lacy silk hiding her oozing pussy and down onto the chair. Valorie could smell it over her own heady musk. Dawn rubbed her thighs together and moaned, quickly shoving the toy she had fashioned out of Valorie's member between her breasts for emphasis. "What would make you cum harder, I wonder?" Dawn continued, her voice trembling with need, "Me slipping you back into my mouth to suck out every last drop of jizz you've got in those fuzzy, white balls of yours, or me sitting here, hands on the arms of this chair, while I watch you watch me. You're so big and strong, and you're so hard for me, Valorie. It turns me on. Would that make you cum, Val? Watching me sit here, getting hotter and hotter until I squirted all over this chair from just the sight of you lying there, trapped under your love for me?"

Her breath caught in her throat, and her hands clamped down on the toy in her hand as she shook. She gasped, a short, girly sound, and Valorie could see the thick stream of girlcum that poured from Dawn's crotch to soak the seat of her chair. "Oops..." she panted with a knowing smile, "Too late to decide, I guess. Even wizards have a limit to their self-control, Valorie. You should know better than to lay there, teasing me with those gorgeous, green eyes while I'm trying to get you to cum all over my bed. Only one thing for it." She said with a smile, and she pushed the head of Valorie's pseudo-cock back against her lips.

Valorie was riding a dangerous line, one between losing consciousness from sheer, wanton lust, and her mind breaking, screaming until she couldn't breathe anymore and Dawn would have to save her from drowning in her own cum. Dawn had just talked herself through an orgasm fueled only by Valorie's reciprocated desire, and she wanted nothing more than to do what the apprentice wanted and shower her bedroom with enough seed to swim in. She couldn't bring herself to touch the twitching pole resting on her chest as the phantom suction picked up

again. It would be an insult to the apprentice's agile tongue and nimble fingers. The delightful cushion of Dawn's lips rushed Valorie toward the precipice of a calamitous orgasm, and the equine fought it as hard as she could, wanting to prolong her ecstasy for as long as possible.

The feeling of being warm and wet, cool and dry, the feeling of Dawn's fingers playfully tracing throbbing veins while her tongue undulated along Valorie's length as she fed more and more between her lips, they brooked no resistance, and Valorie's muscles tightened threateningly. Valorie hadn't lied, she had grown very practiced at holding herself back when the situation demanded, but as the apprentice pushed further forward, pressing the flared head of the toy into her neck, visibly bulging the lines of her slender throat, Valorie almost lost it. The apprentice apparently had no gag reflex, and she swallowed as much as she could, the ghostly muscles lining her esophagus wringing at Valorie's member as she vigorously deepthroated the equivalent of a horsecock longer than her torso.

Valorie's member twitched angrily as she bit back her release, clinging to sanity by only the barest of threads. Each muscle bulged against her fur and she tensed with the effort of controlling her passion. Her swollen testes pulsed between her thighs, her pure white-furred scrotum stretched taut over their load as they tried desperately to empty themselves. Valorie could have sworn that they swelled larger, pushing apart her legs as if becoming backed up with unspent seed. Valorie wasn't even sure she could move her hands to add to her pleasure even if she wanted to. Her body was locked in a state of constant pre-orgasm, her spine bent under the strain of holding herself back.

Dawn eventually had to breathe and she pulled back, humming thoughtfully at Valorie's frantic resistance. "Careful Val. Don't want to pull anything, do we? You might need it later." Her fingers worked over the length in her hands, rubbing slick saliva over each surface still uncovered before zealously pumping her fingers around its glowing girth. Valorie couldn't breathe; she was trapped in an endless circle of bliss that threatened to overwhelm her, and as Dawn's motions slowed, the equine glanced nervously at her. "I don't even need this anymore." said the apprentice, tossing the luminous, scaled-down dick to the side where it exploded into tiny motes of light that winked out of existence. "You're going to cum no matter what I do. It's etched into your body. You're fighting it so hard; all it would take is for your concentration to falter for just a split second."

The apprentice rose from her chair, grinning mischievously as she slowly approached Valorie's tense form. Dawn stopped at the edge of the bed before she turned, displaying to Valorie the slim, smooth curves of her back. She twined her arms behind her, glancing back at Valorie as she undid the clasps of her lacy bra, letting it fall forgotten to the ground. Once more, the huge, graceful swells of the apprentice's bust were visible around her back, and Valorie could hear skin sliding on silky skin as Dawn briefly fondled herself, teasing the equine mercilessly with glimpses of dusky, erect nipples and lusty grins.

Valorie's eyes were glued to Dawn's form. She couldn't even blink. She tried to move, to reach out and touch the flawless body within arm's length, but she wouldn't budge. It was as if her mind had separated from her body, a gulf of numbing bliss separating her from the rapture pouring through her frame in a raging torrent. She was truly trapped. Even the slightest stimulation would send her over the edge, but Valorie couldn't give it to herself; she could hardly breathe. She needed Dawn so badly, in a way the apprentice seemed to understand, and seemed intent on taking advantage of.

Dawn just smiled as her roaming hands gradually worked their way down her exquisite figure, stopping to grope here and there, wherever a luscious curve seemed to present itself to her

exploring fingers. It was as if the apprentice was discovering for the first time that she was truly beautiful, and fingers lingered on elegant curves, only her coy smile telling Valorie that she knew exactly what she was doing. Eventually, her slender fingers worked their way beneath the waistline of her soaked panties, and she rocked her hips tantalizingly back and forth as she slowly pulled them down her shapely legs. The perfect, twin cheeks of Dawn's rounded rear filled Valorie's vision, swaying along with her undulating hips as the apprentice bent lower and lower, eventually putting on display the puffy, parted lips of her dripping womanhood as it oozed clear slime onto Dawn's thick, womanly thighs.

She stepped out of her underclothes and spun, wrapping an arm over her bust as if to preserve her dignity, despite her engorged pussy proudly on display. With her other hand, she raised her panties, giving Valorie a long look at how they practically dripped Dawn's slick fluids. "I wonder how sensitive your nose really is." Dawn mused. She grinned and flicked her drenched smallclothes in Valorie's direction. Her aim was true, and the absolutely soaked crotch of Dawn's barely-worn panties slapped wetly directly over Valorie's nose.

Dawn's sweet scent was suddenly overwhelmingly strong, and it filled Valorie's lungs with the apprentice's intoxicating aroma just as it filled the equine's body with sudden energy. She blinked, and as if the small motion alone had opened the flood gates, Valorie's precarious control was shattered into oblivion. Valorie gritted her teeth so fiercely around her scream that she thought they would grind themselves to dust as she felt her huge, girthy tool bulge against her in sudden, relentless release. Rope after hot, thick rope issued so forcefully from her tip that, at least at first, she remained dry. Her fist-sized nuts ached with the volume they poured out of themselves, and Valorie could practically feel them shrinking as she deposited her seemingly endless load across Dawn's sheets.

Eventually, the growing puddle began to run into the dimple in Dawn's mattress formed by Valorie's weight. The puddle turned into a pond as Valorie writhed wordlessly in a sea of her own making. Her eyes had rolled back into her head at the first shot, but she could still make out Dawn through the haze of her bliss, standing beside her and watching Valorie empty herself. Urgent contractions, powered by the dense, unrelenting muscle of Valorie's body, squeezed everything the equine had out of her and plastered it across the soft sheets of Dawn's bed until it ran off the mattress in numerous, thick streams. Dawn had to step away to keep from standing in the quickly spreading tide of white that poured from Valorie's body. Her orgasm stretched on and on for minutes, and when she finally collapsed, her cock still spurting fitfully into her golden brown hair, Dawn had been forced to retreat to the far side of the room to avoid stepping in the inch-deep ocean of seed that spread inexorable onward.

Dawn hummed thoughtfully. "Interesting," She muttered, her tone analytical, "There is no way all of this fit in your body. There's got to be a spell at work here somewhere. Remind me to give you a more... thorough... inspection later. I think you'll enjoy it."

Valorie gurgled weakly. She had to fight just to breathe through the haze of fatigued delirium that swamped her mind. She stirred sluggishly as her deflating member retracted down the length of her body. She lay there numbly, blinking at the ceiling for several minutes while her mind reluctantly reorganized itself into what could be passingly called rational thought. She saw Dawn standing above her, smiling down at her as the apprentice swept her hands lightly along Valorie's body. She hummed softly as she worked, and before long, Valorie was clean and dry. The apprentice levered herself onto the likewise cleaned bed and rested her hand gently on Valorie's forehead, brushing back the equine's thick, golden brown hair from her face.

"Thanks, Val." Dawn said sincerely, "I feel much better now. Why don't you squeeze yourself into some fresh clothes while I do the same, hmm? I've wanted to have a reason to wear that dress for the longest time. I hope you like it."

When Valorie managed to find her voice, she assured the apprentice that she would, forcing herself to sit up slowly as Dawn strolled back over to the wardrobe, this time actually beginning to clad her beautiful body. Valorie stood, peeling out of her ruined pants to saunter over next to Dawn, nudging the apprentice with a hip as she drew another set of clothes from the sturdy, wooden piece of furniture. Dawn grumbled and shoved back at Valorie's mass, and the equine let herself be pushed away from the wardrobe after she had retrieved a new blouse and pair of pants. She watched Dawn move as she trapped her delicates in a layer of thin, gauzy fabric that held her close to her loins and chest. Then she buttoned a shirt of deep, forest green over her chest and bounced up and down to convince the silky, chocolate fur of her hips to slide into, as usual, too-tight pants that packed a frightening bulge at the crotch.

