Interim
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Warning*: This story contains elements of open and/or alternative sexuality such as growth, expansion and inflation as well as sensually arousing or erotic circumstances. Reader discretion is advised.*
Rated*: R for Restricted*

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Chapter 1: When we Last Left Our Heroes…

Oh… if all stories began this way. If all stories in the whole wide world could begin with a birth or a wedding, then that would be wonderful. So much pain, so much hurt, so much betrayal… it's about time that something like this happened near me.

By the way, my name is Pendragon; or Pen for those who are familiar with me. I'm a Fairy Dragon, and this is my shrine.

"And it's time for Lifestyles of the Shallow and Pedantic!" *Bob gestured toward Pendragon as he swooped in; wearing a pinstripe suit and suddenly having a jaw so square you could sink the titanic on it, speaking with the accent of that douche bag Robin Leach.* "That's right Poon… who are we observing today."

"Well Bob… what we have here is a notorious asshole." *Chimed Poon, appearing in a sparkling dress with her breasts overtly oversized currently, she speaking in a show girl sort of voice. I pursed my lips in annoyance as my grip tightened on my pen and my eye twitched.* "He's too big for his britches, and that's only at four feet tall! Ladies and gentlemen. This right here is an asshole. Pay attention now while we go through his house and…"

I snapped my fingers and the pair of them froze in place, being pinched by their fluttering fairy wings.

"Hey… that's not fair you son of a bitch…" *Bob continued, still in character.*

Rising to my feet and walking over to the two mated pair of powerful yet younger fairy dragons, I lifted my pen and popped both of Poon's boobs, and both of them deflated loudly before one of the sacks shot up and whizzed about the room like a balloon hemorrhaging air out of a hole in it. She faked a scandalous scream.

"Mah boobies! You popped mah boobies!" *she fake-sobbed and gripped the flimsy front of her dress as the deflated titty landed on my nose.*

"I swear… the two of you will be the death of me." *I said with a twitching eye as I removed the deflated sack and flicked it at Bob.* "Even in my youth I was never so much as an inane little prick as just one of you are."

"That's right… I got more inaneness in my little finger than you do in your whole body!" *bob shouted and showed me his pinkie claw.*

"That wasn't a compliment Bob. I asked you for a favor Bob in my time of need. I placed my trust in you that you'd accomplish it and not mess it up. One simple little favor that I could've done by myself, but it was too much of an inconvenience for me. So I asked you to step in and do me a favor.

"Doing that favor doesn't mean that you and your mate and your entire brood can move in with me."

Bob shook his head to clear it of the self mutation he did of himself to make his face and jaw look like that.

"Alright… fine. Throw us out in to the cold." *He sniffed, and Poon lifted a flashlight and shone it down on his head as he curled up into a kneeling position in mid-air.* "We come to you… cold and hungry… we needed your help! And… hold on a second…" *he took a bottle of eye drops from a pocket and dripped them into his eyes and blinking let them droop out of his eyes as snot drained from his snout.* "There we go, where was I… oh yeah… we came to you… hungry! Starving even… and you throw us out." *Poon began playing a sad tune on a violin, her face contorting like those guys who sometimes played violins that supposedly had intense emotions to them… as if the tune was really getting to her… or making her constipated and she was trying to cop a squat.* "We've wandered the streets… looking for food out of trash cans and dumpsters, trying to take care of our growing family… and now that we're in a nice place… you want to throw us out! You're a bad man… a… dragon-man."

"Trogdor!" *Poon shrieked suddenly.* "Trogdor!"

"Trogdor is a man… he's a… dragon man…" *Bob mused and the two of them began singing before I snapped my fingers and pointed at my eyes with two fingers.*

"Hey assholes… I'm up here." *And they looked at me immediately, Poon hiding the violin and flashlight somewhere behind her. I could tell you where, but that would be a secret. Regardless, pinching the bridge of my nose:* "Ok… let me see here. You're both wanting to stay in my shrine, a shrine of peace, with three hundred of your babies. Well immediately I have one solution to your growing family problem there…" *And biting my lower lip I gripped them both in two hands and shook them.* "Stop… FUCKING!"

"Well I'd wear a condom, but they don't make any in my size! There aren't any large enough." *Bob complained.*

"He wears them as hats." *Poon admitted and they both nodded sagely.*

"Gives new meaning to Jimmy cap… oh Great Maker!" *I moaned.* "Now you got me doing it. Ok… fine… you want to stay? Then we'll make a bargain! You ok with that? Both of you? A bargain?"

"Bar-gain…" *they said in unison and pulled out notebooks before writing that down.* "I gain a bar?" *Bob grinned and waggled his eyebrows and then cowered as I growled at him.* "Sure boss… whatever you want boss."

"Both of you?" *Poon nodded.* "Say it."

"Sure boss!" *she chirped.*

"Ok… you can stay." *They both gasped excitedly.* "But…"

"Oh here it comes." *Bob moaned and I eyed him and he fell silent.*

"You, Pun't'ang and all your brood whether they were born before now or after now, that so long as they live in this shrine they will cause absolutely no mischief, practical jokes, mayhem and so on, and you will all contribute to the

well-being of the shrine. Should you breach this contract without my consent, then you and your entire family will spend a year in the underdark… and this time I may just forget you're down there. I will not have another New York Fire on my hands, do you understand me?"

"Oh that was a wild night. They blamed it all on a cow and… and…" *Bob withered beneath my gaze and Poon followed suit.* "…We'll be nice."

"Then I agree as well."

Draconic power had a particular trait to it called Dragon Lore. It was an enhancing enchantment that rested on top of psionics and magic, and combining the three created some truly spectacular effects. In that moment, Ba'ab and Pun't'ang were surrounded in incredibly complex spell circles that turned thirty-three and a third degrees and then vanished.

"AH! Dick move!" *Bob exclaimed as I released them both.*

"I just want to make sure that you live up to your side of the bargain. It's time to act your age, Bob…" *and I lifted a finger and pointed it at his nose.* "You're way too old to be gallivanting about causing mischief and mayhem like a hatchling."

"Yeah… whatever *dad.*" *Bob said and folded his arms tightly.*

"You want me to be your dad? Oh… I could be your dad."

Poon began slapping her butt repeatedly and moaning erotically. "Who's your daddy? Who's your da-day?!!"

Bob folded his large ears over his face and made like an asthmatic. "Luke… I am your father…" *and he made a gripping hand toward me and made sounds of deep breathing before he started struggling for air, and throwing his ears up he gasped and panted.* "I can't breathe in those things! Whew!"

I folded my arms and eyed them.

"Ok… fine… we'll be good." *They said in unison. Their duplicity was alarming.*

"Good… then here's a list of chores." *I smirked and produced a scroll that was their size and handed it to them, and the moment they gripped it, it unraveled right down to the ground and unrolled by several more inches.*

"Ah! Second dick move!" *Poon shouted this time as they gaped at it.*

"Yeah… but with more than three hundred of you, that list should only take the day." *I smirked.* "Now get going. Those floors won't sand themselves."

I turned back to my writing, jotting down in the diary. I had a library of such tomes… each written on thin plates made of gold. Gold was forever, it never tarnished and had a long half life. So I wrote: 'I was very heartened to hear that Sue was pregnant… and with her burden comes a certain air of responsibility and…'

"*'Oh… if all stories began this way. If all stories in the whole wide world could begin with a birth or a wedding, then that would be wonderful?'* What kind of sappy…" *Bob began, and I looked up, and this time the pen, which was a metal etching tool that was tipped with a diamond head, snapped in my fingers.* "Oh… damn. Ok I'm going."

I sighed and massaged my temples. Fuck me… why did I let them stay?

******

I am Sue.

Counting back on my life… I had to admit that I never knew a time of leisure before. Life was hard and it was work. After I became a Lycan, despite that I had a patron to help me along, it was even harder work. So right now, here I was enjoying certain sensations that were like living in a paradise.

I was living in a room that was a traditional Japanese Feng Shui, the bed built into the floor with a great still pond before it, quoi fish swimming within its crystal waters. I slept naked next to a relatively powerful male, not necessarily strong… just powerful. Technically Madoushi was a magician or a mage… perhaps a sorcerer, but what I've learned about the Dreamtime thus far stated that Dreamtime was as non-traditional in regards to magic as one could get. Though it's practitioners were considered 'Shamans' *they weren't shamans per-se. To hear Pen explain it, being able to manipulate the Dreamtime was like manipulating the machine code of reality. I wasn't too sure of what machine code was so I looked that up.*

Machine code is the most basic form of computing language in the world… also known as Binary. Little ones and little zeros. Hexmidecimal is built on top of binary, basic I/O Operating Systems like DOS and UNIX are built on top of that, and Graphical User Interfaces like Windows ™ and Mac OS ™ are what are built on top of those. What we see on an everyday basis is the Graphical User Interface – or GUI – of reality. Magic is like manipulating the Hex commands or the command-input Operating Systems beneath the GUI. Mady accomplishes his magic on a level well below conventional magic, hence, manipulate reality at the machine code level.

Pen says that there were Dreamtime Shamans that could remake the world in times past… and its potential quite possibly could even override Pen's magic. With training of course.

I didn't know how that was possible, a lot of that went right over my head… I was a Physical Mage after all… my magic worked inside *the GUI of reality and worked along with its rules and regulations. If what Pen said is true, Mady could rewrite local physical laws to make me even more powerful. I was eager to try that some day.*

Regardless, Mady was powerful in more ways than his mystical might. Though I was larger and stronger than he was, I nonetheless respected his ability to tip elephants with a flick of his pinkie. But there were other ways that he was powerful… more powerful than Lee was even… and that was in regards as to how well that man of mine was built… down there.

Finger point downward toward the loins.

Since returning from Lea Monde, the two of us had been making love at night to say goodnight and again in the morning to say good morning to each other. And his 'key' *fit my* 'lock' *like it was made for it. Even as it was, here I was waking up to the late morning sun, the sheets having been thrown aside and Madoushi laying on his stomach next to me, arm about my middle and its hand elevated to hold onto my fat tit while Mew was nestled currently in a ball between my breasts.*

I'd woken up for the past week like this, in varying degrees of disarray and covered with the remnants of lovemaking and experimenting with love and more love and kissing and… sigh… what a week. But after Wormwood and then Lea Monde, I was rather enjoying this. So was Mady. Poor fellah hadn't gotten his gun off in three centuries

before meeting me, and at the same time had to deal with the aggravations of dying every few days or so in various ways. He's lived so many lives that way.

The warm rays of the sun slid slowly across me, caressing my naked skin, lighting and warming the mounds of my breasts as well as the mounds of my every heaving and surging feminine muscle on me, and moaning, trying to go back to sleep I laid there for as long as I dared… or at least till the shaft of sunlight moved off me again.

Having become a kitteh, I've come to understood why cat's like laying in sun rays. I liked being warm, I liked being comfortable… even more so than before.

Eventually though, I did wake up, cradling Mew in my arms as she stirred briefly, the dingle bell on her collar jingling briefly as she looked up at me in annoyance for being moved.

"Mmm… five more minute mom…" *she mewed and then laid her head back down in my arms as I nonetheless rose and moved her to her basket before the window and laid her down on it. Ivan was lightly snoring beside it, using his hat as a pillow, his boots lightly laying on the floor beside him.*

I then stood naked before the window, feeling the milk-laden weights of my heaving breasts dragging down on my chest as they wobbled subtly with my every move, the pair becoming pressed between the long pipes of my biceps as I took to looking out at the bay and the birds and things flying amidst the boats sailing in the water. These boats varied everywhere from massive enormous ocean liners and an American Aircraft Carrier to the small traditional junks with their pleated sails.

Before I'd become a Lycan, there was no way that I'd be walking around naked like this, even in the comfort of my own home, for fear that some random person would be spying upon me at a distance with a pair of binoculars. But running around naked as a mighty fem that was covered with fur and laden with muscle tended to give me the sort of confidence of walking down the open street naked if it were legal. And I was a strong, powerful fem… and I was going to become a mommy.

Lifting both muscular arms to the sides of the window to lean into it so that the kiss of both the sun and the wind could caress their swells and their teats, erecting them then with the mixture of cool air from the ocean and the warm touch of the sun, I closed my eyes and beamed upward at the sun. My arms hugged me then, either with thick Olympian male-sized biceps, I arched deeply, feeling like I was glowing from the inside, the sea air blowing against my body in a sudden rush, kissing my flesh, licking the sweat and the dried love juices against me like a big wet licking tongue from navel to neck, right between my tits, before great suckling mouths drew upon my teats and loins, I closed my eyes and breathed deeply.

And then ever so slowly I drew my hands backward and cradled my tummy. Somewhere inside me was the spirit of Pandora, now bonded to the growing body of an infant produced partly by me, and partly by Mady… or at least I hoped it was partly by Mady.

