

1357

"Fabric... of existence... What?"

Yosepha smiled again. Thank god it was a friendly smile.

"Potram is one of the three runes given to angels alone. It is the rune we call upon when we are relaxed, social, and wish to display such."

"Wait, what? Relaxed? ... that's it? You're relaxed, and that needs a rune?"

"It does not require one, but it is one angels were gifted, so that we may devote our time to serving the souls of Heaven, without needing to manage ourselves." She gestured to herself, her jewelry, her clothes, her gold lipstick and mascara, all of it.

"That's a pretty useful rune for socializing, I guess. I mean, I didn't exactly go on a lot of dates when I was alive." Total: zero. "But, yeah. Men, too?"

"Of course. Women do not have a monopoly on beauty."

The few male angels she got to really see on the stairs to Heaven were, indeed, utterly gorgeous. And they'd have been even hotter wearing only partly see-through togas, with lots of muscles on display. And, given what Yosepha looked like naked, no pubic hair.

"So you're using potram now, and... that's why it's glowing brighter in my mind?"

"I can only surmise. That is not how the three runes react for us, but... the runes should only exist in the mind of angels. They were created for us alone. No demon or soul can use such runes, even if we tried to teach it to them."

Yeah, well, there were a shitload more than the three angel runes in her skull. If she could just get at least one of them to click, that'd be at least one thing out of her mind.

"I'm pretty sure I'm not an angel."

"Indeed. But, if you can see the runes, and know them, then... then that is knowledge I wish to confirm." With a nod, Yosepha stood up and helped Mia do the same. "As much as it may backfire to give you knowledge and teach you how to use it, if I can learn what the unmarked are capable of, it may help with dealing with the others. Not all of them will have your disposition."

"You mean, they might be mean?"

Yosepha nodded. "At the minimum. So, let us learn what we can about your abilities and uniqueness. You can create an aura, as angels and demons can, but it is not a direct aura. Direct auras, created by grace or sin, are like waves crashing against the walls of your mind. You can resist them. But your aura is like a spire's aura and how it affects demons, or the aura you felt on the stairs to the gate of Heaven."

"Oh right! That aura was... wonderful. I felt wonderful."

"Those auras are beyond my knowledge. They are auras of the world. To resist one would be like resisting existence itself. Angels cannot create those auras, and neither can demons. Heaven can. Her Heavenly Islands can. Hell can, and her nine spires can."

"What about the archangels?"

"I... do not know."

Mia winced. "Vinicius said the archangels are dead. Or at least, he said he's seen their corpses. What'd that mean?"

"That is a long story. But... it is true."

Holy shit. "R-Really?"wWw.novEltwoRm.(c)Om

Yosepha fluttered her wings. "An ancient tale, and one for another time. Let us focus on the task at hand. We know your aura is unusual, but similar to auras of the world. You read the ancient language spoken by the archangels, by God, and you have runes in your mind. The three angel runes, but what others?"

"Lots of others. I don't know what they mean, but I can read them. Which is weird, right? There's something to the runes, and I can see them, read them, but I can't understand them! I saw the horde seal on Livian's stomach, and how it connects to other runes, but I can't activate them, use them, anything."

After a slow breath, Yosepha touched her own chest.

"That is terrifying, Mia."

"Terrifying?"

"No one has seen the power of those runes since Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael fought Lucifer and the Old Ones, millions upon millions of years ago, and Hell still suffers the scars."

"I uh... don't think I'll be able to do anything like that."

"I hope not. And the angels would not allow you to pursue such absurdities, regardless. So, we will see if you can at least learn potram."

"But, how? I don't--"

A gold light encompassed Yosepha, gentle and warm, and the angel's wings spread wide as they glowed as well. Soft, inviting, Mia stared up and out at the glorious display, and the runes in her mind glowed brighter as she did. There was one in there for angel, servant of Heaven, and it glowed in response. The three runes angels used, potram, batlam, and royam, all glowed brighter as well, but potram blazed.

"I am wearing potram now, but also pushing my grace into it," Yosepha said. "That is not normally needed. It takes but the tiniest trace of my grace to engage it, and wear it like a glove that fits perfectly. Royam is more difficult. Batlam is much more difficult. But let us see if you can engage potram."

"Engage it? I don't know how to do that. I don't have any grace or sin to just... turn it on." Sighing, Mia reached out and touched Yosepha's silk, now glowing. "--" Her eyes snapped open wide and her body froze as electricity shot through her. It was happening again, just like when she'd touched David.

Yosepha didn't react. She tilted her head to the side and gently lowered her wings, but had no reaction. Didn't she feel the electric tingles of something moving through them? Something in the angel shot up through Mia's arm, flowed through her limbs, and tingled in her brain.

The potram rune in her mind flared, and the chains that connected it to other runes aligned. It was attached to existence, and angels, and beauty and peace and relaxation and sex and socialization and... and an angel's special grace. Mia didn't have grace. How could she use the rune? It was like trying to speak a language she didn't understand.

But, the fingers inside her knew. They stopped plucking the strings, reached out, and traced the lines of the rune. The invisible digits, guided by Yosepha's glowing light, flowed over the rune in ways that defied any sort of 3D space Mia could wrap her mind around. However it worked, it worked, and the rune came to life.

Mia stepped back with a squeak, and squeaked again. The rune awoke, blocked out her vision from inside her skull, and buried everything in a glowing light. Not a gold light, though. Some other color.(w)Ww.n(c)VEOWOrM.COm

Red.

The light vanished, and something slipped into place in Mia's mind. Like wearing a glove in her head. The rune stayed there, awake and humming silently in her, like the strings that flowed through her. The rune latched onto something, like a balloon on a string, and it drained Mia of something, but with all the hurriedness of a tap with a tiny leak.

She could hold this rune forever,wWw.nOveLWOrM.(c)om

"Mia."(w)Ww.NoOeLWOrrm.cOm

Mia opened her eyes. She hadn't realized they'd been closed. Yosepha wasn't glowing anymore, and she looked at Mia with a raised eyebrow.

"I... whoa!" Holy shit. Was that clothes? Clothes! There were clothes on her body, clothes that fit, clothes that didn't fall off if she spun around too fast, clothes that... that were red.