

“It is said that, in the beginning, the divine was one omnipotent being...”

Krys tuned out of what the snow-bearded monk was saying. After the third hour of their walking tour she was thoroughly done. At first, the older man had been ever so nice, bringing her breakfast with the dawn, but when he saw her, she knew he was going to be trouble. There was a certain twinkle in his eyes as he could not tear his gaze away from her chest. He had been even more gracious after that, his hospitality extended to taking her traveling gear under the auspices of washing it. He even gave her new robes! Robes that were obviously too small even though they brushed the floor when she held them in front of her.

While it was true that women built like her tended to become wives and mothers, not priestesses, she felt that surely there had to be something larger. He apologized profusely that he was unable to find anything.

As such, her wide hips and considerable endowments ate up inches of fabric, raising the robe's bottom hem from sweeping on the floor to a considerable distance up her legs. It hung just below her knees, baring the dark tan skin on her calves and ankles. It was not like she had a lot of leg either, she barely came up to the monk's shoulder. Most of her growth had been out, not up.

At first the enjoyment of seeing the largest temple in the province, won over her sullen feelings, but as the day went on she spent more and more time tugging the v-neck collar together in the hopes of obscuring her bandage wrapped cleavage. Doing so too much only forced the already tight garment to further constrict her legs and make her bust jiggle as she struggled to keep up with her taller guide. Trying to get slack in other places meant she was almost falling out up top. She had settled for playing with her thick, black braid and using that to obscure most of her chest.

Even if she had been comfortable with the robe's v-neck collar constantly being pushed wider as her wrap slipped further with each passing minute, the information the bearded monk was continuing to spout happened to be trivial. She knew every word, of every version, of the Story of Origin. It was a

hazard of being the adopted daughter of clergy from another Crystal Shrine. There were not that many divine inspired bedtime stories after all.

When it had not been myths of creation that she fell asleep to, it was history. Stories about the Beginnings of Witches were common tales the realm over. From here in Khaladstan all the way to the far removed Northern Wastes, many young girls grew up with the dream of finding a shard of their own and becoming a witch. She certainly did.

Above all that, the temple's vast crystal was far more pleasant to listen to. The sound of the spell song swirled around her like the melody from hundreds of tiny wind chimes. As if thinking about it encouraged the song, the soft, persistent chimes grew brighter and she felt her gaze rise to look at the pinnacle of the shrine.

The witch crystal of Alannathea was even larger than the crystalline pillar back home. It was so vast that at all times of the day, its translucent shadow loomed over a part of the teeming city built around the wide hill in which it was buried. She closed her eyes as the music wrapped around her. For a moment everything was perfect.

“Are you listening, dear? I asked if you wanted to eat before evening meditation.”

“Oh, yes please.”

He nodded curtly, his gaze once more traveling down to her barely contained bust before rapidly moving elsewhere. Krys bit her lip, but said nothing.

She was begrudgingly used to the reaction, but it was also part of why she had left home. She had bloomed early, becoming a maiden almost over night. Thanks to living in the temple, she avoided most of the unpleasantness aimed at girls who became young women early. Once since she had come of legal age to wed however, the world had come looking for her. Many artisan's first sons had flooded the temple to fight for her attentions. When she had given a few of them a chance, they had been jerks when alone with her. Their hands always hovering and touching, a hunger evident on their faces.

She had thought those focused on communing with raw feminine energy would be a little less obsessed with her figure. It seemed however, that men would be men regardless of self-discipline.

“Goddess within, give me strength...” she said under her breath as she continued to fight her outfit for some amount of modesty.

She followed the older man's lead to a hall where many others knelt before simple tables with simple meals. It seemed dinner tonight was a bowl of rice mixed with chopped onion and carrot, along with two fried eggs and a couple slices of cheese. It was fare she was used to and it made her think of home.