"Poor little one. You're such an unlucky little girl… to have suffered so much and now even before you're born we don't even know the identity of your real father." *I whispered to my belly… looking at the heaving and tight abdominal muscles from between my breasts.*

I wanted to give birth to her here in Japan… in all this comfort.

Saint Paul was a nice place, and living in Galtier Plaza, the tallest building in Saint Paul, it satisfied my kitty instincts for being really high up. But the smells that came from Saint Paul were very different than the ones that

came from the sea. Saint Paul tended to smell differently depending upon which direction the wind blew and what time of year it was. In the spring there was the smell of the Slaughterhouses. The slaughterhouses weren't in production any more, those facilities had been moved well outside the cities further down river, but those yards still held cattle, and their smell had permeated the wood of that place so that it stank no matter what time of year it was.

In the summer, if the wind caught you just right there was a coal burning plant and garbage burning plant to the east of it, and let's not forget the lovely smell of the river whenever it got low. But nonetheless, the crisp air in the fall and winter made it worthwhile, especially when all the people all around were burning leaves in the fall.

Tokyo… had different smells.

It had the salty sea air every morning and evening as the tides came in and out, it had the smell of fish from one direction at times and there were hills of cherry blossoms that were in bloom at the moment around the shrine. Whenever the wind blew down the mountain – Mount Fuji that is – it brought crisp cool mountain air with it. Pen's shrine got the best of all of that. He'd chosen it in a place that was upwind from the city, or at least the sea air interfered with the city air to help keep the place crisp smelling, and the place was likewise in the lee of the geography of the volcano should it ever erupt again.

Pen mentioned that this shrine had stood in this spot in one form or another for nearly half a million years. Though the island of Japan has broken off from the main land, new islands rose or fell, the mountain itself erupted and deflated repeatedly, his shrine nonetheless had remained her for all that time.

I could feel the old magic here… it was ancient… very, very ancient. Older than the human race ancient. Pen had taught other dragons, taught Fae, taught elves, taught humans in their myriad of races, shapes and forms. This place was a place of peace, and I owed it to Pandora to give birth to her here.

She still needed a new name… at least that part was easy. We knew she was going to be a girl… so she'd need a girl's name eventually. Looking to the desk beside the window here – my favorite place to sit and read scrolls and books in study – I'd assembled several sheets of names both traditional and new to come up with the perfect name for her.

Mady and I had spent hours last night just thinking that up… till… well… till we got frisky. I blushed in thought about how creative that man was when he was enticing me, and I sighed in remembrance as my thighs pressed together as my loins did a few tricks between them. The very thought of Mady made me moist and short of breath with passion. The sound of his voice made me shiver with the same remembrance, and his touch made me swoon. Oh that man knew how to touch.

But taking a deep whiff of the air as I caressed my muscled navel, I opened my eyes and looked out over the wall of the shrine out at Tokyo Bay and the brilliant and marvelously sprawling city, home of the tallest building in the world.

Tokyo was a city that was at war with itself… between traditional and ultra-modern. Few US cities could claim that they did that, if any. But nonetheless, Tokyo smelled either of stale industry… or fish – Hmm… fish – but in the morning, unerringly, the wind blew in off the ocean and carried with it that nice salty sea smell that I'd grown to love. It was a soothing smell; somehow calming… and being in Tokyo at this time of year also meant that the cherry trees were all blossoming, so that cherry smell was prevalent in everything.

While I stood there however, enjoying the warmth of the morning mixed with the cool of the sea air, suddenly I was being embraced from behind… with a thick man-sausage fitting right in between the swells of my bottom, the thing

thick with a mild chub as two strong hands embraced me. One of the arms that embraced me cradled my breasts, cupping one of them directly while the other cradled my belly and alternatively rubbed the cleft of labial muscles between my legs. I sighed nasally as a pair of lips began to peck their way along my thick neck and broad shoulders, a finger tip tweaking the nipple of the breast its hand cupped.

"Hello my lover." *I said quietly so as not to bother Mew.*

She was very heavy with her kittens, and it would be very soon that she'd give birth to them.

"Hello my beloved." *Madoushi whispered in my ear, pausing only long enough in his affections to say that before once again continuing his soothing caressing of my body.*

Just as expected, his hand cradling my belly slid downward to start playing with my sex, his fingers finding my clit and rubbing it. Almost immediately I creamed… from both my sex and teats. Those teats had firmed up and enlarged, their areola puffed out from pregnancy already, which likewise gave me a sensation of being perpetually aroused, while the breasts they capped had engorged by several cup sizes despite that I was siphoning milk from them daily… twice daily if you count Mad drinking his fill from them.

Milk… it does a body good. He'd even bulked up by at least twenty pounds since escaping Lea Monde with us. Fresh food and sunlight with good milk and descent rest did wonders on a body. His ropy body was firm and as supportive as a hardened shield about me. Despite that I was physically the greater of the two of us… he made me feel safe. Maybe Mady was using that fantastic power of his to soothe and entice me, doing things to me deep, deep inside me to make me react like this, but I didn't mind. He wanted to, it felt good so I was going to let him and that was that.

But as Mady soothed my engorged mammaries, either larger than my head, and my strong and powerful and firm labial muscles, I cooed and soothed, leaning forward against the window sill again and arching myself, rising on tip toe for my morning 'Hello' from my soon to be husband, while he kissed, massaged, soothed and caressed my developing body.

Pen had said that I was developing as a mother a little prematurely… Like the first six months of matriarichal maturation were happening all at once over these first few weeks. I was growing more buxom – a definite switch from the pert, tiny little breasts I used to have – more hippy, while the maturity of loins and breasts were becoming more defined but also more sensitive. But I was also strengthening all over again, as if my growing motherhood was a physical empowerment to me. I knew one of my chakras – probably the sixth chakra, or the Sacral or Svadhisthana Chakra – must be to blame for that causing the forced development of the other chakras which in turn were buffing me out slowly and methodically.

…And I didn't even need to exercise.

My hips were wider, like I'd mentioned, the pair shoulder-width now. When I was a human they were narrow, girlish, but now that I was a mommy, they'd grown wide into what many would call 'good child-bearing hips'. *Many of the women here in the shrine said that I had the sort of hips that were good for baring sons. I'd just smile at them and curtsy, thanking them for the comment. Little did they know that I bore one of the most famous of feminine bodies in all of human history… the only more well-known woman would perhaps be Eve herself, the mother of our race. But these wide hips narrowed quickly into a slender yet muscular belly before immediately flaring wide again into the long lats and broad flaring dorsal muscles that supported my upper body and the grand tits that decorated them.*

I'd been remade from my mother's scrolls into a female that was much given to pleasure… but after that pleasure I was likewise much given to physical strength and power that I'd as of yet seen even a man hold. Motherhood was only enhancing those traits.

I wanted a dozen babies if I could handle it… if Mady could handle it too. I didn't plan on living forever, but there was much one could do in the lengthened lifetime of a Lycan.

Mady's affections soon got me into position as my back arched, his kisses on my back, and after a little work I felt his manliness slide into my womanhood smoothly, his penile ridges rubbing against my vaginal ridges in an enticing penetration against each other that got me to clap on him and bite my lip and roll my eyes back in elation. A passionate size escaped my nose as he massaged my bottom as we began our morning greeting to each other, my breasts wobbling while I breathed long and deep with every stroke.

"Wha… oh for crying out loud." *Ivan groaned as he awoke, stretched and yawned before placing his hat on his head.* "She's already pregnant! You don't need to hump her anymore."

"No… I don't *need* to." *Mad smirked.* "But I want to. And don't you think I don't know you would do Mew if you had the chance, Ivan."

"Oh I want to… but she bites me whenever I try now. Something about me hurting our kittens…"

"Yes, but Sue isn't that far along, and I want her right now."

"And I want him to too." *I murred deep in my throat, swallowing with what felt like him probing me to the base of my throat.*

"Yeah… but do you have to do that right over my mate?"

"It won't matter if she doesn't wake up. And by the way Ivan, you might get more loving from her if you service her more." *I smirked at him while my vaginal tract was probed repeatedly, I rising up on tip toe like a ballerina as Mad pulled at my hips for a better stroke.*

"Sure… sure… but she's nine weeks pregnant! I'm not going to…"

"Not *sex* her… not yet… but *serve* her." *I smirked and closed my eyes and leaned toward the open window, milk leaking from my teats and rolling down the fat swells of either breast as Mad's motions pleased me in a particularly soothing way. It got my toes to spread and then curl.* "You know… massage her… be kinder to her. Let her know you really care. Tell her you love her."

"I'm not human…" *Ivan said as he took his hat off and fluffed it, and then sighed.* "Does that really work?"

"It works for me." *Madoushi smirked, and shoved himself even deeper into me, lifting me off the ground now and I bit my lower lip and trembled as he did. I might be stronger than him, but he was still strong enough to support me off the ground if need be.*

"So I see." *Ivan mentioned with a raised eyebrow at us.* "But for now, I'm going to go check in with Tanya. She'll want to know what I've been up to. She is after all my human… sort of." *Ivan smirked and snapped his fingers and disappeared, leaving Mad and me to our own devices again.*

Oh this was wonderful… soon I was going to be a bride, and soon thereafter I was going to be a mommy! Life couldn't get much better than this!

******

My name is Fellania Bloodclaw.

I knew a draw inside me, a pulling sensation. I knew a direction unlike any I'd ever known before in my life. It was a palpable situation that pulled, directed, and compelled me in the most nagging of ways. It came with an interest in a man coupled with the most accursed thing in womankind, and that was the so called *'Biological clock.'* That clock went tick-tock-tick-tock continuously, and every tick and every tock the weight of that pulling force inside me increased as assuredly as a winding rubber band. Oh sure, that band had lots and lots of ability to twist… and to grind… and to stretch, but a band only had so much elasticity before it snapped.

And as that band wound and bound up, I could feel it drawing me ever closer toward a man, a man trapped in ice so ancient and pure that the ice was blue. But this man, this being from an ancient time, resembled so much of the face of a man I saw only snippets of in my dreams… like a half-remembered memory from so very long, long ago.

These dreams were often romantic… and sometimes erotic, and even as I awoke it was with the lingering sensation of his hands upon my breasts, his loins and my loins coupled lovingly in a union so immaculate that it must be divine. So divine as to last across the ages from the there and then to the here and now.

Pen had told me and Sue separately – I heard Sue relay this to me – that there was no such thing as reincarnation. Dead is dead… and not even a being of his ability could raise a spirit that has gone on. But then at the same time he tells Sue and me that we're the spitting images of our first mothers, women who existed more than three hundred millennia ago, two women who'd happened to know each other and just so happened to last know each other in this region known as Japan… when Japan itself was a part of the Chinese Mainland and that mainland was also a part of the super continent known as Pangea. Though he mentioned *'dead is dead'* he also hinted at *'that which has gone on'*. It suggested that a soul could be brought back and perhaps manipulated in that tenuous moment between death and afterlife.

Noah's flood and countless cataclysms have happened since that which had sundered the whole world time and time again, the magnetic shifting of the poles, an ice age or two, countless tectonic movements, near Extinction Level Events, and so on and so forth…

The face of Earth was nothing, absolutely nothing in comparison to what it was those three hundred thousand years ago, but nonetheless, this land – the land of Japan – still drew me to it, still wanted me to be here. The source of all of that, the source of all this draw, was none other than Mount Fuji itself, an ancient volcano that my first mother had been bound to somehow since she was a young woman. It was the home of White Oak, my staff, and somewhere inside my heart I felt another draw in me to remain here.

I mean, I was an American, that was my home over the seas, but I was rapidly coming to love this place. It was so peaceful, so serene and quiet, and the land accepted me like a prodigal child.

So as I awoke that day a week after Sue, Remy and I had left – escaped – Lea Monde, naked, grasping the sheets that had knotted up somehow between my legs in the night to simulate a… well I won't tell you what they were simulating, but now with a renewed strength that had been enhanced from my own experiences in Lea Monde, I felt a tickle of additional strength coming into me thanks to this land. It flared me, it thickened me little by little each day.

I lifted an arm, looking at thick forearms and beefy biceps with a supple layer of skin around the hardened chords conjoined by webbings of tendons and veins, and I beheld the strength, the sheer, unmitigated strength that was my life's blood, my birthright through maturation over generations and generations of bears to become… this.

They called my first mother the 'Mountain Queen,' I thought, not knowing how I knew that, but I did know that. She was so big and so strong that only she could tame the fiery mountain. It was said that she was the one who calmed Mount Fuji.

That mountain wanted me, it… *loved* me… it was an odd sensation to feel the land be so affectionate to oneself, especially after having to coax every little thing out of the earth back home, but it was like that this land was my perfect shamanic synergy. Many Shamans and Druids spent their whole lives and never found a plot of land that acutely formed such a symbiosis with them. In my case… the land itself called to me and I came. My home in America was one thing, it was used to me, but here… it was like a long lost parent welcoming its child back with open arms to embrace me to its voluminous bosom and give me suck.

