

Chosen by Fate 681

Chapter 681 - 98- Reece – Talking To Talia Part 1 (VOLUME 4)

Reece

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It's been a few days since I had gotten some pretty shocking news. Well, I wasn't certain yet if it was true, but it still made me think and it was still very shocking.

Charlie had asked me if there was another clairvoyant, another person that could converse with souls, living in the house. And one that would be in or close to the Royal Tower at that. Even though he hadn't mentioned that the person was close to the tower, I had a feeling that he had meant to.

And ever since I heard him say that I had not been able to stop thinking about the words that Talia had said at dinner that very night. Just a little while before I was called to the meeting with Trevor, Charlie and Chloe.

All of us had heard my Little Bunny's voice. The children had heard her voice for the first time in two weeks and while I fought to stay still and not react, Reagan and Rika were looking all around us trying to find where the sound had come from. Unlike her brother and sister though, Talia just sat there, looking at her plate, while she said something that made my blood run cold.

"Mommy isn't here."

How could she have known that? Why would she have said that? I hadn't told the kids that Trinity's soul had left her body, and I hadn't told them anything about the babies. Though I needed to tell them about the triplets soon, since my Little Bunny's belly was steadily growing bigger and bigger. Thankfully, the babies were growing even with everything that was going on.

And not only had Talia said that, but when I went to tell Rika goodnight after the meeting was over with, she told me something else that Talia had said. Apparently, Talia had told Reagan and Rika that Mommy wasn't in her body and that she was with their three baby brothers. I had just found out from Charlie that the babies were boys, so how did Talia know about that?

The more that I thought about it all, the more that it seemed like my little Talia, my sweet little four year old Talia, was the clairvoyant conduit that Charlie had told me about. There was simply no other way to answer it. That was the plain and simple truth of the matter.

So, knowing what I know now, I had to think about whether I was going to confront her with this or not. I needed to know if I should talk to her about what she knows. I needed to know if she had seen these things like a vision or if she simply just knew them.

It was going to be a hard conversation, but it was something that I needed to do nonetheless. I needed to take care of my daughter as well as everything else. I was not going to neglect Talia because I was worried about my Little Bunny. And I wasn't going to let my little Talia live in fear of the unknown.

Not to mention, I wanted her to know that she was allowed to come to me and talk to me if she had any questions or concerns. We would work them out together or we would find someone to help her. I

didn't want her to be tormented like Charlie and Chloe had been when they were younger. I wanted her to feel safe and secure with her new power.

Simply put, there was just a lot of talking to do with her. And I had to make the decision about whether I was going to approach her now or wait to see if she was going to come to me. Though, with how anxious I was right now, I was pretty sure that I was going to be the one to reach out to her first.

That Friday, after I brought the children home from school, I told them that we were going to spend one on one days together that weekend. I was going to take them all out, just me and one of them. It would help them all since they would get some alone time with me, and it might take Reagan and Rika's minds off of what was happening.

"I am going to take Talia first. She can pick whatever she wants to do, and we will go right away. I know you two might want to go first, but this also gives you time to choose something really special." All three of them were smiling happily when they heard my news. "What do you say, Tally? Where do you want to go?"

"I want to go to dinner. I want to go to the zoo. And I want to see a movie. And I want ice cream." She was smiling happily as she listed off her ideal night.

"Done, done, done, and done." I smiled at her. "I think I can make some calls and get something super special for you."

"Yay!" She was practically dancing in place with her excitement.

"Why don't you go and get ready. I will call some friends of mine."

As Talia ran from the room, Reagan and Rika looked at me with worried eyes.

"Daddy, are you doing this to talk about things with Talia?" They seemed to be scared and worried about their sister. Though, I didn't know if that fear was for her or of her.

"Yes, I am going to talk to her about the things that she said. I want to let her know that there is nothing wrong with her and that she can talk to me, and hopefully the two of you. She's still young and doesn't understand what is going on. She has new powers that none of us have seen before, but that isn't bad. The two of you started showing powers when you were about five or six months old."

"I'm not scared of her powers, Daddy." Rika gave me an earnest look, something that was filled with emotions and uncertainty. "I am not scared of them or her. I am just worried about Mommy."

"Yeah, we love Talia and are not scared of her. We just want Mommy to wake up." Reagan added, his eyes rimmed in red.

"I know you do." I pulled them into my arms and held them close to me as I comforted them. "And I promise you, Mommy will wake up. She just has a job that she is doing and when it's done, we will be a big happy family again."

Once I had the two of them settled, I pulled out my phone to call some people that I knew could work miracles in a short amount of time. I wanted to make Talia's date with daddy perfect. She was going to get her dinner, her movie, to see the animals at the zoo, and her ice cream. And I was going to make sure that it was all done in the most spectacular way possible.

"I'm ready, Daddy." Talia raced into the living room where she had left me. She had gone upstairs to change out of her school uniform and into a pretty little dress that was cute and frilly, exactly like she preferred to wear. She had also had someone, probably Rika, do her hair and help her put on her earrings and a necklace. She looked like a true princess.

"You most certainly are." I knelt before her and smiled. "And you look amazing, baby girl."

"Uh huh. Yup. I look beautiful. But daddy, aren't you going to change? This is a special night. We need to dress nicely."

"Oh, you are right. I completely forgot to change because I was on the phone. I will go now."

She hurried me out of the room so that I could get ready for our daddy daughter date. I chose to make this special for her, so I was going to go all out. I went to put on one of my nicer suits and I styled my hair so that it didn't look messy or unkempt at all. After that, I put on the watch and bracelet that I got from Trinity for our first Christmas. Topping it off with some of my more comfortable dress shoes and a jacket, I was ready to go. It was time for me to pick up the princess for our night out.

Chapter 682 - 99- Reece - Talking To Talia Part 2 (VOLUME 4)

7-9 minutes

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Reece

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Talia, my adorable little princess, wanted a zoo date with her daddy, so that was what I gave her. I called up a friend of mine that I knew could call in some favors. This was going to be one of those times that I showed the world just what money could buy.

Yes, it was a little wrong of me to want to force people to do their jobs beyond the close of day, but I did offer them ten times their normal hourly wage to stay on. So, it wasn't really that hard for me to convince them. Not to mention, I was making a massive contribution to the zoo for them to allow this. Basically, since the zoo closed at five that afternoon, I was throwing money at them so that they would stay open until eight or nine. Since we would be by ourselves it wouldn't take long for us to see the whole place.

When I had Talia properly buckled in her seat and we were on our way, I told her something that I knew she would find surprising.

"You know, Talia, daddy has lived here his whole life, but I have never been to the zoo before."

