

xii. the negotiation

By then the Horsemen grew rigid, Walter just laid a hand on their youngest Horsemen. Evelynn narrowed her eyes a bit and calmly spoke. "Are you? You have a unique way of showing it."

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"So," he began to let her go, smiling. "How'd I do it? Easy, you see magicians like to control other people's perceptions. In your heighten state of agitation you saw the simplest choose, black tube roof and your mind built west. The tube you meant to go down was twenty feet to your right. Oh, come on don't stand, sit, sit down."

The guards pushed them over to the couch and they sat. "Anyways, what's in the tube and you're right. While the strobe contained UB letters causing you all to sleep. That combined with sound knocked you out. Evelynn, however, was a different case. From our, or should I say, your files it says that she couldn't be hypnotized. We also added sleeping gas, but she seemed to have found that out. So, we had a backup, someone there to drug her. Unfortunately, she had to be dealt with the hard way, but that was fine by me. A better than on it really was just fun," he sat in between all of them on the couch and turned on the television. "I can assure you, you don't know what happened."

The TV displayed pictures of them unconscious with Walter in it. Selfies, to be specific.

"That's really creepy," Lula commented. "Like really, really creepy."

"I don't think I've ever been more embarrassed, annoyed, frustrated, and freaked out all at the same time, in my life," Evelynn noted.

"Easy stuff, magic," Walter said chuckling. "I mean if you put your mind to it."

"All right, that's enough," Daniel said fed up with all of it. "So, why are we here? Besides, you getting to show off how adorably clever you are."

"Well, to start with, the man you stole from last year. Turns out I've invested quite a lot of money inside of his company. So a lot of what you stole was, in fact, mine," he explained. "Good news is it's very easy for you to pay me back. I just need your skills. Owen and I were like the Beatles if the Beatles were geniuses."

"Pretty sure the Beatles were geniuses," Lula piped in quietly.

"And like them, we had a dream, could we make actual genuine magic."

"I'm guessing one of you did achieve that dream," Merritt told him. "And it wasn't you."

"That is what he would like you to think. My vision was a perfect blend of elegance and technology but Owen wanted it for himself. So he humiliated me by exposing my private files to the Board of Directors. Convinced them that I was unstable."

"Did you take a picture of him while he was sleeping?" Daniel asked.

"He got me kicked out of my own company," Walter continued as if Daniel never spoke. "And now he goes around taking credit for a chip that's not just a key for one computer, but every computer system on the planet. It can unencrypt anything, crack the defense bar wall, open black markets, and spy on anyone. Now, it's being sold to the highest bidder."

"If you're so rich, why don't you just buy it?" Jack questioned.

"So he can get the money and the pleasure? No, besides why would I buy it when I can have you steal it for me? It's being previewed tomorrow to the various suitors. Which includes your target, a South African Gangster."

"South African gangster," Lula repeated in disbelief.

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"Yes, seems like it's up Evelynn, can I call you Evelynn? Evelynn's alleyway. Anyway, how you're supposed to get through security, that's up to you but once you do all you need to do is inspect it and steal it."

"That's it?" Daniel asked rhetorically.

"Well, this is perfect for you, isn't it? You're magicians and thieves."

"What makes you think we'd even consider doing this?" Jack asked him.

"Oh wait, I had a reason, what was it?" Walter asked himself, thinking.

"Oh yes. You see, back home you're wanted criminals but here I control the police, the casinos, the media. I can give you a new life out of hiding. And of course, if you don't I'll have you killed."

"Great," Evelynn mumbled.

"You know what? I'm not stealing a thing for you. Not unless Dylan tells me it's okay."

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"Really? And Dylan's where, exactly?"

"Doesn't matter," Lula stood up. "I'm with him, so you can go ahead and kill us 'cause I'm not going to steal anything for you."

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Evelynn watched as Merritt also stood up and assumed Walter's blue. She turned to Daniel, "This guy is insane," she whispered to him quickly. "He isn't kidding, he'll kill us. You need to make a decision quickly. You're kind of the team leader."

Daniel looked at Evelynn's concerned face and nodded. He stood up, "Actually, we'll do it."

Lula looked back at him incredulous, "What?"

"We're in Macau, the oldest magic store is. We'll get the supplies we need and we'll do it," he said as if it was no big deal. He got up and shook Walter's hand and Evelynn sighed in relief.