It was so… sensually wonderful.

With naked breasts wobbling and rolling over my ribs, the pair super engorged into great rounded sacks that held themselves up atop the hardened and rounded pectorals I possessed, I rose to my rump and one arm and sighed, rubbing at my eyes to clear them of sleep with the knotted sheet between my legs still. Then rubbing the supremely muscled tummy I had even in human form while my long hair fell over one shoulder, I smacked my lips and looked about the supple and earthen room in which I was stationed. Already nearby was a tray with a clay pot of water sitting on a bed of coals to keep it hot, while an upside down hand bowl rested nearby with a metal tea leaf dipper resting beside the bowl. More bowls with condiments – honey, lemon and sugar – rested nearby for taste. If only I could use those for taste. Adding sweeteners would lessen the potency, so I had to drink the bitter-tasting tea – like earl gray or green tea – in order to douse a second fire that was in me.

That twisting band inside me generated heat… a sexual heat… the longest insurgence of it yet. There were no other bears here for me to attract, and it was just lasting and lasting.

Fingering the tea pot and then turning the bowl over, I placed the already prepared metal tea dipper into the bowl and poured water over it.

There were many natural alchemists in this shrine – Pen being among them – herbalists, Eastern Alchemists and individuals who had an ancient and devout knowledge of herbs and teas, how to steep them, how to cure and preserve them… how to enchant them… and what mixture of leaves all together would make a woman like me, a bear-woman like me, entering into her deepest, longest heat in her lifetime, to cool those sensations that roiled in my belly and loins morning, noon and night and make them at the very least bearable.

Pen did this without being asked. True he didn't ask for permission, but for granting me relief from those damnable sensations that made me stupid and loopy, loose my usually unflappable composure, was a gift that I wasn't eager to scoff at or refuse. I could think clearly after drinking this tea despite how deep the heat was getting inside me, how long it roiled, and a cup in the morning and a cup in the evening were able to allow my body to experience the heat but for my mind to mostly ignore its mental affects.

And his gifts just kept coming… and it all began with White Oak.

Replacing the clay pot with water back into the coals, letting the leaves in the tea dipper steep for the prescribed amount of time, I removed the Tea Dipper, picked up the hand bowl, turned it a quarter turn to the right as was the custom, and cupping the hand bowl like a woman should in the orient, as was custom, I drank deeply from it.

There were specific ways to hold tea, one for a man, another for a woman, either having different methods depending upon ceremony or causality. Tilting the bowl and taking the next sip of the tea, I relished those first few moments where the burning fire in my pelvis and loins was gently quenched by the effects of the tea sliding into my blood stream.

That fire slowly had been crawling up my pelvis each day. Pen himself had checked up on me, markedly looking into when that sensation of rising heat got up to my head. Once the burning got that high… I risked madness. I'd gone nearly two decades now without a man in me… my body was markedly protesting the need to breed.

Damn these heats! It was an evolutionary thing, a super ovulation that required one to breed, required a mating to keep our species going. Those who went without satisfying the heat in their bodies had the potential on going into a sexual rampage, hunting for a mate, while still others simply fried their brains and received serious brain damage from the lack of a mating.

As such, matings were typically arranged the moment a mother knew she was ripe with a female cub. The problem for me was… there weren't any males. My den was almost entirely female, and what males were left were either too old or too young to mate with and… and… there had always been that insurmountable sensation in me that there was someone special for me. I dreamed of him, I kept dreaming of him, and now that I saw his face, knew that he was real…

I sighed and looked to my hand again, the mighty woman's hand attached to the impeccable forearm muscle, bulging separated biceps and chorded shoulder.

The tension from my heat had clenched my muscles almost constantly with the tension. I was thickening and growing partly from accomplishing a sort of isometric weight lifting… muscles so taut and tense that they were undergoing steady growth just by the sheer sake of being so tense all the time. And I was definitely growing stronger, especially since leaving Lea Monde. The other day, while in my human form, I'd bent a washer in two between my abdominal muscles. Before I could only do that trick in my full hybrid form. Shortly after then I cracked a walnut that way, and then folded the base of a pop can in half in one hand. You think that's an easy task?! You try that and tell me how well you do. Just the base of the can, pinching the very bottom in just your fingers.

And all this was in my human form.

Each day when new clothes were delivered to my room, they were a size or a fraction of a size larger than they were before. Pen's thoughtfulness at hand… or at least he had well trained and thoughtful servitude in the shrine.

Sighing again and rubbing the sheet into my loins – I knew they were moist, they were moist every morning now – I gestured with my hand and the windows swung silently and easily open to allow a shaft of beautiful sunlight into my room along with the breath of the late morning air wafting in with it. Immediately the glorious visage of White Oak shivered in the wind, its leaves rustling in greeting as it seemed to untwist and unfurl its leaves from sleep as those leaves glittered in the morning light like alabaster, opal and mother of pearl. I smiled in greeting at the ancient oak, and drinking the rest of my tea and setting the bowl down, I rose and stepped over to its broad planter.

"Good morning friend." I greeted to it and again it waved in the air.

It was a tree, and though it could remain eternally as a staff if it so chose, but I wanted it – Him? Her? Did it really matter? – to remain happy so I planted it so it could feed from the soil and the sunlight here on the ground floor where my room was. I caressed its bark with one hand and it shivered and twisted lightly for me, its glistening and waxen bark coiled and molted into arcane and natural symbols of curves and lettering.

It loved me… loved me because it loved every woman in my family line who'd ever wielded it. It was sad when each of my predecessors left, but it was overjoyed with each new wielder who took it up. Even as I stood there it flowered suddenly with pink-white flowers in imitation of all the cherry trees that flowered all around the shrine in grand groves. Flowering was something no White Oak did, but it was an ancient and magical tree, and did things with its leaves and bark that no tree should do anyways. Even as I stood there unabashedly naked before its celestial glory, a new white-green vine extended from a branch and drooped with a cluster of prickly nuts that flared and thickened and ripened from nuts into a luscious sort of prickly pear.

"Thank you." I smiled grandly and embraced it, my thick and rounded melons for breasts cleaving to the sides of its warmed bark.

White Oak shivered as I stepped back, and reaching up I accepted her gift. I didn't break it off the tree, rather the tree pulled its branch back with the new growth and it came off the prickly pear easily, leaving the fleshy fruit with a soft nut-like exterior. It had to be broken open and peeled like an orange, but the sweet fruit on the inside was luscious, filling… and most of all, White Oak's nectar reduced the heat in my loins. What was more was that that one little fruit filled even a big lady like me, made me feel awake and strong, able to deal with the day.

"Delicious." I told the tree and it shivered again, coiling like another might shrug bashfully, and holding the fruit and nibbling at it, I moved to the open window, still naked, feeling the soothing embrace of the wind coupled with the strengthening touch of the mountain's roots beneath my feet. Oh, but those roots held fire beneath them… engorging fire like the veins of the great mountain.

Whether the mountain were a mother or a father depended upon the moment, regardless, it was ancient, supportive and protective, and when angered… well… the only natural force that rivaled the unmitigated power of a volcano was the super nova from a detonating star. Not even an earthquake can compare with the unrivaled power and energy that the earth expends in order to erupt a volcano.

White Oak waved happily in the wind behind me as I stood before the window… vulnerable head, chest, and pelvis out in the open currently to whoever might look in my direction. But White Oak would warn me if there were praying eyes about. It was protective of me… hence why its preferred form was a staff. Only when its barbs needed to be bared against vampires did it ever become a spear.

In nature, White Oaks could grow to be *immense* trees, and yet this one was only slightly taller than I was. It held so much great power though, so much pristine and natural beauty, and given its age, it should be the size of the oh-so-rare millennium trees, this tree being nearly as old as Pendragon himself was. It'd been ancient even before my first-mother ever plucked it from the cinder cone atop Mount Fuji, just prior to the mountain erupting.

This tree radiated feelings of life and love, natural mysticism, and affection for me and my bloodline.

To cut a White Oak prematurely down was now a crime in Japan. It and its ilk were considered sacred now, especially after so many much of the other white oaks had been cut down for creating the Bokken, a wooden training sword that became popular in the sixties to eighties, even in America, especially when martial arts were just beginning to be world known. More trees were cut down for walking sticks and canes, and essentially the tree had become as rare and as protected in Japan as the Black Thorn was in Ireland.

Walking naked to the window, looking out the window at the beautiful, monumental and white-capped mountain that was Mount Fuji, I remarked at the sacred symbols that made up my bloodline. The sacred white-capped mountain, the sacred White Oak tree.

Thoughts of a family crest of a White Oak before the silhouette of Mount Fuji came to mind. But there was another family crest, one that I was more familiar with, and that was of a black paw with a single red claw over a field of silver.

It'd been different three hundred thousand years ago… tree covered and taller, it's base coming right to Pen's shrine here, so that a part of his shrine was literally built into its rock. In its old age, the mountain had flattened downward and gone largely dormant. Oh it was still alive alright… alive and vibrant, with a core of fire that burned with heat and power that only a really old volcano could manage to do. The sacred peak was the most loved sight in all of Japan, and Pen had chosen his shrine location wisely for the peace that it radiated at this very point.

Even Pendragon, the mighty Elder Wyrm that he was, resided at the roots of that mighty peak. Even he dared do nothing more than an occasional sojourn to the peak of my family's mountain.

With my magic, I summoned the tea pot and the tea dipper and poured myself another bowl of the bitter tea, drinking it while leaning on the window sill with my broad hips and thick powerful yet rounded bottom, smiling at the shining sun on my face while I looked up at Amaterasu's brilliance, Amaterasu being the Japanese Goddess of the Sun, exemplified with the game Okami.

The cherry trees were blossoming, the mountain was still snow-capped, the view of the bay was forefront in my view, the wind was warm with just enough of a cooling breath from the bay to make this a perfect day.

After finishing the tea and a swivel of the body with a jostling of breasts, I paused and saw yet another gift in my room, and stooping by the bed on the floor to place the cup on it, I rose and lifted up the first layer of a patterned kimono and smirked at it.

Unfortunately… I was not the sort of woman to wear a *'traditional'* kimono. That's not a shot mind you… it's just a fact of my body type. Most Japanese women were small and petite. Generations of breeding a preferred small and petite woman – right up to forcing their feet into tiny shoes to make even those small – bred a woman that was typically small in height, slender of body and small of chest. Like the women it was designed for, the Kimono was designed to wrap the legs, making it difficult to move quickly, while the flaps over the front could enclose the nearly flattened chest easily. But my bust was far too large for the two flaps to contain it, and if I were to put on a traditional Kimono, then my breasts would perpetually be out in the open and naked.

This was a modified Kimono to fit a woman like me, a woman who weighed over three hundred pounds of sheer unrestrained muscle, with breasts that were like the block and tackles for an ocean liner. There was a chest wrap of patterned white silk, along with a set of feminine patterned underpants, a white under robe and a patterned outer robe. The chest wrap was meant to hem in my breasts and cover the naughty bits that the kimono's folds didn't cover, and likewise, this kimono had cut open sides to allow for my broad, powerful legs, with the cut rising up to just over the hips. Two long thigh socks and slippers likewise completed this wonderfully beautiful gift.

The layers of under cloth, including a set of Oriental style underpants – the kind that flossed the butt and had a wide wedge across the loins and wrapped the waist with twists of cloth – were soft and kind to a woman's skin… especially taken into the sensitivity of my flesh at the moment in my… *heightened* state of sexual awareness. The chest wrap actually separated and supported both breasts first before wrapping them while at the same time allowing

for the flesh to breathe. It felt like the most comfortable bra I'd ever worn… which was saying something… especially when no store carried a bra with your measurements.

A hundred and ten triple-Z was not the sort of bra most bra makers get, and I always got calls or emails from the manufacturers wondering if I'd entered the measurements in right. I swear to the Maker they must think I'm a really, really fat woman, and after that one time where they sent me back a bra that I broke the next day trying to put it on because they changed the measurements on me and I didn't know it… simply because they said that no woman had measurements like mine. Then they had the gall to say I couldn't return it since I broke it regardless of their error and… oh! It just made me not want to wear more than an athletic bra ever again. At least those were one-size-fits all, but I didn't like how they kept trying to push my boobies together like they were trying to make one big good one.

To have actual support after years of not having one… I actually cooed and rubbed the cloth into the soft sensitive mammaries and contemplated on giving Pen a big hug and a kiss for all these nice comforts he'd been giving me as of late.

True to his word… he wanted us to relax and be happy after our exertions.

I donned then a layer of soft silk followed by two layers of supple linen – previous garments proffered to me as a part of the Kimono – and finally by an emerald green and amber brown with white trim Kimono that complimented me in every way. Finally I donned the high leg socks that left the toes open, and even a pair of Japanese sandals with their high wooden slats – made to keep their wearers largely out of puddles and the mud – were actually strong enough to support my phenomenal weight.