"Really!" Like I thought, she was shocked by my revelation. "Then we need to have twice as much fun as normal because it is new to us both." She always sounded so grown up when she talked, it was cute but sad too.

"Yeah, I think we will."

I pulled into the parking lot for the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo and parked near the front in the spot that my friend had reserved for me. I opened the door for my little Princess, and we entered the zoo while there were a lot of people leaving.

"Hey, mister, the zoo is closing." A boy about ten years old or so called out to me.

"My daddy is taking me on a date." Talia called back to him.

"But it's closing." The boy was still confused. I didn't want to make the boy feel bad about the fact that we were getting private access, so I didn't say anything regarding that.

"We will be quick." I nodded at him.

"Whatever." He shrugged and continued walking with his parents out of the zoo.

Talia and I walked inside and to the guest services kiosk that was nearby. They were waiting for us and I swear I saw, and heard, quite a few of the staff members gulp in fear when I approached them.

"G..good evening, Mr. Gray." The man that seemed to be in charge, came forward and spoke to me first. "W..we are s..so glad that y..you are here t..to visit us."

"Thank you." I smiled at him. "I am glad that you all could accommodate me and my little girl." I smiled down at her at that moment. "Talia, go ahead and say hi to the nice people."

"Yes, Daddy." She was so happy right now. "My name is Talia, and I am four. It is so wonderful to be here for the first time."

"Thank you for joining us, Talia. And might I say that you look just like a little princess." A woman that seemed to be pretty high in the pecking order leaned down to speak with my daughter.

"I am a princess. Aren't I daddy?"

"Yes Talia, you are an adorable little princess."

Talia and I knew of her status, but the staff here didn't, not unless one of them was a member of our community. To them, I just sounded like a doting father that was showing his daughter some love.

"Well, come with me princess Talia. My name is Ginger and I am going to drive you around the zoo so that you can see everything that you have come here for."

"Yay! Thank you." Talia took her hand, but she also took mine. She wasn't about to go off with a stranger that she didn't know.

Just as the two of us followed along after her, I felt the air move behind me as all those that were still there sighed in relief. What were they so nervous for? To them I was just a rich man flaunting my money around. They knew nothing of what I really was.

Talia and I were taking to a golf cart that people could apparently rent while they were here to move around the park faster. However, it was a service that very few knew about. It was, after all, an added fee.

The woman, Ginger, who did not have ginger-colored hair, got into the driver's seat and started our journey. She took us to all the exhibits, the experience habitats, everything. When it was almost sundown, around seven that night, she took us toward the Mountaineer Sky Ride. This would be a way to see a lot of the area from really high up. Not to mention I had a surprise for Talia at the top.

It had just been Talia and I that went to the top of the mountain, and when we got there, I had a picnic dinner waiting for her. There was food that I had ordered to be brought here for my little girl. It was being kept warm in special (magical) devices that were brought from home. The zoo staff, of course, didn't know that it was magical.

"Daddy! We're having a picnic?" Talia seemed to love the idea and that made all of this worth it.

"That is right." I pointed to a little pink pillow for her to sit on and walked over toward the larger green pillow for me. "We're going to watch the sun go down while we eat."

"But won't it get dark?" She sounded worried and scared.

"Don't worry, there are lights they are going to turn on for us." I pointed at the strings of lights that were above us and she giggled.

"Thank you, daddy. This is wonderful." I knew that she was having a good time, and it was only halfway through. From here, we were going to a movie theater to see the latest kid's movie, whatever one it was. And while we were there, she would get her ice cream as well as a lot of other junk food.

While we were watching the sun go down, I decided to start the conversation with Talia. It was time for me to ask her some hard questions, for me anyway.

"Talia?"

"Yes, Daddy?"

"I heard something the other day, something that made me curious."

"I hear stuff that makes me curious all the time. So, I am just like you." She took a bite of her food and smiled at me with her cheeks puffed out.

"Well, I heard something that you had said, and it made me wonder about something. Talia, baby, why did you tell us that Mommy isn't here? And why did you tell Reagan and Rika that Mommy was on a mission with your three younger brothers?"

"Oh, that." She giggled. "That wasn't something to be curious about, Daddy. I just told Reagan and Rika the truth. That was all."

"Yes, I know it is the truth, but how did you find out that truth?" I was at a loss right now.

"Well, I hear the people around us talking about it."

"What people?" Now she had me curious if there were more in the castle that knew about this."

"The whispering people. They told me that Mommy left her body to fight a bad guy and that she was protecting my baby brothers at the same time. The whispering people told me that I didn't have to worry because Mommy was strong and that she would come back when she was done."

"Talía?" I was shocked by her words. The whispering people? What the hell were they? "D..do you know what these whispering people are? Do you know what they want? Do you know why they talk to you?"

"Well, they're all good. At least they have been so far. Some of them are really sad, but most of them are OK."

"What are they? Do you know?" I saw a slight shadow pass over her eyes then. It was not exactly a look that I wanted to see when talking about this subject.

"I haven't been able to see them, so I don't know who they are exactly. But, uhm, well, I..I..I think that they're d..d..dead people.." She looked embarrassed as she said those words.

Chapter 683 - 100- Reece – Talking To Talía Part 3 (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Reece

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Talía hadn't looked upset at all until this point right here. Should I be worried? Should I be upset that there are dead people talking to my little girl?

Would it do me any good if I did get angry? Would it help either of us right now if I got scared? Would it benefit my little Talía if I acted like this was something bad or something to be ashamed of?

The answers to all three of those questions were the same. No! No, it wouldn't do me any good to get angry. No, it wouldn't help either of us if I was scared. And no, it wouldn't benefit Talía if I made her feel bad about this whole situation. I needed to be understanding and accepting because she couldn't control this anymore than I could.

"Can you tell me more about the whispering people, Talía? I mean, why do you think they are dead? What did they do or say to make you think that?"

"Hmm."

Talía put a hand to her chin as if she were thinking about something really hard. I could see her eyes scrunched up and her head tilted. She was putting a lot of thought into this right now. I knew that whatever she said next was going to be what she truly thought or felt instead of just whatever came to her mind first.

"Well, I think that I know they're dead because of the things that they say. I mean, some of them talk really funny. They talk like us, but the words sound funny." She went back to thinking for a moment. It was like she was waiting to make sure that she got it all perfect before she told me what she was trying to say. "It's not just the way that they talk. Some of them have actually told me that they were dead. They didn't use that word, but one man said that back when he was alive, there were a lot of things

different and that our castle wasn't there. I told him that the castle was there before I was born so I didn't know."

"Yes, it's been here for about six years now." I agreed with her, letting her know that the castle wasn't that old.

"Anyways, the people that talk to me never show me who they are, they just tell me things I just know that they are dead people. I don't know how else to explain it to you Daddy."