"Thank you. It should be fun. Chase will take you to the magic shop in the morning."

Like he said, when morning came they were escorted by a car near the shop. The streets leading to the shop was too narrow so they walked the rest of the way. Last night, the Horsemen barely talked to one another because they were all being monitored. However, now they were free from unwanted ears and spoke their minds freely.

"Steal something," Merritt started off. "For this narcissistic little man boy? I don't like it but what I don't like less is you deciding for us."

"Yeah, and do you like that we're the laughing stock of the magic world and fugitives in the real world? Walter is right, we have nowhere to go."

"But we can fix that," Lula argued.

"We can fix it?"

"Yeah!"

"Oh, so you're officially a part of the team, now? Okay."

"Excuse me?"

"Yeah, I'm sure this is what Dylan meant when he said to work as a-

"A single organism," Daniel interrupted. "That is a fairy tale that Dylan tells himself and tells us. Look even if we get the stick, he'd never let us go. We can't trust Walter, okay? The Eye has a history in Macau, they're the only ones we can trust and if we can get it to them they can clear our names and get us the hell out of here."

"It's a bad plan, man. Also, Evelynn what was that thing with the gangsters Walter was talking about?"

"I don't want to talk about it," Evelynn mumbled as they entered the store. Truth was that her past was an insane roller coaster ride she wanted to forget.

The store seemed like quite a normal looking Chinese store. Except, for antiques they had little magic products everywhere. I was pretty crowded with shelves but that was to be expected with a magic shop. Daniel walked up to the desk and rang the bell. "Hey, hi how are you? Umm, we need some things costume made. Actually by tomorrow, we're kind of in a rush and you have no idea what I'm talking about. Do you?"

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Evelynn saw some Chinese finger traps and was distracted by them for a while. She analyzed the old woman and the man. Evelynn knew who they were. They had hidden it quite well if it wasn't the fact that the oldest magic shop ever, was definitely a part of the Eye. She placed both of her index fingers into it and tried pulling. As expected, she could not get it out. She relaxed her fingers and pushed towards the center. Sure enough, when she so lightly pulled out again her fingers were free.

"You!" Someone spoke in Mandarin Chinese to her. Evelynn looked up to see that it was the old woman.

"Yes? Hello," she formally greeted her bowing, to show respect. Oh yeah, she was also speaking in Mandarin. She learned it not too long ago because she was feeling bored.

"Come with me," the woman lead her to the back room. Evelynn looked behind her but it seemed like everyone would be alright. She saw that the backroom was very spacious and filled with huge magic items. "You're associates are idiots."

Evelynn laughed at her observations and nodded, still looking around. She assumed the woman was talking about the racist incident with Daniel, that she overheard. "Yes, indeed they are," she answered using her native tongue. "But it can't be helped."

"I know, people with your skills, they impress me."

"Do they?"

"It's hard to do what you do."

"It's hard but only to ones who give up easily," Evelynn simply said. "Let me tell you something. I know who you work for. You, your grandson, me, and my team all have the same employer. Do we not? We are all a part of the same movement."

"Like, I said. People like you impress me," the woman smiled at her.

Evelynn chuckled, "Well, you must know that I'm a danger to the Eye. I can find you guys out quite quickly."

"Oh don't worry," The woman spoke in English next, "You'll find a suitable competitor, soon."

Evelynn laughed yet again, "So, you did understand him."

"Like, I said idiots," the woman reverted back to Chinese. "You should go back before they start to worry about you."

She came out from the back, chuckling to herself. She saw that Jack and Lula looked over at her way when she re-entered the room. "That lady's hilarious," she told Daniel as she passed him.

"Wait, you speak Chi-" he stopped himself. He walked over to Jack. "Nevermind."

"So, you speak Chinese and purposely let Danny completely embarrass himself with the translation?" Lula asked as she approached Evelynn. "Can we be best friends?"

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Evelynn chuckled at Lula, "Ah, one step at a time. Friends yes, best friends seems a little too far-fetched."

"Why is that?"

"I've never had a best friend before."

"You are an interesting character, Ev. Interesting indeed," Lula studied her. "Unfortunately, we are going to become best friends and you can't do anything about it." Lula walked away from her, leaving Evelynn shaking her head at her, smiling.