Valorie returned to her seat on the bed as she busied herself with lacing her trusty boots onto her feet, dainty when compared to the rest of her body. The equine started to fuss with her hair as Dawn wriggled into the vibrant, colorful dress the apprentice had chosen to wear for the occasion. Like everything Dawn made, the dress preferred simplicity and color over artistry and form, but it fit perfectly, and its plainness, instead of detracting, served only to accentuate the magnificence of Dawn's lavish figure. Valorie could feel her ears quivering atop her head, and she swallowed hard.

Dawn smiled at Valorie as she spun, smoothing the fabric over her slim waist. The dress was loose at the hem, and billowed out through the air as Dawn twirled, but it tightened noticeably over Dawn's wide hips and round, perky rear. It clung to the apprentice's voluptuous frame as if desperately trying to contain her opulent shape, but it instead seemed to draw Valorie's eyes magnetically toward it. It draped over her petite shoulders and flowed across her elegant curves like water, and Valorie felt her mouth gape as Dawn took a few experimental steps, rocking her hips from side to side, swishing the dress lightly through the air.

"Come on, Dawn." Valorie groaned, "I just got my pants on. I'm going to have to go naked at this rate."

Dawn smiled knowingly at her before returning to the wardrobe. "Relax, relax." She muttered soothingly, "I just... I feel so sexy. I haven't worn this dress before."

With a frustrated huff, Valorie continued to fiddle with her hair. "You feel sexy because you are sexy. You act like that's surprising. I don't understand your confusion." Dawn blushed, but remained silent as she pulled something else from the wardrobe. Over the dress, she clad herself in a set of plain, grey robes that completely hid her body. "Aw... really?" Valorie whined, "Over the dress? I wasn't done looking yet!"

Shrugging, Dawn tugged her robes straight on her shoulders, murmuring apologetically, "They're my apprentice's robes. My symbol of office, such as it is. I need them for the ceremony. There will be plenty of time to look afterwards, I promise. I think you'll like what happens to them."

Valorie stood, having finished twining her hair back into a thick braid that hung past her shoulders. She pulled it forward, letting the tip dangle provocatively into the blaze of white fur that flowed into her cleavage. "I better, or that dress might not last very long."

Dawn giggled, and as she stepped toward the equine, Valorie realized that the robes were the same ones she had seen the apprentice wearing the day she had met Dawn, more than a year prior. "I didn't really expect the dress to last very long, but hopefully it will at least survive the

ceremony. After that, all bets are off." She wrapped her arm affectionately around Valorie's waist, pulling at her gently. "Now come on. Let's go. I don't want to be late."

Valorie resisted, saying through an amused grin, "Dawn, we've still got two hours before we have to be anywhere. We'll hardly be late."

"Two hours, hmm?" Dawn mused, slowing her insistent pulling, "I suppose we've got some time to kill. What ever could we do with two free hours?"

Her calf-length horse tail swished excitedly, but Valorie resisted the call of Dawn's smoky gaze, instead stooping to scoop the apprentice off of the ground, tucking Dawn under her arm before sweeping her through the door. "Fine, fine." Valorie cried, cutting off the apprentice's meek protests, "We'll go mingle if you're so keen on it. Just remember, if you get bored, it was your own idea." Dawn's only response was an exasperated grumble, and Valorie's laughter echoed off the walls as she carried Dawn with her into the future.

Daryn looked out over Southcliff, fighting for control over his emotions. The world was quiet around him, in stark contrast with his roiling innards. He wished he could settle on just one feeling to focus on, but more than he could count used his gut as a battleground, fighting fiercely with each other until the Archmage felt like he was getting seasick.

Standing relatively alone at the top of one of the towering spires that rose from the thick annulus of his home, he watched the sun climb lazily higher and higher into the sky and drew strength from the weight that occupied his arms. He looked down, smiling at the oblong mass of the egg that rested against his chest. It's smooth, bronzed surface was spiderwebbed with veins of red and blue, a tribute to its parentage, and it sat placidly in Daryn's arms as he spoke to it. "Is this what it will be like when you leave the nest?" he asked numbly, "Pride and sorrow, happiness and agony, all bundled up into a burning ball that eats at my sanity?" He sighed heavily, and turned, leaning his back against the solid, crystalline window that supported the spired roof.

"Do you think she'll visit?" he mused to his unhatched child, "I don't know what I'd do if she didn't. Probably go crazy. For more than sixty years, she's been at my side, and I've done everything I can to prepare her, to teach and train, to try to make her understand." He stopped, his throat growing tight with emotion before he forged on. "Is it... Is it selfish of me to want her to stay? Probably, but I can't help it. I've had to watch people turn and walk away my entire life, and I'm already sick of it. That's why I hate goodbyes so much... because they never come back. I was still so young when I realized my parents had forsaken me. I was going to be a wizard, and they were terrified of me, so they left me to the order. The only time I ever saw my parents again was at my mother's funeral. My father was ancient and shriveled, and I still had the body of a twenty year-old. He didn't recognize me, and I almost didn't tell him, but they had loved each other, and he was in so much pain. I wanted him to know he wasn't alone."

Daryn wasn't sure when the tears started to fall, but he didn't bother to stop them, even when they were dripping down to roll off the curve of the egg in his hands. "He looked so happy when I told him who I was, that he wasn't the only one who would remember her. I remember wanting to be angry that they had left me. I wanted to hate them, and maybe I had, for a time. But the terrifying loneliness in my father's eyes hurt me, more than anything ever had, and I just wanted to take his pain away... But pain is just part of life isn't it? You can never take it away completely. He died not too long after my mother, and I just hope that knowing that I... that I shared in his pain gave him some peace at the end."

He closed his eyes, wondering if his tears would ever stop. "Dawn's mother is here, you know. I spoke with her earlier. She's a good woman, and she wished Dawn's father was still alive to see her graduate. I'm glad Dawn's only memory of her parent's during her apprenticeship wasn't of their receding backs as they walked away. And I'm glad she didn't have to wait two centuries to find someone that loves her the way she deserves." He fondly stroked the shell of his child's egg. "Both she and your mother ask me sometimes why I'm alone so much, and the answer's simple. I like being alone. I like walking alone, eating alone, reading alone. Being alone lets me order my thoughts. It gives me time to think. Solitude is my sanctuary; silence is my sanctum. I was never really comfortable around people; it certainly didn't help me make friends. Any friends I made, I made because they sought me out. They came to me in my realm of calm and quiet and pulled me out to join them in the light, and I relish it, because the one thing that terrifies me more than any other is loneliness. It was the one thing I didn't know how to rid myself of, and companionship and intimacy are gifts I value over all others."

He laughed softly. "Gods, I'm messed up, but it's who I am, and it's worked out for me so far, so I must be doing something right, right? Don't tell Dawn any of this though, okay? She'd make fun of me relentlessly for being a sentimental old man." He sighed again. "Hells, maybe I am."

"Sentimental? I suppose... Old? Hardly... A man? Most certainly."

Daryn looked up at the source of the new voice. At some point, he had sunk against the wall, and he gazed upward at Clara's towering form. Somehow the dragoness had managed to make her way into the room, and the Archmage voiced his confusion. "I called your name," Clara answered, "but you weren't listening. And I didn't want to break up such touching... dialogue." She slid down the wall to sit next to him, pushing an arm behind his back and squeezing him against her. He leaned in, and she whispered up at him, "I suppose you have to wear that for today."

He nodded. He had had to resize his pitifully tiny robes for the occasion, and they were draped over his massive frame, plain black cloth contrasting with the gleaming golden scales that covered the rest of his body, with the exception of the broad strip of jet black that coated his front. He had to keep his tail hanging low to avoid lifting the hem of the robes past his knees, and it made it hard to balance as he walked, but he wouldn't be wearing it for much longer, so he had persevered.

"Yes," he responded as he leaned further in, letting his acute sense of smell bask in the dragoness's scent. His eyes slid closed again, and he felt Clara shift under him, letting the tip of his snout dip close to her throat as he filled his lungs with her.

When it seemed like he would say no more, Clara continued. "People have been wondering where you were hiding yourself, but I had a feeling I knew where I could find you. You're not the only one with a good nose." She reached out to rest her fingers on the hand Daryn had on the egg in his arms. Her shining, silver scales were cool against his, and he couldn't help but smile.

A plume of thin grey smoke drifted up from his nostrils as he sighed lightly. "Yes... I suppose we should go greet our guests. Almost everyone has made it." He chuckled, "We don't gather together often; business usually keeps us apart." Clara rose with him as he pushed himself to his feet, following him silently as he strode carefully over to return his egg to its cradle, a webbing of faintly shimmering force that kept it hanging off the ground so the egg would have a prime view of the outside world. He stoked it lovingly one last time, saying, "Sit tight, kid. I'll be back before you know it."

Clara turned to leave, and he pushed his robes high enough to let his tail slip from under them to wrap around her leg, keeping her close. "Don't think I've forgotten your promise, Beautiful. You still owe me a dress." She huffed, a jet of fine, white mist crystallizing in the air before her snout as she tried to pull away. He stepped slowly away from the egg, pulling her along with him as she struggled in vain against his strength. Clara was enormously strong, but Daryn smiled as he jerked her closer, spinning to catch her. He was stronger. He twined his arms around her, pinning her own to her sides and he held her as she thrashed against him. The dragoness hissed defiantly, but her tail twined around his leg urged him to continue.

Daryn brought his powerful arms together, crushing Clara to his chest and shoving the tip of her snout into the hollow of her throat. A growl rattled in her chest and her nostrils flared as she filled her lungs with Daryn's scent. She exhaled a harsh plume of dense white mist that washed against Daryn's neck, leaving a thick layer of transparent ice in its wake. The heat of the dragon's body began to melt it instantly, but before it could liquefy, the Archmage twisted his head, shattering the ice with flexing muscles and sending shards flying back into Clara's face.