"OK, sweetheart. Can you tell me what all they say to you? And when did they start?"

"Well, they started just before my birthday. When Aunt Glory and Athair mòr were here with Uncle Trevor and Grandma Daci."

"They started that long ago?" I felt my blood run cold. That had also been when my Little Bunny started acting strange.

"Yes. It started with just one whisper person then. She wasn't very nice. She was the only mean one that has talked to me so far. She said bad things but I knew she was lying so I didn't listen to her."

"Talía, baby, what did she say? Did she tell you what her name was?"

"The first lady? Hmm. She said her name, but it was kind of hard to remember. It was something like Hack Tay, or Heck Tay. I don't remember it all that well. I am sorry, Daddy. I didn't want to listen to her. She was saying bad things about Mommy and that made me feel sad to hear it. I think it was making Mommy sad too."

I saw that my little girl was getting upset and I didn't want to push her too far, but I needed to know what she had been hearing.

"Talía, sweetheart, I know it's hard, but can you tell me what the bad lady was saying to Mommy?"

"She was telling Mommy that people were going to get hurt and it would be her fault. She told Mommy that she was a killer and that is not true, Daddy. Mommy isn't a killer. She's a good girl and she loves us."

"That's right. Mommy is a good girl and so are you, Talía." I hugged her to my side to comfort her.

"Daddy, the bad guy that Mommy is fighting, I think it's the bad lady. When Mommy left, that was when the bad lady left too. Since the bad lady left, all I hear are the other whispering people. The other people said that Mommy went to the underwear world."

"Underwear world?" I was confused for a moment then I realized she was trying to say underworld.

"Daddy, do you think that Mommy is going to be OK? I mean, I know that the whispering people said that she would be, but, what do you think?"

"Yes, sweetheart, I know she will be OK. She will be home soon and then we will make sure that she doesn't leave us like this ever again."

I had heard what I needed to, even though this wasn't the full explanation. I was trying to figure out how to help my little girl and make things easier on her. The problem was, I didn't know how to handle this.

"Talía?" I had a sudden thought. "Do you want to talk to some more people who are like you? Some more people that can hear the whispering people?"

"You know people like that, Daddy?" She looked surprised.

"Yes, I do." I grinned to let her know it was OK.

"I would love to meet them."

After the talk, we finished our Daddy daughter date. Talía fell asleep before the movie was over, so I carried her up to her room and put her to bed. She had a good night and I found out what I needed to.

The day after I took Talía out, I took Rika out. She wanted to go to the North Pole. OK, not the actual North Pole, but the amusement park that was nearby. So, I took her. We went and rode all of the rides. I got her junk food and candy galore. She got to play all day long and she also fell asleep, but on the way home.

On Sunday, I took Reagan out for his father and son day. He wanted to be a 'big boy', which apparently meant doing less babying things. The actual result was that he wanted to go fishing and hiking through the mountains.

Reagan and I talked a lot that day. More than Rika and I had. Reagan had been worrying a lot about his mom, and that made me feel bad. I knew that he and Rika were having a really hard time. I did my best to reassure them both and let them know that Mommy would be back soon. They both seemed to feel a lot better by the time that their days were done.

I was just glad that by the time that it was all over and done with, all three of my kids were feeling a little bit better. And they might be feeling a little bit closer to their dad too. I just hated that this was all that I could do for them. These small little outings and silly little days.. I wanted to do more for them.

Chapter 684 - 101- Trinity – Traversing Purgatory Part 2 (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Trinity

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With no other choice but to approach the gate into purgatory, I steeled my nerves and straightened my back. I needed to be the Goddess and Queen that people expected me to be, the one that I knew that I could be. This was it. This was the true start to the purgatory journey.

Zachary, Zander, Zayden and I walked toward the four guards that were welcoming the guests of purgatory. I mean, I guess that is what you would call it since they were the ones granting them entry into the place.

I had a sudden thought. Would they deny someone entry to purgatory? Would they tell them that they didn't belong there and leave that soul out here for all of eternity? What would happen if a soul meant for damnation came here? What would they do when someone that wasn't dead came here?

These were all just a few of the thoughts that were running through my mind as I approached the gate with the boys. I saw that there were four men guarding the gate and they all looked like they were from different stages of life. One of them looked so old that he was likely to drop dead right here and now. There were two that were middle aged, one just approaching it, or starting it, and the other one just about to be considered elderly. And one of the men looked like he was young, in his late teens or early twenties.

Aside from these men at the gate, I saw that there were dozens, if not hundreds, of more guards in the back of the area. They looked to be quite well staffed. I don't know why I didn't notice how many guards were here to begin with. How is it that I was able to see the punishments and look past everything else?

I guess that didn't matter right now. I just needed to keep moving. I needed to get across that threshold to the other side and then find the door to the next level. The next level should be the Halls of Damnation. That would be where I would find Hekate. That was where I would be able to put an end to her and finally find a way out of here.

"Next." The oldest guard, the one that looked wizened and on death's doorstep, called out to the next soul. That meant that the boys and I were to be next. Even though everyone else was here alone, I was here with three little boys, so I was not going to be going up there alone.

"Next." The youngest of the guards spoke next, beckoning me forward. He wasn't even looking at me. He was just staring at the stone in his hands and preparing to scan me for my punishment. "Look straight ahead and do not move."

I felt the heat from the light coming off of his tablet as it tried to scan me.

"I am not here for punishments."

"Do not speak." The man snapped at me. "I will scan you and send you where you belong." He sounded like he normally dealt with souls pleading for themselves and he was already tired of it.

"I understand that you don't want me to talk, but I am not dead. I am not here for punishment."

"Look, I know you don't want to deal with the fact that you are dead, but this is the process that you must follow." He was clearly annoyed. I could see the emotion perfectly in his red eyes that weren't even looking at me.

He was quite the unique looking person. Fit and tall, a lot like Reece. He even had black hair like Reece. Only this man was pale where Reece was tanned. His eyes were red. His face wore a permanent scowl. And he looked like he was just a boy compared to Reece.

"When the scanning is complete, please move on so that you do not hold up the line. You will be taken to your punishment where you will serve your time. The length of your sentence will also be given to you at the.."

He stopped speaking in the middle of his explanation and just stared at the tablet in his hand. I could tell that he was confused by what he saw. And it was clear that he didn't know what to do right now.

"Th..th..this can't be." He was still staring at the device with wide open eyes. "I need to scan you again."

He still didn't look up, but I felt the light start to move over me again. He was determined to find where my punishment was supposed to be, but it wasn't working. I was glad to see that, though. I didn't want to think about what would have happened to me and the boys if they put us into a punishment.