She picked up a tray and got behind others who had arrived before her. As she moved down the line, she was aware of the flicking glances, the whispered conversations. She was handed her plate by an older woman with long braids of silver hair and a necklace of wide wooden beads. The senior priestess gave her an appraising glance and rolled her eyes. Krys inhaled to say something, her temper starting to get the best of her as sure she was about to be judged for her appearance, when the lady smiled instead.

“Stop by later, little bird. I think I have a robe that might fit you a bit better.”

Caught in a wave of surprise and irritation, Krys thanked her as she felt warmth she had not experienced since she left home. Stepping carefully around those already eating, the junior priestess finally secured a seat near the window. She knelt on the simple pillow and set her tray on a short table. As she whispered thanks, her gaze was drawn once more to the pillar of crystal at the heart of the shrine.

“It's beautiful to look at, isn't it,” said a feminine voice from her right. She turned and was faced with a very big woman who was smiling widely, as if life itself was indescribably pleasant. Something about the woman made the word aunt come to mind, though Krys could not put her finger on why.

She was heavy set, but in a bulky kind of way. Combined with her height, she looked like she could probably wrestle livestock into their pens. Her hair was a shocking light blue hue and was pulled into a braid she had looped around her neck. Even more striking was her bright skin tone. Unlike many in the hall, she was dressed in clothes meant for the road. A hooded cape was still around her shoulders and it shrouded most of her form. Krys unconsciously tugged at her robes as she felt a pang of jealousy.

“The song it sings is so much better,” she added with a wink of a brilliant amber eye before turning back to her food.

Krys' jaw dropped as she glanced between to woman and the crystal. Back home, no one, not even her parents, could hear the soft, but ever present chiming of their shrine's Witch Crystal. “You can hear the spell song?”

“Of course, dearie. What kind of witch would I be if I couldn't hear the song of a spell?”

“You're an actual witch?” Krys asked, her voice rising.

The woman shushed her and she felt a heat spread up her cheeks. The apparent witch did nod however as she put down her empty bowl.

“Sorry,” the young woman said as she turned back to her own meal. “I just—that is, I've never met a witch. They're rare in this part of the realm.”

“Even during the golden age, my sisters were uncommon in this province. History had proven that witches trying to claim power here only resulted in disaster.”

“What happened?” Krys asked before biting into a slab of cheese.

“In the time before Arankant's coven, there was a war between witches. Someone got it into their head to collect all the millions of shards into one place and revive the Goddess—by force if necessary.”

“I didn't know that...what happened?”

“Have you ever wondered why the Witch Crystals are so large here?”

“Honestly? No,” Krya said between mouthfuls of rice. “They're just part of how things are.”

The witch's facade of contentment faded for a moment and Krya was hit with an intense wave of sadness. “They are the remains of those who led that effort. The southern witches all got their wish to know the divine and became the closest thing to the Goddess they could.”

“That's terrible!” Krya said, her food forgotten in her hands as she was pulled into the witch's story.

“They do more good now than they ever did as people, or so I'm told,” she laughed as contentment once more began to radiate from her. “Now, their song quiets the wild creatures in the area and make it safe to travel. The energy from their ever present melody illuminates the nights, keeping the darkness at bay. Magic from them leeches out into the soil, allowing what was once a barren wasteland to flourish.”

“I had always felt the crystals were looking out for us,” Krya said, once more eating from her half-empty bowl. “I never would have imagined that was actually the case though. Sad as having my hunch confirmed might be, knowing only furthers my desire to become a witch myself.”

“And why do you want to become witch, dear?” The woman said as she puffed at a cup steaming tea that had appeared seemingly out of nowhere.

“I want to help people. I want to be a force for good.”

“And what makes you feel that way...” she trailed off, fishing a name.

“Krystala, but you can call me Krya.”

“And I am Siteri of the Hearth. Now...tell me more, Krya, why do you want to be a witch? One does not necessarily need to be a witch to do good. Anyone can do good. As a priestess, I'm sure you already know how much you can do as a mediator with the crystals.”