Taking the initiative, Daryn leaned his head down and scraped the bony spines lining his jaw along the scales of the dragoness's neck. She shuddered, her growl cutting off into a choked moan as her movements lost some of their aggression, growing slower and more languid. "Please..." she begged, practically gulping in the hot, arid air that hung over Daryn's scales. "Please give it to me."

Raising a thickly-scaled eyebrow, Daryn smiled. His tail, still curled around Clara's ankle, jerked abruptly, yanking the dragoness's feet out from underneath her. Daryn felt her weight settle in his arms, and he let himself be pulled down on top of her. Daryn felt the supple flesh of Clara's ample bust press into him as he pinched her between the smooth stone floor and the hard muscle of his chest. The dragoness was buried in a mountain of golden-scaled might, and Daryn's arms still held her motionless with unyielding strength.

Daryn could hear the faint rasping of Clara's horns on the floor as she shifted her head slowly. She was silent for a few endless seconds, punctuated only by her urgent panting. Her wings quivered underneath her, and the dragon shifted his weight slightly. It wouldn't do to make her uncomfortable. As he moved, Clara's body tensed powerfully, and she once more threw herself into the fight against her draconian prison. His temporarily poor position nearly lost him his dominance, but he caught her as she started thrashing against him and pinned her underneath him once more. If she got loose, they would be late for Dawn's ceremony.

He held her calmly, letting her feel how strong he was, how effortlessly she was trapped, how secure she was in his arms. Her entire body flexed underneath him, and he basked in it. She was so strong, long lean muscles bunching with relentless potential as she struggled against him. He reached down, pushing her snout up with his own and baring her throat to him. She grunted, tendons standing out in her neck as she tried desperately to roll herself, to put herself on top of him. He ignored it, instead resting the side of his head against her throat. He could hear the blood roaring through her veins. He could smell the ardor oozing through her scales. The frantic need with which she fought him begged him to give in, to be taken along for the ride. Clara might even be gentle, though he doubted it.

Clara was pleading now. "Please! Please don't let go!" She panted, her breasts squishing delightfully into Daryn's chest. "If you let go, I don't know what I'd do to you! Oh, Gods! I need you so badly; don't you dare let go!"

It was as if the dragoness's body was at war with her mind. She implored Daryn to keep his grip, all the while fighting with everything she had to free herself from his adamantine

embrace. Daryn smiled down at her, lifting his head just enough for her to see him. She arched her back when he spoke, her body snapping taut as a bowstring and coming dangerously close to lifting the dragon off of the ground. If she could find some leverage, she may have been able to do it. "That, my lovely dragoness," he whispered with exaggerated calm, "you need never worry about. Whenever you need these arms, I will be there for you. I promise."

He watched Clara's eyes defocus just as she squinted them tightly shut, gritting her teeth around a strained groan. "You're not helping, you idiot!" she growled, "Just... Just hold me and let me breathe. I need... Oh, Gods' Golden Blood, just let me breathe!"

Daryn smirked and shifted his arms, giving her a little bit more room to inhale without compromising his position too much. "Your wish is my command, milady," he murmured with mock servility. He let out a long, slow breath, a steady stream of thin, grey smoke drifting across her snout.

The effect was immediate. She froze, her struggling dying off abruptly, but a faint, tingling pressure pressed in on Daryn's senses, and the Archmage briefly worried that he had taken it too far. Clara's eyes slid open, and she peered up at him, her pupils contracted into narrow, predatory slits. "Daryn..." she said in a dangerously low whisper, "I'm trying very, very hard to rein myself in for you. But if you don't stop teasing me, this room won't hold me, let alone you, and I will not be held responsible for my actions as I shatter this place beneath us." She took a deep breath, expelling the air forcefully from her lungs before she continued. "Now kindly get off of me so I can get some fresh air. I need to get you out of my nose."

Daryn gave her the grin of a chastised schoolchild as he stood sheepishly, freeing her reluctantly from between his arms. She nodded graciously as she likewise rose to her feet, her wildly flicking tail the only indication of her tumultuous inner battle as she strode coolly to one of the crystalline windows. Daryn heard her mutter the command word, and the enspelled crystal seemed to melt and peel away, permitting the dragoness's exit from the room. She dropped from the balcony and swept her wings out behind her, letting her glide to the roof of the adjacent tower. Daryn followed her out and felt the warm summer breeze cycle fresh air through the room behind him.

The dragoness landed heavily on the roof across from him, practically collapsing onto her hands and knees as she shook her head wildly from side to side. Daryn couldn't keep the childish grin from his face as he turned and leaned on the railing. She would get him back later; that much was certain. But it would be worth it. With a whispered phrase, he repaired the rents Clara had torn in his robes and fingered the heavy lump in his pocket. He hoped she would like it. It had taken him weeks to find something good enough for her, and days to begin constructing the spell he would need to use.

He stood there pointedly ignoring the sounds the dragoness was making behind him. She would probably yell at him if he watched, something about his eyes burning her, so as much as he wanted to, he let her do her thing in relative privacy. Daryn closed his eyes, listening to the sounds of Clara's shaky breathing filtering through the air that separated them. He wasn't sure how much time had passed when he heard her wings snap open, but only seconds afterward, he felt her touch down lightly next to him, evidently having regained a semblance of self-control.

A pleased hum vibrated in his chest when she slowly pushed herself up under his arm. He lifted it, draping it across her shoulders, and she purred, her breath cold on the scales of his chest. He kept his eyes closed. "Better?" he rumbled.

"Better," she answered lazily.

"Forgive me?"

"Absolutely not."

"Am I in trouble?"

"You'll find out as soon as we're alone."

"I can't wait."

"Quiet, you."

He grumbled his reluctant acceptance and pulled her around to face him, twining his arms behind her back and pulling her forward into a warm embrace. She sighed heavily against him, her own arms wrapping around his bulky chest as she pressed herself into him. Daryn had to fight to keep his hands still as her tail slowly wound itself around his leg. He ignored her wandering fingers, instead focusing on the tempering coolness of her body against his and held her to himself for a minute that stretched out into infinity. Eventually though, he felt Clara shift in his arms, and he roused himself from his reverie.

"Thank you, Clara." he whispered confidentially, "Thank you so much. You do something for me that I didn't know I needed for the longest time, and I wish I could find a way to tell you what you've done to my life. Just-"

She silenced him with a rough squeeze of his ribs. "Hush..." she responded quietly, "You weren't the only lonely one on that mountain. Nor were you the only one rescued that day. I know what you feel. I can smell it on you, always. I can see it burn behind your eyes like it burns in my chest." She paused, and he slid his eyes open to look down at her. "You can keep trying to find a way to tell me how I know we both feel. It's... romantic. As long as you know... that I know, okay?"

A fire of desire suddenly flared up, white-hot in his chest. Tongues of flickering, golden flames shimmered between his teeth, and he lifted his head as he let out a long, slow breath, shoving aside the need that threatened to overwhelm him. The plum of thick, pitch black smoke was carried swiftly away by the insistent, light wind. Her wry smile tugged at his self-control, and he felt his grip tighten involuntarily on her magnificent body. "Now who's doing the teasing?" he mused.

She pushed herself off of him with a musical giggle. "It's less than you deserve, you... incorrigible beast, you." Daryn laid a wounded hand over his heart and followed her beckoning tail back into the room as she danced nimbly through the opening. The crystal melted closed behind them at another murmured word, and Clara spun gaily across the floor, waltzing to a tune only she could hear, ending facing the Archmage, her arms spread open in invitation. "Alright, Daryn, I'm ready for my fitting."

"Oh, now you want to wear a dress." he said in feigned frustration.

"No." Clara admitted, "But I like to see you smile, and I trust you. So why not?"

Daryn flashed her the requisite smile. "I feel like yesterday you would have had plenty of answers to that question." said the dragon blithely.

Clara just smiled back. "Today's a new day."

Nodding sagely, Daryn stepped forward, pulling from his pocket what he had put so much effort into obtaining. His smile broadened into a toothy grin as he watched Clara's eyes open wide, her mouth gaping in surprise. "Gods' Blood, is that real?"

Daryn tossed it lightly from hand to hand, nodding again. He snatched it out of the air and held it up between himself and the Clara, peering through it at the shocked dragoness. The world was tinted blue through a pure, perfect sapphire the size of his balled fist. It was rough and irregular, but clean. If it were treated and cut, it would have been worth Clara's weight in gold.

He intended something far better for it, however, and he told the dragoness as much. "You're kidding me." she said, flabbergasted, "That must have cost... How did you even... Where..."

"I know people..." Daryn responded mysteriously, "But I'll be honest, this is only the first part of a gift that I've been working on for some time. Current events haven't really left much time for personal projects, but I'm almost done, despite all of the... distractions. I hope you'll like it." He cradled the sapphire in his hands, hefting its weight as he sized Clara up. "Now hold still, I have to make some last-minute adjustments to the spell." He flicked his tail at the egg hanging placidly in the air nearby. "You've drastically changed size recently."

A blush of excitement worked its way through the icy blue membranes of Clara's wings, darkening them with anticipation. "I'll drastically change size right now if you don't hurry up and do whatever it is that you need to do." She lifted her arms out to the sides as her entire body stiffened in preparation.

Daryn almost laughed at her nervousness. "Relax, Clara." he reassured her, "This is hardly some delicate operation. I'm just making a dress." He swaggered over to her, taking her hand in his own as he placed the flawless gem in her palm. "This is for you, if you'll permit me to work a little magic on it first." He grinned at her eager nod, and then dropped to his knees in front of her. He leaned back, taking in for a moment the glossy white scales of her taut abdomen before he raised his hands and laid them gingerly on the dragoness's slender waist. He let his eyes be pulled up the elegant lines of her body until he was smiling up at her past the hefty swells of her magnificent bust.