"The scan is almost complete. Do not move, do not speak, just stand there. When it is done, I will give you your punishment and the length of your.."

He stopped again. The scan had finished and it was clear that there was no sentence or punishment being listed for me. That was when he looked up at me and actually decided to look at me.

I watched as his already wide red eyes got wider and he tried to figure out what was happening. He took in the look of determination on my face and then moved lower. He saw that I was wearing clothes and not walking around naked. Then he saw that I was with the boys and that they were clinging to me.

"What is all of this? Children do not belong in purgatory. What is going on here? How come you have children with you? How come there is no reading on where your soul belongs? I can't even get a reading on if you belong in paradise or torment. What are you?"

"I am still alive, that is what is going on here. I am just here metaphysically. These boys are the children that I am pregnant with back on earth."

"That's impossible. It's beyond impossible, it's insane." He looked like he was about to fully freak out.

"It's fully possible. My name is Trinity Gray, and I am the Luna Queen to the Shifters, the Queen to the Magic Users, and the Goddess to the Shifters, Magic Users, and Fae."

"Y..y..you're a Goddess?" He tilted his head in shock.

"Yes, I am."

His reaction only got more exaggerated and more funny. He was kind of cute in a little brother kind of way when he looked at me with that sort of reverence. I could tell that he was feeling somewhat starstruck. I may be a minor Goddess that no one he ever heard of, but what is the likelihood that he would meet a Goddess, even working in the underworld? Part of me just wanted to laugh at him, ruffled his hair, and joke around with him. There was something about him that made me want to take care of him as well.. Was it sisterly or motherly? That I didn't really know.

Chapter 685 - 102- Trinity – Traversing Purgatory Part 3 (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Trinity

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"I..I..I've never met a Goddess before." He was totally awestruck. Just how I thought that he would be.
"A..and you're a Goddess three times over, and a Queen. Th..th..that is amazing. B..but what are you doing here? Why are you in the underworld? And how did you even get here?"

"I was brought here by someone else. Someone that wants to steal my magic. Someone that wants to destroy me and leave the underworld so that she can wreak havoc on earth."

"S..she plans to leave? But she can't do that. There are rules, regulations, protocols, so many things that are stopping her from being able to leave." The man looked like he didn't believe me about that.

"That may be true, but she had slowly been reaching the real world for the last few centuries. She has whispered to others like she did to me. She has been trying this for a long time."

"Who is it? Who is trying to leave the underworld?" The man was fully enraptured with what I was saying now. He was hanging on my every word.

"Hekate."

I swear, the amount of shock that filled his eyes right then was beyond what I ever could have imagined. He was floored by the revelation that he just heard and was just shaking his head no.

"B..but she is in the most secure part of hell. She is in the deepest trenches of Damnation. She cannot get out of here. She cannot reach beyond her walls."

"I beg to differ. She has not only whispered to the people on earth, but she has influenced souls in Limbo and the Hall of Regrets. She has been growing in power and I fear that she will return to the world of the living and kill everyone."

"No! No! She can't do that." This man, this boy, was looking at me with fear in his eyes. This servant of hell, this guard of purgatory was afraid of what Hekate would do when she got out of her prison.

"I am here to stop her. I am here to put an end to her once and for all. But I need your help."

"My help? What can I do?" He was so boyish, so childlike at that moment, it was so sweet, but so problematic as well.

"I need to get through purgatory and find a door to Damnation. I need to find Hekate's cell. Can you help me?"

"Uh..uhm." He seemed to be thinking about it.

"What is your name?" I thought that getting him to talk might be good.

"M..m..my name is R..Rudolphus Desmodius."

"Well, Rudolphus Desmodius, will you help me? Will you show me where to find the door to damnation?"

I watched as the man looked around himself. The others hadn't even lifted their heads from their tablets. They hadn't seen us talking. They hadn't even noticed that Rudolphus Desmodius was taking a

lot longer than usual on one specific case. Did they pay that little attention to their surroundings? Did they not care about anything at all? If that was the case, no wonder Hekate was getting so much closer to escaping.

I have been surprised at every turn with the way that the underworld was. I would have thought that a place that has literally been around since the dawn of time would have a better management system in place. Yes, it would make things easier on me if I was able to keep moving without finding the guards but, maybe, the underworld had the problems that it did with ghosts and whispers from Hekate because they didn't watch their 'prisoners' better than this.

I mean, shouldn't they watch the hell more than anything? Heaven or paradise or whatever it was, that could be mostly unguarded since you only got there if you were a good soul. The hell should not be this lax.

"I..I think I will help you." The man, Rudolphus Desmodius, finally looked back at me and nodded his head. "I want to stop the evil Hekate from getting out. I don't want to let her ruin the world. I have never seen the human world, but I don't want it to be destroyed either"

"You've never seen it?" I was confused now. "But aren't you a deceased soul in servitude to the underworld?"

"No, I was born here. We are demons born to serve the underworld. We live and die to be guards to hell." He hung his head in shame. "I am new to my job, but I think that it is in dire need of reform. They don't like that I have these ideas. They don't like that I want to change things." I could see that he was saddened to be saying those words.

"I agree with you, Rudy." I smiled at him.

"Rudy?" He tilted his head.

"Rudolphus Desmodius is a mouthful. Rudy will be your nickname." I did my best to make him feel more comfortable. "And as I said, Rudy, I agree with you. This place is not secure enough. So come with me and we will stop Hekate together."

At that moment, Rudy nodded and smiled at me. I saw that he was feeling better about the things that he had been saying and feeling. I watched him look around once more before he stepped out of his place in the gate.

The space that Rudy had just vacated was actually sunken into the ground. There were grooves where he was standing that showed where the men of the gate guard had been standing since the dawn of time. This actually made Rudy even taller than I thought he was. I was used to tall people though, so it didn't faze me at all.

Rudy tentatively took his first step out of that place and seemed to be acting like he hadn't walked in a long time. He probably hadn't. From what I was gathering, these people probably did their jobs from the moment of being assigned until they died. And when they died they were just replaced.

That was a sad existence. That was no way for anyone, even a demon of hell, to spend their life. They needed to be treated better. They needed to be appreciated. Who in the hell would treat people like this?

Well, I guess I could answer that. All the various leaders of hell. All the Gods and Goddesses that ruled the underworld. They were the ones that were treating Rudy and the others like this.

If I had my way, this place would be run more like a business. They needed to make sure that their guards could do their jobs if they wanted them to keep working. That was the humane and efficient way to do it.

It wasn't up to me, and I didn't have a say in it, so there was no reason for me to even be thinking like this. Still, it made me think. It made me want to do something even though I knew that I couldn't.

