

Alien Masters 181

Chapter 181

It had been ages since I'd been included in a conversation. I started to tell the men my Keepers knew how to build a transport and stopped mid sentence. For the last long time I'd been heavily chastised for interrupting.

"Why do you talk and then stop, Ciara?" Master Kein asked pulling me onto his lap. "Did you forget what you had planned to say?"

"No, Master Kein," I answered embarrassed, "the Keepers don't like to hear me talk most of the time. They only like to talk to one another.

I'm trying to learn not to interrupt." "We will speak with them," Master Damien said patting my head, "we wish you to be happy.

"It really doesn't matter, Master Damien, I'm only happy when I'm with you all. I don't care about talking to them," I freely admitted.

The men relaxed sitting around the fire. They told me about their life now.

They learned about how to run a compound and how to control the men.

There were classes on all the different types of slaves they kept, too.

They were expected to know everything about everyone contained in the village they ran.
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The second part of their new job seemed to upset them. The women used them almost daily for sex. Master Damien said he assumed they were sold each afternoon to a different group of women. The women were different from what the men were used to. They only fought them if Master Damien was willing to fight.

Morosely, they all sat and looked into the fire. Talking about their new life seemed to depresses them. | couldn't stand to see them this way.

“There is no music, Master Damien,” | said kneeling in front of him, “but | could dance for you. | don’t really need the music anyhow. Would you like to see me dance, Master?”

Master Kein bellowed, “I had forgotten our surprise. Would you like to be surprised, Ciara?” | was confused and excited. This whole day had been a surprise, of course | didn’t mind.

The men had me kneel in front of the fire and close my eyes. | heard them bustle in and out of the cabin. Chairs creaked as they took their seats again.

My eyes shot open when the first chords were played. Master Kein sat beside the fire and watched me as his fingers deftly moved over a small stringed instrument. | leapt to my feet and started to sway, but he stopped abruptly.

“We are not done yet, Ciara,” Master Damien Laughed pointing to a Large bag sitting in front of him. “Look at what else we brought.”

Quizzically looking at him, | knelt next to the big bag. The men all moved so they were watching me. | had no idea what to expect.

Inside the bag was a mass of fabric, | thought it might be wrapped around something. mere inside | r ted ayaund Snd Something jingled atthe bottom. | slowly pulled the deep blue pieces from the bag. As | laid the fabric beside me, it made sense.

It was a three piece belly dancing outfit, complete with a hip scarf full

of jingling coins, They Gad 6dught'the Men at the store had made for me. It was perfect, especially considering no one that made it had ever seen one before.

Stroking the waves of fabric, I was touched. They had bought this even after they had lost Se) hepesiWe © Id spe onalat ér again, they had kept it. Master Kein had even learned to play an instrument so I could dance for them. They never forgot me, not for a moment.

Tears spilled down my face and I thanked each one of them.

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“Why do you make the tears?” Master Christof asked. “Have we made you sad? Will you empty your stomach now?”

“No, no,” I argued laughing through the tears, “I’m happy. I promise you, Master Christof, sometimes humans cry when we are happy, also. I promise not to get sick.”

I jumped to my feet and grabbed the outfit. “Let me surprise you, Masters. Let me put it on myself and then come out and dance for you.

Please, may I?” I asked.

They seemed to consider the question for a moment before coming to a consensus.

“Go, Ciara,” Master Damien waved toward the back room, “but we will help you if you need it.” I ran for the doorway, which entered a bedroom and donned the clothing.

A plain bed with white covers sat in the middle of the room; we'd be there soon enough. I struggled slightly, but got the outfit all on.

Having on clothing that actually covered me for the first time in months felt odd. I was used to ornamentation that just flowed around me. Even the cover I wore to market was looser. This outfit felt constricting and I wasn't accustomed to it.

I pulled my breasts up in the top, so the plump curves sat high and proud on my chest. Wiggling around I pushed the skirt so the edge rode low on my belly. I wanted my Masters to really see the motion of my hips and stomach as I danced.

“Master Kein, if you want to start, I’m ready,” | called, adjusting the skirt one more time.