His fingers began to move, almost of their own accord, mapping out every contour of her exquisite form. She cuddled the bright, blue stone to her chest as she gave a soft, musical cry, a reminder to Daryn how inhuman she truly was. It didn't matter though. The fire burning behind those crystalline, emerald eyes held him entranced. The brilliant, everburning inferno that roared in his chest was a constant reminder of what she, and now he, was. The vicious, obsidian claws that tipped his fingers raked harmlessly against her impregnable scales and she purred at the sudden roughness.

Her free hand drifted lazily down to brush along his jaw, gently encouraging him. He swallowed hard around the tension in his throat. Oh, how he wanted to press forward, to pin her beneath him once again. The unbearable heat in his body screamed at him to loosen his restraint. The fitful pulsing in his loins promised unknowable pleasure if he would just let himself go. Clara would egg him on, her tail teasing just so, her claws striking sparks from his scales as she writhed beneath him. Instinct demanded that he throw her to the ground, that he show her what he was capable of, that he unleash the beast into which she had made him.

He was shaking when he opened his eyes. He wasn't certain when he had closed them. Clara's hand still gently caressed his cheek, as if she was unaware of his savage internal battle, but the sly glimmer in her eyes spoke otherwise. He growled softly as he pushed himself to his feet, his hands trailing up her body, lingering on the supple curves of the mounds that capped her ample chest. She pressed forward almost imperceptibly, as if to urge him on with the sight of her breasts filling his hands, squishing softly against his fingers, at odds with the diamond hardness of the sensitive buds that poked into his palms. He couldn't bring himself to pull his hands away, and her tail found its way around his leg yet again. It crept steadily upward in slow, undulating motions, stroking the thick, hard muscle of his leg lovingly. Daryn was having trouble breathing; if he had any hair, it would have been standing on end as a heaving, relentless pressure started to build inside him.

Clara's claws found a sensitive spot, just behind his jaw, below the base of his smallest set of horns, and she scratched at it tenderly, her tail moving seemingly of its own accord, inching higher and higher up his thigh. "C-Clara..." Daryn panted, his voice shaky, "Stop... I... I can't... So hot."

The dragoness chuckled at his predicament. "I know," she trilled, "I can feel it rolling off of you. It's like standing in the summer sun. It soaks into my scales and melts the ice in me until I get so... wet."

Her tail was getting dangerously close. "Not funny," the Archmage growled. The dragoness just smirked and leaned forward. His hands on her breasts were pushed back into his chest and he tried in vain to take a step backward. Clara's tail restricted his movement, and combined with his blasted robes, Daryn lost his balance, toppling backward.

He landed heavily on his back, and before he could blink, Clara was on top of him. Her movements were jerky with excitement, but she remained silent as she slipped her hands under Daryn's robes to rest her fingers on the slab-like muscles of his chest. His wings were pinched uncomfortably under him, and he cursed under his breath as he flexed, shredding the fabric around his body effortlessly so he could spread his wings out to the sides. Clara grinned down at him, peeling the rest of the ruined cloth off of his broad torso, leaving him bare to her hungry eyes. The dragoness's breasts heaved on her chest as she panted atop him, and she assaulted Daryn's senses. Her tail had not even slowed its inexorable journey up the Archmage's leg, and her scent filled his lungs with each breath, adding fuel to the fire that burned brighter and brighter within him.

He felt tight, like he was going to burst, and the frightening energy that was cascading through his veins would explode out of him, but he knew that was not what was going to happen. "You look tense." Clara cooed, "You've been working nonstop for too long, Daryn." Her eyelids drooped, and she pushed herself up to straddle his waist, her hands cupped around the impressive swells of her chest. "Lucky for you I'm here to help you... relieve that pressure," She moaned lewdly when, seemingly for emphasis, she squeezed her fingers together around her breasts, pinching her nipples roughly until a dribble of thick, creamy liquid spurted from her tender buds. She looked down at him again, smiling as she sucked the milk off of her fingers with slow, wet, slurping sounds, "as long as you promise to help me do the same later."

Before Daryn could stop himself, he was licking the ice-cold milk from where it had splattered on his snout. It didn't serve at all to suppress the fire raging out of control just below his scales, and he whimpered weakly up at the dragoness sitting on top of him. She just gave him a sympathetic pout. "Aww..." she whined, "Still thirsty? There's plenty more where that came from, big boy." She returned her hands leisurely to her breasts, hefting their weight and once more soaking her fingers, since the flow she started didn't seem keen on stopping by itself. "They're so full and heavy. I know you've been draining them as often as you can, but they refill so, so quickly, and it's no fun to do it by myself."

Daryn's hands were balled into fists at his sides, and he closed his eyes tightly shut. Try as he might, however, the image of the dragoness gleefully milking herself atop him stuck in his mind, and the coolness of a puddle forming in the valleys of his abs forced his eyes open against his will. He couldn't understand how the milk wasn't boiling as it touched his scales, he was so hot, and growing only hotter. The pressure grew and grew, and he railed against it with everything he had, but the throbbing in his loins was beginning to grow painful in its insistence, and would not much longer be denied. "Clara," he growled in warning, trying desperately not to sound like he was begging her, "please, I can't... I-I'm going to lose control. It h-hurts... So hot..."

Clara's expression became one of silent understanding and she nodded astutely. "I know," she said soberly, "That's because you're fighting it, but you're not going to lose control, because I'm going to take care of you, just like I said I would." She held her hand out to him, and Daryn dutifully began the process of licking her fingers clean. As he worked, she slid off of him, kneeling beside him and fixing him with a tender look, finally uncoiling her tail from around his leg. "Now relax, just a little bit. Focus on my hands; ignore everything else." He nodded uncertainly as she slipped her finger from between his teeth. She rested her hand on his snout, leaning in slightly to look down at him fondly. Her other hand trailed slowly down the length of his body, scraping with agonizing slowness against the nearly invisible slit between his legs.

Daryn's world went white with need, and his lips peeled back from his teeth in a ferocious snarl as his entire body flexed, bending off of the ground. With a labored grunt, delicate, but powerful, muscles snapped taut. Clara's eyes never left his, but she let out a long, pleased hiss as her hand was suddenly filled with a scaldingly hot, angrily throbbing column of flesh. Daryn blinked the haze from his eyes as he watched his loins empty themselves into Clara's patiently waiting fingers. She didn't have to wait long, however, as the dragon erupted with frightful force. The relief Daryn felt was euphoric as his girthy, draconian member began to stiffen, flooding with boiling desire as if it gave the pressure within him a place to go.

Seeing himself shocked him into a semblance of sobriety. He still hadn't grown used to how big he had become. Clara's fingers tightened playfully around a rapidly hardening, ruddy crimson shaft that was longer than her forearm. It was ribbed with fleshy ridges that lined its top all the way to its flared, tapering head, and Clara couldn't fully encircle its stiffening girth. "Ooh..." murmured the dragoness in a teasing growl, "You must be so pent up." She gave him a slow, smooth stroke, encouraging the torrential flow of blood into his crotch with tantalizing fingers. "So hard so fast. All for me... I love it."

Her eyes, locked in a low burning gaze, finally slid shut as she gently pumped her fingers up and down the length of Daryn's twitching member. Daryn made a tremendous effort not to pant, but his lungs betrayed him, his tongue lolling free of his mouth as plumes of inky, black smoke drifted from his gaping maw. As Clara worked him over, he felt the dangerous pressure against his scales shift, and he felt himself relax, if only marginally. "That's right..." Clara whispered down at him, her eyes sliding open above her intimate smile, "Watch me pull all that nasty tension out of you. One... Stroke... At a time."

Daryn attempted to move, but Clara's hand on his snout kept his head in place with a suddenly steely grip. "Oh no you don't." she scolded, "You're just going to have to sit there and take it, mister." Daryn gave her a hiss, but he was far beyond the point of resistance, and they both knew it. She patted him softly on his nose and withdrew her hand, tapping her chin thoughtfully as if unaware what her other hand was busying itself with. "Almost ready?" she asked with a sidelong grin. He whimpered a quiet affirmative. "Good."

Her free hand dipped down to caress her chest, her dexterous fingers teasing a few more spurts of creamy milk to coat her hand and run down her arm. Sufficiently wet, she turned her attention to Daryn's nethers. The supine dragon hissed again at the sudden coolness of Clara spreading the frigid liquid over the lust-tightened skin of his rigid member until it shown wetly in the summer sun. "I like a little sweet with my spice." said the dragoness with an excited hum. Like a snake leaving its burrow, her tongue slipped from her mouth to wriggle enticingly through the air. Daryn groaned when it finally made contact with his relentlessly pulsing manhood.

With slow, undulating motions, foot after foot of pale blue flesh poured from between Clara's teeth and began casually coiling it around the scarlet monolith that filled both her hands.

She carefully formed a tight tube of flesh around Daryn, her saliva mixing with the milk that she continued to spread across his boilingly hot skin. No amount of freezing fluid could cool his ardor, and as Clara started to slide her tongue along the length of the dragon's member, he bucked his hips erratically in an unconscious effort to extend his pleasure. She growled a warning, but winked at him regardless as she bent over casually.

Daryn froze, keeping a close, worried eye on Clara's teeth as the dragoness carefully slid her mouth around his shaft, using her tongue as a fleshy sheath to protect him from her daggerlike ivory fangs. She bobbed her head up and down, each time dipping a little lower, slipping a little more of his girthy tool into her maw, until he could feel himself sliding into the velvet embrace of her throat.

