

Chosen by Fate 691

Chapter 691 - 108- Trinity – Traversing Purgatory Part 7 (VOLUME 4)

Trinity

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"I wish I was just a self-proclaimed goddess. Do you have any fucking clue how much stress and pressure I have been under for the last few years? Do you know what I have had to deal with just recently because of who and what I am? I am not here because I wanted to be, asshole! I am here right now because one of your trapped souls is trying to escape. I am here because I need to stop her. All I want to do is go home and be with my family again. But no, now I need to do your job for you!"

The man's already angry looking face just went purple with his boiling fury. I had said too much. I had caused problems for us. I knew it was coming though. I knew it was going to happen. I just couldn't stop it. I was too pissed off, too angry to hold it back anymore.

OK. I will admit that this man had nothing to do with the way that I had been feeling. He wasn't the one that I was angry with. He wasn't the one that had put me through hell. He wasn't the one that had brought me here. So, I shouldn't be angry with him, right? Well, fuck that. I was going to treat him the way he was treating me.

"I told you I would not be talked to like that." The wind, which had just been a soft and gentle breeze, picked up with a sudden intensity. It was like someone, most likely him, was calling it to life. Ha ha, that's funny. Calling something to life in the underworld.

"Look, whoever you are. I just want to be on my way. I just want to get to the door out of here and find the person that I am looking for. I will be out of your hair as soon as I can be."

With those words, I held onto the boys while simultaneously pushing Rudy ahead of me. We had just gotten past the big brute when he slowly turned to face us and bellowed out in his booming voice.

"My name is Alexio Ptolemy. And by the grace of all the Gods and Goddesses, I will not let you escape this place. I will not let you shrink your punishment. You will atone for your sins as you are supposed to. And I will be the judge that drags you there."

Was it just me, or was Alexio here growing in size? Nope, it wasn't just me. I could see the look that was on Rudy's face as he watched the man. He was definitely seeing what I was seeing. And I do not think that this was a good thing either. This was most likely going to be, quite literally, hell for us.

"Rudy, I think we need to get out of here." I said as I scooped up the boys in my arms. They were almost too big for me to fit them all. Technically they were too big, but I was trying my best here.

"Yes. We need to run."

Rudy took two of the boys from my arms and held them in one of his. Then, he took my now empty left hand as I clung to Zayden with my right arm. He pulled me along behind him as he ran as fast as he could. I was glad that I was able to move fast, or he would have been dragging me. Actually, I could probably move faster than him.

So, I decided that I was going to move faster than him. I ran faster and harder until I was ahead of him. I started to pull him behind me and made him force his body to keep up with me.

"You aren't human." Rudy called after me, marveling at the speed that I was showing.

"I already told you that." I laughed at him and his absurdness.

"Yes, I know that. However, seeing is believing."

I wanted to respond to him, but I just didn't have the chance. We were running for our lives, after all. If I didn't want to upset the balance of things in this world, I would have just fought him. I couldn't do that though. I couldn't risk it.

Running didn't seem to be working right now though. It wasn't that we weren't trying. It wasn't because we weren't moving fast. We were doing both of those things, but when your opponent was now almost ten feet tall and covered way more ground than you ever could with each stride, and then add into that the fact that his size did not diminish his speed at all, it was going to be hard to outrun them.

I needed to think of something else. I needed to get us out of this predicament, and to safety, so that we could then figure out how we were going to get to the door. I needed to figure it all out and in the space of just a few seconds. So, you know, no pressure there.

I scanned my surroundings as quickly as I could as I literally felt the ground shaking beneath me. That mammoth of a man, the massive brute of a warrior, but hot on my heels and breathing down my neck. I swear I even felt his breath there as I looked for where to go.

There were a couple of different options. I could sprint and leap to the top of an outcropping of rocks that were near a punishment. The only problem with that, though, was that I didn't know if the barriers would keep me from approaching that area. That would be a big risk to take right now. If it stopped me in my tracks, then Alexio was going to catch us.

OK, then let me check out option number two. That was a narrow alleyway that was between two large stone structures that housed different punishments. It looked like it might actually turn into some sort of underground tunnel. It was not more than two feet wide so it would be a tight fit for Rudy. However, it had the added benefit of being low as well. Rudy would have to stoop, but this place was at most five feet tall. Even I would have to crouch a little to get in there.

There was a major upside though. Alexio definitely would not be able to fit his huge ass into that space. He would not be able to follow us, no matter what he did. That place was just going to be way too small for him.

Well, I think that just about settled it for me. That should be all that I needed to know about this. I was going to take Rudy and the boys and run toward that tunnel.

And I hadn't made my decisions with any time to spare at all. The moment that I turned and changed our path, I felt the movement of the air as Alexio ran past us. He had just been about to catch the five of us, but we were safe now.. I hoped.

Chapter 692 - 109- Trinity – Traversing Purgatory Part 8 (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Trinity

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The moment that we were off the original path and out of Alexio's reach, I started to pull Rudy along behind me to the tunnel that I had seen. I wanted to get there before Alexio knew where we were going, even though I knew that this wasn't likely to be the case.

Alexio didn't run for long when he barreled past us. Only enough for him to quickly slow down his charging body and turn in the direction that we had disappeared in. I could literally feel his eyes on us when he found us running away from him.

Dammit. I didn't want to run away. I wanted to fight him like I had trained to do years ago. However, if I killed him there were things that could happen that I wasn't prepared for. What if I killed this man and hundreds or thousands of souls escaped their punishments? What if those souls, which had yet to fully repent and were likely angry, made it to earth and started to hurt people? I couldn't risk the things that his death or even just his temporary absence from his post would have on Purgatory and the underworld as a whole.

No, as much as it pissed me off, the only thing that I was able to do was run. I needed to protect myself, my boys, Rudy, and the entire realm that I was in. DAMMIT.

Alexio roared in anger when he saw me fleeing to safety. He knew what I was doing, and he didn't like it. At that moment he snorted like a bull. I didn't see it, but I heard it. That raging bull of an ancient Greek warrior was bearing down on us faster than ever now.

It didn't matter though, we were in the tunnel and on our way to freedom. I had snatched Zachary and Zander from Rudy's arms and pushed him in ahead of me. No offense, but at the moment he was expendable to me. That was why I was forcibly making him the guide.

After Rudy, I pushed the boys into the tunnel then followed them inside. We were all in there and safely away from the opening when we felt the ground, and the walls around us, shake like crazy. Alexio had obviously run headlong into the rocky wall, trying to bust his way through so that he could get to us.

I really, really, really hoped that the stone around us held up to his raging bull-like rampage. He was literally ramming the wall over and over again, causing the ground to shake and creak around us.

"We need to get to the other side of here and then move as quickly and stealthily toward the exit as we can. I don't want Alexio to see us anymore at all. He will be a major problem if he does. Not to mention, if he tries to stop us again, I won't hold back. I will take him out to finish my task if I have to. I cannot let him stand in my way."