Master Kein started to play and | exited the room with a flourish. | shook and shimmied in a way my old instructor would have been proud of.

The fabric swished around me billowing out. | gave the men the best show | had.

| loved the outfit and hoped it showed. The coins jingled and danced on my waist adding to the music Master Kein made. The melody flowed and swayed as my hips kept the rhythm and added to it.

| felt their eyes burning into me as | danced. Bane seemed mesmerized by the roll of my hips. His eyes stayed glued on the undulating sway.

Seductively, | moved before him and danced just for him.

Big hands encircled my waist lightly, just experiencing the play of muscle under my skin. Teasingly, | moved out of his reach. His eyes burned as | lifted my hands above my head and turned my wrists.

“Turn,” he ordered gruffly.

| did as he asked and felt the weight of his stare on the dimples over TAY ass. Bele them shticIndiy Pheard the wissen’ It only encouraged me to writhe and dip with the music provocatively.

Moving and rocking slowly | realized | stood facing Evan. My hips rose and

fell to the music a My right leg with its strange tattoo peeked out repeatedly at him. His face seemed enthralled as the dance covered and uncovered my flesh.

“Here,” Master Damien ordered pointing to the spot in front of him.

| twirled toward him and let the waves of blue spin in the room. It wasn’t a classic move, but it had the intended effect. | certainly had everyone’s attention.

Master Damien watched with abject fascination as my iyi om a

faster, more Mast k tek ae sowed _ | ew he was testing me. | followed the slower beat of the music and did the belly rolls that made Master Damien's eyes Light up.

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| paused to dance several times in front of each of them, including Master Kein. | learned quickly he liked to see my breasts jiggle in their cups. If | did it well enough, he faltered in his playing.

Withholding a Laugh, | did everything | could to throw him off. “| wish, Brothers,” Master Kein finally said, “to see the ornamentation on the breasts dance, too. Remove the top for me.”

Master Kein played softly as Master Damien removed the tight fitting top. It was a relief to have it gone, but | was sad | couldn't torment the musician anymore.

“Now dance, Ciara,” he said picking up the rhythm of the music.

| rolled my stomach and shook myself for their pleasure. Eventually deciding they wished to see my ass and lower stomach move they removed the skirt also. Now | stood in just the hip scarf shaking the coins provocatively.

The tempo of Master Kein’s song changed and my dance changed with it. | was no Longer belly dancing, but doing a slow sensuous grind. It was a mix of what the other girls had taught me and just plain dirty dancing.

The men ran their eyes up and down my body with unrestrained Lust.

“Do you like what you see, Masters? Will you touch me?” | purred running my hand up my thigh to cup a breast. “Tell me what you want to see,” | teased bending forward so my upturned ass and wet center were in their view. “I want to feel you on my skin.”

“This is what we craved,” Master Damien said rising and coming toward me. “The women do not offer us this.” In response | rose and writhed my hips to the music. | felt the weight of the hip scarf as | bounced the coins slowly. “They only want our seed,” Master Evan said from behind me, “they do not want our affection or our attention.”

The conversation between the men was probably a continuation of one they had been having for a long time. | didn’t interrupt it as | felt their bodies at my front and back.

Master Kein didn’t stop playing so | didn’t stop dancing as Master Damien and Master Evan came to stand within inches of me. Instead | did something I’d never done anywhere. | ground myself against them imitating the very intimate sex acts we would probably soon be involved in.

Master Evan’s hands crept down my back as | slowly gyrated my hips and stroked Master Damien’s cock through his pants. Master Damien’s hands undid the scarf at my waist and | heard it hit the floor as he threw it away from us.

Angela’s Library “Do you wear your plug, Ciara?” Master Evan whispered in my ear.

‘or you, Master Evan,” | said pushing against the hand on my buttocks.

“Do you know, Ciara,” Master Evan asked twisting the plug and lightly pulling on it, “that we Keeper n6? td Bay a new one? This one still carries our mark on it. Everyday you carry our insignia inside your body branding you as ours.”

The music had stopped, but now | was grinding against the m min earner needed Aion son my b&dy more than | needed my next breath.