"Oh Gods, Clara." Daryn groaned, "How... What is...? Oh Gods!" Her tail flicked through the air to wrap around his snout as she growled a warning, sending pleasurable tremors through the enveloping tightness of Clara's neck. She shot him one last glance before she climbed back up to straddle his chest, resting her tail heavily against his snout as she presented him with the expanse of her full, muscular rear. Daryn's hands were pulled almost magnetically to the tight, round swells of the dragoness's ass, and he groped her excitedly as the tempo of her bobbing head started to increase.

It seemed Clara appreciated the attention, because the muscles under the scales of her generous posterior tensed as he caressed them, and she pushed back into his hands as if eager to give him something to touch as she worked. The dragoness shuddered as his heavy breaths washed over her polished silver scales; his body burned with a delightful mix of sensations and emotions, and the heat boiled off his body desperate to escape. The bliss was mind-numbing, and Daryn focused on the feeling of Clara's hands and tongue wringing his ridged member for all it was worth, and the feeling of the firm muscle in his wickedly clawed hands, just pliant enough for him to squeeze and fondle.

With her wings outstretched as they were, Daryn's view of his lower half was blocked by a wall of gorgeous dragoness, silvers scales and icy blue flesh, with a splash of white visible running along the underside of her tail and up into her loins. Clara would surely not allow herself to open up to him, but that didn't mean he couldn't make her feel good. Channeling the frantic energy within him into determined motion he raised his head cautiously. Clara's tail pushed down, warning him not to get up, but she let him lift his head to get a better look at what he had to work with. He could see the dragoness's head buried between his legs, her long, tapering horns bouncing up and down with each increasingly energetic thrust. The smooth lines of her back twisted as she gyrated atop him, wiggling her butt against his hands enticingly. He squeezed, his breath shortening at the sight. The long, delicate muscles of her wings were taut, holding the broad blue membranes out to her sides, opposite wingtips reaching nearly the whole width of the room.

From his current angle, Clara's slim waist looked even narrower than it already was, flaring suddenly into thick, womanly hips and the perky roundness of her voluptuous rump, over which Daryn's hands were roaming playfully of their own accord, much to Clara's apparent delight, seeing as how she let him continue his digital ministrations. Clara's shapely legs were spread around the girth of Daryn's muscular chest, her clawed, digitigrade feet resting to each side of his horned head, their toes curling spastically with each gentle bounce.

Daryn hissed a wordless warning as he felt the tightness in his groin swell to near-orgasmic levels. He was far beyond the point of no return. Even if she stopped her oral attentions right then, he couldn't stop himself from taking the flying leap off of the mountain of his expertly

teased desire. The sight of her lithe, powerful frame, slender but deliciously full-bodied, would push him over the edge. The sound of her voice, urging him on, deep, primal, but unmistakably feminine, would have him crying her name to the heavens. Her scent, Gods' Blood, the smell she oozed every hour of the day, the one that filled his lungs constantly, sweet, heavenly musk, herbal and earthy with a hint of something not even Daryn's acute sense of smell could decipher. It haunted him, just as did the memory of her hands on his scales.

He shook her tail off of his snout, trapping it between the muscle of his shoulder and the short, sharp spines that lined his jaw. As slowly and smoothly as he could manage, he let his tongue fall out of his mouth, a task he didn't find difficult, and draped it over the gleaming scales of the dragoness's tail. He coiled his oral appendage around the thick, muscular girth of Clara's tail and began to stroke it lovingly, giving her the same treatment she had given his leg only moments earlier. She didn't slow her movements, but the giddy shudder that worked its way down her spine, causing her tail to thrash in his grip, begged him to continue. He worked his way up, toward the joint where Clara's tail met her body, just above her lavish rear. Keeping one hand on her trembling muscle, he raised the other to scratch a claw gently against the thick scales at the base of her tail just as he ringed her powerful limb with his tongue and rocked his head from side to side, scraping his rough flesh across her sensitive scales, right where he knew a nerve cluster would be.

Clara grunted, her whole body tensing as Daryn thought for a moment she would actually swallow his draconian member. The abrupt pressure shoved Daryn over the crest of his passion, and he knew instantly that Clara was about to get a whole lot more than a mouthful. One arm encircled her tail while the other hand clamped down on her rear with brutal force as he felt himself detonate in rapturous release. He wanted to cry out, but he could only manage a long, breathy hiss as he began emptying himself into the accepting coolness of Clara's throat. The dragoness's head shot down, pushing Daryn's titanic tool as far into her body as it would go and she drank greedily the boiling liquid that poured into her.

The silky walls of Clara's esophagus milked Daryn with rippling contractions as she swallowed, her hands pumping furiously around the flesh that her mouth and tongue left uncovered. For each second his orgasm stretched on, it felt better and better, and before long he was reduced to weakly whimpering Clara's name as he rode out his explosive relief. Eventually, Clara had to breathe, and she pulled up for air, gasping frigid breaths on the violently spasming flesh of Daryn's loins. The flow had lessened, and Clara's tongue ensured that not a drop of scalding seed went to waste until her pumping hands, moving slowly and languidly now, could pull no more from Daryn's body. Only then did she give a satisfied nod and collapse heavily onto Daryn's bulky frame, going limp with fatigue.

Gradually, Daryn managed to regain control of his body, and after a long period of silence, filled with only the sounds of harsh panting, even his heavy breathing let itself be calmed to a semblance of normalcy. Clara was mostly motionless, only the rise and fall of her chest and the sluggish wriggling of her tail giving evidence that she had remained conscious by some miracle. Her wings sat open lazily on the ground, and her legs trembled occasionally as Daryn stroked the curve of her rear lovingly. "Good Gods, Clara," Daryn wheezed, "That was amazing... That... Put that on the top of the list. The tongue... Oh, Gods, the tongue."

Daryn hissed again as Clara blew a sharp puff of wintry air over the softening flesh of the dragon's well-used member, causing it to retreat back into his body reflexively. "I... told you..." she panted, apparently still not recovered, "I told you... that I would take care of you... Just... give me a minute to breathe..."

The recovering Archmage mentally counted off the sixty seconds, trying to organize his thoughts once more, and finding it difficult with Clara's prodigious behind still occupying the majority of his vision. After the requisite minute, he reached down, drawing a surprised yelp from Clara as he lifted her bodily off of him, spinning her around in the air until she could lay atop him with the appropriate orientation before he lowered her again to his chest. Her extremities were comfortably cool, as always, but her core radiated warmth against his scales, and he smiled up at her, brushing a hand tenderly against her cheek.

She shifted against him, wriggling closer as he brought his wings up to envelope her slim frame in a scarlet cocoon, briefly tinting the world red. A languid hum vibrated in her chest as she made herself comfortable, and she finally mumbled, "Feel better now?"

With a snort, Daryn answered, "I felt fine before, you scaly minx... But yes, I feel even better now." He tightened his arms around her as he pulled in a tremendous breath, filling his lungs with her. She writhed in his grip, not fighting, just sliding her body against his, moving with him as he sat up. He felt a rush of emotion well up in his chest as she glanced up at him with a small, private smile. "Alright you." he murmured against her throat, "Will you let me wrap you up so I can peel you open later?"

The dragoness sighed dreamily, giving him a slow, confident nod. He gave his wings an awkward flap to put him on his feet, pulling her up with him, and looked down at the tatters of his robes with a frown. He would have to fix that afterwards. Clara slipped free from his arms and stooped to scoop the giant sapphire from the floor where she had tossed it to the side. She held it out to him to take, but he only placed his hand on it, feeling the dull throbbing energy of the spell he had woven into the transparent, blue crystal. He whispered a few phrases, making the required adjustments, and then spoke the command word that would set the spell in motion, stepping back to watch his handiwork.

Clara jerked in surprise when the sapphire shattered in her hands, suddenly filling her palms with a mound of glittering blue powder. It trickled through her fingers, but instead of falling to the ground, it stuck to her scales and began to crawl up her arms in a wave of azure. The muscle of Clara's shoulders bunched in momentary worry, but she relaxed when Daryn took her hands in his. The air filled with the sounds of a thousand tiny chimes as the miniscule shards of sapphire rattled against each other, inching in a cerulean tide to the dragoness's throat. It flowed around her neck and poured over her shoulders, down the length of her body, clinging to each lavish curve as if glued in place.

Her wings were untouched, and the enspelled gemstone left her slowly forming dress backless, showing an expanse of silver scales to anyone who stood behind her. In the front however, the dress rode high, up to Clara's throat, not that it made a difference. The makeshift "fabric" clung to her body so snugly it fit like a second skin, stretching taut over the dragoness's curvaceous bust and covering, but not hiding, her appearance. She giggled lightly as the torrent of blue snaked down over her abdomen, complaining that it tickled, but the blush that was working its way through her wings told Daryn that a different sensation was at work. He just smiled and watched her gyrate in her dress, trying to scrape the crawling gems over sensitive areas.

They washed over her hips like a waterfall, falling freely, nearly the full length of her legs, to the ground, stopping with barely an inch to spare. The diameter of the dress's hem would not allow the dragoness to take a full step, but a long slit up one side gave her freedom of movement, as well as put on display whenever she moved a splash of polished scales and shapely leg. The stony wave didn't stop there, though, as it swept down Clara's tail, almost half

its length, before terminating in a bejeweled cuff. She whipped her tail through the air as he last of the sapphire dust dripped off of the underside of her tail, falling in a diaphanous curtain that swished through the air with her movements.

Clara pulled in a shaky breath as she slipped her hands free of Daryn's to lightly touch the continuous sheet of stone that wrapped her form. Daryn knew that it would feel like the finest silk. He briefly wished that he could still whistle; instead, he just hummed. "That was close," he mused, "There almost wasn't enough. Next time I'll need something bigger. I'm thinking maybe ruby, or emerald. Oh! What about jet? Black would be so... sensual on you." She told him to shut up, and he chuckled, letting her explore her body while he incinerated the remnants of his robe with a word. He would have to start from scratch, anyway.