I had been whispering toward Rudy ahead of me. I didn't want my voice to travel back to Alexio, but I needed to talk to the man that was guiding me. I knew from his silence that he had taken issue with what I had said. It didn't seem to me like he wanted me to get violent with this fellow guard.

"Does it have to come down to such violence, Queen Trinity? Do you need to try to fight him?"

"Do you doubt that I can?" I asked Rudy angrily.

"I do not think that is it, Queen Trinity." I could tell that Rudy was trying his best to be polite and not set me off. Could he sense how truly fucking pissed off that I was?

"Then what is it?" I prompted him to continue.

"To be honest, Queen Trinity, I just do not want to see your soul tainted with the death of a demon like Alexio."

"I do not want to kill him either, Rudy. I do not want to upset the power balance here. But I cannot let him stand in my way. That would only hurt more people. It would only lead to tragedy."

"Y..yes. I know that. I just do not want you to bear that burden. If it comes down to it, I will kill him. I will fight him to the death and buy you time to escape through the door."

"Mommy?" I heard Zayden speak up. They spoke so infrequently that it still surprised me sometimes.

"Yes, honey?" I told him to continue.

"Are you going to get in trouble? Is that big man going to hurt you, Mommy? Are you going to be OK?"

"I will be just fine. Don't you worry." I did my best to assure him and the others. "Mommy will get us out of here, out of this situation, and then I will get us to the next level of the underworld. That will be the last level, the last stage of it all. That is where we will find the bad lady." I tried to sooth the boys and help them understand.

"That's good Mommy." Zayden spoke softly.

"Yeah, that's really good Mommy. Because I can feel the door now." Zachary piped up next.

"Yup, the door is getting closer." Zander agreed.

"We will be saved soon, Mommy." Zayden was the last to speak.

"These boys truly are something." Rudy's voice was curious about the kids even though he couldn't see them right now. "I have never met children before, and I am quite surprised by them."

"Never met a child?" I would have stood up and looked at him with shocked eyes, but the rocks made that impossible. "Weren't you ever a kid yourself?"

"No, Queen Trinity. We come into existence as fully grown adult demons. From there we age and grow as we work our jobs until we die of old age." His words made me want to shudder. What the hell was going on here? This was no existence at all.

"So, Rudy, what do you do when you're not working? Since you never had a childhood and all that." I knew what he was going to say. I knew it, but I still asked that question anyway to make sure that I knew it for a fact.

"I do not do anything besides work. We demons are never to leave our post. I know that I will be severely punished, most likely even killed, for what I have done here for you. I had to help you, though. You were where you needed to be, and I was where I needed to be to help you. Besides, going with you

gave me an adventure before I am to die. I should probably thank you for that. I will not have to live this monotonous life anymore. I will be free of this place, this prison." Rudy didn't sound scared, worried, nervous, none of it.. He didn't sound at all concerned about the fact that he was probably going to die soon. What the hell? Didn't he understand it at all? Didn't he care at all if he lived or died?

Chapter 693 - 110- Trinity -Traversing Purgatory Part 9 (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Trinity

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Actually, now that I think about it, Rudy probably didn't care if he died or not. He was just going to live the same useless and boring life until he wasted away. Why would he care? Why would he want to do that?

I didn't say anything for a little while after that. I just thought about the lonely existence that Rudy had to have had. Rudy and all the others that came before him. And to think, there was another self-aware guard and all that he cared about was stopping me and punishing me. How was it that they could have such drastically different views on their lives and jobs?

Maybe the position that they worked had something to do with it. Maybe the fact that Alexio was so intent on stopping me and doing his job, was that he had a different outlook based on what he saw in his job.

Rudy, being a gatekeeper, was the one that had to hand out the punishments to everyone else and that would definitely be hard on people. Alexio was guarding somewhere deeper within Purgatory. He didn't have the same things to do. He didn't have to be the one to tell people where to go to be punished.

This wasn't something that I needed to be thinking about though. Not at all. I needed to focus on our escape. Then I needed to focus on killing Hekate. I needed to get us through this and then I could think about what to do next.

I could think about things like what to do about Rudy. I couldn't leave him here to die. But should I take him back with me? Should I bring him to the human world? Should I give him a place among my people and save him that way?

I don't know why, but part of me was thinking that I probably should. I mean, I couldn't let him die just for helping me. That would be a total bitch move. Something that I would never forgive myself for having done.

But how was I going to get him home with me, though? I mean, I still didn't know how I was going to get home. Whatever, I would figure it out. I wasn't going to leave him behind. Nope, that wouldn't be right. And I was going to try to be a good person for the rest of my life, mostly anyway.

Alright. My mind was set. I knew what I was going to do. And I had thought about it all when I told myself not to. Oops. Oh well. It was done now and I was able to focus on the tunnel ahead of me. I mean, it wasn't like I could see anything beyond the tops of the boys' heads and Rudy's ass. It was an OK sight and all that, but I would much rather see Reece's ass in front of me. His was my favorite ass in the world. Both, the literal and figurative ones. I mean, there were plenty of times that he acted like a major ass, you know. Still, he was usually sweet now and that was all that mattered.

GAH! Why do I keep thinking about these random thoughts? I needed to focus but I couldn't Dammit! All I wanted was to go home and be with my family again. This needed to hurry up and get to the end of this fight. I was just about out of patience for it all.

"I see the end of the tunnel, Queen Trinity. I can see a light out there. I do not think that it will take us that much longer to get out of here." Rudy sounded way more excited to say that than I had thought he would be. He must not like this tight space. Hey, at least he didn't have claustrophobia. That could have ruined our entire escape plan. I had actually been lucky about that.

Or had I been? I mean, do demons have issues like claustrophobia? Was that a thing among the inhabitants of the underworld? I didn't know and that was kind of bugging me.

"That's good, Rudy." I finally commented about the light he was seeing. "Be very cautious when you leave the tunnel. We need to make sure that Alexio isn't around."

"Yes, understood."

"Zachary?" I called out to the boy.

"Yes, Mommy?" He happily answered me.

"How close is the door? How much further do we have to go?"

"It is not too much further, Mommy. I can feel that it is somewhere over there." He pointed toward his right, that the direction we had been going in before Alexio had decided that he needed to stop us. That stupid giant asshole. Why did he have to be such a fucking pest?

"He's right, Mommy." Zander added. "I can feel the door too."

"That is good boys." I nodded at them even though they couldn't see me. It was just a habitual gesture. "Rudy, when we are out of here, we will run as hard and as fast as we can for the door."

"Yes, Queen Trinity." He agreed and started to slow down. Apparently, we were close to the end of the tunnel. He was stopping so that he could peer out and check for danger.