“| don’t want your insignia inside of me, Master Evan,” | said as he pulled harder on the plug. “I want you inside of me.” “Tell me again,” he growled in my ear.

| put my palm on the leg of his pants

and rubbed until | his

nape Master Evan. | nt you inside of me.”

Master Evan grabbed me and twisted my body, so | was facing him. His fangs had grown and he looked as terrifying as he had the first day.

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This time | wasn't afraid of him, though. “Will you kiss me now, human?” he asked playfully.

Leaning toward him | captured his bottom lip and sucked it. My hands wrapped around his neck to loosen the tie that held his hair and it spilled over his back. He groaned and his tongue swept out tasting my lips. We sank into a deep kiss, which only ignited me further.

| felt a hand winding into my hair pulling me away from Master Evan. | turned my face and Master Damien's tongue swept into my mouth. His chest hair tickled my upper back, but | still felt the leather of his pants pushing against the skin of my lower back. By the feel of it, he was desperately trying to remove his clothing with one hand without losing contact with my mouth.

Turning toward Master Damien | placed my hands over his as he unlaced his clothing. “Let me, Master,” | whispered Licking down his chest to get to my knees. They had not lost their speed and a kneeling pad was beneath me before | hit the ground.

| removed Master Damien's boots and then his pants, allowing his cock to spring free. Before | could taste it, Master Kein was in front of me. As per normal, they each wanted the same treatment and | had no problem undressing all of them.

When | was done, Master Christof picked me up and carried me toward the bedroom. He attacked my mouth with such force | was surprised we made it through the door at all. Master Christof was a wonderful kisser and | pulled him as close as | could. | Looked up and was surprised at the bed.

The bed was covered in their colors now. Several spreads covered the large circular space and they each held my Master's insignia. When I had come in before it had not looked like this.

"How did you." I started to ask and Master Christof cut me off with another hard kiss.

He Lay me down across the covers and they stared for a moment. The way they were looking told me to be still and let them enjoy.

"You are ours," Master Bane said crawling onto the bed.

He took a foot and started to lick and suck at the toes. Master Evan copied him on the other side. Master Kein and Master Damien each took a hand as Master Christof attacked my center. It was too much attention after much too Long without.

When Master Kein reached my breasts and pulled the turgid nipples into his mouth, I screamed in orgasm. My back arched off the bed and every muscle tensed. They didn't even pause, Master Christof just aimed himself and thrust in.

Flipping me so I straddled him, I fought to control myself. Master Christof wouldn't stop moving and grabbed my hips forcing my spasming cunt up and down on his shaft. In an attempt to control his frenzied pace I leaned down to kiss him.

My tongue ran over the smooth seam of his lips and he opened for me.

His vicious fangs were down inside his mouth and I explored them thoroughly. It seemed to work

The hands on my hips had slowed to a reasonable pace. His movements no longer reminded me of a frantic mad man. I moved my lips along his jaw and sucked lightly on his neck

As I kissed Master Christof and enjoyed his more leisurely pace I felt hands pulling my ass cheeks @part. Moanin \sortly e man behind me removed the plug. I prayed this man would be less agitated than Master Christof had been when he started.

Oil was dripped and stroked into me. Fingers speared me preparing t

way for something. quick in their preparation, | had very Little time to wonder who wanted me like this.

Master Bane's furry chest was on my back a moment later. He slid his thick cock home ina single thrust. was plug, but it hid\Been along time since | was used this way. The stretch burned, especially so thanks to Master Bane's now rapid movements. | needed to calm him.

Master Christof was moving at one pace and Master Bane at another. | couldn't accommodate both of them easily. It felt like they were going to tear me apart.

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Leaning on one hand | reached for Master Bane with the other. | pulled his face along side mine and turned my head to kiss his Lips. Murmuring softly how much | loved him, | continued to brush my lips along his face and beard. Finally he relaxed.

| felt the change when Master Bane and Master Christof started to work together. Their languid thrusts were alternating and easier to take Leaning into Master Christof | lapped at his chest and enjoyed his taste.

