

MANASTUFFED

A TALE OF MASS & MAGIC



(Content Tags: Dark themes, violence, dubcon, inflation)

II. – Jailbreak

What was it about the feline brain that made it so tempting to push precariously-balanced objects off high places?

Mix certainly didn't know. And frankly, she didn't care. In this exact moment, it was the last thing on her mind. She was pre-occupied gazing into the golden surface of a strange-looking chalice.

What an odd artifact. A cup made of solid gold.

It was encrusted with gemstones and clearly made to look lavish and ornate. But... if you were going to go through all the trouble to make it look so fancy, why gold?

Everyone knew gold was practically worthless.

Mix blew on the chalice, and as a cloud of dust puffed from it, its surface became pristine and vibrant. Her eyes dilated as she gazed at the reflection of herself. Bright, golden eyes, amber fur, perked ears, countless cuts and bruises, and of course her trusty brown cloak. That was her, alright. The reflection was so crystal-clear, Mix could've sworn she was looking into a mirror.

Acting on instinct, a shaky paw began to extend outwards. She *sloooowly* inched her paw to the cup, until the faintest 'tink!' could be heard as her claws made contact.

Finally, she pushed it. The chalice dragged along the pedestal with glacial speed as she inched it further and further along, until—...

FWSH—CLAANG!

It fell to the dusty stone bricks below with a horrible sound that echoed through the catacombs. Mix snickered as she heard a *SHARP* yowl of panic from behind her.

"Thief, *please!* Can we *not* make so much commotion while we're down here?" the priestess behind her snapped.

Mix tried to stifle a giggle, but a smirk peeked through. “Awwwwh, *come on!* What’re you scared of? What, think there’s gonna be zombies crawlin’ around down here in the catacombs?” she taunted with a swish of her tail.

“No. I’m scared of the city guards hearing us down here and arresting us for trespassing and looting. What we’re doing here isn’t exactly legal, might I remind you, thief.” she said with an impatient huff and a flick of her ears beneath her headwrap.

Mix rolled her eyes. “Fine, fine, fair point. And this *thief* has a name, y’know!”

“Well, with all due respect, I’d much rather not know it. The less we know about eachother, the better, frankly—”

“*Mix!* And yours?”

The priestess sighed. “Your name is... Mix?”

Mix nodded, and the priestess simply blinked a few times before responding.

“Carmine. I am Daughter Carmine of the Healing Church.”

Mix nodded with a flick of her tail, and took a second to look the cleric over.

She was pretty tall, especially compared to Mix herself—who was on the far shorter side of strayfolk. Carmine was curvaceous and soft, with a beautiful siamese coat. She wore the standard tight-fitting coverings of a daughter of the Healing Church... and *by the gods* was it certainly a tight fit.

Her chest was enormous, hefty and weighty enough that it seemed to actively impede her, leaving the poor woman constantly leaning on her staff just to walk comfortably.

The fabric stretched around her bust was so thin that Mix could distinctly make out the bulges of nipple piercings on her swollen teats.

“And what in the Goddess’ name are you doing with that artifact? I thought I told you not to touch anything.” Carmine scolded, rubbing her temples as she leaned against a wall to catch her breath for a moment.

“And *I* thought I told *you* that it was pretty silly to work with a thief and *not* expect her to steal anything. *Oh!*” Mix interrupted her own thoughts as she threw herself to the dusty floor to pick up the gilded chalice.

“Any idea what this is? Why’d someone bother making such a pretty cup just to make it out of gold? Why isn’t it made out of copper or something?” Mix asked as she tossed the cup to Carmine.

CLING! “Ow!”

Mix winced as she watched the hefty chalice smack the poor priestess clear across the muzzle, the feline rubbing her nose as she shot a glare at Mix.

“Can you *not* throw things at me, please? *First of all*, making cups out of copper is a horrible idea. Nobles really need to stop doing it. It will make you sick.” she explained. “And secondly, there used to be a time where gold was extremely valuable. Precious metals like gold and silver were far more valuable than useful metals like copper.”

Mix raised a brow at that. “Seriously? *Why?*”

Carmine thought for a moment... and shrugged. “Not sure. Guess they just thought it was pretty?”

Mix twitched her whiskers as she looked at the cup one last time, but merely shrugged. That was a good enough explanation for her.

Crrkkrrrle—!

Mix’s ear perked as she heard the crinkling of wrappers. She glanced up, and she watched as Carmine methodically opened up several large chocolate bars one by one, cutting the wrappers apart with a sharp claw, before quickly cramming the sweets between her lips in a hurry as she still huffed to catch her breath.