The area right here was larger than it was on the other side. Just at the mouth of the cave-like tunnel, and nowhere else. Still, that little bit of room, that small area that let us stand side by side was going to help out a lot.

I shimmied along the wall, past the boys, to the wider opening in the cave. It was also a taller section of the cave which allowed me to stand completely and Rudy to straighten up just a little bit.

"I will look with you." I told Rudy as we stood side by side, checking the surrounding area for Alexio and any other enemies.

"I do not see him, Ma'am." Rudy spoke calmly. "I think that the coast might be-." That was when Rudy stopped short. He was not able to finish saying those words.

Why couldn't he finish saying them? Because they weren't true anymore. While we were watching the area, we saw a flash that was unmistakable. Alexio had just run past the opening to the tunnel and was heading in the direction of the door.

How had he gotten over here so fast? And why was he moving in that direction? What was he planning now?

Well, let's see if I can answer those questions for myself.

He got over here so fast because he was a giant rampaging bull that moved faster than almost anything that I've ever seen. Almost. I mean, David could go invisible with how fast he was able to move. He was literally the fastest person ever.

OK, let's continue on to the next question. He was probably heading in that direction because he knew the door was there and he was going to guard it and block me from escaping.

And well, that last one sort of answered the second and the third question so there was no more need for me to explain things to myself.

"Dammit!" I snapped as I thought about what to do now.

Chapter 694 - 111- Reece – Wrath (VOLUME 4)

9-11 minutes

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Reece

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I will admit that we were all getting used to life without Trinity around. Reluctantly of course, but we did what we had to do. The kids came to me with their issues so that we could talk them out. They were still upset but they were dealing with it in stride.

I was becoming a better dad because of this entire situation. Trinity would most likely say that I was maturing or something. That was stupid, though, since I was in my mid thirties, I was already mature. I mean, I have been married for many years, I have three children at home and three on the way. Who in the world would say that I was not mature?

Still, I guess you could say that I was growing and changing a little. I would never again say that Trinity didn't have things hard. Despite our staff, there was a lot that she did for the kids. And with her not being around right now, I was the one doing those things for the kids. Trinity had been so busy with work, but she was still a good mom. She was still an excellent family coordinator. I don't even know how she ever had the time to do it all. I guess she was just that amazing.

All in all, the kids and I were doing OK. We weren't happy, and we missed Trinity, but we would survive until she woke up. I knew that we would make it. Just like I knew that my Little Bunny was strong enough to make it through all of her ordeals, whatever they may be.

Not everyone was handling things as well as us though. And I think I might have been neglecting that group of people a little bit over the last few weeks. They were getting endlessly worried about my Little Bunny, beyond the point that I had even realized.

To be fair, I did tell them about what had happened and about the babies. I told them about what the twins had said, and even what Talia had said. Still, it didn't seem to be helping them that much. That was why someone was currently stomping toward my door.

'King Reece, he wouldn't wait for me to come up there. He sped right past me and is on his way up there right now.' Tenison, the main butler for the castle, not to be confused with Peter who was the butler for the tower, sent me a quick mental message as the thundering steps approached my office. 'I am sorry, King Reece. I did try to stop him.'

'It's fine, Tenison. I expected this sooner or later. He's not been all that happy and I have not been expressive enough for him. Is she with him?' I sent a message back to the man as the stomping grew louder and louder.

'Yes, my King.'

'Alright, I will handle this. You just get back to work. All is fine.'

'Yes, my King.'

As soon as the words were sent telepathically, the door to my office burst open and the man that had been barreling through my walls came charging in.

"Reece, tell me what is going on with Trinity right now."

"Hush and leave him alone, dear. He's working right now. You know he is busy."

"I don't care if he is busy. I want answers. This is my family we are talking about. I want to know what happened to my Trinity."

"Hahh." I sighed in exasperation. They hadn't even been in my office for thirty seconds, and I already had a headache. "Hello Mom. Hello Samuel. Please, come in and have a seat."

My Little Bunny's grandfather and my mother were now here to visit me. The fact that the two of them were now married made for a strange dynamic for me and my Little Bunny. My mom married her grandfather. Normally, when your parent marries someone else, they become your stepparent, even when you're an adult. For us though, my stepfather is also my grandfather in law. And for my Little Bunny, her mother-in-law is her step grandmother. That is very hard to process sometimes.

When Samuel got in moods like this one, where he was hyperactively protective of his granddaughter, it just made things feel super weird to me. I don't know why, it just did. He was so intense lately. And it all started to happen after the aging process reversed itself for him and Mom. Now that both he and my mother only looked to be about thirty-five to forty at the most, Samuel acted like a big kid. It was actually exhausting.

"Hello, sweetheart." Mom came around my desk as I went to get up and hugged me around my waist. She kissed my cheek as I leaned down toward her.

"Is there something that I can do for the two of you?" I knew what was coming, I knew what this was going to be about, but that didn't stop me from hoping I was wrong and therefore pretending like I didn't.

"Yeah, you can help me." Samuel snapped at me. "You can tell me why you're just sitting here on your ass while my granddaughter is in a damn coma. What are you doing to help her? How are you going to save her? When are you going to bring her back?" Samuel was so angry that he was hyperventilating.

"Honey, please, calm down. Reece has told you everything already. There is nothing for us to do now but wait. I know that you are upset but there is nothing else to do." Mom sounded like she was trying to handle a ticking time bomb with caution. He better not be taking his anger out on her. I would kill the bastard. Little Bunny's grandfather or not. That is my mother, and no one will hurt her.

"But Lila, Trinity is still in a coma. It's been six weeks now. For crying out loud, how long do we have to wait?"

"I already told you, Samuel. Trinity is in the underworld. Her soul left her body through a magic door that disappeared with her. No one can follow her. No one can bring her back. No one can do it because no one knows how to get to the underworld. There is nothing for us to do. If I could go there after her, I would do it in a heartbeat. I would have followed her the moment that I got home if I could. But there is nothing that I can do right now."

The pain, the heartache, the fear, all of it was visible on Samuel's face right now. I knew that he was hurting. He didn't understand what was going on. He didn't understand how to navigate this situation. It was the same for me, Reagan, Rika, and Talia at first.

However, the kids and I had each other and a lot of people that were there for us. My Little Bunny's family wasn't exactly that lucky. They didn't have the same support that I had had. They had been left to deal with this on their own, and that was my fault.

I think that I should have brought them all here. Not just when I told them what happened, but for the entire duration of this incident. For all of this. I think that I need to take better care of them.

"How about this, Samuel, all of you come to stay at the castle for now. You and Mom. Eve and Wesley. Carter and Emmalee. Even Gloriana, Trevor, Valerian, and Daciana. We will get everyone that is related to Trinity to come stay here and we will work this out ourselves."

"How in the hell does having a fucking family reunion help anything? What is that going to solve? This isn't a game, Reece. You need to be a man, to be an Alpha."