Then stepping in that rocking motion the sandals required for every foot step – there was either that or the shuffling motion thing – and making my way back to White Oak, I only touched its bark and it twisted immediately, surging around my arm and up to the peak of my head where it braided my hair with its trailers and white-green new growths and made a beautiful hair-dressing that curled my hair beautifully and crowned it with hair rods and a filigree of white leaves.

Sighing and smoothing the kimono over myself, I then headed to the door, and sliding it open, took a deep breath… a moment before a powered floor sander, being ridden by no less than a dozen multi-colored and miniature versions of Pendragon slid across the floor, banged against a wall and dropped a silk painting, spun in a full circle, whipping along power chord behind it, and then bounced down a flight of stairs leading into the basement.

I saw this amidst…

"You're doin' it wrong… stupid!" one little drake shouted up at the driver.

"I yam not! I got it! I got it!" the driver, who was wearing a pilots fur-lined leather helmet along with a pair of goggles and a bomber jacket who was riding the handlebars like it was a chopper.

"I yam supah-man!" another little fairy dragon said… being that it was a she, I think the correct term was draca, but she was doing the superman atop the floor sander's chassis.

And when they went down the stairs, they all made silly sounds like teeth chattering and repeating "Ai-ya-huh" sounds from many little voices as the machine fell on each step as the power sander struck another walls, careened against two others and sped off in another direction down the next flight of stairs.

“The hell was that?” I blinked, and looking back from whence the contraption came, I saw a swath in the polished floor and an extension cord that looked to be a mile long crisscrossing the halls, draping over random objects and was tied in a big bow-tie knot to make a web right in the middle of the corridor.

Other guests were sticking their heads out of doors as I ventured out into the corridor, stepping well over the cable on the floor to avoid it tangling up on me all of a sudden.

“**BOB!**” I heard Pendragon rage suddenly from across the building, and suddenly that Bob fellow that transported Sue, Mad, Remy and me from France back to Japan came rolling down the stairs up the hall – literally rolling, bouncing like a ball – and slapped hard against one of the walls.

“Oh shit, oh crap, oh shit, oh crap, crap, crappity-crap-crap-crap!” And he leaped up and quickly untangled the chords, giving the ball that was reminiscent of the balls of Christmas lights most people have to untangle when putting up their decorations. Tugging on this, gnawing on that, he got it to untangle and with a pull a ceiling tile broke just above his head and the powered sander fell out of it with all the miniature multicolored fairy dragons still hanging onto it and looking frazzled. I noted now that there were tassels on the handlebars of the machine.

The machine ground a circular sanded spot in the middle of the floor for a few brief seconds before Bob yanked on the chord that was powering it to stop it.

“Damn it… we’re in trouble! Put this thing back where you got it!” Bob hissed.

“**BOB!**” Pen’s voice cried from across the shrine again, amplified subtly now, and Bob winced.

“Definitely in trouble!” and he yanked on the chord and it wrapped itself up into coils before he crawled all over the machine, knocking the little ones off and then knuckle-dusting the one still trying to ride it like a chopper, who was singing *‘Born to be Wild.’* Till he was silenced with the knuckle punch.

“You!” and he pointed to a little pink one. “Take this and this chord back where it came from! The rest of you…” and it may’ve been me, but it literally looked like he pulled about a dozen hand sanders out of his butt and threw them at the little ones. “Sand! By *hand*,” he said through gritted teeth while clenching the air with all four hands. “And you… quickly… put those pictures back up… straight!”

“But dad!” they complained as a chorus. “This is faster!”

“Faster yes… but noisy. Pen doesn’t like noisy! Now ye bunch of festering gobs… get to work while I go kiss the Great Wyrm’s ass for your collective screw up! Or do you want to be banished?” They cringed and bob glowered back at them before scurrying off on all sixes. “Coming! Coming!”

Not wanting to miss this as the little ones, Bob’s children apparently, began to half-heartedly sand the floors – “Left the circle… right the circle… hey look at me! I’m Ralph Macchio!” – I hurried off toward the central chamber.

Padding along, the sandals clicking with nearly every step, I arrived at the main hall where several other of the house denizens, those who served here, were hiding behind corners and giggling or chuckling. I didn’t know how Pen was doing it, but there was a thick throbbing vein pulsating through his head plates.

“What did I tell you… what did I tell you Ba’ab? This is a shrine of peace!”

“Oh is it? I didn’t notice with you yelling at me all the time.” Bob smirked.

“You and your brood have already destroyed the peace, so why should I continue being peaceful when the lot of you are so intent on riding a stolen power sander through my shrine at seven in the morning?”

“Ah… I’ll have to get back to you on that one.”

“Translation: you don’t have a reason. Clearly… you are what the humans call an irresponsible father.”

“Now that’s hitting below the belt.” Bob pointed out and Pen snapped his staff right between Bob’s legs.

“No… *that’s* hitting below the belt.” Pen smirked.

“OH, right in the mommy daddy button!” Bob squealed in a high-pitched voice and fell over sideways gripping his groin.

“Really? … Must’ve been a lucky shot.”

“They were right between my legs! How could you think you missed…” Bob was saying in a high-pitched voice before he paused and then stared at Pen. “Oh… you cold maniacal bastard. I’ll have you know I’m quite endowed.”

“That’s *‘well-endowed’*, Ba’ab.” Pen smirked. “Your standards must’ve gone down. Now look…” and Pen rose into the air, and as he floated passed Bob, Pen reached out and grabbed the smaller blue drake by one ear and tugged lightly on it, Bob followed immediately up into the air and fluttered his wings to release the pressure as Pen landed on a window sill, dragging Bob to the window. “See that? See that whole area? You, and only you, will rake the sand, wash the rocks, trim the grass with hand sheers and turn the soil in the garden. In the mean time… you will let your entire brood know that if I hear another power tool, it will mean punishment… for both you and the broodling. Do you understand me Ba’ab?”

“Loud… and… clear.” Bob mentioned and Pen let go of his ear and the thing retracted like a blind, flipping repeatedly over itself somehow before Bob grabbed it and yanked it back out again.

“Now get to work.” Pen finished and hopped off the sill and began walking away.

“You know… you could be a little gentler.”

Pen stopped, and his one visible hand on his staff clenched.

“I have already tried being gentle with you Ba’ab. I’ve tried quiet suggestion, I tried being direct… and damn me for the past three thousand years, you’ve proven yourself to be a perpetual thorn in my side… and when you started breeding you proved yourself to be a cancerous, malevolent and viral thing. In Draco’s name, Ba’ab… you will either toe the line, or I swear I’ll plough you head-first into the underdark like an overpaid football player spikes the ball into the end zone. And so help me, I’ll send your beloved mate and all your entire brood down there with you, letting each and every last one of them know that they’re there all because of you.”

“That’s… that’s cruel!” Bob blanched.

“Bob… I’m a million and a half years old. After as much patience as I’ve already exerted against you, I am at my breaking point. If anything… that’s justice. Now get to work. You’ll either wind up a just, descent dragon, or you’ll end up forever committed to the underdark and its denizens.”

And Pen stamped his staff against the floor in a final note that the conversation was over and walked off.

Bob – or Ba'ab – drooped his head, and reaching behind himself pulled out a pair of hand sheers. "I'm Pendragon… blah-blah-blah… you're a stupid lazy dragon Bob. Get to work bob. Blah-blah-blah!" and Bob threw a raspberry after Pen had left, dragging down an eyelid to show off his eye.

Hurrying off and hopping through a window, I soon heard what sounded like a lawn mower, but a quick look outside saw what was best described as a tumbling ball of quickly moving body parts and clipping hand shears… kinda like the Tasmanian Devil from Looney Toons. Blinking at this and turning quickly, following after Pen, I caught up with him at a bridge overlooking one of the many quoi ponds.

Pen was throwing bread crumbs to them.

Like he always was outside, he had his head covered and only two arms visible. Hand wrappings and his robes covered his fingers. I knew he did this because of the probability of satellites, and there were four probable governments who could immediately see him in his shrine: Japanese, American, Russians and Chinese.

"That seemed a little drastic." I mentioned.

"Seems… I assure you Lady Fellania… it is quite an optical illusion." Pen mentioned. "If I could've gotten away with something kinder, I would've… but I've attempted to be kind for ages now… and even my nigh inexhaustible patience is quite exhausted."

"Your patience is?" I mentioned and he nodded. "There's a saying that the older a person is the more patient a person is."

"Or the less patient." Pen smirked. "They're called *'crotchety'*. But like I mentioned and you undoubtedly heard from our heated exchange… how well is one able to wait after nearly thirty thousand years?"

"Ask my first mother…" I mentioned and laid both hands upon the railing of the arching bridge. "By the way… thank you so much for this kimono. It looks beautiful and feels comfortable."

"You're welcome." He said gently and then threw the last handful of bread. "It fits you well."

The buzzing of Bob rushing back and forth in his menial labor neared. "H-how soon." I asked suddenly and gripped the railing… anxious and eager.

"How soon till he thaws?" Pen asked and I nodded vigorously, not able to keep the palpable excitement and anticipation from my face. "I'll be beginning a transfusion in about an hour… if you'd like to be present."

I nodded vigorously again and licked my lips this time. No one was allowed in that chamber without Pen present… not even me. He explained it that what he was doing was of the utmost delicacy that he couldn't in good thought damage the possibility of failure by opening even accident to that chamber. The thawing was agonizingly slow too… but it needed to be. It needed to be gentle and it needed to be delicate or the shock or the ravages of time would kill Anhogamon.

"What is the transfusion for?" I asked.

“Three hundred thousand years of time have passed, Fellania. By my last check, Anhogamon wasn’t an immortal when I last saw him. Air wrecks insane amounts of havoc to a person who’s been preserved. The moment the air touches a preserved thing, it applies that much time that has passed upon the thing. Parchments yellow and wither, pages crumple and blacken, metals tarnish and blacken…”

“And flesh disintegrates and blackens… falling off the body.” I finished with a grim thought.

“For as much time that has passed, he’d disintegrate right down to powdered bone dust, Fellania… but that’s not the only problem.” He stepped away and I quickly followed.

“Not the only problem?!” I asked, feeling panicky all of a sudden. This wasn’t because of my heat… no… this was fear of being denied something I’d been missing my whole life… possibly longer. “What else can there be?!”

“Three hundred thousand years ago… Lycan were called Spirit Folk. They were originally the offspring of demon remnants and human beings.”

“D-demons?!”

“Not all demons are bad… most are… but not all.” Pen corrected. “Back then, a Spirit Folk, also known as a Hengeyokai, had a choice of being a man or a man-beast… but it wasn’t their conscious desire that made this… it was their subconscious wishes that deemed whether they are human or not. In time, Lycan began to learn to control their forms and were able to change more quickly as time progressed… likewise they learned to transform into other shapes, obtaining more hybrid and full beast forms even though they continue to exemplify a requirement to transform when the moon is full, and are harmed by precious metals and magic. A throwback from their demonic origins… something that is ingrained into you upon the cellular level.

“Three hundred thousand years of evolution have happened on earth, Fellania… but thankfully his body is still old enough that he can still be considered protean. A part of the transfusion is a necessity of making him capable to absorb the synergy of the Lycan if he is to survive. If this adaptation isn’t made, the world itself may reject him. Paradox is a powerful force, and it allows for nearly no errors.”

“What would happen if you fail?” I asked.

“Essentially… he dies.” Pen said and paused in his step to look directly up at me to enunciate the seriousness of the matter at hand. “I swear I have made all necessary preparations, and have checked them twelve times.”

“And what does your all-powerful future vision see?” I asked with a smirk.

Pen turned and smirked at me. “I don’t know… it’s a mystery.”

“Oh I hate it when you say that.” I said and folded my incredibly muscular arms with a return smirk, cradling both breasts as I did, but then the humor soon died in me. “Do you… have any idea on how long it’ll take till he thaws?”

“This isn’t like taking a chunk of meat out of the freezer, Fellania. Defrosting a living thing is delicate, but if everything remains constant – which it rarely does – I suspect that you shouldn’t have to wait more than a few days. You understand that there will be a period of coping, correct? Physical… spiritual… social… mental…” he paused even longer and eyed me. “…emotional.”

"I-I understand." I nodded and fidgeted. Absentmindedly I thought for a moment of feeling a dick sliding in me, my thighs pressing together, and I shook off the thought.

Another concern I had would be… how would he take me? Would he refuse me, push me away, send me off? On the one hand I hoped for a magical reunion, and something out of one of those sloppy romance novels, you know the sorts where all the guys were super muscular and all the gals were super busty in scantily and often revealing clothing who met, romantic music came up and they fell instantly into each other's arms in love with each other. Even that seemed a little too far-fetched for me to even hint at hoping at… but I could still fantasize.