"Come with me, Goddess Trinity, I will guide you through Purgatory. But stay close, it can be very dangerous.." Rudy interrupted my thoughts with his outstretched hand.

Chapter 686 - 103- Trinity – Traversing Purgatory Part 4 (VOLUME 4)

7-9 minutes

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Trinity

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Rudy was all ready to help me now. With his hand out toward me, he was waiting for me to follow him. I saw no reason not to follow him either. The sooner that I had someone guide me to the exit of purgatory, the better. I wanted to get out of here. I wanted to get home. And I wanted to hug my children.

Not to mention, I wanted to see if I was right in my guess that these three little boys were currently growing in my womb at the moment. If they were, then I would be truly happy to be having more babies to add to our family. If they weren't, then I would be sad to see them go.

I would miss them a lot and I would most likely try to get them to become a reality very soon. I know that sounds very bad of me, but I already loved these three little boys and I would do anything so I could bring them with me into the land of the living.

Zachary, Zander, Zayden and I followed Rudy over the line of the gate. The moment that we were fully into purgatory, completely in this level of hell, the sounds intensified exponentially. The amount of screaming, cries of agony, and sorrow-filled woes that met my ears was deafening.

I knew instantly that this had to be affecting the boys as well. What surprised me, though, was that I saw this was affecting Rudy. He had immediately clamped his hands down over his ears and doubled over as if he were in pain or sick, or possibly even both.

"This is horrible." I tried to tell Rudy, but I doubt that he heard me at all. He, like me and the boys, was covering his ears to block the screams. And my voice definitely was not louder than the screams.

I needed to do something about this. I needed to make this stop. I needed to make sure that none of us went deaf, or the underworld equivalent of it. But man, this sound was making it so hard to hear.

What was I going to do about it? How was I going to stop this noise? What was I going to do to make this easier on all five of us? Dammit. I could barely think with this noise.

That was when I saw the boys. All three of them, like Rudy, looked to be in pain. I could see their little faces scrunched up with everything that they were feeling at the moment. The looks they were making were enough to bring tears to my eyes, if there hadn't already been tears in them.

If for nothing else, I needed to end this sound. The problem was that the sound wasn't so easy to turn off. There were billions of people being tortured here, that wasn't about to stop on my account.

So, I needed to do the next best thing. I needed to turn it off just for us. I needed to block the sound from the screams for our ears alone. And while I thought about how to do this, I thought that the guards that were on this side either had something that worked like I wanted this spell to work, or they were born being immune to the sound of screams.

I cast the spell, imagining what it was that I wanted to happen. I thought of a thin, invisible barrier surrounding all of us. That barrier would block just the sounds of those being tortured. We would still be able to talk to each other and furthermore, if Rudy came across another guard that he needed to converse with, he would be able to hear them as well. I didn't want to cause any more problems here, only solve them. That meant that I needed to just do things that affected me and my group.

"Th..th..the screaming stopped." Rudy stood up and started to look around himself. It was like he thought someone had just turned off hell and all the tormenting had actually stopped.

"I cast a spell. I blocked the screams out." I explained it as best as I could.

"Mommy is the best." Zachary hugged me around the waist.

"Mommy can do anything." Zander hugged me around the left hip.

"Mommy is the smartest lady in the whole world." Zayden finished them out by hugging my right hip.

"The three of you are not stuttering anymore." I was amazed at the sound of their uninterrupted voices.

"We got used to talking because Mommy was here with us." Zayden was the first to speak up about it.

"We never talked until we talked to mommy. We needed to learn more. Now we know." Zachary smiled up at me, his arm still wrapped around me.

"Now Mommy can hear us better." Zander rounded them out.

"They really are your children, aren't they?" Rudy looked surprised. I guess he hadn't fully believed that part of my story.

"That they are."

Now that we could hear without almost dying for real, we set off for the other end of purgatory.

"Where is the door, Rudy?" I asked him with curiosity.

"There are only two openings into purgatory. The gate that we just left, and the door at the end of the hall. The gate is an entrance only. And the door at the back is an exit only."

"Hmm. So, what happens when a soul serves their time in purgatory and needs to leave? How do they get up to their paradise?"

"Well, to be honest, I don't truly know. I haven't worked here long enough. And it is not something that would happen every day, so it just hasn't had a chance to come up yet."

"How is that possible? How is it that with so many people here, there isn't a soul leaving every day? Multiple souls leaving every day at that. OK, I am going to take a crack at this math here, but I know that the daily death rate worldwide is around one hundred and seventy thousand people. That is per day. And if we were to break that down it would mean that there were more than seven thousand deaths per hour and that makes more than one hundred deaths per minute and almost two deaths per second. Now, let's just air on the side of optimism and say that only ten percent of those people end up in hell. That is still more than ten people every minute. That is just with the current death rates of course, I know that there were a lot less when the population was smaller. Still, with millions of souls entering purgatory each year for the last several centuries, how is it that there isn't at least one soul leaving a day? How long are the sentences that you usually hand out to people? How much time do they need to serve in purgatory?"

I could see that my question had made Rudy uncomfortable. That was fine, this was something that I needed to know, and I wanted him to answer.

"Well, to be honest, the terms are quite lengthy. The average person needs to serve at least a century in purgatory before they make it to paradise."

"A CENTURY?" I was floored by his answer.

"I don't think that it's right either, Queen Trinity. I would change it if I could, but I don't know how."

"OK Rudy. I know it's not your fault, so don't worry about that. Still, that just isn't right. And I hope that these are not just minor sins that these people committed. If they were in purgatory for that long for something minor, then I would have to seek out the others and have a word with them." I was starting to get very pissed off.

"W...well, like the sentences, the crimes vary as well. I would like to say that the sins are not major, but I have no idea of what a major sin is and what isn't."

What the hell had I been thinking? I knew that he had no experience in the real world. How was I supposed to get answers to questions like these from him? The answer was that I wasn't going to get the answers from him.. And that just made me feel like I had absolutely no power whatsoever.

Chapter 687 - 104- Griffin – Checking On Trinity (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Griffin

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Trinity had now been in her coma for almost a month. That meant that she had been receiving IV nourishment for the three babies that were growing her belly for almost half of the time that she had been pregnant. I knew that she was alive and it was just her soul that left her body to go on some big mission, or that was the short answer that I had gotten from Reece when he had contacted some witch doctors.

I didn't want to sound like a cynic or anything, but I didn't want to see anything happen to my patient because Reece was searching out 'alternative' routes. Was it that he didn't trust my medical advice? Did he think that I was incapable of caring for her or the babies? Why would he look for other doctors to treat her?

OK, it was true that I didn't know how to wake her, especially if it was her soul that had left her body. I didn't know how I was going to bring her back to this world, to Reece, to me. What was I supposed to do about all of this?