Thousands of tiny points of light scintillated off the glittering surface of her body as she spun, the hem of the dress swirling around her ankles. "Oh Gods, Daryn," she breathed, "I was so wrong. This is amazing. How did you- No! Don't tell me." She stepped over, her breasts bouncing ever so slightly in the confines of her dress, and clasped her hands around the back of Daryn's neck. "I wish... I wish I could use magic like you. I wish I could give you something like this... something so... intimate."

At that, Daryn actually laughed. "Oh, but Clara," he corrected, "You gave me a gift first, remember?" He grinned down at her confusion and, cliché though it was, reached back behind her head, and pulled it from the hidden place he kept it. He pulled it back around, showing it to her, and her hands went to her mouth in shock. She was crying before he could wrap his arm around her shoulders. "It will never melt, you know." He said, gesturing at the perfect, crystalline rose, formed of the purest ice, which he held out in front of her. "I've tried to figure out how you did it, but there isn't a spell on it. It just won't melt. Hells, it wouldn't surprise me if it took root if I were to plant it. Just another of your miracles, I suppose. One of these days, you and I are going to have to sit down and discuss the laws of magic, and how you seem to be able to break all of them on a whim." He wiped away her tears as he sniffed the rose. It smelled like ice, unsurprisingly. "This simple piece of ice, Clara, this means more to me than any act of magic I am capable of working, not because of its simplicity, but because of the implication of its existence. You wanted to give me a ball of ice, something easy and simple, but a ball of ice isn't what I got. Your subconscious saw fit to give me a thing of such pureness and beauty that just holding it takes my breath away." He squeezed her shoulder meaningfully. "The torrential, raging power that is your birthright as a dragon percolated up through your emotions and desires and gave birth to something so hauntingly exquisite that it hurts to look at, so brilliant is its perfection. This rose, Clara, oh Gods, this rose, this rose came from you. It boiled up from your soul, from a place so intensely personal for you that I am still learning its meaning. I make a poor dragon, Clara, but I am a damn fine wizard, and let me tell you, this rose means more to me than any dusty old spellbook or rock I could pull from the ground. It's almost funny actually, that this little icy flower be my window into your essence, the clarity it gives me, the clearness through which I can always look to see you. Clarity, clear, do you know where those two words came from? Draconic is one of the oldest languages in existence, and many of today's tongues sprung from draconic roots. Both of those words formed from their draconic ancestor, clarus, from which you, Praeclara, got your name. It means clear, bright, something to aspire to, to admire. I admire you, Clara. The magnificence of your soul burns bright and clear through this tiny work of effortless magic, so simple, but full of hidden meanings. There are few things in the world that I value more than this petite rose, Clara, and most of them are in this room. All of them are in this building. So don't you think to lecture me on gifts, you wonderful creature, you."

Daryn couldn't be certain if the dragoness pressed close to him was laughing or crying, but her tears dripped from her jaw to splatter against the glittering black scales of his chest. He hoped they were happy tears; happy tears were good. He fingered the delicate petals of the flower in his hand. It was cold, and no amount of heat it had been exposed to had taken as much as a drop of water off of it. With an arcane gesture, he secreted it away back from where he had taken it and lifted his hands to cup Clara's cheeks, holding her as she wept. Her fingers found his, and her grip tightened on him with the desperate strength of a drowning man.

He glanced at the sun. There was still plenty of time before they had to be anywhere, and he would hold the dragoness in his arms for as long as she needed him to. It wasn't often Clara let herself appear vulnerable, and Daryn treasured the intimacy of her tail winding around his own as she shook. "Daryn..." she sobbed, "Oh Daryn, I love you so much."

"Really?!" Daryn said after a moment, utterly astounded, "And here I was thinking that you were just sticking around because of my cooking."

That earned him a not gentle punch in the ribs, but Clara's sudden laughter was worth it. "That's pretty good too, I suppose." she grinned with teary-eyed mirth.

He idly scratched the base of her ivory horns with an onyx claw and looked down at her warmly. "Do you want me to say it?"

She shook her head slowly. "No... I know you love me too. After a speech like that, a few little words would seem so... pitiful in comparison."

It was Daryn's turn to laugh. "Please Clara, I'm a wizard. With a few little words I could split the ground apart beneath us, or leave Southcliff a smoking crater. I built this place with a few little words. I healed your wing with a few little words. Words have all the power in the world, and sometimes, a few is all it takes to work miracles."

Her tears seemed to have dried up, and she lifted her arm to run her fingers along his cheek. "And sometimes, all it takes is a dragon and a whole lot of love."

He smiled. "Now you're getting it." She giggled and jabbed him in the ribs again, pushing herself off of him to dance backward, bouncing giddily on her toes. "Oh?" murmured the amused dragon, "Excited are we? Ready to go give Dawn her well-earned reward, hmm?"

"That and so much more." Clara answered as she slipped through the portal in the floor after opening it with a quiet word. "Don't think this means that you're not in trouble, though."

He followed her out of the room and down the stairs, with a last look at the egg hanging in its cradle. "I wouldn't dare. A wizard must accept the consequences of his actions."

Valorie busied her fingers nervously polishing her breastplate with the hem of her cape. She stood off to the side, relatively unmolested by the hundred-or-so people that milled around the spacious park that sat inside the ring of the Archmage's home. Valorie's experience with Daryn had given her a gentle introduction to magic, but so many wizards clustered in such a small space still made her nervous.

Dawn had been swept away from her by a tide of congratulatory hugs and handshakes, and she stood alone, feeling woefully out of place. At least she had the satisfaction of looking over everyone's head to keep a watchful eye on the apprentice, who seemed at least as uncomfortable from all the attention as the statuesque equine. The sea of people who were all clamoring for Dawn's attention were clad in a rainbow of different colored robes, seemingly without any rhyme or reason. Each wizard's wardrobe seemed as varied as the people themselves. There were almost equal numbers of men and women, which surprised Valorie. Years prior, if someone had mentioned wizard to her, an image of the stereotypical, silver-haired

man with matching, waist-length beard would have sprung to mind. However, none of the people Valorie could see looked to be over forty, but they all moved with ageless confidence, and it frightened Valorie to think of how much combined experience surrounded her.

No two looked alike, and nearly all of them seemed to have shed part of their humanity in favor of some aspect from the natural world, but not just in the form of the increasingly common animal morphism. It was more primal than that. The flesh of one man was smooth and grey, flecked like polished granite, and a short, stiff mane of stone shards crested his head. There was a woman whose skin glowed with an inner light and whose hair flickered like living fire. Valorie was still able to spy a plethora of animal morphs, particularly another horse morph. He was surprisingly skinny for his height, taller than she, with a coat of glossy black fur and a gaze that kept making Valorie want to smooth her argentum skirt over her hips.

She snorted and shuffled her booted feet nervously. Valorie practically jumped when her long, equine ears swiveled around, focusing on the nearly imperceptible sound of someone approaching her from behind. The naga, Cera, slithered with unbelievable silence up next to her, giving the startled equine a friendly nod. "If I were a snake, I would have bit you." She said with a smile as she coiled foot after foot of her seemingly endless serpentine body underneath her. The ophidian woman towered several feet over Valorie, making her the tallest person outside, at least until Daryn finally decided to show up. Her frighteningly muscular bulk stretched taut the fine fabric of her shirt, and her own shining dragonsilver breastplate was closely molded to her equally large chest, clinging like a second skin to an impressive musculature that put Valorie's own powerful body to shame.

Cera had quickly warmed to the body that had been forced upon her, and she moved like she had been born with it, and not with the body of the tiny, mousey woman she had been just over a month prior. Daryn had, of course, offered to return her to the way she had been, after the passions of the moment had worn off, but she had accepted only a change of color. The scales that covered her body had started out different shades of lewd purple. She looked a bit more natural now, having received the sandy brown coloration of a desert viper, with a pale yellow underside.

"Very funny." Valorie grumbled, forgoing a punch to the ribs that would bruise her knuckles on the serpent's armor. She squinted up at the burnished gold disks of Cera's irises, eventually giving the naga a grin of her own as Cera sunk down into her coils, essentially sitting on herself, which put her head nearly level with Valorie's.

"Why the longer-than-usual face, Val?" the naga wondered with cheerful humor, "Jealous that Dawn's getting all the attention for once? Or afraid that she might spy someone out there cuter than you?"

Valorie scoffed. "As if Daryn could manage to dig up someone cuter than me. No, Cera, it's nothing like that. It's just... weird. I'm always the outgoing one, but here, I'm just so out of my element. I don't know how to react when people who look like they're made of rock look at me like I'm the strange one. To be honest, it's kind of overwhelming."

Cerasta idly preened the short, spiny mohawk that crested her snakelike head, listening intently. "I know how you feel. But all I can think is that it's about time you got more weird looks than me for once, little miss "normally abnormal." Sorry if that's not the sympathy you were looking for. Whatever would we do if we all had to live with your troubles... Gorgeous lady-friend, regular employment, friends in some of the highest places possible, an absolutely killer body." She sighed heavily, but it came out more like a long, breathy hiss. "Yeah, what a

place the world would be if we lowly peons had to shoulder your burdens... I'm glad you're here to save us from the dreadful responsibility."

"Okay, okay!" Valorie groaned in exasperation, "Gods' Blood, you sound like my sister, she tells me the same thing whenever I write home."