Whenever I thought of that man, that hard, chiseled man with his noble, beautiful features, a feral man that was barely refined by the empowering ways of a tradition of Bushido that was as old as mankind was, I considered things. Wild… sexy and erotic things… his hands upon my body, upon my breasts as I churned and swooned to his touches and kisses as he touched me in places where not even doctors or my mother had touched me since I was an infant.

Even as I stood there before Pen my mind got lazy and I murred softly to myself, feeling the leakage of cream from both nipples and sex as I wobbled slightly from nearing a swoon before I shook my head to clear it immediately and recover from the lazy mind. Thankfully… only Pen saw, and he was kind enough not to bring notice to the moment of weakness… or share it with anyone else.

But regardless… I think… I think it was possible that I did fall in love at first sight… now only if Anhogamon did the same thing in return…

"Your desire to help him is admirable, Fellania," Pen said then, breaking into my thoughts. "But you should be prepared… he might want more from you than you give."

Amidst my thoughts on how much I wanted from him, and calculations on how much I was already willing to give, this took me by surprise.

"What do you mean?" I asked, blinking with a stunned look on my face.

"You shall see."

"Damn it!" and I stamped a foot, causing the wooden bridge to creak and rattle beneath my strength. "Stop saying stuff like that! If you know then just say it!"

"Fellania… when you look into the future, the future changes… because you looked at it. Such futures remain constant only so long as all factors remain constant, and only so long as certain Wild Cards don't interfere. I never know the real future until it becomes the present."

"Wild cards?" I asked, hearing something new. "What do you mean by Wild Cards when it comes to the future?"

"Fate Cheats." Pen smirked. "He's laced his deck with various individuals who, by either celestial design or by accident of birth, do not factor into any form of clairvoyance no matter how potent the wielder of that power is. Whatever it is about these individuals, whenever one looks into the future, the future plays out as if that person never existed, and such visions don't account for what would happen if such a person were to interact with the individuals in whom the future regards. Butterfly effects, quantum theory and so on… any sort of interaction these individuals create can either do nothing… or they can offset the very power of the earth."

“H-how common are such people?” I blinked in surprise at such a revelation.

“They are rare… exceedingly rare… maybe one in a billion, one in several billion perhaps. I personally know of four such people. One of them… resides in this shrine.” And he gestured with his staff.

“Here?! But… who?”

“I promise you… I watch this individual very carefully, Fellania. I can ensure you that this person would be the last person to interfere with Anho’s revival. Now if you’ll excuse me… I need to go change my bandages. I’ll meet you in three quarters of an hour in the sub basement.” And he hobbled off, still leaning on his staff from the wound that Remy’s grandfather had supposedly given him.

There had to be given respect for Pendragon to survive through not one but two blows of the wererat’s fabled venom. It was considered the second most venomous substance in the world, possibly the most venomous. Not exactly in regards to venoms per-se, but the number of viruses and diseases in a wererat’s special skill were enough to digest a bull elephant from the inside out within a matter of seconds. The fact that such a little guy like Pen could take such blows, straight to his heart even, denoted exactly how powerful and resilient this dragon was, especially when one accounts that Remy’s grandfather was renowned to have the Seven Deadly Venoms.

But likewise, it was a testament as to the potency of the poisons and diseases in a wererat’s bite. Even after Pen had suffered the blow from a knife coated in the saliva of a wererat more than a week ago, Pen still he hobbled favoring his side.

I watched him go before turning to watch the fishes eat the bread floating in the water, and with a long sigh, I dreamed of the future like a young woman might as she thought of her girlhood crush and the guy who most interested her, and I dreamed of places to live, things to do, the babies I’d have… and I did so for that whole three-quarters of an hour wait before I could go and see my Anho again.

******

Her name is Lilly Jade, and she was either a pure accident… or a design of fate.

The best way to describe her was as a sort of a she-hulk creature. She was granted phenomenal muscular might and power at will, might and power that only kept growing and growing… but might and power scared her. She hated those words, and absolutely refused to allow them to be used in reference to her. She adamantly stated she was not mighty, and she was not powerful. Instead… she asked to be referred to as skillful and able.

In her mind, possessing the ‘skill’ *that* ‘enabled’ *her to do a thing didn’t make her mighty or powerful.*

As such, where most other legends of hulks grow larger and stronger the angrier they get, Lilly grew gentler and more loving the bigger she got.

A sort of energy wells inside her, potent enough to tilt the whole world on its axis if she chose to, and she was strong enough to move mountains – literally – and considering that prowess, one should also consider that she uses every ounce, every mote, every nuance of that potency to give kindness, love and affection. The greater her strength became, the gentler she became.

It was like she was the definition of paradox.

So then, as I was hobbling along, trying to ignore the pain in my side, it was of little surprise that I felt hands under my arms before they lifted me into an embrace that involved me being smished into her voluminous bosom.

"Nee!" *she mewed and rubbed her cheek against my head, embracing me like I was her favorite plushy, right before she began to purr rather loudly while I fit easily between her cleavage.*

"Good morning Lilly." *I smirked, and with a gleeful sound in her throat as she began purring even louder, she gave me a lick with her tongue and its tongue comb combed my mane to one side before she walked with me automatically into the apothecary chamber, a room with a multitude of little drawers with herbs in them, where she took to tending to my wound, humming a random song that was delightfully in tune.*

Her very presence just sucked hate and anguish from the room.

She was kitten-like, playful and loving, and try as one might, you just couldn't look upon her in a sexual way… even despite her definite… assets.

She had incredible feminine potency… much like a few of the other females I could mention in my shrine… but unlike them, Lilly didn't show off that potency… not even inadvertently. Teats didn't show themselves through clothing she wore, and right now the yellow bikini beneath her opened Kimono was tasteful in its size to give an appropriate and non-scandalous level of coverage.

She covered her womanly gifts, and she was truly bashful when it came to showing off elements of her feminine form, even to a doctor. She still bathed alone instead of in the communal baths.

"All done!" *she said and then lifting me up she embraced me again, rubbing her cheek affectionately against my head and folding me into her soft bosom.*

I had to admit… I'd grown accustomed to her affections. Besides… it was a wonderful experience observing her.

With all the hurt and harm in the world, with all the negative energy that even the best-minded individuals of a world with a population of more than nine billion individuals create – humans made up only six-point-eight billion – Lilly Jade was nature's way of counterbalancing all the hate, hurt and harm in the world.

The Book of Revelations spoke of that there would be wars and rumors of wars, and as such… I'd observed that the greater the atrocities became in the world, the greater the suffering, the more affectionate she got, and likewise the more affectionate she got the larger and the stronger she got.

She was a luminous being… as luminous as any Dragon was beneath their scales, but in her case her shell was made of the softest most silken flesh and fur imaginable. Muscles that should feel like bundles of piano wire were as soft as if they were fat instead.

Like I said… she was paradoxical.

In the short few months that she'd been in my care she'd increased in the measure of all the power in her by at least three fold. Oh she enjoyed her strength… a part of her remembers the wisp of a woman that she used to be, but never would she use that strength to so much as defend herself. To coin a phrase 'she wouldn't even hurt a fly'.

As if she needed to defend herself… I was certain she could take a direct hit from an ICBM if necessary.

"Are you going to treat that nice man in the basement mistah Pen-Pen, mew?" *Lilly asked as she continued holding me like a plushy in her arms.*

"Yes… but how did you know about Anhogamon?" *I asked her.*

She paused, eyes going distant, eyes that shone and glowed faintly in the dim light of the apothecary. "I can… feel him… dreaming. Miss Fellania is very concerned about him. Very, very concerned." *She then began to carry me through the halls of the shrine, legs dangling beneath me while she carried my staff.*

"So she is. Do you have any insight about the matter, Lilly?"

Lilly's mind was in the now… she didn't dwell on the past, didn't think about the future… her awareness and the potency of the abilities within her were all focused on the immediate, and because of that, when she acted it was also immediate… not down the road, not a half an hour from now… she acted… now.

But then… her presence and the way she acted toward me made me wonder. Why me? Why did she place so much attention on me? Was it thankfulness for coming to get her when she'd blossomed for the first time? Was it because I was still injured and fighting disease and poison in my body and this was just her being loving and kind? Or was it something deeper…?

Being a million and a half years old had a tendency to do things to a guy. Having lived for so long I understood seclusion and loneliness, and strangely… with her near… all that went away.

"Time for breakfast, Pen-Pen!" *she said with much glee, carrying me off toward the kitchen where the smells of breakfast were wafting upward.*

With a sigh, I simply laid back within her arms and bosom and gave myself over to the inevitable. Besides… how could a four foot tall guy like me complain about commonly finding himself within the ample bosom of an affectionate female?

******

I am Remy LeBeau. Yeah… I'm still hanging around.

Strangely enough, this is the longest I'd ever remembered 'hanging around' *in one place for so long. Even as a child there was the necessity of moving… constantly moving. We could never stay in one place for long… only the elite held any authority in the Undercity, the stolen city of the Wererats. Only the Elite had property and things, living in the peaks of the vaulted towers of that dark city. The rest of us scurried along the ground levels, having to fight each other for supremacy, pitting brother versus brother and sister versus sister amidst a cut-throat game of survival.*

I remember as a child finding a person who accidentally got into the Undercity… survival, for myself and our species, dictated that I rob the bastard blind and slit his throat. I robbed him blind all right, but he woke up in his underpants in a back alleyway with an empty bottle of Jack Daniels in his hand, hopefully thinking that all this was a massive drunken stupor.

No newspaper stories spoke of giant rats in the sewer; no strangers came visiting, no government agents attempted to delve in the city under the city under the city of New York. If there had been… chances were that I wouldn't have survived till today. Should our elders ever discover the nature of such mistakes, then the offender is executed for the

mistake no matter their station. Even our kings, princes and princesses can be punished thus. No one was over that all-encompassing law.

Secrecy was our greatest stricture, and disobeying it was like committing treason. But… I just couldn't kill some drunk who wandered into a sewer and stumbled in on our home. It was that day that I discovered our second stricture… which was distraction.

I'd become among the best in my field because I became aware of those things. I had a zero percent failure rate, I stole everything I was meant to steal, executed everyone I was meant to execute… without fail. So when I got commissioned to be a guide for two other Lycan into an unknown place… simply because a dragon wished it, I hadn't expected the generosity of a dragon.

As a matter of course, most dragons I'd met were staunch misers. This Pendragon was very generous… exceedingly so, philanthropic even, especially for what he'd already given me.

So here I was, laying face down in my nest of blankets, warm and comfortable… two things I couldn't recall ever having at the same time in my life. It made me complacent. The mother of all fuckups was becoming complacent, so I took measures to make sure that my home was still safe, so regardless, I'd ensured that every nook and cranny was sealed, the doors were doubly barred and there were tripwires and traps set all across my room.

But that never kept my favorite guest from getting past them.

A jingling of bangles and jewelry were always the only things that gave her away, and then only when she wanted to be given away. This was only done when she was upon you, ready for you. She was silent and unheard, and the sort of person that most people wouldn't notice, or if they did notice her then they'd overlook her. It's what made females potentially more potent assassins than males.

They were so often overlooked.

Sen was a sheathed dagger honed to a razor's edge in a bejeweled hilt hidden amidst thick and heavy robes. She was a rare creature, especially among rats, and Pen just… gave *her to me. Trained from a young age, it seemed as if she was prepared specifically for me, for my wants and desires in mind. Her affections had been uncomfortable at first… I wasn't used to affections like this… they felt… genuine. I was used to being played upon for some greater purpose. She wanted money, she wanted food or clothes, she wanted sex…*

Sen's affections were the first that I'd ever had where I couldn't see some ulterior motive in. She pleasured me because she wanted to… and nothing more.

Even now as I laid there in the nest, she lightly pulled the blankets back to reveal my backside and great thick pink tail that she loves so much, and as she crawled up onto the bed, she dragged her sex along that long, pink tail, humping its base briefly as she pulled the blankets up over her shoulders, and then she laid against my back and embraced me from behind. I reveled in the press of her dual set of breasts against my shoulders and the back of my neck as she laid repeated kisses upon me while still humping that tail. It wasn't long before she intertwined her tail with mine.

"It's time for you to get up." *She sighed into my ear, nibbling on it.*

"I got a better idea… how bout you stay here with me." *I murred and twisted myself to look at her from over my shoulder.* "Sleep in… relax. You're supposed to be watching over me after all."

"That I am… in every respect. This includes getting you out of bed so you don't waste away and become fat and lazy." *She mentioned and then straddled me as I rolled onto my back and she immediately arched herself deeply, jutting her chest outward into the air and squeezing each pair of her breasts for me while I took hold of her wide hips.* "And besides… if you stay in bed all day… then you'll stink like you got washed up by the run off… and a sewer rat is unbecoming of you."