Today, though, I was on my way to examine Trinity and the babies. I was going to check how much they had grown and if they were still doing OK. I was going to check to see if Trinity's body was holding up during this condition of hers. I was basically going there to do my job, even though I didn't know what that was supposed to mean anymore.

There is nothing worse for a doctor than not being able to help their patient. Not knowing what is wrong with them or how to make it all better. That was the worst feeling in the world. Then you add in the fact that this patient, this person that I couldn't help, was a close personal friend of mine as well as the queen to more than half of the world. That was just adding more and more pressure to me at every turn.

I was determined to make sure that Trinity and the babies survived this whole ordeal. I was going to make sure that there was nothing at all that happened to Trinity, nothing else anyway. I was going to make sure that, when her soul came back, Trinity was perfectly healthy and the babies would be ready when the time came.

When I pulled into the garage, the one for friends and family and not visitors, I hurriedly made my way up to the royal tower. At the current moment, I was given full access which meant that I didn't have to wait for someone to let me in. I just went straight up to the room and knocked on the door. That was just to make sure that Reece was decent.

He called out for me to enter right away so I guess that meant that he was properly dressed and waiting for me.

"Hello Reece. How have you been holding up?" I asked him when I walked into the room. He was sitting in a chair next to Trinity's new hospital bed and I could tell that he hadn't been sleeping that well.

"I've been better." He turned to look at me and I could tell that this whole ordeal was taking its toll on him emotionally.

"You need to sleep more, Reece. I told you that already. You don't want to end up sick or worse before she gets back. You need to be here for her and the children. In a matter of months, you will have six children, Reece. They need you."

"My Little Bunny needed me too." He was so depressed. "She needed me, and I didn't see it." He was almost like a broken man. "Don't worry about it, though. I am usually better than this. I have been making it a habit to keep myself together for the kids. I can't let Reagan, Rika and Talia suffer because of me. I need to be strong so I have been trying."

He didn't look strong right now. Then again, the kids weren't here right now either. So, I guess he was allowed to be weak at the moment. All that he had with him was his comatose wife and his lifelong friend. I wasn't going to tell anyone about this though, and he knew that.

I did my best to comfort and console Reece, but he wasn't having it at all. So, deciding not to waste anymore time, I got to work on the real reason that I was here. I pulled the machines out of the closet that I had brought here before and started to check Trinity and the babies over completely.

I checked Trinity's heart first. I wanted to make sure she wasn't having any issues like she had before. When she was pregnant with Reagan and Rika, she had so many issues that made it so that she was on bed rest for a lot of it. I just wanted to make sure that there wasn't going to be more issues.

Trinity herself seemed to be fit as a fiddle, perfectly healthy and pregnant with triplets. You know, except for the whole coma thing.

Now it was time for me to check on the triplets. I put the gel on Trinity's belly and placed the ultrasound wand on her. Immediately I saw three little babies. They all had their own amniotic sac, which made things a little better. The problem though, was that they shared a placenta. That meant that the babies were indeed identical. Trinity and Reece were going to have their hands full with them when they were older.

I checked a little more and watched as the babies move around restlessly. They seemed to be quite active, and they were definitely growing big and strong. When one of them turned and shifted a little more, I saw that the baby was very clearly a little boy.

"Congrats Reece. You're having three healthy little boys." I thought that he would be excited to hear that. I did not expect what he said to me then.

"I know."

"Wait! How do you know?"

"The witch doctors told me, but they didn't know before Talia did."

"How in the hell did Talia know?" I was floored.

"Oh, she's a clairvoyant. She could hear the whispering people talk about them."

Clearly, there had been a lot that happened while I was away. What the hell had happened here? What the hell was going on?

I didn't know, and I didn't think that I was likely to get an answer. So, instead, I just figured that I would finish up and head home.

This visit with Reece and the check up for Trinity hadn't answered any questions for me at all. Instead, I had been given so many more questions to not ask. How did little Talia and these witch doctors know

more about my patient than I did? How was it that all of this has happened and I was just now finding out about it? This was not right. I shouldn't be finding out this information just now.. I was going to have to talk to Reece about this, soon.

Chapter 688 - 105- Trinity – Traversing Purgatory Part 5 (VOLUME 4)

7-8 minutes

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Trinity

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The further that I went into purgatory with Rudy as my guide, the more that I saw various forms of torture, including several more ancient forms that were used hundreds of years ago.

There were modern tortures, like the people trying endlessly to retrieve their phones. Some people were even living in a false world that made them think that dying had all been a nightmare, but the life they lived in there was a nightmare as well. Men and women who prioritized making money and reaching the top of their careers, only to not be satisfied. They were never satisfied, nothing was ever enough, not at work, not with their family, nothing. Those people were being sent to work more and more. They would be given large pays, only for every penny of it to disappear right before their eyes. They never got promoted or any of the things that they wanted in life. Their greed had been turned around on them only for it to become their ultimate torture.

Other people, men and women (but mostly men), were living in a false state of reality. These men seem to have been obsessed with pornography. They were to spend their entire time in purgatory trying to access pornography online, only for it to instead be various religious sermons from multiple different religions. They were being lectured for centuries on what they had done wrong in their lives.

The modern tortures seemed to be more specific to the major sin that they had committed. The others, the more ancient ones, were not so individualized. They were generic punishments that were befitting the 'crime' at the time.

These ancient forms of torture included things like flaying, peeling, the rack, the iron maiden, whipping, burning, and various other forms. These ones looked a lot more brutal and harsh than the more modern forms of torture.

"Rudy?" I called out to him as we walked through the halls toward the exit that he was guiding me to. "When did the more barbaric tortures go out of fashion? When did these new tortures become the new normal?"

"Well, those older tortures are still used, depending on the sin that the others have committed, but the new tortures came into being when the digital age became a prevalent entity. It was almost like the digital footprint was so strong that it reached the underworld whenever it took a leap toward the state that it is in now. I have been shown the devices that humans and other mortals use. I have seen what

they do to each other with them. This development changed not just the mortal realm but all of the realms."

"That is actually a frightening thought." I shuddered as I told him these words. "Oh, question, do shifters, vampires, Fae, and magic users come to this underworld? Or is there a different underworld for all of them?"

"That is an interesting question. For the most part, the souls mingle here. However, they are judged differently. The laws that govern the community of shadow dwellers are not the same as the ones that govern the humans. I guess you would say that humans are judged more harshly and therefore are treated unfairly. However, when a shadow world soul reaches the point where it needs to be punished, it is almost always sent to the Halls of Damnation. Their sins are never taken lightly and there is no reform for them. They suffer for all eternity with no chance for salvation. So, in a nutshell, all the souls are in the same underworld but there are differences. The Halls of Damnation, for one, houses more shadow world souls than human souls, though there are several humans that found themselves worthy of Damnation's warm embraces."

