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She nodded. She didn't understand yet she wanted to remain sympathetic.

"I'm playing catch up in an incredibly lethal chess match," I continued. "My advantage is I'm not fuck-nuts crazy like the rest of you people. I don't mean to insult you. I simply want to make it clear how I feel. All the societies are spiritually malformed blights on reality; evil, twisted and predatory."

"But you like us," she observed.

"I'm going to Hell," I risked much by brushing her nose with my finger from brow to the edge of the veil. "I might as well enjoy the journey." Since I returned with all the fingers I started out with, I could tell she appreciated my caress.

Our other guests were getting restless, so I had to end our interaction there. A lone man approached. He looked to be a Turkish/Mongolian mixture and he was uncomfortable with the way the situation had developed. I doubt I had offended him. It was much more the scope of this informal meeting had gone way above his pay grade.

As he was from the Earth & Sky, the Amazons' hostility simmered. I countered that by being as civil as possible. The emissary, Iskender, gave his condolences, I thanked him for his respect and entered into a small conversation. When he figured out who the Magyar were, he smiled. Iskender was a Kyrgyz, a Turkish people from Central Asia, and we bonded over our male progenitors having saddled up on our nomad ponies, making Eurasia tremble.

I was putting forth the effort to make him feel welcome. That was the message for him to take home. Not all the Amazons were going to have their knee-jerk reaction to the E&S's goal. Next came the Seven Pillars, mainly because the Egyptians seemed ready to wait for the grass to devour them before coming my way. Now I had to pillage the vaults of my crafty interpersonal skills to do this correctly.

Two men, endowed with as much racial supremacy as Ursula, if not more, introduced themselves. Slight bowing, polite English and the proper, rehearsed words flowed from their mouths. They didn't look down on me; the reason being that behind their perfect civility, they considered me and mine to be inconsequential. The nice female of an indeterminate South Asian lineage had that haunted look of someone made to do horrible things just to survive.

A flash of the macabre dumped a memory of her strangling homeless people in some back alleys with barbed wire - so it would hurt them both - training, Seven Pillars style.

"Thank you for paying your respects at my father's grave," I started. They hadn't, btw. "I only ask for two things, please," I added humbly.

"May I see her palms for a moment?" I asked the man. The woman was clearly a servant - some sort of Palace Guard/Fuck Slave. The leader nodded. The girl was never consulted. Her hands came forward and they rolled so that I saw the scars on her palm - fuck you, Ishara. I don't want to care about her. My day planner was more than full with anguish as it was. No answer.*www.NövElWörm.coM*

"I appreciate it," I smiled. I waited, keeping eye contact.

"Was there something else?" the leader finally gave in.

"Oh yes," I smiled and nodded. "Don't get in our way. Behave, stay put on that rotting, rubble pile of a decadent and faded civilization you call Heaven and let us do what needs to be done."*wW.NöVÈ(())öRm.cOM*

"Is that clear enough, or do I need to send you both home with your irradiated testicles in jars?" I kept politely smiling and nodding. I was threatening to make them eunuchs with the bonus of having their precious genetics rendered useless. The girl was giving off minute reactive tremors. That was okay. I had been anything, but quiet. Twenty Amazons were ready and willing to make my threat a reality.

I wasn't sure how they would break into Fermi Labs for the radiological material, but their resourcefulness never failed to amaze me. The two guys from the Seven Pillars were standing there, not sure what to do next. I had insulted and threatened them - emissaries. Didn't they realize Amazons had been killing poor bastards entreating them for peace for several millennia?

"Beat it," I snapped with authority. "I'm done with you. Take my words back to your masters and pray they excuse your gutless reaction. Don't let the airport hit you in the ass." Ugly American? I was the God Damn Bearded Woman/Dog Boy American and their facades were finally fraying around the edges and not the least because going home and telling their bosses my exact words was going to be... well, the positive spin they put on it had better be impressive.

They left with their confident poise while the Egyptians approached with a bit of trepidation. Calling me erratic and volatile was being overly kind. My bet was the older male was in charge, but my age and lusty actions convinced them to put the younger woman forward. The younger male bodyguard wasn't even paying attention to me. If the shit went south, he knew he was a goner.

"Greetings Cáel Ishara, it seems," she offered my hand to shake.