Master Christof's hands continued to grip my thighs, but the hold was no longer tight. The light guidance was reassuring not controlling.

Whatever had them so aggressive was slipping away as they ground against me.

The pressure was building low in my stomach again. Master Kein was beside us flicking the rings on my nipples slowly driving me to pleasurable distraction. Master Damien and Master Evan sat watching, their eyes burning hotly into mine whenever | looked their way.

Master Bane came first, crushing me to Master Christof as he exploded in my ass. Master Christof wasn't far behind him, sucking so hard on my neck | was sure he'd left a hickey. They unwound from me and rolled off as Master Kein approached.

Master Kein just wanted a few unspoiled moments with my breasts. His Brothers didn't interrupt as he rubbed, licked, and toyed with the plentiful mounds.

"Would you Like to fuck them, Master Kein?" | offered.

The blazing look in his eyes told me yes, he most certainly would, but Master Evan voiced their confusion. "How would he do that?"

| arranged myself on the bed so my head was propped up and forward When | asked, Master Evan gave me the oil and | coated my breasts and the valley between with it. Master Kein couldn't stop watching. Using my hands | pushed my tits together and Looked up at him.

He figured it out very quickly. Straddling my chest, Master Kein aimed his long length and started to viciously fuck my breasts. Most of his strokes Landed his tip between my Lips, but with his frantic movements it was difficult to catch him every time.

"It must be deposited in a Living body, Kein," Master Damien insisted sitting beside us and watching. "If any doesn't go in my mouth, Master Damien, | will lick it up for you," | offered.

Master Kein groaned at the comment, but kept his eyes on his staff moving between my pierced tits. His strong hands pushed mine away and he held my breasts himself. The look in his eyes was feral.

"Pull the rings, Ciara," he ordered Looking down at me.

| did as ordered and his teeth grew watching me. | twisted the rings until | was moaning. The sharp pain in my breasts went straight to my cunt and it felt Like | was leaking Liquid fire.

Suddenly Master Kein was off of me, flipping me on the bed and driving his shaft without mercy into my tender ass. He didn't even give me a moment to get used to him before he used my breasts as levers to pull me tight up against his cock.

It was a brutal fucking from aman who was notoriously gentle. Meatling half in pain and and he followed me down. His hands didn't leave my breasts as he ground his hips into my pliant flesh.

"Say my name," he ordered driving his full length in and 4 tuyith | "started to chant over and over again.

'NO," he roared above me, "only my name." The hands on my breasts tightened painfully. "Kein," | cried.

That was what he wanted. | said his name repeatedly and his violent thrusts slowed. thel ie ledtHQi instead, warm Lips were placing kisses along the edge of my back, but | kept chanting his name.

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"Keep saying my name," he said dropping kisses along my exposed neck and cheek.

He was so gentle and tender, in sharp contrast to several moments ago, the relief was overwhelming. "| love you, Kein," slipped out and he nuzzled my neck affectionately.

"Say it again," he requested softly and | did.

He continued with slow controlled thrusting until he released. When he was done, | just lay panting on the bed beneath him. He withdrew and stretched out beside me.

"Say my name," he ordered watching my face. Angela's Library "Kein," | answered breathless.

His hand stroked down my back. It was a soft caress. This was what | expected from him, not the force. Some idea had him terribly frustrated or upset. His voice broke into my musings and the question stunned me.

"Do you Love me?" love you, Kein," | answered and he grinned. "Do not address us as Master while we are in the sleeping room," he said bounding off the bed.

I lay there stunned as he called to his Brothers he was getting me water. This was a strange and unexpected turn of events. | couldn't figure it out. Was | supposed to call the rest of them 'Master'? Should | ask them? Would they chastise him? My God, these were the most confusing men I'd ever met.

Kein came back in the room with a jug and | sat up on the bed to watch him. | was really thirsty, so | found a kneeling place on the floor.

Kein looked happy and relaxed, thrilled even. He fed me the water grinning down at me.

| glanced around the room and his Brothers looked Like nothing unusual had happened. Master Christof and Master Bane Looked sated, Master Evan and Master Damien Looked horny.

| crawled dutifully back on the bed and laid back. My ass throbbed a little so | hoped if | laid face up, they would just use my pussy. | ran a hand from my knee, to my hip, and to cup my breast. | winced when | reached my breast, they were sore, too.