"So, if I was an evil soul, I would wind up in Damnation and I would never get out of there?"

"Yes, if you were an evil soul that is where you would end up. However, you are far from evil, Queen Trinity. You will have no place in Damnation." Rudy looked so sure of that fact. And maybe that was how it was now. But I was immortal now, seemingly. What would happen down the line? What would happen in a few centuries? What if I truly did become evil and was assassinated for the greater good? What would happen to me then? Would I end up in a cell next to my father's place in Damnation? Would we share a punishment, which would be a further torture to the both of us?

I was stuck thinking about these various things, and I just wasn't able to stop. I just wanted to make sure that they didn't happen, but they felt like an inevitability to me. They just seemed so plausible that I knew it was my fate.

While I thought about this, looking around me in a very tourist manner, I noticed more and more guards in the area that we were in. This part of Purgatory seemed to have fewer actual souls that were being tortured, though they were still there, nonetheless.

The guards that were around us seemed to be a little more alert, a little more attentive than the ones that we had already passed. These guards seemed to have an interest in our guide as well as me and the boys.

I watched as one man in particular, a very stern looking and very strong looking, warrior type of man, eyed me with sharply focused eyes. He looked angry, very angry. Did he think that I was a soul that had been trying to escape? Did he think that I was someone here to be punished?

How could he think that, though? I mean, I didn't look anything at all like the souls that came through here for their purgatorial treatment. I was clothed, I was clutching children to my side, and I was being guided calmly by a man that was from his own team of guards. How was it that he could look so angry at me with all of the things that set me apart from the others?

Well, however he was able to be that way, he was. He was not only staring at me with a look of death, but he was also clearly getting ready to leave his post to come over here and see exactly what it was

that I was doing here. The angry determination in his face couldn't have meant anything else at that moment.

And there, that was the moment. He just took a slow and tentative step away from his post. It had been just like Rudy when he stepped away from the gate. It was like he had been put in that spot and never moved until he left that spot for me. This man, like Rudy, was tall and good looking, but fierce. His eyes were red as well, but his hair was silver. He looked exactly like an ancient Roman warrior though, with his armor and that look on his face. And that warrior was after me.

Why? Why did things like this have to happen to me right now? Why couldn't it be easier for me?

Chapter 689 - 106- Reece – Talia Meets The Twins (VOLUME 4)

8-9 minutes

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Reece

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The twins that Trevor had brought to see me were staying in the castle, in an unused tower room at the moment. They wanted to be high up and far away from the other people. They truly didn't like meeting new people that might not accept them.

It took both Trevor and I a long time to convince the two of them to meet with Talia. She had expressed interest in meeting with others that were like her. Others that could see or hear what she referred to as the whispering people.

To Talia, finding others that could do what she did would most likely make her feel validated. She needed someone to tell her that what was happening to her was normal and that she wasn't a freak because of it. Someone other than her father.

However, the only people that I knew of that could talk to her about all of this, were too afraid to see new people because of the way that they looked. They were permanently trapped in a half human-half bear state, and that meant that they had never been able to visit anywhere with humans in it. People, other bear shifters and witch doctors, had all made fun of them since they were babies. They didn't like people. They didn't trust people. And they didn't want to meet more people.

Talia was insistent though. She wanted to see them, to talk to them about their similar gifts. And she was just too young to understand what it was that the two of them were feeling at the moment. She didn't understand that meeting her was a source of anxiety for them.

Over time though, Trevor and I were able to get both Charlie and Chloe to agree to the meeting. They would only do it in their tower room, though, and they would reserve the right to end the meeting when they felt too uncomfortable, regardless of the fact that Talia was their princess and technically outranked them quite a bit.

I agreed to their terms. That wasn't up for debate. Mostly because I could understand what they were going through. I may not have experienced it personally, but I could see the pain in their eyes and knew that this was not something they took lightly.

Talia didn't care about the status and things like that. She was just excited to make new friends with people that were like her. All week, leading up to the meeting, she kept telling Reagan and Rika that she was going to make new friends. Friends that saw the whispering people. Friends that were grown ups and would probably be very cool. I know she wasn't trying to brag, she was just excited, and it was all very cute.

About five weeks after Trinity had fallen into her coma, and about three weeks after the twins had come to stay with us in the castle, Talia and I were on our way to meet with them. My little girl was literally bouncing with excitement all the way up to their room, talking about the different things that she wanted to tell them.

When Gabriel knocked on the door and called out to the twins, letting them know that we were here to meet with them, Talia quietly squealed in delight. Her eyes were filled with glee and the smile looked like it was about a mile wide.

"Please come in." I heard Charlie call out to us.

Gabriel was joining us for the meeting, there as a trusted advisor, guard, and attendant for the royal princess. This had been a stipulation that I enforced when I told them that we would meet how they wanted. My little girl needed to have someone there that was a 'servant' type so that she appeared more regal and proper. In truth, I just wanted Gabriel there in case something bad happened. One of us would protect Talia while the other would deal with the problem.

I didn't think that was going to happen though, so it wasn't that high on my list of worries. Still, I was prepared for it.

The moment that we were inside, Talia bound forward and rushed toward the two new friends that she was trying to make.

"Hello there. I am Talia Gray. I live here in this castle. I hear that you are like me. You can hear the whispering people."

Charlie and Chloe seemed to be quite taken aback by her sudden appearance and abrupt introduction. And despite the way they seemed to be reacting at the moment, Talia wasn't done yet.

"What is your name? I can't wait to be friends with you. I can't wait to hear all about the stuff that you have done. I am very happy and excited about today."

After a moment, the twins looked at each other with bewildered expressions then they started to smile. They could tell that to Talia, they were just normal people. She didn't see anything but who they were, not what they looked like.

"My name is Chloe." Surprisingly, she was the one to speak first. She was usually the more shy of the two.

"And my name is Charlie. It is nice to meet you, Talia. And you know something, we don't just hear the whispering people. We see them too." He was leaning down toward my little girl and showing her his furry face.

"Yes, my daddy told me that. I think that is amazing." Talia beamed at them, literally she was shining like a beacon.

"Talia, are you not afraid of us?" Chloe asked her worriedly, still wondering what the little girl thought of her and her brother.

"Why would I be?" Talia tilted her head in confusion.

"Well, Talia, we don't look like other people." Charlie informed her. "Most people think we are ugly or scary. They are afraid of us."

"Well, those people are stupid." She clapped her hands over her mouth and turned to look at me. "I am sorry for using the bad word, Daddy."

"It's OK, sweetheart." I nodded at her.