My blood boiled at his words. OK, I might have lied a little bit earlier when I said that I was doing good. It was more or less just me pretending like I wasn't wanting to scream every five seconds. This though, this pissed me off.

"I will pretend like you didn't just say that for the time being, Samuel. I know that you are upset and feeling stressed out. However, never speak to me like that again."

"Like hell I won't. You're supposed to be Trinity's husband. You're supposed to love her. Yet all you do is continue on in life like nothing happened at all. What the hell do you expect from me besides contempt." Samuel was not done trying to push me, and I was doing my best to remain as calm as possible.

"How dare you!" I snapped at him. "I have not been able to stop worrying about Trinity since the moment that I got the call to come home. I have been beside myself with guilt, filled with rage, and cried myself to sleep. But you want to know something else, Samuel? I have also been here for the kids. I have held myself together for them. I have to keep my emotions in check. I have to keep them going. So, excuse the fucking shit out of me if I haven't been searching the world for an entrance into hell. I have, however, kept the people close to me that can reach out to Trinity and let me know how she is doing in the underworld. I am doing all that I can. I am doing everything that is in my power to make sure that she is safe and that all six of the kids are healthy. Or did you fucking forget that Trinity is pregnant right now as well? I need to be here for all of my children. And when my wife comes back to me, when she wakes up again, I will do everything in my power to keep this from happening to her again. I will stay by her side every minute of every day if I have to. But I will not let you fucking tell me that I am not doing all that I can or that I am not a man or an Alpha. I am still your Alpha, and I can make you submit to me. So, if you don't want to see exactly what that is like, then I suggest you watch your fucking tongue. Got it?"

"I would love to see you fucking-." Samuel started to argue again before he was interrupted by a very scary, and very angry sounding voice.. It was a voice that was strong enough to rattle the windows with its loud boom as it cut through the space around us.

Chapter 695 - 112- Reece – Wrath Part 2 (VOLUME 4)

7-9 minutes

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Reece

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"ENOUGH!" Mom bellowed so loudly that I winced and put my hands over my ears. I saw that I wasn't the only one either. Samuel had done the exact same thing. He was hunched over and cowering in fear of my mom's booming voice.

"What the hell, Mom?" I snapped at her after my ears had recovered a little bit.

"Don't give me that tone of voice, Reece. I swear by the Goddess, I will turn you over my knee and beat your ass so hard you won't be able to sit right for hours."

"Ha ha." I heard Samuel chuckle in response to my mother's harsh words. It pissed me off, but I didn't want to say anything just then. If I did, then my mother was likely to hurt me.

"Oh, just shut up Samuel. I love you, but if you keep up this attitude, I will kick your ass so hard, you will no longer be immortal. You'll wind up some time in the past and you won't know how to get back here. If you don't believe me then keep testing my nerves and see if I'm kidding."

Mom was fuming mad. I swear I could see smoke coming out from her ears, and there was definitely fire in her eyes and some sort of ethereal evilness coming out of her. But she wasn't done yet, so I wasn't going to say anything.

"I am tired of the whining and complaining." She was glaring at Samuel when she said that part. At least she didn't try claiming that I had been whining. "And I am tired of the big macho man attitude." That time she looked from him to me and then back again. OK, so I guess that applied to both of us. "The two of you are going to get along. You're going to shut up about this whole ordeal, and you're going to just wait for the day that Trinity wakes up again. I can't wait for her to return to us either. She is my one and only daughter in-law, she is the mother of my precious grandchildren, and she is the woman that has been leading our people. She is a very important person not to just me and the two of you, but to the entire world. I love her. I miss her. And I want to cry and rant just like the two of you, but I don't. So do me a favor and stop fucking bickering before I hurt the both of you."

"Yes, dear." Samuel nodded and answered her at the same time that I spoke.

"Yes, Mommy." I had my head lowered and didn't look her in the eyes. She was scary sometimes.

"Good. See, was that so damn hard? Hahh." She rolled her eyes and sighed before she continued.

"Reece, I liked your idea of us all being here though. That way we all know right away when she wakes up. Not to mention, it will give all the kids time to be together. I think it's time to have all of the family here. But that means you need to include Juniper and Paul, Vincent and Heather, Cedar and Acacia, David and Rawlyne, Shawn and Dietrich, Shane and Falena, Jackson and Melita, Devon and Ella, Gina, Roisin, Abigail, Peter, Crawford, and Eldrige. You need to have everyone that she considers family here with her. Don't just include those that she is related to by blood, bring those that she had love for."

"You're right, Mom." I nodded at her as I agreed.

"I know I am." She snapped at me. "Now hush. I didn't tell you to talk yet." She was glaring at me. "There is a lot more to talk about and discuss."

I snapped my mouth shut and didn't say another word until she told me to. I still had that ghost of a sensation. That one that I got a long time ago. That feeling of a book smacking into the back of my head so hard that it would have cracked a human skull. Damn, my mom was a fucking beast.

For the next half of an hour or so, the three of us talked about what we needed to do. And by that I mean that my mom lectured me on what I needed to do while Samuel and I sat in our chairs like bad little boys that were getting lectured. It was brutal, but at least we had a plan.

"HAHH!" When mom and Samuel left my office, I audibly sighed and nearly slumped out of my chair. I swear, the sigh was so loud that I thought my mom had heard it and was going to come back into the room to lecture me some more. I definitely did not want that to happen.

"Hahh!" I sighed again, quite a bit softer and quieter this time. "Damn. I am going to be even more busy now. Mom gave me a huge list of people to call and 'summon' to the castle. And she told me that I

needed to do it and not push it off onto someone else. She had something about this being a family business, so it was something that needed to be taken care of by the family. And since I was the "head" of the family while my Little Bunny was away, that meant that it was my duty to take care of it. Then she reminded me that Trinity would do it herself if she were here.

Dammit. Mom wasn't playing fair. She was manipulating me and using that scary power of hers to force me into submission. That and I just really, really didn't want to be hit in the head with a book again. Or for my mom to turn me over her knee and beat my ass. Yeah, that would be a hard one to explain to people. I could hear it now.

"Daddy, why aren't you sitting down for dinner?" Talia or maybe Reagan or Rika would ask me as I stood to eat my meal.

"Well, sweetheart, Daddy fell down today." I would try to explain it away to them.

"What did you fall on, Daddy?" They would ask me.

"Daddy fell down on Lola Lila's hand."

"Lola spanked you, Daddy?" One of them would ask me and the staff and family around would bust out laughing whether I confirmed or denied it. It was all perfectly clear in my head. That was going to happen to me if I didn't listen to my mommy.