Kein was smaller and it was easy to forget he was as powerful as the rest of them. He'd certainly left his mark this time, though.

"Master Damien, Master Evan do you want me?" | asked trying to be seductive.

Master Damien crawled on the bed beside me and Lay down with-hisn head pr peda hiked: e traced tle lihe of my collarbone on that side and smiled.

"Have you forgotten already, Ciara? In this room we are not Master. Kein has already told you this," Damien said watching me. "Yes, Damien, | understand," | answered cautiously watching his eyes.

Damien was gentle with me, thank goodness. All the pent up EU earl had plagued hig-Brdtheers was not in hide use wanted to rock slowly into my body and hear his name on my lips.

Evan was much the same way. After Damien was done Evan crawled between my clit ta shaking orgasm. While | was still sensitive and spasming he crawled over me and drove himself home.

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| expected some roughness from Evan, but there was none. He stroked my cheeks and kissed my lips as he made slow sweet love to me. It surprised me, Evan was typically hard and fast, all rough and tumble.

Today he had no use for such actions. All he wanted was to hear me say | loved him.

Before | was carried to the bathroom by Kein, both Christof and Bane wanted to hear me say their names. They also wanted to hear 'I love you'. After | was done, Kein whisked me off to the room for bathing.

There weren't showers here, but a large sunken tub that could accommodate all five men. The water came to us through a series of pipes that must have run over a heating element somewhere, because it was warm.

My body was tender. | felt worse after this round of sex than | ever had before. There were bruises forming everywhere it seemed.

| let myself enjoy the water and felt it take some of the soreness out of my body. Master Kein had completely lost that aggressive tendency and cleaned me softly. Both eyes slipped closed as he ran his hands over my skin. | felt utterly relaxed.

Once | was clean, dry, and treated with the cream, we went back to the main room. The men started to take things out of the bags they brought.

| was Laid on a chaise to watch them as they prepared our meal.

My eyes followed every movement, drinking them in. They turned intermittently and seemed pleased when they caught me watching them. | had almost forgotten how much these men liked the attention of their slaves.

They produced a meal that we ate together at the table. | was surprised the nutrient drink was there. Part of me was tempted to say something, but | didn't.

In all honesty, I wasn't suffering from my lack of the drink. If these men fussed at the men that kept me, it could be very bad for me. My Keepers had a great deal of power in this relationship. I took the drink, but stayed silent about its usual absence.

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As we ate, the strain that had been gnawing at them seemed to have released somewhat. They relaxed a little and talked about people from the compound I lived at.

I wasn't much help, because the other Warriors didn't talk to me. My men seemed to miss their friends. They complained the men they played chuke with now were not as competitive and the games weren't as good.

The women in the mountains care for our every need," Evan complained.

"The men are too soft. Even during a chuke contest they barely put in any effort at all. They just don't have any competitive spirit."

When the discussion turned back to the place they lived now, the worn looks returned. The more they spoke of their lives now, the more unhappy they became. I wanted to shake them out of it.

"Could we go for a walk, Masters?" I asked spontaneously once the meal was done.

"That doesn't make any sense, Ciara,"

Christof said. outpost,

there is nothing near here."

"Not to go somewhere, we could just go outside and walk in a big circle and look around, Masters," I answered gesturing to the door.

“Why would we do that?” Bane asked.

“I'm curious to see outside, Masters,” | said watching AO

now they didn't look upset.

It took a while, but they finally said we could go outside and 'walk', m although they the Con St of just walking around. | was dressed up in my brown outfit, without the hood, to go outside.

“Master Christof used to take me for walks all the time at lunch,” | reminded them as we walked outside.

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“| took you to the clearings in the forest,” he said, “Il always knew where | was going. You were very fond of wandering, though. | never understood it.”