"Oh is it… and what is becoming of me? A street rat, a lab rat…"

"How about a jumbo albino rat?" *she murred, and with a deft wobble and a wiggle she caught my erecting tip in her loins and slid down onto it while fingering that shaft with her long-nailed fingertips.* "With a pink tail!"

For a fem that had been a virgin before she pierced herself on me… she was amazingly deft at lovemaking… her loins just the right amount of clench and give, and she had the expert abdominal control of a belly dancer who studied Yoga to give me the semblance of a hand job whenever I sexed… I mean made love to… her.

And with her loins conveniently coupled with mine, she giggled and dipped, kissing my chest and dragging her chests against my body while I held onto her behind.

That behind was wide, firm and rounded, apt for baring children with little pain or hurt, her body firm and athletic with just the right amount of musculature creasing her form. She had the arms of an apple picker, the belly of a belly dancer, the legs of a dancer, the hips of a mother and the grace of an artisan… she was prepped to be everything I wanted. When she was born, Pen rescued her from whatever situation she'd been in, brought her up apart from our culture, tempered her to be as elegant as she was dangerous, had her instructed in the most profound of sexual arts, and then when I arrived, he prettied her up and had her… attend *to me.*

He must've been working on her for the better part of two decades or more…. Just to give her… give her*... to me.*

I kept telling myself that he'd worked some sort of spell on her, that she was a lure, a piece of cheese in the world's greatest rat trap, and at any moment, a great big snapping bar was going to come down and break my neck. But as a thief, I was trained to recognize fakes, recognize falsehoods, and either the trap was so well made, or somehow, for some reason, everything that I ever desired in a woman, even the situation, was being realized in her…

Perhaps that was the trap. Perhaps I'd already been caught and didn't know it and was just struggling against the inevitable. I was actually considering words like family and children and I thought to myself that I must be mad! There was no way it was possible… no way…

But… my father had done it, somehow had found a female to father me with. And if my old man could do it with my mum, have a semblance of a normal life, then I'd beat that bastard yet! I would actually have *a normal life and not just a semblance of one. And what was more was that I was certain to outlive that fucker for sure.*

And this fem, this lure to the trap… was the key to it all.

Sen… you are the lure to my trap and the key to my escape.

…

I reminded myself then t never underestimate the conniving ability of a dragon…

******

Madoushi's fingers were cradling and loving.

We'd finished our morning lovemaking, had bathed together and made love in the waters. Dried and made love again so we had to bathe a second time… which we simply moved the lovemaking back into the magically heated and cleaned waters of the pool here. After drying off a second time and managing to get dressed this time, me in the matriarchal robes Pen had given me, robes that were cut high on the hips, low on the belly and high on the ribs to show off my tummy, to display that I was pregnant to all in the shrine and so offered additional help whenever needed, Madoushi had dressed in a loose gentleman's Gi consisting of flowing black silk pants and a voluminous white linen wrap-around shirt.

"The clothing is odd here." *Mady mentioned as he tugged at parts of the clothes he was wearing.*

I chuckled and moved up to him, pressing my body against his, my breasts flatting against his chest, my thighs and pelvis cupping his groin while I palmed his chest. "What would you prefer then? A butler's suit or a loincloth?"

"I don't know if I should answer that."

"Oh… and why not?" *I smirked at him and fussed at straightening his collar.*

"Well, I've been wearing a butler suit – the same suit mind you – for over three hundred years. I'm really not keen on getting inside one again. And I don't know if I should put on a loin cloth or not. It'd just give us more reason to make love again."

"And is that such a bad thing?" *I fake pouted.*

"Not as much… but we do need to eat from time to time."

I smirked and hefted my breasts in either hand. "Got that handled right here." *I smirked and Mady immediately embraced me, and I turned amidst his caressing and possessive hands about me.*

Almost immediately he went to cradling my belly while nibbling love-bites on my neck along with sweet kisses, licking my skin while he massaged my muscled belly. I noted that his hands kept getting lower and lower till he was actually rubbing the labial muscles through the white linen thong I wore.

"We're going to be late for breakfast." *I giggled as we managed to get to the door, but not before he got a hand into those panties and had started to probe my pocket, getting me to bite my lower lip and sigh nasally as I churned in his supporting arm.*

"I can't help it. I've been without feminine companionship for three hundred years, and now that I have a mate, with a cub on the way, I can't get passed how strong you are yet how soft you are. Nom!" *and he began sucking on my neck.*

Man I was going to get a hickie… good thing that we Lycan heal such things almost instantly.

"Strong am I?" *I murred and lifted an arm, coiling it, making the heaving Olympic-sized bicep swell from that arm, and tensing it harder in a flex, the crackelature of veins popped out and stood on end, and he immediately cradled the arm now and kissed the massive bicep as it swelled and swelled and kept swelling several times its previous size.*

Not even Fell's muscles did that… expanded as they flexed to those proportions. I was still pretty sure she was stronger than me though… she was a plough horse that I just couldn't keep up with.

It was a man-sized arm on this woman's body… possibly even larger than man-sized. I was a supernatural creature of power! And my muscles displayed just such a thing. Madoushi moved and his kisses lowered to the bridge of the shoulder, over the shoulder and onto that bicep again and again as he kissed and licked the long and thickened bicep vein that throbbed excitedly in tune with my heart. The veins in my forearm knotted, and I laughed and cooed even as his other hand slid from my sex to my belly and then onward to my breasts, lifting that hand just long enough to coil that impressively long tongue of his around it to lick my juices off before that hand descended my body again.

Eventually I felt his fingers starting to slip in through the leg-hole of those panties of mine to caress my labia and perhaps eventually finger me again by the time I opened the door.

And suddenly there was a cacophony of noise, of hammering and sawing and sanding and planning.

"All right you bunch of louts, boss says that we need to sand this hallway! Get to sanding you slack jawed jerks!" *A small lizard-like thing with four arms, a long tail and an oversized hard hat was yelling at a crew of dozens if not hundreds of similarly shaped creatures but of varying genders and coloring.*

The one shouting lifted a mug of coffee that was about the size he was when we slid out into the hall with confusion, finding that every plane in the hall had been sanded smooth. Floor, walls, ceiling, picture frames… everything*... leaving only pictures and furniture alone.*

"Whoa! Hot mama! Hubba-hubba-hubba!" *the leader said pushing up his hard hat that seemed to be wobbling idly around on a pair of antennae.*

"Milf! Eh-heh… milf! Milf!" *another of the lizards said, obviously male.*

"Ah… hi." *I managed, wide-eyed and surprised at this debacle as Mady's arms embraced me possessively, even protectively.*

"Hi-hi-hi… HI!" *the lot of them greeted in an echoing wave as they all waved before getting back to work.*

"What's going on here?" *Madoushi mentioned.* "This is madness!"

There was a zipping sound, and one of the creatures, a black one but dressed like Groucho Marx with a cigar appeared. "I'll tell you about madness. Madness is a rat a cat and a dog in a burlap sack thrown into the river. You'd be lucky if there was anything left." *And he zipped away again to goodness knows where.*

And from nowhere one of the little butterfly-winged lizards slapped her whole body againstMady'ss face. "No… what's madness is that I've never made the acquaintance ya big hunk-a-hunk-a-burnin'-love! Ooo… come make me a woman and…"

And another little lizard arrived with a crowbar and pried the female off Mady's face before hauling her off by her wings, walking through the air and dragging her along by her tail over his shoulder.

"No wait! I must have you my love! Take me! Oh!"

"I feel strangely violated." *Mad mentioned.*

"We do that." *The one with the hard hat said.* "Just be glad that the face hugger wasn't a guy. Hi! Name's Mxyzptlk."

I blinked. "Wait… isn't that…"

"The name of a Superman villain… yes. Mom and dad started running out of names after about twenty of us or so… so they started naming us after candy bars, comic book characters… sexually transmitted diseases."

"Yeah… imagine my wonder when I grew old enough to understand what Chlamydia meant." *One lone pink female said as she dragged a satchel filled with tools along the ground as she passed.*

"…Right. Anyways… we are the brood! And we're here to stay…"

Another little butterfly-winged lizard hopped in and did a riff on a miniature guitar and threw the horns up into the air and head-banged. "And we're here to party every day-ya!" *he screamed before leaping away.*

"That was Lars." *Myx said staring at us as we stared back and another of the little lizards hopped up onto the cupboard that Myx was on.*

"Ever have that uncomfortable silence… where you just stare at each other, hoping the other person has something else to say." *This one said while grinning stupidly and wiggling his fingers close to his face for emphasis.*

Myx back-handed him. "Get back to work!" *he shouted at everyone and the hammering and sanding and sawing continued.*

"Brood… what brood?" *Mad asked.*

"We are the brood of Ba'ab and Pun't'ang!" *he bowed deeply as the helmet on his head wobbled dangerously.* "We're… ah… going to be staying here for awhile."

"A long while!" *some random person said and Myx reached behind himself as if pulling something from a back pocket and lobbing it at the speaker who turned in a full circle from the blow and then collapsed to the ground with a laugh.*

"Anyways… we're trading… ew… *work*, for a place to stay." *And then there was the sound of a power drill.* "Excuse me a second." *And he flew off quickly to smack one of his brood-mates.* "Dad said no power tools! Here… here's a hand crank one… use that."

"Are you destroying Master Pendragon's home?" *I asked as Myx returned.*

"Depends upon your definition of '*destroy.*'" *He grinned and flew upward with a fluttering of wings to the top of the cabinet.* "But no… we are sanding the hallway… just like he told us to."

"Probably will get us to wax it later!" *some other random broodling called.*

"Wax on. Wax off. Wax on… wax off. Lookit me, I'm Ralph Macchio again!" *yet another cried.*

"Perhaps what we're doing was a bit too literal…" *one of the other lizards, who was wearing a pair of children's glasses that were taped to his head and wore a back pack filled with pens and pencils and a ruler said from behind some blue prints. Until now I thought it was just a page of paper lying on the ground.*

"Of course not… he told us to sand the hallway so we're sanding it. Make sure you get everything nice and smooth!"

"And why aren't you working mister big mouth?!" *a girl lizard called from a rafter.*

"Because dad put me in charge… that means I get to stand around and shout at people while drinking coffee. Oh wait… I forgot something…" *and suddenly he exhaled and his belly distended so he looked nice and fat before he seemed to push down a layer of skin to show off butt crack. He then promptly placed a fat cigar in his mouth.*

"I'm telling mom you're smoking!"

"You better believe it sister." *Myx waggled his eyebrows.* "Smoking hot!"

"Sa-mokin'!" *another broodling with big teeth said. He just so happened to be green with big teeth as well.*

"But what are you all?" *Mad reflected then.*

"We…" *Myx managed, drawing himself up on tip toe and then raising even higher onto tail tip.* "…Are Fairy Dragons. Yeah… that's us." *And he pointed at himself with the index fingers of all four arms and the big toes of both feet.*

"Fairy dragons… should you be drinking coffee?" *I blanched.*

"Hey… it's only a triple espresso chocolate mocha…" *and he sipped at it coming back with a thick brown moustache and beard of foam.* "Hmmm… that's good cream."

"I squoze it myself!" *another of the lizards – dragons – said from down the hall, saying it with a lisp and an effeminate wave of a hand, and Myx looked into the cup, smacking his lips before taking another sip.* "EW!" *many little voices squeaked.*

"Pecans with a pleasant crunch." *Myx mentioned with an extended pinkie and licked the moustache off with an abnormally long tongue.* "But if you will… please move along you humina-humina-humina hottie. This is a professional work zone." *And he raised an index finger to make a point of that right as another dragon cried* "Bonzai!" *and bungee jumped off the rafters.*

"Ah… nice to meet you Myx." *I mentioned and Mady and I quickly left that hallway and headed downstairs to the main hall, me holding onto his arm as the little Fairy Dragons started sanding the stairs behind us.*

"For a moment there, I thought I was in the Dreamtime…" *Mady mentioned shaking his head.*

"How was that like being in the Dreamtime?" *I blinked.*

"How chaotic are dreams?" *he asked me and I nodded.*

"Oh… right. Pen's going to be mad I think." *I mentioned looking back as they little dragons swept up the saw dust and made a snowman out of it… well… a sand man while that Lars guy played* 'Enter the Sandman'. *They worked at a maddening pace… like squirrels on too much caffeine.*

"Yeah… but I'm beginning to get the idea that those little guys are a tad too literal. It may've been Pen's mistake." *Mad mentioned as we entered the dining hall, a double row of low lying tables with cushions all around, and at their head with a third table was Pen and the masters of the shrine.*

Pen was of course at the head table, with the lovely young Lilly Jade totally spoiling him, blowing on some eggs before feeding them to him. I had to snerk at seeing him in a bib.