Krys sketched in her background as she ate. She touched on her past, describing to Siteri how she had hated her peers for thinking so trivially about what they would do if they became a witch. They had wanted power over such small things, like their boyfriends, their families, or their bodies. None of them paid any mind to the fact that becoming the vessel of a divine fragment would lead to a life of service to the realm and her people.

The young woman then talked about her dreams, about how she wanted to travel and see the world. “I’ve never been north of Hamura, so I would love to visit the mountain city of Karajiin to the east or the Wisteria where Mistress Illuna advises the western crown. Even the Northern Wastes would be a sight to see.”

“I could make that happen.”

The witch had spoken so causally that Krys figured she had been dismissive and she slumped against her heels. She set her utensils over her empty bowl and then picked up her tray, wanting nothing more than to be out of the conversation all of a sudden.

Siteri put a hand on her arm. “I feel like you misheard me, dearie. I said ‘I can make that happen.’ I’m up on the fourth floor of the guest wing. Number forty-six. Stop by after evening meditation and we’ll talk more.”

With that, she picked up her tray and departed, leaving Krys with a heap of emotions.

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Krys intended on working through her sudden rush of feelings during evening meditation. Yet, attempts to calm her mind were unsuccessful. The normally soothing time of day was only agitating as she squirmed through her breathing exercises. The anticipation of speaking further with Siteri kept her from falling into her center as her mind flitted between possibilities. The knowledge that the monks around her kept sneaking glances also kept her from finding peace. She could feel their eyes on her with each deep breath which caused her bust to overflow the too small robes.

All of this added up to her acting with a haste she had never felt before. Back home, she would have waited some time after the final lingering chime to get up from her pillow. Now though, she was on her feet almost before the recall command had left the lips of the monk guiding them.

Eager to be anywhere else, she rushed off only to realize she had no idea where she was headed. After taking more than a few turns around unknown corners, she was thoroughly lost. Just as she started to panic, the matronly priestess from earlier came around the corner up ahead.

“What are you doing wandering around the archives this late, little bird?”

“I, um, I got lost ma'am. I was supposed to meet someone in the guest quarters and I went to where they were in our shrine back home, but this place is far larger than my home in Kerihan.”

The large woman gave her another appraising stare, but nodded and smiled just the same.

“Ah, I will get you there in a moment, because first...we need to deal with those robes. I just can't believe that anyone would provide something so woefully inadequate. I really must talk with the sisters about this...”

The woman ranted the whole time they traversed the complex to the dorms. Kry's smiled and nodded, but wanted desperately to be back in her room at this point. Siteri would be around tomorrow, she would have another chance to talk with the witch. It was then however, that the senior priestess invited her in.

After some rummaging through her wardrobe, the senior priestess threw her a new robe. It accommodated her expansive bust line, but hung off her like a cape everywhere else. A wide belt helped with giving her some shape, but it was hopelessly huge on her. She had to roll the sleeves and hem up to even move. The collar was still not cooperating, though for different reasons, as it slid off one or both shoulders. A few pins from the matronly woman wrestled the garment into place, but Kry's was still pretty dejected. Still, at least she did not feel like she was wearing an outfit meant to be ogled.

“There! That will do for now until you have a chance to sew your own. Now, to find your

friend!”

It turned out the guest wing of Alannathea's shrine was more like a hotel than anything. Luxury was obvious and everywhere she looked. She must have had a disapproving expression because the matron assured her that the income from lodgings were what allowed such a large temple to flourish.

“People pilgrimage from all over the province to see the witch crystal of Alannathea. Why not let them do so in style?”

Krys did not have an answer. She tried hard not to look angry as she thanked the matron and headed off to the wide, sweeping staircase. With each flight the opulence became less garish. By time she had gone up four floors, the hallway was much more down to earth.