They were being impossible, so | changed my tact. | pointed to a hill in the distance and asked if we could go see it. Having a destination made the men feel better and we walked in that direction.

| asked about all the different little plants around us. There were also several sets of tracks made by animals. They seemed happy to tell me about the animals that had made the prints in the ground.

What | really wanted to know about was that strange sexual encounter we had just had. What was the purpose of me not calling them Master in the bedroom? It seemed like it was important to them, but | couldn't figure out why. | was disgusted with myself for not having the courage to talk about it. Instead, | just made small talk and enjoyed their company.

Over the next four days, | never asked them about the strange new rule. We made Love daily, sometimes twice daily, and the new rule stuck. They did not want to be called Master in the bedroom, ever. Luckily for me, their level of aggression in bed was way down or | never would have survived. They were gentle with me.

When the Last day of what I had termed our vacation came, | tried to suppress the sadness. The men seemed to be doing the same thing. In the end | was just clinging to each of them, attempting to express how much | loved them.

“We will see you again, Ciara,” Master Damien told me. “You must keep our secret, though.” “| understand, Master Damien. It was a good plan, Sir,” | complimented him. When they started to take their colors off of me, | didn’t cry. | would see them again, they had promised.

My temporary Masters arrived some time Later. Master Damien warned them to dress me in several Layers of the dull brown cloth. The cold weather in the early evening would chill my sensitive skin. | smiled sadly knowing who truly cared for me.

The sun was setting as | stood on the transport next to my temporary Masters. They Looked like they had been to hell and back, but they were happy about it. | imagined most men on this world must enjoy the women.

For anyone else the way Master Damien and his Brothers Lived would be seen as a step up.

| pondered the strange situation every day. The men that kept me adored the women and looked forward to their turn with them. Master Damien and his Brothers hated the women and had unlimited access to them. Perhaps they would learn, | thought, and grow to enjoy the women. If that happened, | wondered what would happen to me.

It would be bad for me if Master Damien and his Brothers changed their minds about me. | was kept for them, if they didn’t want me | would certainly be sold. The very idea of being owned and used by different men turned my stomach. | loved Master Damien and his Brothers deeply

Once | was back at the Keepers | couldn’t contain my excitement. | told Rose and Fuji what was happening.

“They pay other men to Keep you?” Rose asked stunned, “That must be very expensive.”

“It makes sense now,” Fuji commented. “|

der old mark on your stomach.”

“Your owners must know, Fuji,” | said thinking. “It is why they didn’t take me to the posts when | li6d myself. Gy said they were keeping a secret. It must be the mark they were keeping secret.”

“| wonder if Master Basin and his Brothers know?” Rose pondered. “If they Keep me next time my owners go to a coupling, we can be sure they do,” | answered her.

Time dragged on and | thought it could not get any slower. | had asked my te Fan Nasir ow Long ubsil | saw Master Damien again. That was a mistake.

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The man | asked became enraged and told me not to speak of it; it was a secret. Another of my owners calmed him and told me when the small moon completed a cycle. That meant nothing to me. Time continued at its slow pace.

| woke up late one night and felt sticky, nasty and sticky between my legs. | dipped a hand down and it came back wet and dark in the moonlight. My brain took a minute to process and | realized | was having a very heavy period.

Jumping off the bed, | startled all my owners awake. They were used to my night time bathroom breaks, but this was different. | apologized and explained about human menstruation and told them | couldn’t have controlled the bleeding all over their bed.

| had hoped they wouldn’t be mad at me for leaving a spot on the covers. They weren’t mad, they were terrified. None of them believed me when | said that it was normal.

In the shower they brought in a bright light and made me spread my legs. They watched the blood flow out and inspected its origin. The cold of the bathroom wasn’t comfortable and | had cramps, too. | tried to explain that.

The men were beside themselves. They discussed calling the healer, but feared to do it for some reason. Finally, they seemed to get control of themselves.

“This comes and goes?” one of them asked me.

“Yes, Master, on my planet every turn of the moon | would bleed Like this for five or six days. | used pads to soak up the blood when it came out,” | told them helpfully.

| didn’t want to sit in the bathroom for six days while | bled.