Mad and I made for a place along one of the side tables, the cooks in the center making whatever the individuals along the edge might want, these individuals dressed in colorful cloaks, shorts and head bands and were serving everything from steak and eggs to fish and sake. There was a bowl of Sweet Bread – a Chineese/Mongolian treat that consisted of a sesame/sugar mixture folded inside a doughy bread – on the table. Just like whenever anything sweet came by me, I got a sudden and absolute craving for it, and so two fisted the treats.

"Methinks that our daughter has a bit of a sweet tooth… or am I wrong and my new bride is the one with the sweet tooth."

"No… craving. Nom!" *I said happily with half a mouthful of sweet bread.*

But as we moved to our places, suddenly a person at the tables rose from his seat to tower over us.

When I saw that it was Lee, I instinctively hugged Mad's arm closer to me, close enough where his arm threaded right between my boobs. Mady then stepped in front of me and faced the towering tiger with all his comparatively diminutive form.

'I've died more than eighteen thousand two hundred and fifty times,' *Mady had told Lee shortly after we'd escaped Lea Monde.* 'I've fought Wolfmen, Denizens and Vampires, and I have more power in my pinkie than you have strength in your whole body. You harm her, or seek to harm her… and I swear to the Maker I'll break you in half.'

They were profound words for my new love and mate, and I was profoundly proud of him that day, but now that we stood here again…

It was a terse moment, and the noise in the room slowly quieted to a deadpan silence while Mad and Lee stared at each other, the rivalry more than apparent even to the casual observer. Lee flexed the fingers of one hand.

"You're in my way." *Lee mentioned in a low growl as he stepped toe to toe with Mady, the Asian shape of his human body seeming more Mongolian or similar than Chinese.*

"You stepped into our way. So it's your place to move out of ours." *Madoushi replied sternly, setting his jaw.*

"Make me, little man." *Lee replied and lifted his hands and adjusted the collar of Mad's Gi, but slowly I saw his fingers knotting the fabric, his jaw setting, and I felt the hackles on the back of my neck rise as I sensed a fight coming… it was a mere fraction of a second from happening when…*

"Lee…" *Pendragon mentioned. Apparently Lilly Jade had snatched him up into her arms to protect him from the oncoming violence, and she was trembling, afraid of what was about to happen.* "…You're in the wrong in this situation."

The warning in Pen's voice was unmistakable. Though Lee might not have cause to fear Mady… he had more than enough to fear Pen. I almost hoped for the fight to happen, then Mady could stuff Lee into a hole and put him out of our lives for good. My stomach cramped and I cradled it, rubbing my belly to calm my daughter.

But despite Pen's warning tone, Lee looked like he was about to ignore Pen's word, and I saw Falcor uncoiling from across the room, and with a jerk of the wrists, Falcor freed his hands and a memory of that deadly Eagle Claw technique Falcor was so well known for appeared in Lee's eyes. But then Lee, with a look of utmost determination, unlaced his fingers from Mad's Gi and stepped out of the way, head hanging.

"My… apologies." *He said in a low growl, looking dark as he glowered at Mady from beneath the bangs of his mane.*

"You are excused, Lee. Thank you for seeing the issue and resolving it civilly." *Pen said quietly. It was calculated words of dismissal that left Lee no room to refuse them*

"Yes… Master Pendragon." *And he soon slunk out of the room, leaving Mad and I to sit far from where he was sitting.*

"Oh… why won't he just go away?" *Lilly mentioned.* "Every time Mister Madoushi and Mister Lee get in the same room, I feel like the air is going to explode."

"It's a delicate situation, Lilly. He wants to know if the child Susan carries in her is his or not. I am not one to deny a potential father knowledge of his children lest he proves himself to be too much of a detriment to this shrine's peace. Hopefully no one ever tests that nerve in me." *And as Lilly carried Pen along as Pen said those last words he glanced at us briefly, or perhaps directly at Mady, a pleading glance to not follow his own baser instincts and fight Lee, before Lilly carried him away.*

I kept looking after them till I felt Mady's hand slide against my belly.

"Are you ok?" *he asked.*

"I'm ok… it's my heart that aches over all this, not my womb." *I said and rubbed my tummy briefly before gripping his hand.* "But nevertheless, I think that last part was meant for us as well as Lee. Pen is a gracious host, but he's right… this is a place of peace. We… should just avoid Lee till the baby is born. Then he can see that our daughter isn't his for his very own eyes and then just… go the hell away.

"At this point I don't think I can ever forgive him. I thought… he loved me."

"His loss." *Mad said and scooted closer to me.* "But I certainly do love you. I love everything about you… and I'll be a father to your daughter… even if it isn't mine."

"I love you too." *I smiled and then sighed.* "I'm kinda not hungry now, but then I kinda am. This stuff with Lee has me bummed… but I've developed such an appetite lately!"

"Master Pendragon says that you may have as much as you want till you're filled." *The cook for the table said.*

“Heh… even Pen is trying to get me fat. Ok… small steak and eggs… medium rare and scrambled!”

******

I am Fellania…

Walking down the stairs after breakfast, past the cellar, past the vault, deep underground where the earth was quiet and still but the power of the mountain still held firm, I approached Anho’s door only to find several little fairy dragons crawling around the bulbous and sealed lock. I grew concerned as I saw one with a gem in his forehead shining like a flashlight while they were trying to pry the lock open with a lever.

“Come on! Before somebody shows up! Pendragon must have something priceless in here that we can take and sell to the goblins and…”

I clenched my jaw. They were messing with my man, and immediately these little buggers were showing themselves to be the sorts that I didn’t like. Thieves and trouble makers.

My hand lifted and within it a yellow-white ball of fierce light flared to life that shone through the whole of the stone hall, appropriately illuminating the scowl on my face. I was a fierce woman when I need to be… and when I scowled I was often told that I looked… scary.

“Eek!” one of the fairy dragons squealed like a little girl… especially when they saw the stone-cold look on my face… like a face of chiseled granite looking darkly down on them.

“We were just… ah…” and the lever that was many times their size disappeared somehow behind their backs. “…We were just exploring! Yeah… that’s it.” the one with the lever grinned widely.

“Or treasure hunting.” I corrected and his grin faded, and then his jaw dropped as I transformed right before his eyes, the loose fitting robes tightening about me like second skins, my bosom surging forward and becoming the breasts of the earth mother, like the breasts of Gaia, the pair straining into the chest wrap therein while even the sleeves of the robes I wore became tight around my heaving arms. I had to stoop slightly due to my height as I strode forward by several steps to look down at the four cowering fairy dragons, my eyes darting over them.

“Now that I have your color patterns, I suggest the lot of you leave and never come back down here. And you should know that this door isn’t from keeping you from getting in, but what’s in it from getting out, and I’m its guardian. Just think… what sort of monster is on the other side of this door that would need me to keep it in?” I grinned at them, showing all my overlapping and rather sharp teeth. My grin was more frightening than my scowl was. “So lest you want to know what it feels like having your entrails sucked out through your nose…”

“Yes ma’am. So sorry ma’am.” And they flittered off, their bodies giving off subtly glowing lights that were visible here in the darkness as they fled.

Exhaling a brief breath through my nostrils, I stood and waited, till I heard the inevitable click-click-click of Pen walking his staff.

“And how are we today, Fellania?”

“Some of your little *guests* were just trying to get into Anho’s room.” I mentioned.

“As I thought they might… so I warded it with my best lores to keep them from getting in. I was young and mischievous too.” He winked and gestured, and I heard the multitude of clicking as the three dimensional lock realigned it multitude of pieces, spinning and turning like the box in that Hellraiser movie perhaps inside the sealed lock before the wall itself parted before us, allowing for some light to flood into the hall.

I felt my breath pause and my heart skip a beat or two as I looked more clearly upon Anhogamon. Not being able to help myself, I strode straight to the melting ice and slid my hands against it, caressing the areas of his face and chest, feeling each breath come harder as I swallowed a choking sensation on my throat.

The yearning in my chest and loins became unbearable, but I withheld myself.

“There’s… so much more of him.” I trembled… actually trembled, and stopping my light spell I wrung my fingers together nervously.

Pen entered behind me and the doors slid silently shut again while I stood there looking upon and pawing at the noble Anhogamon’s frozen form, a diminutive bobcat-man that was nearly as ancient as the human race was.

His muscles were ropy, his thighs thick, his arms taut with skilled muscle. Whatever series of events that eventually led him to this moment I might never know, but regardless, I squatted before him breathing deeply, seeing my breath chill and come out as smoke whenever I got too close to the remnants of his ice block. My throat bobbed and I swallowed deeply against the choking ache again, suppressing a nasal moan as I felt my loins churn strangely and moisten in preparation for a coupling.

Even his very presence this close to me made me ready for love… made my loins receptive, and to cover the body change I promptly knelt and pressed both thighs together. Thos loins of my ached for want of him in me before I shook my head and palmed its forehead with one mighty clawed hand.

“Headache?” Pen asked bemusingly as he unrolled a satchel and began removing vials and tubes and needles.

“Among other things.” I mentioned and then stood; steeling myself and taking several very deliberate steps away from Anhogamon.

I had to distance myself… being close to him now enhanced the sickness, stepping away at least lessened it a bit, but then that stretching band feeling I felt this morning returned and started to twist faster with this close proximity to him.

But then he just looked so handsome! So virile. And then there was the box…

My memories remembered the box. He was never without it. It was his mission in his lifetime, and whatever that mission was I knew not, he hadn’t even told my first mother what it was. Nevertheless, he’d needed to complete that mission at all costs… even to the point of…

I pressed my palm against my forehead and tried to remember it, but when the memory came, a wash of loneliness followed right along behind it.

… even to the point of abandoning his new mate and newborn daughter to complete it.

Immediately I came to hate that box.

But looking back to Anhogamon, I wondered to myself why I was so… *fascinated* with this man. Sure he was ancient… sure he was my first mother's first and only love, and apparently there was enough of her in me where there was an… I don't know, and infatuation? I mean… he was handsome… and well built… and… and hung… and…

"Careful, Fellania… you're about to start drooling." Pen smirked over his shoulder and I checked my mouth quickly with a thumb, and then glared at him.

"Get out of my head!" I growled.

"I'm not in your head." He chuckled and I exhaled the stern annoyance that was in me as I watched him drill through the ice surprisingly quickly using a heated piece of metal.

"So it's that obvious then?" I asked.

"Fellania… I know you're typically a stalwart woman… strong and independent who never shows signs of weakness, but there are moments when you think no one is watching and you think about him," he tapped the ice with a little claw tip. "And you transform immediately into what I'd normally see on a love-sick teenager."

I fidgeted.

"There is no such thing as Reincarnation?" I asked him, not for the first time, probably not for the last time.

"Absolutely no such thing. I know such a statement might upset some individuals from India, in particular those of a Hindu faith, but having observed transcendence and the passage of a soul, having observed life and death across the multitudes of the world, I can assure you that there is no such thing as reincarnation. A soul can do only two things, Fellania… and that's move on… or haunt."

I stared at his back as he removed the heated drill, and now began to use needles with rubber hoses and bladders to start a transfusion of a fluid that he placed in mid air upside down and it hung there unsupported. I continued staring at his back, with those pretty multi-colored and faceted wings his… dragon wings but with crystalline slats like a dragonflies… only many thousands of times stronger.

"Pen… I've come to know you too well Pen… you're leaving something out there…" I mentioned suspiciously.

Pendragon was silent for a moment as he observed the cycle of whatever subtly glowing blue substance he was injecting slowly into Anhogamon was, squeezing a bladder to increase the speed of the infusion.

"Imagine that by their very design that every law of nature is to have loop holes. Including death. Take John the Beloved, one of Christ's apostles. He wanted to walk the earth until Christ came again. Met the guy… and John the Beloved is indeed a most apropos title for this most holy of men. Dressed in a T-shirt and jeans at the time, but he really cared for… well… everyone.

"But then imagine Pilot's gate keeper. A different man, he who struck Christ and was so cursed to walk the earth until the End of Days. Never before have I met a more repentant soul in my whole life."

"That's immortality though. You're an immortal, aren't you?" I asked.

“Not in the strictest sense of the word, but yes. Your first mother, seeing her own death approaching, sought to naturally extend it so that she could wait longer. Her fur had turned white and still she was as strong as she ever was. Her child and grand children and great grand children had all died long before her… shell… simply couldn’t sustain itself any longer… not even with the ageless power of Mount Fuji sustaining her.

“So then it fell to White Oak.”

“White Oak? What does it have to do with anything?”

Pen turned to look at me with those wide and enlarged green eyes of his. “In the moment of her death, a part of her… call it her essence… was held within White Oak’s heartwood, and preserved these many hundreds of millennia… till such a time when happenstance and serendipity allowed for a nearly perfect vessel – and by nearly perfect, I mean for a woman that was very nearly exactly like your first mother – appeared, and then the measures of fate could be pulled to end the endless waiting.

“At the same time, another mote passed from mother to daughter for countless generations, till it nestled in you.