"GAH!" I grabbed my head as I thought about it. There is no way, absolutely no way in fucking hell that I could let my mom spank me. That would be the most embarrassing thing ever. And I just know, I know for a fact that when Trinity woke up, she would wind up making fun of me just the same. She would say something along the lines of:

"Don't make me call your mom." She would think that it was funny. Or she might say:

"Do I need to spank you, Reece? You need me to treat you like a bad boy?"

Well, I guess that last one could be quite nice, depending on the situation. It would add a little bit of spice at least. I don't know now. Maybe I want my Little Bunny to spank me. Not my mom of course, but my wife can do it anytime she wants to.

To be honest, I would probably enjoy that just a little bit too much. I would end up wanting her to spank me more and more. It would turn into something bad. Now that I think about it, we should probably steer clear of spanking altogether.

Actually, I think that I was just really, really missing my Little Bunny. She has been gone for so long, and we hadn't been intimate in over a month before she left. I was truly starting to feel lonely right now. I needed her. Her touch. Her warmth. Her kisses. All of her. I just really missed my Little Bunny.

"Come home soon, Little Bunny. Please come home. We all need you. Not just me and the kids, but all of us. We miss you. It's just not the same without you." I wasn't even in the same room as my wife at the moment, but I was still talking to her, hoping that my prayer would reach her somehow.. "Please come home."

Chapter 696 - 113- Trinity – Traversing Purgatory Part 10 (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Trinity

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Dammit. I wasn't sure what we should do. Should we go back through the tunnel? Should we move away from the beast that was Alexio Ptolemy? Should we try to sneak around this area and get to the exit further away from him?

Who knows, maybe Alexio will get worried that he hasn't seen us in a while and will instead start searching for us. Maybe he will think that we went in the other direction when we left the tunnel and are, therefore, moving away from him instead of toward him.

Our other option, if I chose to take it, would be to exit the tunnel right here and move straight toward the door. It would be a straight-forward, no nonsense approach that left nothing up to the imagination. It would not be pretty, and it would not be creative. It would just be a race to the door with an inevitable fight.

That was a fight that I didn't want to be caught up in right now. I didn't want to upset the balance of this world more than I already have. What if I messed something up and it allowed Hekate to escape before I even got to her damn cell? What would be the point of me being here then? What would be the point of me trying to stop her?

Nothing. That's what the point would be. It would be nothing at all. And, in fact, it would actually mean that my whole reason for being here was only to help Hekate escape instead of stopping her. I would be the bad guy. I would be the cause of problems. That was definitely not something that I wanted on my conscience.

I couldn't risk fighting with Alexio, not yet anyway. But I also didn't want to take more time than I needed to. I wanted to just get out of here. Dammit. Why was this such a hard decision to make?

And to make matters worse right now, the boys were pulling on my sleeves and tugging on my arms. It was making it all really hard to think.

"Stop it you three, Mommy needs to think." I tried to silence them so that I could work things out.

"Mommy. Mommy. Mommy."

"Mommy. Mommy. Mommy."

"Mommy. Mommy. Mommy." They were all three calling out to me repeatedly. I was just trying to make sure that I got us out of here, I didn't want to ignore them, but I was lost in thought at the moment.

"Mommy. Mommy."

"Mommy. Mommy."

"Mommy. Mommy." They called out to me again, a little more frantically this time. Finally, the tones in their voices made it through my thoughts and I could hear just how upset they were.

"What is it? Is something wrong?" Those tones, the way that their tiny little voices sounded, that was not something that any mother ever wanted to hear coming from her children.

The moment that I looked down at them, I saw that there was fear in their eyes and they were trembling. They weren't even looking at me. They were instead looking down the tunnel, back in the direction that we had come from.

"Boys? What is it? What's wrong?"

I knelt down then, bringing my face closer to theirs. This would allow me to see their expressions better, but also to see things from their angle.

"Tell me what it is. Tell me what's wrong?"

"Down there, Mommy." Zachary pointed into the dark of the tunnel.

"Mommy, there is a monster." Zander was next.

"It's coming for us, Mommy. It's going to eat us." Zayden looked like he was about to cry.

"What's coming for us? What is going to eat us? What is it, baby?"

Just as I asked Zayden that question, I heard an ominous sound coming toward us through the tunnel.

The sound was something like a heavy panting and a weird chuffing. It was very animalistic and definitely not friendly. To go along with the panting and chuffing, there was snarling and growling that echoed through the chamber.

There was another sound that came through the tunnel after that one, as if this was some sort of game called guess the noise or some stupid shit like that. This newest sound was something like scraping. It was like something was pushing its way through the tunnel toward us. Something that was big. Something that I was sure I was not going to like at all.

"Rudy, what is that thing? What is it that is coming for us? And is it coming for us because of me or because of Alexio? Did he send that thing after us?"

"I don't know. I cannot answer a single one of those questions, Queen Trinity. I am so sorry, but I just do not know what that thing is. Not without seeing it first anyway."

"Well, since you haven't seen it yet, and I really don't think that I want to see it, what should we do? Should we run, or fight it?"

The moment that I asked that question, the panting grew louder and more prominent. And, on top of that, that scraping noise became louder and more incessant, like whatever that thing was, it was moving faster. A lot faster.

"Judging by the way that sounds, Queen Trinity, I would suggest that we run for it, right now." Rudy was just as against seeing that beast as I was. And I could tell that the boys definitely didn't want to see it. Good, it was a unanimous decision.

"Then let's get going."

I wanted to just leave this tunnel now. The sooner we left the better. And on a positive note, now we could just run straight toward the exit. We could have our showdown with Alexio, and I promise that I wouldn't kill him, just him up until we were gone. That was all that I needed anyway.

Well, that was what I thought I would be able to do anyway. However, that wasn't what was happening. Because no sooner had we turned around, right there, in front of us was a large, hulking beast.

This beast was at least as large as Reece's wolf form, and it was nearly as black with piercing red eyes. However, where Reece's wolf form was beautiful and elegant looking, this thing was disgusting and nauseating.

Just one look at the tangled, gnarled mess that was this thing's face told me that it was not something that was meant to be seen by the living, especially humans. If this thing got out, if it was seen by the general populace, it would literally scare millions of people to death.

And, to make it even worse, the black of this thing's fur, if you could even call it that, was oozing. It looked like it was covered in some sort of thick, pungent ink substance. It was so wrong on so many levels.

"Mommy. Mommy."

"Mommy. Mommy."

"Mommy. Mommy." The boys were clinging to me and screaming when they saw the thing.

"Rudy, what the hell is that?" I asked him with fear in my own voice.

"That is a hellhound."

Chapter 697 - 114- Trinity – Traversing Purgatory Part 11 (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Trinity

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Oh, just fucking great. We now had to deal with a hellhound on top of whatever the hell that thing was that was pushing its way through the tunnel. I didn't have the time for this dammit. I did not have the fucking time to spare right now. All I wanted to do was to get this fucking job done and go home. Why the hell was this happening to me? And who the hell sent a hellhound and that other thing after us?