She knocked at the number she had been told and Siteri answered, dressed much differently than at dinner. She was barefoot, her toes clad in many rings. A simple skirt hung past her knees, revealing the ink of several runes on her calves and the tops of her feet. Her bare midriff was thick, but hinted at an array of muscles beneath. A low cut top served as a shelf for a bust line that was almost unreal. Krys had never seen someone more well endowed than her, but it was hard to deny that the witch was truly massive.

“Won't you come in, dear?” she said, raising an arm shrouded in ink.

“I, um, sure.” Krys found herself oddly fascinated by the play of the witch's well defined muscles. She had never thought about people being attractive, but the witch's body was working its own kind of spell.

The room Siteri was staying in was simply furnished, with just a pair of mismatched armchairs by a fireplace. Through a doorway at the far end was a single bed and a couple drawers, enough to sleep comfortably and unpack one's things. A fire burned in mid-air above the hearth, its blue flames seeming to rise from a fist sized chunk of glimmering crystal. All else forgotten, Krys rushed

over to look at it.

“This is amazing!” She turned to look at the witch, “How are you doing this?”

“My talents lie in the direction of homemaking, so conjuring a fire that needs no fuel beyond a pinch of magic is trivial.”

“But it's coming out of a witch crystal,” Krys said, turning around. “How is that possible?”

“Remember what I said my title was?”

“Siteri of the Hearth?”

“Correct. Now, what is a hearth?”

“It's the stone part of a fireplace, yes?”

“Indeed. So if the hearth is something I can influence...” She laid her hands on the simple brick fireplace and it twitched before swelling into a brick oven that filled nearly half the room.

“Wouldn't you say that manipulating other stone was within my sphere of influence?”

Comprehension dawned on Krys's face as the fireplace shrank back to its original size. Then her mind jumped to what seemed like a logical conclusion.

“So you're here to free the trapped witches then? You'd destroy all of this to bring your sisters back?”

Siteri put her hands up and shook her head, making her lush body jiggle. “That's not it at all! I tend to the crystals to make sure my overly ambitious sisters don't awaken. Besides, it's my nature to nurture civilization, not destroy it. Hard to be a witch of the homestead if there's no where to live, right?”

She dropped into her arm chair with a sigh. “Honestly, I'm looking for an apprentice. This part of the world is growing so full now that I can't keep up. I can't be everywhere making sure the seals hold up. I wish my master was still here. She was truly blessed with the gift to hear the divine.

She told me about the war, about how she tried to prevent it..."

Krys found herself sitting in the other arm chair. As she did, she pulled the collar back up her arm. "So, um, when you heard that it was my dream to both travel and to be of help..."

"I knew that I had to at least offer you the chance. It helps that you've got the build for being motherly without bringing your own children into the world."

"I don't follow..."

"My place is to ensure the spells of the crystals are making it to the towns throughout the valley. I bring that power to bless unions and crops. I make sure women who contact me get help. Much of this city is possible because I moved stone and dirt to make the roads, but also there aren't many children whom I do not know."

"I know this is probably rude, but just how old are you?"

"Let's just say I saw the crystals form with my own eyes."

"Wait does that mean—were you there when—"

"If it is told as a story, I was probably there. I have seen more life than any one woman ever has, Krys, and I mean that in many ways. Sure, there is no one older than I, but I have also seen so many new lives begin in the world around me."

"How do you keep from letting all the death get to you? How do you know weep for those you know and have lost?"

"All things end so they can begin anew," she said, once more puffing at a cup of tea that had simply appeared in her hand.

"So what, exactly, are you offering me?" The spell song grew louder and more intense than she had ever noticed before.

"A glimpse into that domain, a chance to prove your words." She held out her hand. A sliver

of finger-sized crystal rose out of her palm.

Krys withdrew as the stone crackled and the chimes rose to a crescendo.

“Come now, child, make up your mind and do something for once instead of aimlessly drifting to avoid being uncomfortable, or did I read you wrong? Was I incorrect in thinking you wanted this?”

“No, I want it. More than anything.”

“Then take it. Make this power yours.”