“Aside from your own curiosity… there is a mote, a fraction of your first mother, nestled inside you long before White Oak came into your possession. When the two motes met, they formed a sort of catalyst and unfolded within you.”

“So… I’m becoming my first mother?” I asked, wringing my hands again.

“No. And yes. It’s difficult to explain without a recourse of your family history and an explanation of transcendental metaphysical spiritualism. In essence… you are you… modified by your first mother’s experiences. There is enough of her in you, where she’s there along for the ride. You will feel a yearning, true… I can imagine it must be pretty powerful to have such a mature woman’s yearnings in such a young body as yours, but ultimately whatever choice you make is your own to make. You control the body… she merely augments you with her power, strengths and experiences.” He paused and returned to his work. “The best way that I can explain this loophole of death is by using the second type of loophole I explained earlier.”

“Haunt? My first mother is haunting me?” I asked him.

“That is a most basic definition of the term, but yes, but haunts have choices… if aided properly. A soul can be broken, a soul can be merged with another soul, a soul can be consumed and burned, but ultimately, a soul is immortal, unceasing and even if broken…” he looked at me directly. “The pieces will always eventually seek to come back together.”

“Skipping through time.” I said aloud and palmed my heart.

“There are philosophies that allow for a soul to die… but the soul must choose to die… discorporate as it were. Your first mother needed to wait longer, and since she couldn’t do it as she was, she wagered that though haunting, she could acquire the time needed to wait.

“She allowed her soul to be broken, journeyed firstly in White Oak and secondly through your bloodline to the here and now. The two pieces made twain, are now one.

“It’s appropriate that Madoushi is in the shrine. His people would call what your first mother has done a sort of spiritual *‘walkabout’*. In you the pieces of become one again, and the two pieces conversed, told each other what

they learned, and are now journeying together again… inside you. All is well again, and though you are not your first mother, you are made greater because of her.

"The only element of contention, I think, is that this is the real and original Anhogamon."

"Why is that an element of contention?" I blinked.

"For several reasons. The most poignant to you is that you're broken in how you are to feel about him. The other problem is that I'm sure he'll mistake you for your first mother."

"How is that going to be an issue?" I asked. "I… sorta want that."

"Perhaps I should remind you that Anhogamon and the original Fellania were romantically engaged. They produced a daughter together. He may expect to start upon that sort of a relationship again Fellania."

I felt a pang in my heart suddenly. "Point taken." I wasn't sure at the moment if I wanted that or not, and looked onto the ropy body of this Ronin bobcat.

"How did my first mother and him have a daughter anyways?" I asked. "I thought different weres can't have children together."

"Different Weres, no… different Spirit Folk, yes. Three hundred thousand years is a lot of time for a species to evolve, Fellania. Fifty thousand years ago was close enough for wolves and cats to mate and produce young, but of course those were the Dire Wolf and the Smilidon at the time. And take Susan's man Madoushi. The Thylacine is called the Tasmanian Wolf and the Tasmanian Tiger depending upon who you ask. They're the Lycanthropes version of the *'missing link.'* Somewhere in their ancestry there was a cat and a wolf that bred, and it produced them. How great their breed was when it was new, but in time they became smaller, thinner, and a sort of wild magic just sort of blossomed in them.

"The Dreamtime." I mused and Pen nodded.

"It's a shame that the bulk of their clan was destroyed by warring wolves and lions. As such… I can only assume that Anhogamon will be protean enough that, despite that he is a bobcat… is that he can still impregnate you."

I went for my navel with both hands, and felt a sudden emptiness inside me that yearned to be filled, my heat suddenly striking me more intensely, fueled on by my damnable emotions. I had to admit… secretly I was jealous of Sue for being pregnant before me. I was older, nearly a decade older, and I'd been wanting a baby too… a soft… fluffy little girl that I could cradle and nurse and…

I shook my head to clear it and sighed, both hands collapsing into my lap before I looked up to this venerable lycanthrope… I mean Spirit Folk that was Anhogamon. Though it might be the ice distorting the image, and likewise that damn box was in the way, but he looked like he could tickle the back of my throat should he penetrate me with that manhood of his…

"How long will this take?" I asked again, another question that wasn't the first and probably wouldn't be the last that I'd ask him.

"His blood is like molten ice, Fellania. It moves through him at about the speed that a glacier slides down from the mountains into its melt pool, but he is slowly waking up as his body warms up and his blood pumps faster the

warmer he becomes. I can imagine that this tonic won't be fully absorbed by his body till tomorrow morning. It'll help thaw him, and help prevent those issues I discussed with you earlier."

"That whole turning to dust as the air ages you thing?" I asked and Pen nodded.

"And the fact that the spiritual pressure of billions is a hell of a lot more than the millions as were present in his day and age. That and the forced evolution of his kind can send him into shock and kill him as his body tries to deal with such a racial change like that. The effect of the moon is a lot more poignant on Lycan than it was on Spirit Folk, so I need to… shall we say… *evolve* him subtly while he's still encased in ice." Pen paused and turned to me, his beautiful multi-colored and multi-petaled wings waving behind him as he did. "He will have to cope with a lot Fellania. I'm sure you understand this."

I nodded. "How does a man go from buildings no more than a few stories tall to more than a hundred stories tall? Madoushi was amazed and shocked at the changes of the world in only three hundred years, so I can only imagine what my Anho…" I paused, realizing that I called him *'My Anho,'* but Pen merely slow blinked at me, his enlarged, ancient eyes not betraying any hint that he'd noticed. But he did… he just wasn't saying anything about it. "… My Anho will be even more shocked at what he sees in this world. Airplanes, clocks, computers, skyscrapers, ocean liners the size of a floating city…"

"Only a human could manage to make their world larger than it really is, Fellania." Pen smirked, and then turned his attention back to the infusion.

I sat there quietly, watching him work, watching the ice glisten with melt and run off, listening to the drip-drip-drip of the water splashing against the ground from the ice. Suddenly I had to pee, but I didn't leave.

I wanted to stay there as long as I could…

Never before in my life had I ever felt so excited in watching ice melt.

******

I am Sue.

I have to mention… spending my days in relative comfort like this, a peaceful shrine filled with people who were privy to my every need with a personal guardian in the form of a powerful magician like Madoushi – the 'Demon Sorcerer' *as he was known as in the town of Dead Wood – was a good way to finally have a vacation. Vacation from scroll hunting, vacation from Corrupted Greatest Elementals, vacation from Wolfmen and Vampires after having delved through my first change, passed through Wormwood, Stolen from the Vatican – excuse me,* recovered *from the Vatican – and later Lea Monde, all that stress had been wearing me down.*

Alteration of a presence of self and constant conflict tends to wear on one soul, and then there was all this BS with Lee and…

…I needed a vacation…

So here I was, sitting next to my lover underneath a blossoming cherry tree while we made out, he playing with one of my tits beneath the robe I wore and two of our hands clasped over my belly… yeah… I felt warm, loved, comforted and safe. Everything any cat might want.

It was at that moment as I was flipping my leg around to straddle the bench before sliding up onto his lap, preparing for a little secretive lovemaking right there in the garden that I heard the disturbance.

"Ow! Leggo! Ow! Ow! Ow!"

Annoyed at the disturbance that dragged me away from that moment, my annoyance immediately turned into humor as I saw Ivan trotting up to us with a Fairy Dragon caught in his mouth. And that Fairy Dragon was not happy.

I van then dropped the dragon and before he could escape Ivan began rolling on him. "Ah! I am not a mouse!"

I giggled. I couldn't help not to while Mad chuckled at the sight.

"You've caught quite a prize there haven't you Ivan?" *I asked.*

"Stupid cat! Leggo!" *the dragon raged and tried to kick and punch his way out from under the large feline.*

"A word to the wise little morsel," *Ivan said with his heavy Russian Accent.* "So long as you serve a purpose… I won't eat you."

"Cripes! It talks!"

"He talks." *I chuckled.* "Ivan… what are you doing?"

"I can't… help myself. I see these little things flitting about and so I must catch one! So I catch one and now I just want to show it to you and rub myself all over it. I don't know why. It's one of those… cat… things. Dogs roll in garbage, cat's roll in their kill and show it to their people. Now I'm contemplating on munching this little morsel and sharing it with Mew."

"Ah! Cannibal! I'll show you!" *The fairy dragon squealed and then tried wiggling his fingers.* "Ah! I can't effect the cat! Why can't I effect the cat?!"

"I know not, Tovarichka… but…" *and Ivan rubbed himself all over the dragon.* "Obviously you are my prey."

"Ah! Dad! Da-day!! Help me Da-day!!"

There was a zipping sound and suddenly a larger fairy blue Fairy Dragon was there before us, tapping a foot with two arms folded and the other two resting their fists on his hips while his face was set in one of utter annoyance.

"Why for you molesting my wittle daughter?" *this larger fairy dragon who was named Bob mentioned.*

Ivan, who had the little squirming dragon under the claws of one paw looked upside down at the newcomer.

"Ah… I was playing with him?" *Ivan grinned and Bob slowly shook his head.*

"If there is molesting and violating to do… that is…*my* job." *And he jerked a thumb at himself, his antennae lifting angrily.* "Now let her go!"

"Da! Da! Letting her go." *And Ivan lifted his paw and rose as the little dragon scurried behind the feet and tail of Bob.*

“He did fowl things and touched me in bad places da-day!” *the little draca squealed.*

“Oh he did, did he?” *the new comer mused.*

“Um… he’s sorry!” *I mentioned immediately, and all eyes swiveled up to me.* “He was just being a cat. It’s his nature…”

“Uh-huh…” *Bob mentioned.* “Well first of all, let me formally introduce myself to you.” *And he bowed deeply.* “My name’s Ba’ab… but you can call me Bob.” *He offered a hand and he shook my outstretched finger.* “But it’s his nature hm? Just being a cat?”

“Yeah?” *I managed and Bob nodded sagely.* “Then it’s human nature to war with each other and they should just be excused?”

“Ah…” *I managed, exchanging looks with Madoushi.*

“Well since we’re talking about natures… then understand that this is my nature, and you should just excuse it.”

And with another zipping motion, Bob snapped behind Ivan and jerked upward on his tail before wadding him up into a ball, a perfect spherical shape mind you, before compressing Ivan down into a small ball with dimples on it. Then producing a golf tee and a club, Bob flew up into the air, set the club and stood in mid-air, planting and replanting his feet and wiggling his butt as his hands wrapped the club with the golfers grip.

“This is for hunting one of my kids… you monster.” *He said, took a swing like a pro, called out,* “Fore!” *and swung the club and sent Ivan yowling across the compound to slap against a far wall.* “Stay away from my kids!” *he shouted after him and then turned back to us with a broad grin, making the club disappear behind his back like he was shoving it up his butt.* “Don’t worry… he wasn’t hurt anywhere near as badly as it appears… Though I should’ve made it hurt for real!!” *Bob shouted at Ivan as the magical kitty slid down the wall and fell backward onto the lawn.* “Anyways… now that you see how silly it is to just excuse natures, then you’ll understand how foolish it is to just say… *‘oh, it’s his nature!’* and then just excuse it.”

“That’s a good lesson, Bob…” *a voice said as Pen came walking by just in that moment, serendipitous as ever.* “…I’m rather glad that you’re aware of such a concise bit of wisdom. And now I’m aware that you’re aware.”

“Ah damn it…” *Bob mentioned through gritted teeth.* “There goes all my fun.” *Pen merely smiled and nodded and continued on his way.* “How is it that he shows up when you least expect it?” *Bob mentioned, but then a sphere suddenly appeared around him and he fell to the ground with much surprise just before Ivan leapt onto the ball, the blue lines on his body glowing brightly.*

“That… hurt…” *Ivan growled, holding the ball that cramped the fairy dragon inside.*

“Serves you right, you monster!” *Bob shouted through the ball, his voice sounding like it was coming through a pane of glass.* “Now let me go or I’ll…”

“Sphere of invulnerability around an anti-magic sphere…” *Ivan smirked, rapping on the ball and making a crystalline sound out of it.* “…I’ll admit turning me into a ball must’ve been hil-ar-ious!” *Ivan said, rolling the word.* “Just as hilarious as, perhaps… me turning you into one too.” *Ivan batted the ball aside and Bob rolled inside it.*

“Whoa… stop!”

“Just until I’m sure that we’re on even terms.” *Ivan smirked, and then with a yowl, bounced the ball and began batting it about till they disappeared around a corner of the shrine.*

The resulting silence was rather poignant.

“That was humorous.” *I laughed and turned back to Mad.* “What can we possibly do that would top that entertainment?”

Mad made a pause of thought and then looked slyly at me. “Wanna make love again?” *he ventured with a smirk.*

“Sure why not?!” *I said with glee, and taking his hands, and helping him up, we retreated to the nearest bushes with sufficient cover.*