[Old Kingdom Egyptian] "May the Blessed Isis bring understanding to this greeting," I countered. Both she and the old man blinked. The rest was in the Egyptian of Ramses and Seti.

"It is wonderful to see you speak our sacred tongue - or a close proximity," she smiled.

Not only was she generally happy, she was also pretty sure a very unfortunate confrontation was not in the offing. The bodyguard knew of the language but not enough to make out what was being said. The young lady and old man were more than happy to switch to this rare form of communication.

We chatted. Things like funerary rites, thoughts on the afterlife and the role of the supernatural in the modern world all came up. No secrets were exchanged and we actually went over some ancient jokes and ribald tales. Buffy's coughing brought us out of our reverie. They taught me the proper Egyptian Rite greeting and farewell, departing in peace.

The Amazons were stirring. It was time to head to the cars then on to the wake.

"I do not understand you," Javiera grumbled. "You insulted multiple people, including threats of death and dismemberment. You struck and stabbed - something, but not before he knocked a women nearly three meters. I am not even sure that... relative of yours qualifies as human."

"I don't know how to approach you and that woman/aunt/whatever," she continued. "Was that incest, public sex, or sexual assault since I didn't hear her give permission for you to do... that?" Whoops - jealousy. Nicole was a half-step back so she could hide her insidious smirk. She already knew I was a bad, bad boy.

"I don't know if this makes it better, or worse, but that - those women are not just my aunts. They are the genetic duplicates of my mother and if you think it is funny that they look to be about my age... you wouldn't be alone," I sighed.

"Is your mother dead?" she seethed. "Normally, I would take a Death Certificate, mortuary report and a grave marker to be enough. Not with you."

"When I was seven years old I saw her very sick in the hospital. I never saw her die, or the cremation, so with my crazy life I'm not going to swear that she's no longer of this Earth," I confessed. "The only one who would know for sure would be..."

"Your father," Javiera answered. I began crying all over again.

That was it. When I wanted someone dead, I was going to personally put a stake in their hearts, starting with me. This shit has gone down the rabbit hole. In that transitory micro-burst, I flipped. Not to crazy. I had spent my life believing in what was real - working out, girls, books, literature and art - things I could touch and feel, even if it was the air escaping my lungs as words, notes and sounds sprang forth.

Now I had to take things on faith. Not 'faith' as in the calculated possibilities which is what most people really meant. I had to accept that there were things beyond my senses that I could not measure, or codify, and move my life forward understanding the total lack of a solid foundation I was basing my actions on. I needed to see Aya so much it hurt.

"Are you going to arrest me?" I hiccupped. I was done bawling like a bereft child for a while.

"For what?" Javiera snapped. "If I took this insanity before any judge I know, I'd be on Administrative Leave, if not out of a job altogether."

"Oh yes," Nicole winked at me. "I was so looking forward to parading out the four identical aunts and the uncle

art-primate."

Javiera shot Nicole a dirty look.

"We need to go," Buffy reminded me. The only snag was the FBI guys, backed up by some Chicago PD, who intercepted Javiera as she walked with me to our limo. She had to separate for a minute to assure them she hadn't been kidnapped.

After some rumbling, we were gifted with one FBI 'bodyguard' for Javiera. That was laughable. If a psychotic fit seized us, there would be two dead government officials instead of one.*wWW.növElwörm.coM*

"Did you really stab that guy?" Special Agent Street Moslin asked once we were on our way.

"My family believes in tough love," I muttered.

"What sort of organized crime outfit are you with?" was next.

"Pre-teen beauty pageants," I sighed. "You wouldn't believe how cutthroat they are."

"It is a crime to lie to a criminal investigator," he countered.

"And if this was an interrogation," Nicole sizzled, "you would have to Mirandize him."

"He has already been Mirandized," the puppy yipped.

"Oh? On the charge of Criminal Conspiracy to commit... clarify the charge for me," Nicole grinned. Street looked to Javiera.

"What? Special Agent Moslin, consider yourself to not know a damn thing about what is going on and proceed from there," Javiera informed him.

The poor bastard looked perplexed.

"I will put your situation in context. The woman to my side (Rachel) is about to slit your throat. The woman (Buffy) next to Ms. Lawless is going to snap your neck. They do not give a crap that you, or I, are federal agents. The issue is not what will you do, it is which one gets to you first," Javiera glared at him. "Clear?"*wW.möVElWörM.É(öM*