The crystal floated over and hovered before her. It rotated slowly, its uneven fractures dancing in the firelight. Her life flashed before her eyes and then Krys grabbed the stone.

At once her hand was pulled back, the crystal making contact with her chest below her collar bone. Orange lines spread out from there, branching and splitting until she was covered in a glowing web. It began to burn as the magic seeped into her, the network of lines fusing to her blood. The song of the Witch Crystals grew louder than ever and deeper as well. The tone was more like the rumble of a rolling gong than the light airy chimes. Each booming note shook her body until her pulse became one with the spell.

Wrapped in magic, she tingled from head to toe. There was a subtle sensation of growth as the power reshaped her to endure the new demands on her body. Her robes shifted against her, the hasty hems pulling back along her legs and arms. Her shoulders widened, pushing the collar open further as her body swelled larger overall. Her wrapping began to snap as the bandages could not hold back her expanding torso. Her bust and hips did not change all that much. Over all, it was not a huge change, but she felt more balanced now.

“Was that it? I expected more...” she said as the crescendo returned to its normal wistful tinkling.

“That was only the beginning, my dear. We have far more work to do this evening. Come, we

need to visit the crystal itself.”

Once again following someone else, Krys wondered just what she could do now. She looked down at her frumpy robes and thought about them being more comfortable. Before her eyes, the stitching changed and the cut altered. It had not become so tight as to not be able to move, but it did not feel like she was drowning in it either. She laughed to herself as she realized what she had done. Well, at least she would always have clothes that fit—which could be a magic all its own.

Eventually they arrived at the plaza built around the crystal. Large wooden gates made from squared beams stood on each side of the square. At this distance, the shimmering irregular pillar made Krys aware of just how small she was even after growing those few inches. The spell song soared as she approached, as if inviting her, but she could walk no further. Even at home, she had been hesitant to be this close to their crystal. There was something about being in the presence of something so powerful which inspired a feeling of being humbled. Siteri on the other hand, kept walking towards it with no signs of stopping.

“Come,” she said, turning back and holding out her hand. “Commune with the crystal, commune with your new sisters.”

Krys glanced at the witch's outstretched hand and then at the crystal. She carried some tiny part of that power inside her now. Why should she be afraid of getting closer? It was not as if the crystal was going to absorb her or bring her to some other horrific end. Still, it was hard to shake the feeling of foreboding.

With each step towards the massive chunk of divinity, the song swelled. It grew from a simple collection of chimes to a harmony that was so beautiful and complex that it made Krys's heart ache. Somehow she knew that she was truly hearing the spell for the first time.

Now, she was arms length from the wall of translucent magic. Shifting her fingers nervously, she reached out to touch the thing her dreams were made of. The stone felt alive under her hand as

feelings of movement bushed against her mind. Something within was curious, an awareness that she could sense moving closer.

“See? Nothing to worry abou-”

The song turned shrill, the curiosity became anger. She tried to pull away, but it was as if she had been adhered to the surface. Veins began to stand out in her arm, there was a notable feeling of something pulling on her from inside. With no other choice, she pulled back with the energy she had been given.

Almost at once she felt stronger, her body starting to tingle once more. She could feel more changes coming on, but this time she fought to contain them, to focus them. Frivolous as it might be to sculpt her body with magic, the opportunity was here. Bright runes etched themselves into her dark skin as she drew on the myths to siphon power from the crystal. They grew brighter with each passing moment as a network designed to store magic flickered into being across her body.

Try as she might to fight it however, her body was growing. She could feel her stance widening as she gained more inches, pushing her height towards six feet. Though she did not get any bulkier, she felt her muscles burning like after a long day in the field. Frustratingly, she also felt her bust expanding as the flesh began to push against her raised arm.

[How did you get out? How did you get free? Tell us! Free us!]

The sudden mental assault of hundreds of mind left her reeling and the magic began to take control once more. A shudder went up her back and out through the top of her head. Glancing down, her braid had bleached into a brilliant silver. Her bust was growing even faster.