Was it Alexio and his fucking 'you shall not pass' attitude? Or was it Hekate and her fucking 'give me your magic' attitude?. Dammit, whoever it was, I was going to fucking hurt them, or kill them. The punishment depended on who it was.

I didn't have time to dwell on it too much though, because at that moment, the hellhound started to attack. It reared back and roared to the sky before slamming back to its misshapen paws with long, lethal looking claws. With its head lowered and its teeth bared, I watched as it started to move toward us.

"Rudy, please guard them."

I pushed the boys into his arms as I went to meet the hellhound's attack. I normally would have put a barrier around them, like I did before. Only I didn't have the time to do that this time. I had to focus on the thing that was trying to get to me and them. Dammit. I should have been paying more attention. I should have done better than this.

I did, however, have time to summon my sword. The one that I had made when I fought against dear old granny. The frozen blade has since gotten its own name even though it is rarely seen anymore. The ice that surrounded the blade made it look scary yet beautiful. The sword was also cold and could freeze at the touch. For that reason, it was dubbed the Frozen Kiss.

Calling the sword into existence was a relief right now. I hadn't initially thought that I could do it, with how limited my magic had been when I first got here, I truly thought that it was impossible for a moment. Holding the blade of the Frozen Kiss in my hand right now, spinning it artfully and beautifully through the air, that was the best feeling I could possibly have right now.

I met the beast's attack head on. It was trying to come low, even with how huge and hulking the thing was. That wasn't a problem for me though, with how much shorter than it I was. I went lower than that monster and swung upward with my blade. I caught it across the right flank with the biting icy shards that instantly bit into the thing's dripping, inky coat.

I was so glad that the blade did not get covered by that strange looking ooze like pelt. And I could tell that I injured the creature with how loudly it yelped and leapt back to lick its wounds. Still, it wasn't enough. I hadn't removed its leg like I wanted to, so it was still able to come at me.

And to top things off, the fucking cherry on top of this cake of hell that I was facing down, the hellhound didn't seem to be freezing at all. Instead, it looked like the damned thing was bleeding fire. And that fucking fire was counteracting my ice.

SHIT! If I am going to make that thing freeze over, I would need to do a lot more damage to it in just one hit. This was definitely not something that I could do lightly.

Just as I thought that, the wound on the hell house closed right before my eyes and the thing was ready to attack me again.

"Be careful Mommy." I heard Zayden's voice call out to me and that seemed to pump me up. I knew that I needed to hurry this up or my boys would be in big trouble. Not only them, but Rudy too. I needed to protect them all. I needed to save them all.

With renewed effort, I started to attack the hellhound when he leapt at me. The beast literally made it easier for me by leaping. He thought that he was going to get over me and get to the others, but I had news for him. I was never going to let that happen. Never!

Before he could even get half of his body over my head, I thrust the Frozen Kiss up and jammed it into the thing's belly. It pierced the hell hound until it was almost at the hilt, and the oozing flaming blood was starting to pour out of the monster dog.

I knew that I needed to stop that deadly looking blood from touching me. I knew that if it did, it would hurt me somehow. That was why I quickly flipped the damned beast toward the ground, spinning with it and pinning it beneath me and standing atop its hulking frame.

Now that the beast was at my mercy, and my blade was still sticking inside of it, I was able to do some major damage to it. I pulled the blade of the Frozen Kiss down from the thing's belly toward its tail. Then I went back up and sliced it up to his neck.

The fucking monster was not almost cut in half with my frozen sword, but it still wasn't freezing over, dammit. It was melting my ice but it was healing slower.

"You fucking asshole." I snarled at the monster. "Just die already."

In a fit of rage I pulled my blade from the thing's neck, used my foot to press its chest open, and stabbed it in the sorriest excuse for a heart that I have ever seen. The thing was huge, black, and looked like it was poisoned and full of death.

With the ice of the blade piercing its heart, the hellhound finally started to freeze over. Starting with its chest and moving out through the rest of it. I just needed to pull the Frozen Kiss from the thing's body and all would be done and over with.

I didn't trust that, though. I didn't want to let things be done just yet. So, instead, I slammed the sword down onto the thing's frozen head and watched as the whole ice sculpture that the hellhound had become shattered into a million pieces.

Finally, the thing was dead. Finally, I didn't have to deal with this hellhound anymore.

I didn't have time to celebrate, though. The moment that the hellhound was gone, the screaming behind me got to be so loud that I wanted to cover my ears. The other beast had obviously made its way over here to us and now it was time to see what the hell that thing was. It was time to see the thing that I didn't want to see. It was time to fight once more.

I turned around slowly, intending to see just what the hell it was, but I nearly stopped at the next words that Rudy bellowed.

Chapter 698 - 115- Trinity - Traversing Purgatory Part 12 (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Trinity

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It took a moment or two for me to process what it was that Rudy had just yelled. I didn't think that I was hearing him properly the first time. That, and it was like me and everything around me was moving in slow motion. Each step that I took to turn around and face the new beast, the new threat, seemed to take forever. And the screams of the boys were long and drawn out.

However, the moment that Rudy's words actually clicked inside of my head, the moment that I actually realized what it was that he had said, I stopped moving so slowly. I felt like I was whipped around at double speed as his words echoed in my ears.

"OH NO! IT'S A HELL SNAKE!"

Why did those words chill me to the bone? Why did it sound to me like Rudy was scared shitless? And why did it feel like things had just gone from bad to worse.

Well, that all had to do with the thing that was coming toward us right now. The beast was still only partially visible as it worked to push its way out of the smaller part of the tunnel, but I could see its head clearly.

I don't know how much the rest of the beast looked like a snake, but the head was only half of a snake. The other half of the head was more alligator-like. Or was that crocodile? I was not always sure, but that snout was more narrow. I think it might be a crocodile head.

Though, honestly, does it really matter right now? I mean, this mutant thing was coming to kill me, my boys and Rudy. Did I really truly want to take the time to guess this fucking thing's origins and genetics? I don't really think so.

While I tried to process the images before my eyes, I acted quickly. I needed to get the others out of here before they were hell snake chow. I whipped my magic out and wrapped it around the four of them. It was both a barrier and a rope. I used that long rope of magic to pull them with me as I ran out of the tunnel and into the open air.

Now that I had them all safe and secured, I turned to face the monster that was the hell snake. It was just emerging from the tunnel. Squeezing its way through it like it was being pushed from a tube.

The more that I watched the beast, the more terrifying it became. The monster's head was almost all crocodile. It was about three to four feet wide. Its jaws were filled with foot long, razor sharp teeth. And the eyes on its head were trained right onto me.