One of the oversized bars would have been plenty on its own, but by the fifth one, Carmine’s stomach made a queasy warble as bubbles of indigestion churned inside her.

“What the heck are you doing??” Mix gawked. “You’re gonna make yourself throw up!”

“I must ensure that I have enough mana to—*uurp—...nnngh...* t-to protect us in the event of danger.” Carmine wheezed in response, covering her mouth as a few more belches bubbled to the surface.

Mix snorted, shaking her head.

“Danger? *Seriously?* Listen, lady, if you wanted a snack break, you could’ve just said so.” Mix mocked with a cracked smirk. “No one’s been down here in like a hundred years. What sorts of dangers would we even—”

CRRRR-CRUUCK!

Carmine yelped as she clutched her staff, holding it in a shaky attempt at intimidation towards where the sound came from, unsteady paws searching her body for what rune would be best to channel.

Unfortunately, all of the runes on her that were easily accessible were defensive in nature. On her left arm, just beneath her sleeve, she had a Healing Touch rune. On her right arm, a Healing Milk rune. And on her forehead, just beneath her headcovering, a Resurrection rune.

She’d have to be creative. She’d have to use every advantage she could if she—

She watched as a coffin’s lid caved inwards.

No undead.

No ghosts.

No ghouls.

Just some rotting wood finally deciding to give out at this very moment.

Carmine let out a deep breath, calming her nerves. However, as she did, she became painfully aware of the claws securely fastened to her, a shivering stray clung to her breasts like a lost child.

The priestess glared down at Mix.

“Nothing to be scared of, huh?” she snorted.

Mix took a moment longer to confirm that nothing within the rotting coffin was about to burst to life, before giving a guilty chuckle and a smile.

“Was just... uh... testing out the safety hardware... *heh-heh*...”

Mix gave a dumb giggle as she squeezed, giving Carmine’s enormous breasts a playful honk before the priestess could pick Mix up by the scruff with a yelp.

“*RUDE!* Paws to yourself!” she snapped, tossing Mix back to the floor.

Steps echoed through the dark catacombs.

Hours passed. They were lost.

And not just the kind of lost where you think you might’ve taken one wrong turn a couple minutes back. Mix knew that kind of lost.

This was *LOST* lost.

“We’re lost.” she blurted out finally, yawning as she circled the same corner she remembered passing about seven times now.

“W-We... are not! This place can’t be *that* big! I’m sure if we just take a left at—... no, we went left last time... hm...”

As Carmine debated her thoughts, Mix checked the torch she carried along. The flame was growing dim. It wouldn’t last much longer at this rate. She wasn’t even sure if it would last long enough for a straight shot back the way they came at this point.

“We should probably head back, Udders. We’re running out of torchlight. Every minute longer we spend here is a gamble. And frankly, there isn’t enough copper down here to make the risk worth it.”

Carmine went completely red-faced. “*E-EXCUSE ME?! N-Not my name!*” she snapped, her voice cracking indignantly. “And absolutely not! We’ve come too far to leave

empty-handed! I will not have my reputation stained by working with a criminal just to have nothing to show for it to the church!"

Mix gave her an unamused look. "Seriously? Fine, be my guest. Die down here. You'll just be wandering aimlessly in the dark until you starve. You don't even know if this place has a—"

"*A resurrection shrine...*" Carmine whispered under her breath.

"Yeah, you don't even know if it has one of th—"

"No... **LOOK.**" Carmine directed, turning Mix's head by her ears to lead her gaze to it.

The strays approached in awe. Even knowing little about all this 'magic' mumbo-jumbo, Mix could tell that there was some serious importance to this thing. The grand stone structure dominated the edge of the chamber, surrounded by coffins and altars like a hidden treasure.

Though, it was strange. This entire catacomb had such a distinctly gothic aesthetic to it. This stone shrine, however, was clearly from a far off land. It was made of stone. A pillar-like statue, in which a dim white flame sat between four small beams like a cage around it. Atop the flickering light, a small stone head with pointed ears was carved at the peak of the shrine.

Carmine was in awe, the faint white light glinting in her blue eyes as she drank in the magnificence of their discovery.

"*We found it...*"

"So this is what we came all the way down here for?" Mix complained, picking her ear.

She circled the shrine, looking it up and down for signs of treasure that might have been hidden within.