"Then she is wise beyond mortal comprehension, if I might say so." Cerasta continued, "Now relax. It's a celebration remember? I never thought I'd be the one to tell you to loosen up, but loosen up a little. Maybe they're looking at you weird because you're standing there all alone with a scowl on your face a mile wide. But what do I know, right? I'm just a humble servant of the people." She gave a mock bow to an invisible audience and Valorie rolled her eyes.

"Exactly." said the naga with a smile that showed hundreds of needle-like teeth, "Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to go find that little fox I smelled earlier." She flicked her forked tongue for emphasis. "He looked absolutely delicious, and he said I have lovely... eyes. In the meantime, I suggest you grow a pair, or another pair, if you're finding your current set insufficient, and go talk to someone. That other horse can't keep his eyes off you."

As the naga rose up and crawled away, Valorie called after her, "Not on his life! I'd hate for Dawn to kill someone on her first day as a wizard." The naga hissed a short chuckle back at the equine and Valorie swung a halfhearted kick at her tail as it slid past her. That only made her laugh harder, and Cera shook as she glided up the hill toward where several people spoke to each other in voices loud enough for Valorie to almost make out what they were saying.

Valorie huffed a sharp breath through her nose. Cera was right. Any nervousness the equine was feeling was a product of her own mind. She made up her mind and started after the retreating naga, but nearly stumbled when she felt something slam into her back. She quickly regained her balance and spun, before the muffled clinking of something crawling up her back told her who it was. "Damnit, Limata, would you give me some warning before you jump on me like that?"

Turning her head, she looked over as the dragonet reached her shoulder, settling down on her pauldron like it was a silver throne. The housecat-sized, dragon-like creature turned her head and regarded Valorie with a critical glance as her voice, light and melodious, sounded in Valorie's mind. "Why?" she wondered, more than a little mirth coloring her voice.

Valorie blinked. That was a first. Limata rarely blatantly asked her questions. The dragonet's tiny, horned head cocked as if waiting for an answer, and the silence, despite the conversation going on around her, was deafening in Valorie's ears. "W-well," Valorie started, "I don't much like being snuck up on, and I tend to react badly when I'm taken by surprise. I don't want to hurt you."

There was a brief pause, and then Limata's stinger-capped tail started to whip through the air and her red, iridescent-scaled body shook, her delicate jaw hanging open as her head bobbed up and down. Valorie had seen her do it before; she was being laughed at. "You pose no threat to me, horse." Limata retorted. The voice in Valorie's head was smooth and even, despite the tiny creature's convulsions. "But there may be other reasons..."

The dragonet eventually stopped laughing and went back to scrutinizing Valorie. The equine felt like she was being tested, probed and analyzed. Daryn had assured her that the tiny creature's telepathy only went one way, but sometimes, the way Limata looked at her made her feel otherwise. "Well..." Valorie began slowly, growing defiant against the little, winged lizard's arrogance, "How about this? I don't like being snuck up on! And I really don't think I need a reason to expect warning before my personal space is invaded by someone who professes to

"like" me! If you disagree, then next time, I'll jump on you, and we'll see if this few hundred pounds of horse is a threat!"

At Valorie's outburst, Limata nodded. "Much better." purred the dragonet. Valorie felt like the little creature had received a different answer than she had given, and she blinked in surprise when Limata reached out with her long, sinuous neck to brush her head gently against Valorie's cheek. Limata's slender horns tickled, and Valorie laughed in spite of her sudden anger. "I will find you yet, horse." murmured the dragonet with confidence.

Limata allowed Valorie to reach a hand up to scratch idly at the base of her horns. "My name's Valorie, Limata. In case you've forgotten." Valorie said through an exasperated sigh.

"I know what you call yourself, horse." Limata said, lifting her head up to stare at Valorie through slitted, sapphire eyes, "It is a good name for you, and it drives me to find what you are even more."

Valorie pouted. "What's wrong with Valorie? You call Dawn by her name."

The dragonet laughed again. "Hardly, horse. She is not Dawn because that is what her parents decided to name her, but because that is what she is. Surely you can see that." Valorie blinked, and Limata crawled closer, pressing her shimmering red body into Valorie neck, and gestured with her nose in Dawn's direction. The apprentice was currently locked in conversation with an excited looking woman, who, miraculously, was even shorter than she was. "See her for what she is, not who she claims to be. Like the sun breaking free from the chains of the earth below, she spills light into the world. She illuminates everything around her, turning dull grey and brown to brilliant red and gold. She banishes the shadows of doubt and worry from her presence. Without her, the lives of those she touches would be grim and dark. She is the breath of life, the splash of warmth that causes flowers to bloom and clouds to break and scatter. Can you see it? She is The Dawn." A light purr buzzed in her chest, and Valorie nodded her understanding.

Valorie hummed thoughtfully. "I think you're right. Dawn is a silly name for her. Dawn is much better."

Limata's purr increased in volume, and she sounded proud when her voice echoed in Valorie's thoughts. "Now you begin to understand. Worry not, horse. I will find what you are."

A warm chuckle made the dragonet bounce up and down on Valorie's shoulder. "Alright, alright. Just promise to let me know when you do manage to figure me out. I've been trying to do that forever."

With an energetic nod, Limata draped her slender tail over Valorie's shoulders and continued to caress Valorie's cheek, now with her neck. "You will be the first to know, horse. You have my word."

Abruptly, Limata's lithe body stiffened, and she looked sharply over her shoulder. Without another word, the dragonet leapt off of Valorie, her wings snapping open gracefully as she wheeled around and shot down the gently sloping hill to a set of large doors that began to slowly open. Daryn just barely cleared the doorframe before the dragonet practically collided with his face. Valorie took no small amount of satisfaction in noticing that she wasn't the only one who Limata seemed to be able to take by surprise. The dragon briefly flailed his arms as Limata's claws scrabbled for purchase on the scales of his snout, eventually making her way up to the Archmage's onyx horns, through which she twined her slender, sinuous body.

Daryn paused, grinning up at the dragonet on his head for a short second before continuing through the doorway with Clara in tow. The sight of the dragoness took Valorie's breath away. Her long, statuesque body filled to capacity a long, sapphire blue evening gown that

clung to each of her stately curves as if it had been glued in place. As she followed Daryn out from the shade of a branching maple tree, the afternoon sun was caught in the fabric of the dress, and she seemed to glow a muted, cobalt blue.

Sudden, complete silence filled the air, and Valorie looked around in confusion. Every eye was locked on not Clara, whose glimmering body even then warred for the equine's attention, but Daryn. The dragon seemed not to notice, and he and Clara approached Valorie, the Archmage with his usual, warm smile. "Valorie," he said in greeting, "Big day, hmm? I hope Dawn hasn't been too nervous. There really isn't any reason to be worried." He chuckled. "But I can't really say anything. I was nervous as all hells when I got my stole."

Valorie glanced around nervously. "Daryn..." she muttered, "Why are they all staring?"

"Why wouldn't they be?" Clara interjected before Daryn could respond.

The dragon glanced around, peering at the faces of his colleagues for a moment before he looked down at himself. "Oh... Well, I uh... may have forgotten to mention a few things when I contacted them. More important things to worry about and all that." He shifted his focus, speaking up to address the congregation that stared him down. "Alright, alright... In a show of hands, who just lost a bet?" Almost a third of the gathered wizards sheepishly raised their hands, and Daryn laughed loudly, snapping the tension in the air so suddenly Valorie could have sworn she could feel the pressure in the air change. "Well then. Thank you for your faith, but that's the way the cookie crumbles, I suppose." There was a mixture of groans and smug chuckles, and the conversation picked up once more.

"What bet did I miss out on?" Valorie wondered with a wry grin.

Daryn gestured broadly at the incredible mix of people around them. "There was a running bet," the Archmage explained, "that concerned whether I would shape myself. They tried to hide it, but I am the Archmage, after all. Secrets tend not to last long around me." He shrugged, nodding in Valorie's direction. "Few people feel entirely comfortable in their own skin, and wizards are some of the few who can do something about it whenever they please, to varying degrees of success, usually. It probably took the people in this room decades to get themselves to look the way they wanted, making small, safe alterations infrequently over the course of years, because body-shaping yourself is... very unsafe, to say the least. I certainly have nothing to say about changing yourself to be happy, considering what I do in my spare time, but I was never one of those people who felt the need to change. It seems a... somewhat surprising number of people disagreed with me." He grinned, shifting his weight from foot to foot awkwardly under his robes. "I wonder how much the pot was."

He met Valorie's eyes, and she felt her fur stand on end. Sometimes she forgot who and what he was. But sometimes, she caught a glimpse through those piercing sapphire orbs at the earthshaking power he wielded, at the terrible potential that vibrated through the air around him. He didn't react, though, and he offered Valorie his hand. "Shall we? The sooner the formalities are over, the sooner we can get this party started.

She accepted the hand. The Archmage pulled Valorie along behind him, and she immediately forgot her moment of clarity. From behind, Daryn's robes looked absolutely ridiculous, and she barely managed to stifle her laughter. She glanced over at Clara, gesturing at the awkward bulge that the dragon's wings and tail made in the loose cloth, but the dragoness seemed troubled by something, and paid her little mind, acknowledging Valorie with only a short nod.

As Daryn crested the hill, he deposited Valorie and Clara a short distance to the side, and he strolled off, gesturing to people as the wizards drifted together, forming ranks with no

apparent pattern. Watching them assemble, Valorie leaned over to Clara, murmuring, "Is everything okay? You don't seem to be your usual, chipper self."

Clara gave her a contemplative frown. "Yes, it's fine. I just... I didn't know he felt that way, about being a dragon now."