It was even textured and colored much like a crocodile. Specifically like a saltwater crocodile. There were two sets of ridges on its snout that ran down from the eyes. And there were even ridges that went down the back of the things head and to its tail. Though the closer it got to the tail, the more spike-like those ridges got. And the thing was dark green, almost green enough to be black if it wasn't so bright over here right now. And that brightness, of course, was coming from the flames of punishment.

That beast just didn't look right. Even with the rest of the thing looking like a snake, it was still so wrong to my eyes. It was long and skinny when it came out of the tunnel. However, as it coiled itself in front of me, it wasn't as thin anymore. It was like the thing had stretched itself out to fit through the cave and was now going back to normal. It was still long though, that wasn't the issue. As it came out of the tunnel, it looked to me like it was at least sixty feet long, if not longer.

I had just a moment to think about something as well. When the thing was moving through the tunnel, I swear I heard something that sounded like claws digging into the ground to push it through. Where were those claws now?

Was it possible that the hell snake's ridges and spikes were making the scraping noise? Or was there something more sinister about this beast than I knew? I really, really, really hoped that it was the former of those two possibilities and not that this thing had hidden feet.

"Queen Trinity, you cannot fight that thing. Not with that sword. It is armored. Its body cannot be pierced." Rudy called out to me from his place of safety.

"Yeah, well, I need to try, don't I? I need to protect you and the boys. I need to kill this thing so that we can move on." I was doing my best to sound confident.

"We need to run, Queen Trinity. We need to get out of here. We need to leave that thing back here. You cannot kill it."

"Give me a chance first, Rudy. I need to try."

Despite what he was saying, I decided to insist on fighting the monster in front of me. I would never know what I was capable of doing if I didn't try, right? I needed to see if I was able to kill this thing so that not only would I, Zachary, Zander, Zayden and Rudy be safe for the time being, but I didn't have to worry about it coming after us later.

I stood my ground, gripped my sword with two hands, and launched myself forward to attack.

I flipped through the air, spinning just enough so that I would land on the hell snake's head. Or the back of it at least. I was facing the others, so that I could keep an eye on them if I needed to. However, I was putting my all into fighting this thing.

The hell snake knew that I was on the back of its head, and it didn't like that one bit. The thing started to shake its head from side to side in an attempt to rid itself of me. I had to do my best not to go flying off into the distance.

Not only that, but the beast started to smash itself against the rocky wall next to us to knock me off. If it kept that up, it would eventually work. Not to mention, I could tell that its tail was whipping around. Was it trying to knock me off like that as well?

Something told me this beast wasn't all that smart. It was going to hit itself with its own tail if it kept up what it was doing. Not to mention it was probably giving itself a nasty ass headache.

'OK Trinity, just kill it and go.' I gave myself a mental pep talk as I prepared to deal the final blow. I wanted to get out of here before there were any more monsters that came after us.

After fortifying my nerves with the mental boost, I once again grabbed the Frozen Kiss in two hands and threw my arms down toward the monster with all my might. I was aiming for the back of its skull, intent to give it history's worst brain freeze ever.

Only I failed at that.. I failed miserably.

Chapter 699 - 116- Trinity – Traversing Purgatory Part 13 (VOLUME 4)

6-8 minutes

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Trinity

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The frozen blade of my enchanted sword shattered against the monster's head. Its armored scales were too powerful for the sword to penetrate at all. Not to mention the resulting vibrations from the sword's destruction rattled through me and almost made me fall off of the hell snake.

"MOMMY!"

"MOMMY!"

"MOMMY!"

"Queen Trinity!" The four people hiding out in my magic barrier were frantically calling for me as I tried desperately to catch myself. I managed, just barely, to stay on top of the hell snake, but I no longer had my sword with me.

I would be able to reconjure it, to bring it to me again, but it wouldn't work anyway, so why bother? No, I needed to think of something else. I needed to figure out what I was going to do. I needed to get out of the way before that snake's tail hit me and pierced through me with its long spikes.

Just as I sensed that the hell snake was about to hit me, I leapt into the air again. I did something that I hadn't done in a long time. I had created a wind platform for me to land on and perched myself in the air to watch the snake.

There was blood. The snake was bleeding. Only it wasn't bleeding from its head where its massive tail had just landed a blow that would have killed most creatures. No, this massive hell snake was bleeding from its tail.

The hell snake was rearing and thrashing about, definitely in pain. The blood from the snake's tail was showering the area around it as the tail flung all around. It was hard to see with all of the movement that the snake was making, but I believe that the snake had lost one of its spikes when it struck itself in the head.

There was a missing piece of the tail that was pink and red rather than green. And the blood seemed to be pouring from that spot.

Before I could even formulate a plan that would allow me to use that wound as a way to get to the beast's vulnerable body, the damn thing started to heal itself. Just like the fucking hellhound had done, the snake was closing its wound up. And I knew that the moment it did, it would attack again.

I needed to get us out of here while it was injured and distracted. I needed to get us all out of the way before that thing decided to come at me once again. And I knew just how I should get us out of here too.

I pulled the rope of magic toward me, the one that was wrapped around the boys and Rudy. I pulled them into the air to where I was perched on my platform of wind. I hadn't expected this maneuver to get the reaction that it did.

While it was understandable for the boys to get scared because of their age, they had been falling through the skies with me every time that we went through a door. They were apparently getting used to the sensation of moving through the air and sky.

Rudy on the other hand, apparently didn't like heights. The moment that I started to pull him up into the air with me, he screamed. He literally screamed like a little girl that was terrified of a spider or something like that.

"NO! NO! NO! NO! QUEEN TRINITY! NO! NO! NO! NO! PLEASE STOP! PLEASE HELP ME! QUEEN TRINITY! AHHHHH!" He was almost nonstop with it until I had him standing on the platform next to me.

Actually, he was still screaming on the platform as well. He didn't stop until I slapped him in the face and called out to him.

"RUDY!" The moment that he felt the stinging slap, he hushed and looked at me. "You're fine. But we need to run, or we won't be fine for much longer." I spoke firmly and a little more sternly than I had planned to.

"Y..y..yes. You're right. I..I'm sorry, Queen Trinity." He hung his head as if he were embarrassed by what he had just done.

"It's fine, Rudy, but we need to go. Now." I pulled him to his feet and then pointed in the direction of the door. "I will make us a path, but you need to run. Run like your life depends on it, Rudy, because it does. We need to get to that door before that beast gets to us."

"Yes. I understand, Queen Trinity." He was nodding as he looked at the nonexistent path that I had yet to make for us.

"Don't worry, Rudy. The path will be there, just trust me and follow me." I picked up Zachary and held him in my arm. "Help me with the boys and follow me. That's all you need to do."

"I understand." I could still see the fear in his eyes as he nodded at me but there was nothing else for me to do. He took the other two boys and was ready to run. I think he thought that if I was going to have him hold my children while he ran, I would definitely make sure that the bridge was there.

"Let's go."