[If you will not take us, we shall take you.]

“Krys, I-”

Memories flooded her mind. Memories of a woman so well endowed her breasts hung past her waist. Memories that could not possibly have been hers and yet, the person in them had her face.

The mysterious her from another time stood arguing with others draped in shadow, insisting that there had to be another way. Then everything whirled and dissolved and she was standing on a plateau overlooking the valley as it was many many years ago. It was a view she knew, the one from the walls back home. It was not nearly as lush however, and there was an army marching in her direction.

Someone was standing next to her on the cliff. They spoke of trying one final spell to end the conflict. The her from the past agreed. As she began chanting, Kry's realized it was a younger Siteri standing next to her, funneling power into her spell as the words rose to crest and washed over the army below.

The world turned inside out and the memory shattered. In the present, Siteri had her hands on her shoulders and was trying to pull her away from the crystal. As if in response to her awakening, hundreds of hands were reaching out from the crystal's surface. They grabbed at her arms and face. Wherever they touched, her skin began to sizzle.

Spells she knew in a another life came flooding back and Kry's spat a curse. A two foot crater exploded into existence, the shock wave shattering the groping hands, and the two witches were sent tumbling away from the monolithic crystal. No longer adjacent to the crystal, the screaming faded and the sorrowful song returned.

The runes and burns on her sin began to glimmer. Fragments of crystal drew close, melting like butter and sinking into Kry's skin. Burning wracked her body once more as the energies of magic wove themselves into her essence.

Everything about her expanded, as if being forced to grow to accept the newfound power. Her robes came undone, revealing just how much her body was changing. As she struggled to sit up, she was hit with a massive surge of heat. Her already impossibly huge breasts began to swell even larger. Soon they were too big to hold in her arms, their curves enveloping her waist.

The shards further afield began to twitch and fly towards her, as if pulled by her swelling

size. Each sank into her expanse of dark flesh like a stick into water, leaving behind shimmering ripples on her skin and causing her to swell ever larger.

A pressure was building and it seemed centered on her nipples. Perhaps it was how malleable the magic had made her, but her areolae were inflating from that pressure. The lighter, pink tinged skin was billowing outward even as her bust line continued to expand.

In the midst of this, Siteri awakened. Her face was pale and she seemed disoriented. "I'm sorry...so sorry...Kless, I...I had no idea you were her."

"I don't, mmm, I don't follow," but she already had a hunch. She knew deep down that she somehow was who cast the spell that turned all the witches into crystals. If anything, she was becoming more than that woman as the power of who knew how many witches flooded her system.

"You reminded me so much of her that I had to see," Siteri gasped. "But I didn't think it would turn out like this... I thought the spell affected you as well. How did you get free of the crystal?"

"I don't know," she gasped as a gurgling emanated from her body. The pressure was growing so intense it hurt. Veins were starting to rise out of her skin and there was a trickling sensation from her nipples.

Great. On top of everything she was now lactating somehow.

Siteri's eyes went glassy and she crawled closer. She pawed at Krys's still swelling endowments and licked her lips. Krys bit her own lip as she braced for the inevitable. The feeling of Siteri's tongue on her elicited a shudder and a moan. As the other woman started to suck, she realized just how much she had also grown. The other witch alternated between one and the other, guzzling an increasing flow of milk. Even so, it was no long before a puddle was forming around them.

Eventually, every shard had drifted over and vanished into her body. Despite Siteri's attentions, Krys had swelled considerably larger. Her bust was truly staggering now, overflowing even her lap and yet, they were not heavy like she expected them to be. The flow of milk had tapered off to a

trickle, but she had a feeling this was not the last time. Siteri was vibrating next to her, her body filled to bursting with magical energies.

Krys glanced at the crater she had made on the side of the gemstone spire. It was already healing as lines of crystal grew over the wound. There was a weird kind of optimism to that.

“Well, guess it's time to see the world...”