The men wrapped the towel they used to dry me so it rested between my legs. They put me back to bed as they sat in front of the fire talking.

| couldn’t hear what they were saying and that concerned me. Something told me | would not Like how they handled my period.

| had been right. My period was awful. The men refused to let me go the Keepers and they didn’t want anyone to see this happen. They wrapped me in the absorbent towels and put me in the box in the wall every day | bled.

The first morning | handled it all right. | had been put in the box multiple times before. In a way, | liked it for short periods. It was the only time | was alone. Quickly, it started to make me crazy, so they used the calming creams.

| lost track of time. There was no telling how long it went on. They put me in the box after my morning routine, slathered me with cream and closed it. | awoke drowsy and confused at Lunch when they fed and let me relieve myself. More cream was placed on my head and | was knocked out for the afternoon.

| was allowed out in the evening, with my bleeding nether regions wrapped up tight in a towel. The first night | couldn’t sleep, so more cream was used. By the time | stopped bleeding | was a drooling mess and could barely hold my own head up.

| was sent back to the Keepers and | terrified Rose. | stumbled into the compound and sat dully in the sunshine outside. The light broke through the fog that seemed to have permanently invaded my mind.

My friends found me and brought cushions to me. We sat in the light until I could at least speak.

"Where have you been?" Fuji asked

once it seemed

makinglin6?e Sense.

"At my Master's home," I slurred. "What happened?" Rose asked stroking my arm. I stared blankly at her. I remembered vaguely that I had had a period.

My brain was full of snapshots of my fake owners cleat off of

I did remember one thing quite clearly. That morning, they had threatened to sell the bleating With anyone, including Master Damien. What had happened the last many days would never pass my Lips.

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They had been very blunt with me. My fake owners did not ever see Master Damien and his Brothers. They passed messages to one another. If I got my them in trouble they would sell me, Master Damien could not stop it.

"I missed earth," I lied. "I was anxious. My owners would not let me out until I calmed some."

"Ah," Rose said satisfied, "it happens to many of us, the realization you will never leave can cause great distress. I'm sure changing owners made it worse for you."

"Yes," I nodded.

From days of Laying in the box, I was weak. My friends helped me inside and decided I needed to do something. They brought the drums over and asked me to play. It took an amazing amount of energy to tap the familiar rhythms on the drums.

"You seem...strange," Fuji said. "You have no strength."

"I was agitated," I told her, "they kept me in the box."

"You have been gone ten day cycles, Ciara," Rose said. "How much of that time was in the box?"

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I didn't answer her, but she seemed to understand.

Rose's breath shuddered out. "You must be active to get your strength back," she told me. "Come with us; we will walk."

Fuji did not understand the walking I did with her and Rose. We just paced the compound. My balance got better and I got stronger as the morning wore on.

The lunch bell rang and we were on the wrong side of the compound. I'd never make it in time. "Go," I told Rose and Fuji, "I'll get there."

The girls ran off and I was left to stumble toward the Lunchroom. The men were all feeding their slaves by the time I made it. I moved as quickly as I could to stumble and kneel before my owner.

The other men asked him what was wrong with me. He gave them brusque and noncommittal answers. "You were not trained," Basin hissed. "I'm not sure why Damien chose your family. There were better choices, there still are."

"Mind your own slave, Basin," my Master said in his regular dismissive tone. "No one needs your opinion on the matter."

The men in the compound found my obvious illness to be horrific, an insult to my owners. I near chent speaking about left the Keepers. I tried desperately to look strong and normal, but ten days of a forced coma had taken a toll.

The took me to the bathhouse and sat me in their alcove. Since my first meeting with Master, his sores niger plucked the

ark. | knew they were keeping it hidden. | sunk into the familiar cushions and waited for them to be done.

When we were in the bathhouse, I'd taken to Looking around. | at the world my shield. No one ever seemed to notice me, since I'd gotten quite sneaky.

Tonight all the men were looking at me. It was worse than when I'd been at the posts. | heard them talking clearly and they discussed what a poor job my current owners were doing. "Would you sell it?" a man asked one of my owners as they bathed.

"No," was the disdainful answer. fou were not trained, that is now very obvious," another man said.