I took off running. The moment that I did, a glittering, barely there, green bridge appeared in front of me. I knew that Rudy would be able to see it as well, even if it wasn't fully solid at the moment.

The bridge didn't need to be solid though. It was firm enough to hold us and more if I needed it to. Not to mention, this was a magical bridge that had other magical properties. This bridge here was helping to move us forward as we ran. It was like running on a quickly moving sidewalk. It made me feel like I was moving at hyper speed again. Only, this time, I wasn't the only one that was going that fast.

With Zachary in my arms, I ran as hard and fast as I could. I heard that Rudy was right there behind me, not struggling nor was he out of breath. He was just running fast as he held the boys in his arms.

We hadn't taken more than a few dozen steps though, when I heard the snake start to follow us again. The thing's massive body was scraping across the ground, and I once again heard that scraping noise that had been in the tunnel. I didn't know what that sound was, but I truly hoped that I would never find out.

The hell snake screeched and I felt a disturbance in the magic behind me as it struck through the bridge. It was aiming for us, but thankfully we were already well ahead of it. We just needed to keep going, we needed to make sure that we got to the door before the snake.

And when we got there, I needed to make sure that Alexio didn't try to stop us from going through. I didn't know what I was going to do if he blocked the door, and the snake came up on me from behind.. Yeah, that just wasn't a good train of thought.

Chapter 700 - 117- Trinity - Exiting Purgatory (VOLUME 4)

Trinity

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After several minutes of running full out on the moving bridge that I had made, I could finally see the door in the distance. And, of course, that meant that I could also see the massive Greek warrior that was Alexio.

I know that it was just a trick of the light or my imagination, one of the two, but it almost seemed like Alexio was even larger than he had been before. He looked like a massive, and deadly, giant that was standing guard over his golden goose at the very top of the beanstalk. If he started to talk in rhymes when I got closer to him and spoke about smelling my blood, then I was going to call bullshit on this entire thing. That would just be too off the wall for me right now.

Whether he was straight out of mother goose's book of tales or not, I needed to get past him and get the golden goose. The golden goose, in this case, being the door out of Purgatory. It shouldn't be too hard to do that, should it?

"Queen Trinity, I see the door." Rudy called out to me as if I hadn't already seen the thing standing off in the distance.

"But it's surrounded by the big bad monster guard." Zachary added from his place in my arms. "What are you going to do, Mommy?" He asked me, amazing me again with how much better he and the other two had gotten with their talking.

"I will think of something, baby. Don't you worry. Mommy will think of something to get us out of here." I patted him on the back as I spoke. I was trying to calm him down and comfort him as best as I could.

Once we got a little closer to the door, it was very easy for me to see that Alexio had spotted us in the sky. His eyes were trained on the spot that was just in front of me at all times, or that's what it felt like as his eyes followed me along the path.

Now that the monster of a man knew where I was, where we all were, I could see an evil sneer spread across his face. He was both excited to see me and fight me, but also angry and pissed off because I was

ruining the order of the underworld or some stupid shit like that. I had been through so much since I had gotten here, so much that I didn't even want to think about it all, and it wasn't even over yet.

"I SEE YOU, SELF-PROCLAIMED GODDESS! YOU CANNOT ESCAPE FROM ALEXIO PTOLEMY!" His bellowed voice was even louder than before. And I heard it perfectly clear from all the way over here.

I chose to ignore him. I didn't want to respond to him right now because I didn't want to take my mind off the plan that I was formulating. But also, I didn't want to dignify his attitude with a response.

The plan that I had was not much of one, but it was all I could think of right now. I didn't know how else I was going to get past the beast of a man and avoid the beast of a demon monster behind me. And I had to do all that while protecting the four people that were counting on me. There was just way too much for me to deal with right now.

I was going to have the moving wind bridge take us directly to the door. While we ran, the bridge would propel us through his legs and right into the door. I needed to time this perfectly, or it would not work at all.

I had confidence that it would work. Or at least blind optimism that was bordering on insanity. It was all that I could come up with in the limited amount of time that I had. And there truly was a possibility that it might work. Just a little, itty bitty tiny speck of dust sized chance. But that was still a chance, nonetheless.

"Queen Trinity, why is the bridge lowering? Why is it going toward the ground?" I could hear Rudy's fear and shock as he started to panic behind me. "The bridge is taking us right toward Alexio. Why? What is going on?"

"It's not taking us to Alexio, it's taking us to the door behind him. It just so happens that the path to the door is between his feet." I didn't want to do this anymore than he did, but I didn't see any other way to the door. He would get us very easily if we went through the air around him. Going through his feet would throw him off balance and give us a chance.

"I AM GOING TO DESTROY YOU HERE AND NOW, FAKE GODDESS! I AM GOING TO RETURN ORDER TO THIS REALM!" Alexio was still yelling at us while we approached him fast. I didn't even pay any attention though. I didn't want to stop listening to the hell snake approaching me from behind. "YOU WILL REGRET THE DAY THAT YOU EVER MESSED WITH ME, ALEXIO PTOLE-!" Alexio faltered and stopped speaking for a moment before he bellowed at me again. "YOU BROUGHT A HELL SNAKE TO BATTLE ME! ARE YOU TOO FRIGHTENED TO FIGHT ME ON YOUR OWN?! YOU ARE PATHETIC, FAKE GODDESS. UTTERLY PATHETIC!"

Wait a minute. Did he just say what I think he said? Did he just tell me that 'I' brought the snake to fight 'him'? Did he seriously just lay the blame on me? And if that were the case, did that mean that he wasn't the one that sent the monster after me? Well, I guess the only way that I would know for sure would be to ask him for myself.

"ALEXIO!" I screamed his name. "DID YOU NOT SEND THE HELL SNAKE AFTER ME? AND THE HELLHOUND AS WELL? WAS IT NOT YOU THAT SENT THE BEASTS AFTER US TO PUNISH ME FOR THE CRIMES THAT YOU THINK I HAVE COMMITTED?" I spoke as loud and clear as I could. I made sure that he heard everything that I just said.

"WHY WOULD I, ALEXIO PTOLEMY, NEED TO SEND A HELL SNAKE OR A HELLHOUND TO DO MY BIDDING? I AM MORE THAN STRONG ENOUGH TO TAKE YOU ON. I NEED NOT RESORT TO SUCH TRICKERY AND COWARDICE."

Well, if that were true, then I guess that only left one person, one culprit for who it was that sent these things after me and the others. There was only one other person in all of the underworld that was actively trying to destroy me.

I was pretty sure that there were more than just the two people out to get me. Those two being Hekate and Alexio. I was sure that Solanum and Edmond were here, and possibly the handful of other people who I had executed or killed personally. I was sure that all of them probably wanted a taste of my blood and a piece of my soul for their trophy. I wouldn't let them have it though. Not them. Not Alexio.. And definitely not Hekate.