That was definitely the wrong line of thinking, and Valorie cut her off with an encouraging hand on Clara's arm. "Now hold it right there. I really don't think that's what he meant. I've never heard him complain about his new scaly-ness, and I can't imagine that he regrets what happened to him. So please don't go and get all depressed on us for something that you had no control over."

The dragoness sighed heavily, and Valorie suddenly felt very cold. "I know, I know. I was so afraid, and I didn't know what was going on. He was dying, and I don't know how it happened." Clara's fingers found Valorie's and closed around them. Valorie just let her talk. "He had just found me, after all those years, and I didn't want to be alone any more, and it just happened. It's not like I wanted him to be like me. I mean, I did, so badly, but it shouldn't have been possible. It's still not possible. I, alone, couldn't have done it, and I was very, very alone."

Valorie squeezed back on Clara's clawed fingers, wrapping her other arm around the dragoness's torso in a tight hug. "Well, not anymore." she said as she leaned into Clara, trying to keep her face a respectable distance from the dragoness's bejeweled breasts. "You've got Daryn, and Dawn, and me. All you've got to do is say the word, and we'll all be there for you."

Clara slowly returned her embrace, and the dragoness was cool through the glittering cloth that covered her scales. "Thank you." Clara murmured down to her. "I'll be sure to keep that in mind the next time I get lonely." Valorie eyed her suspiciously, and Clara gave her a playful shove away. "Not like that! Unless, of course, you're ever interested. I'm sure I could talk Daryn into-"

"No!" Valorie interrupted, "No thanks! Dawn's more than enough for me. Believe me."

Clara laughed and brushed the tip of her tail against Valorie's leg fondly. "I'm kidding, I'm kidding... Mostly. You do look quite lovely today. You should braid your hair more often; it suits you."

"Thanks." Valorie said, hoping her fur was hiding the blush she could feel coloring her skin, "You look... really good too, for a dragon in a dress. It accentuates your... horns... very nicely. Um... wow." The dragoness was always nude, and Valorie had grown used to the sight of Clara's gorgeous body. But seeing the dragoness in a dress served as a glaring reminder of how stunningly beautiful she was, and Valorie had to fight to keep her traitorous eyes focused on Clara's face.

As if sensing Valorie's internal struggle, Clara leaned down, whispering to the equine, "Doesn't it though? It fits so... tight, in all the right places. You can look if you want to; I'm sure Dawn won't mind. As long as you don't touch, unless, of course, you really, really want to. What kind of friend would I be if I said no to something so harmless?"

Taking the invitation with a huff, Valorie reached up and grabbed Clara's horns, shaking the dragoness's head for emphasis. "What is with people teasing me today? What vendetta do you people have against my pants?" Clara just chuckled, spooling her tongue out to lick Valorie's nose, leaving a trail of cool slime on the fur of her muzzle. "Ack! Gods, you smell like sex! What did you do, swallow a- Oh..."

Clara grinned, showing an uncomfortable number of razor sharp teeth. "I smell like sex? You reek like you took a bath in-" Clara paused, looking down at Valorie, and both women suddenly burst out laughing. They each laughed until people started to stare, and Valorie

struggled to choke back unrepentant giggles as Cera slithered up next to them, taking her place beside Valorie.

She looked between the two, confused. "Did I miss something, or have you two finally snapped?"

Valorie blinked tears from her eyes as she snorted a new wave of snickers from her throat, leaning heavily on the dragoness next to her, who likewise didn't seem capable of ceasing her laughter. "We're... we're fine. It's fine. It's just- Oh Gods, I can't breathe. It hurts. Give me a second." The naga rolled her eyes, which only made Valorie laugh harder, bending over to brace herself on her knees as she gasped for breath. Eventually, however, she managed to get her humor back under her control, and she straightened, tugging her clothes back into place, pointedly not looking at the dragoness next to her, because she knew that if she did, she wouldn't be able to contain her mirth.

Close to the same time, people stopped milling around, having formed nine long columns of varying lengths. They radiated out from a central point like the spokes of a wheel, and Dawn stood there, looking around her in wonder. The apprentice shot Valorie a small smile, and Valorie returned it eagerly with a quick wave. The Archmage stepped forward slowly from the head of one of the lines, and the rest of the people in the column stepped forward to fill the void left by the dragon. He took short, measured steps, nine of them, and stopped in front of his apprentice, Limata having disappeared off somewhere.

Once more, a hushed quiet fell over the park, and not even the ever-present sound of birds whistling away in the trees could be heard. Then, with no prompting, the people at the back of each column started to chant. Valorie couldn't make out any words, if there were any, but the beat was deep and primal, and vibrated in her chest, despite coming from only nine people. After what seemed like hours of the rhythm rumbling in her ears, Valorie heard more people begin to sing. It was a light, haunting melody that perfectly accompanied the throbbing beat that continued underneath it. Valorie could feel the ground start to tremble beneath her from the power in the voices that rose higher and higher, and her jaw dropped when she saw what began to happen.

Starting with those who had started to sing first, lances of brilliant light seemed to pierce their skin from within, spilling out to light the air around them with a rainbow of different colors. The light spread outward, shredding away flesh and clothing until nothing but a nimbus of light surrounded forms of radiant energy. Around the shoulders of each glowing figure hung a knee length piece of something that glimmered the color of their discarded robes. The wave of blinding light continued inward as each successive row of wizards added their voice to the slowly building song. Valorie could feel the energy in the air as a physical pressure that pressed in on her. It made her feel small, like a speck of dust, miniscule and invisible to those who had better things to think about.

As one, the innermost ring of wizards shed their skin, leaving Daryn and Dawn the only wizards who still retained their bodies. Then the Archmage let his maw drop open as his resonant baritone rose and added itself to the song. Scale by scale, Daryn's hide started to flake away, and Valorie actually had to shield her eyes at the blinding radiance that the process revealed. She felt Clara's tail whip around her calf, squeezing hard, and she was certain that only her argentum greaves saved her from broken bones as the dragoness stared.

Glaring like a second sun, the dragon's aura filled the park with a warm, golden light that poured off of his luminous form, blocked only by the rectangle of pitch black draped over his broad shoulders. Valorie looked on, puzzled. The black seemed to absorb the light around it, and

looked more like a stain than anything else. But she was distracted by the sound of Dawn's voice cutting through the song around her, sharp and clear. Valorie grinned; Dawn could out-sing anyone on the planet, and Valorie found herself staring as Dawn began to peel herself free of her body, adding her aura to those around her, shining a mellow, pale blue.

Valorie stood entranced as the gathered wizards' auras distorted slightly, flaring in time to the beat that shuddered through the air, and began to drift upward in thin strands, one from each wizard. The delicate wires of energy floated aimlessly through the air toward the center of the circle and the singing apprentice. They came together in front of the Archmage, and he raised a single glowing hand, his own aura beginning to pulse as the strands started to weave themselves together into a long piece of gleaming, multicolored fabric. As it finished, the song shifted tempo, growing slower as Daryn reached out, plucking the cloth from where it floated in the air. Dawn's voice dropped away as her master lowered the stole, laying it across the apprentice's slender shoulders, where it clung, melding with her aura in a soup of color.

The dragon's voice rose in volume, drowning out all the others as he pressed his hands down onto Dawn's shoulders over the stole. Like spreading ink, the fabric under his powerful fingers slowly turned a pure, shining gold. Valorie wished she could understand the words as Dawn's stole was dyed the color of her master's aura. As it finished, the song fell away, until the deep, rhythmic chanting was all that remained.

The Archmage spoke. "One last gift, from master to apprentice." He held out his hands, and a bar of flickering gold sprang to life, stretching between them, and quickly reached nearly his full height. He spun it experimentally, catching it confidently in his hands and raised it high. "By staff and stole I name you Dawn, wizard!" With that, he slammed the rod in his hands into the ground and it flared violently, and Valorie was forced to look away as a tremendous crack, like a clap of thunder, crashed through the clearing, nearly knocking Valorie off of her feet.

Valorie blinked numbly, trying to gather her scattered wits. The last note of the song still buzzed through the air, audible over the ringing in Valorie's ears. She had felt the concussion in her bones, and her armor rang like a chime as she peered at the wizards. They had all returned to their normal forms, clothing and all, and they all stood, grinning at the center of their circle. Daryn was back in his black robes, holding onto a thick length of dark wood, tipped with caps of golden metal. Arcane-looking runes were etched into the staff's haft, and he tossed it to Dawn, who caught it awkwardly. It shrank in her hands until it seemed sized for her, and she leaned on it heavily. Her robes had been tinted a bright gold, the color of the stole that hid beneath her skin, and she breathed heavily as she fingered the cloth that hugged her body.

Carefully, Daryn dropped to his knees and pulled the still stunned-looking former apprentice into a hug that hid most of her body in his thick arms. The crowd erupted into uproarious cheers and Valorie found herself screaming along with them. She stepped forward, tearing herself free of Clara's tail and started to run at the pair on the crown of the hill. She cleared the intervening space faster than she expected, and she didn't even think to slow down. Luckily, Daryn noticed her frightening velocity, and he shifted at the last second, wrapping an arm around Valorie and spinning to bleed off some of her momentum. He set the equine back down, slipping Dawn into her arms as he did so. Valorie's excitement carried her a few more steps before she stopped, holding Dawn off the ground but unsure what to do now.

The newly-minted wizard's amber eyes shone gold in the afternoon sun, and Valorie couldn't help but smile as Dawn looked up at her. "I did it." the smaller woman whispered, "We did it."

Valorie's smile widened into a shameless grin. "You're damn right we did." Her ears flicked at the sound of music starting up somewhere to her left, and she leaned her head down to plant a heated kiss on Dawn's perfect lips. "Care for a dance?" she mused after a moment of contact. Dawn blushed and nodded. Daryn had mentioned a party, after all.