"Well, as I was saying, those people are not smart if they think that about you. I think you're beautiful. I think that you are two of the prettiest people in the whole wide world."

I could see the happiness spreading in their faces. They were definitely enjoying their visit with Talia.

The three of them talked for a long time. They shared what they knew about the whispering people, though not the scary parts. They told Talia that they could teach her how to block out the voices if she wanted to. It was a good night.

"Thank you, both of you." I shook their hands and let them know how much I appreciated what they had done.

"Can I see you again?" Talia asked them.

"Of course, that would be fun."

"We would love that." Charlie and Chloe answered with those respective responses. They seemed to have changed their minds completely.

"Can I have a hug?" Talia smiled at them.

"Of course." Charlie leaned down first, but Chloe followed him and together, they hugged my little girl. It was a group hug and I thought it was sweet.

That is, until the light started to shine around them. They didn't seem to notice it, but Gabriel and I did. It was a light that reminded me of the past, of a light that Trinity used to have. Only instead of white, this light was pink.

The light enveloped all three of them while they hugged. It didn't last long, but it was there. And when Charlie and Chloe pulled away from my little Talia, I saw what the light had done.

"Hey, where did your fur go?" Talia asked them, not understanding what she had done.

"Talia, sweetheart, why don't you go back to your room. I need to talk to Charlie and Chloe."

Once she was gone and it was just the three of us, I had to explain to the twins that my daughter, the wolf, Fae, and witch super child, had blessed them with a full human form. It took them a long time to process this information, and I had to repeat it all over and over again. Though, in the end, when they accepted it all, they were beyond happy to hear the news.

And I now had to come to terms with the fact that my daughter was truly a powerful little girl.

Chapter 690 - 107- Trinity – Traversing Purgatory Part 6 (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Trinity

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I watched in suspenseful dread as the man came toward us. I don't think that Rudy noticed him just yet. Well, that said a lot about Rudy's attention to detail and his awareness of surroundings. If I was going to make it through here alive, intact at least, then I was going to need to be the one to protect us. Rudy, as big and strong as he appeared to be, could not be counted on to do that.

"Rudy?" I whispered his name and as the warrior quickly walked over to us. "We have a problem."

"Huh?" He jolted to a stop and turned to look at me, then at the man that I was watching with worried eyes. "W..why is he coming over here?"

"Great. I was hoping you could tell me that. I mean, I am the one that is not from the underworld, whereas you are from here." I was speaking sarcastically and with a little more anger and force than I intended to at the moment. I shouldn't be treating him like that, but I truly couldn't help it at the moment.

"Well, it is unusual for any of us to leave our posts. I..I shouldn't have left, and he doesn't look like a way between."

"A what?" I shouldn't be asking when we clearly didn't have the time to talk, but I had been surprised by his words.

"The guards that take souls to their punishments. They are called 'way between's'. They show the soul the way between the gate and the punishment."

"Well, I guess that was actually pretty self explanatory." I chuckled to myself and what I should have been able to figure out for myself.

"We do not have much time before he reaches us." Rudy was still walking forward at a nonthreatening, non hurried pace. "I do not want to present the appearance that we are nervous or that we know that we are in a place that we should not be. I would like to show that guard that we are not in the wrong here. I am just escorting you."

"I agree. If we run, he will give chase and that would probably not end well for us." I responded without taking my eyes off of the other man.

The man, like Rudy had said, reached our path in almost no time at all. He was standing there, blocking us from moving on. That was when I noticed that this had to be a giant. I was used to tall people, those that were close to seven feet tall, but this man had to be closer to eight. And not only that, but he was broad-shouldered and powerful looking. I bet he literally had the strength to take someone's head off with a single punch. That was how powerful he looked.

"Halt." His voice was deep and low. Even though he spoke in what seemed to be an average tone, his words boomed around the entire area as if he had used a megaphone or microphone and speaker.

"Is there a problem?"

I truly had thought that Rudy would stutter again, like he had done a few times before already. I was actually quite happy to see that he was being so calm and sure of himself at the moment. That would help us out quite a bit in this situation.

"Who are you? What are the two of you doing here? What business do you have in these parts?"

"I am Rudolphus Desmodius. I am escorting a soul through the Halls of Purgatory." Thankfully, Rudy still spoke confidently and didn't falter.

"Tell me why? For what purpose are you taking a new soul to this area of Purgatory?"

"She is not a new soul. She is not even dead." Rudy did his best to start explaining things.

"That is preposterous. There are only dead souls in the underworld. Dead souls and those that guard it. Not even the Gods and Goddesses that govern these parts come to this place. They take the souls that they punish personally to their own domains."

"Are those domains not part of the underworld as well? If they rule over this place, should they themselves not dwell here?" I was so surprised by what I heard that I had to say something. Even though I immediately regretted it the moment that I had finished talking.

"Do not speak to me, mortal. I will not be treated like some commonplace mortal."

"I am not a mortal, nor am I commonplace." I knew that my tongue was going to get me into a lot of trouble right now. I was a little too keyed up to be calm and civil at the moment. I knew that I needed to be that way, but my body just wasn't conveying those thoughts to my mouth.

"Really? And what, if you do not mind explaining it to me, makes you so special? What makes you any less common than the other humans that come through these halls?" This man was truly angry at me right now.

"I am not a human. I am a goddess, a queen, a wolf shifter, a Fae, and a witch. I am far from anything that is common." There was anger filling my voice now. This man was going to learn to respect me, even if he wasn't one of my subjects. Even if I was technically nothing to him.

"I do not believe that you are a goddess. What reason would a goddess have to be in the underworld? You are not a ruler of one of the hells. You are not an overseer of paradise. You are nothing to the inner

machinations of the afterlife. Therefore, what would you, a self-proclaimed goddess, be doing in our realm?" Oh, the amount of sarcasm and spite that he was spitting at me was going to tip me over the edge.

I was getting to my wit's end. I was through with being here in the underworld. I wanted to get this over with and go home as soon as I could. I didn't want to be here any longer than I absolutely needed to be. And right now this asshole was prolonging my forced visit to the afterlife.

He may think that he is big and strong now. He may think that he was able to do so much to me. He would most likely think a lot of things about me. But he would be wrong. He would be so wrong that it would cost him more than he was willing to pay. These people, these men, according to Rudy, were alive. And that meant that he could most likely feel pain and receive a punishment. They weren't beyond the torture that they were inflicting onto the others. They, specifically this asshole, were not above my wrath.

I tried to keep my calm, though. I had already been shown just how my actions affect the things around me, how I can cause consequences. I didn't want to put anything out of order in Hell, this was not the place to be doing that. Still, that didn't change the fact that he was annoying the fucking hell out of me.. No pun intended there.