"And why does the church want these things again? They supposed to grant wishes or something? *Ahem!* O—great shrine! I cast my wish upon thee! Grant me—"

“They don’t grant wishes.” Carmine interrupted, rubbing her head as she clung desperately to patience.

“They are conduits of resurrection. As the temple of all that is holy, the Healing Church wishes to round up all resurrection shrines within the Mainland and keep orderly watch over them to prevent misuse.”

“*Uh-huh.*” Mix nodded, only half-listening. “*Misuse...*”

She circled the shrine one last time, her paw bumping into the coffin left beside it. Mix tilted her head curiously. The lid was ajar. Unlike the other coffins around, this one wasn’t left completely sealed tight.

As Carmine busied herself with inspecting the shrine’s quality, Mix rummaged through what was left inside the container.

She wrinkled her nose at the skeletal remains inside.

Ew... what even WAS this guy? An orc? Why is the skull shaped like that?

Mix was shocked by how good of a condition the clothes that clung to the bones were in. Covered in dust and decades of grime, but she could make out the blue fabrics and dark belts all the same. Maybe it was a woman’s outfit?

Ugh. And more *gold* jewelry. What was up with these people and their gold stuff?

She tossed one of the worthless gold rings aside, and as the bones shifted, she noticed something lodged within the skeleton. Wedged just beside the spine was a rather ornate dagger.

Mix pried it free, looking it over with intrigue.

“*Ooooh, come to mama.*” she said with a snicker, putting it aside to remember to take with her.

And then, finally, she saw what looked to be some sort of missive. A decrepit, barely-legible letter.

The ink had faded to such a degree that Mix had to squint at every letter. Reading already wasn’t her strongsuit.

“Hey, Megadrums, check this out. Ancient scripture or something.”

“*That’s not—*” Carmine drew a sharp breath, and sighed. “What does it say?”

“It says... *‘By her Unholy Majesty’s decree, heed this warning; herein lies the body of Princess Foulheart, daughter of this castle’s own queen. Be it known—let no ritualist ever speak in the presence of Gwenifer’s remains, the words of power unto which would grant her life anew... Vesta-uh-thorum?’*”

Carmine couldn’t stop another sigh from being pulled from her, her face falling into her paws.

“How can you possibly be this dumb? It’s pronounced ‘*Vysta athorium*’—”

CRRRRRCCCCSSSHH—!

Immediately, the catacombs began to rumble. Debris and small chunks of stone crumbled down from the ceiling above. Carmine braced herself on her staff, and Mix fell against the catacomb wall.

“Oh, great. *Look where being smart gets you!*” Mix yelled over the quaking noise around them.

FLSSHH!

The faint white light of the shrine suddenly flared into a brilliant gold, just as the rune on Carmine’s head did the same.

Whimpering in fear, the priestess frantically batted her paw against her own head, trying to disable the spell.

“*Turn off! Turn off turn off turn off turn off!!*” she pleaded fruitlessly.

Mix’s eyes, however, were firmly locked onto the swirling flame of the shrine.

All at once, it burst out with a beam of energy, humming in a sound like a distant choir as it thrust rays of light into the remains within the coffin.

The bones shuddered and seized. Carmine took a step back, biting her nails as she glanced around, as if someone were coming to their aid this far down from civilization.

The catacombs rattled even more as the remains were slowly pried from their container. As they levitated, the strays watched in disbelief as a golden, ghostly form began to seal itself around the bones. Mix dropped the dagger she'd taken, her paws suddenly feeling numb as she watched in disbelief.

Before their eyes, a body was forged from light and flame...

...and Gwenifer Foulheart was returned to this world.

She floated before them, somewhere between a ghostly spectre and a descended angel. Mix watched in awe as the glowing-eyed bat turned her gaze onto the woman that resurrected her.

"What... happened...? ...Where am I...?"

The ghostly voice echoed through the chamber. It sounded... confused. Scared. Lost.



Carmine *screamed*.

Without a word, she BOLTED back down the corridor from where they came.

The shrine's glowing light began to fade. The spectacle of the resurrection subsided, and slowly, Gwen descended to the floor. Her feet were unsteady under her own weight, and she felt herself collapse to her knees.

Mix felt a strange concoction of emotions. She was in awe... she was terrified... but most importantly—

Shit, wait... what's that priest doing?

"W-Wait! Thundertanks! W-Where are you going?!" she called.

"TO GET THE GUARDS!"

Gwen's eyes snapped back to their usual red, the glow leaving her body as she was suddenly startled awake by the exclamation.

"The guards?!" Mix and Gwen practically spoke in unison. Unsteadily, Gwen rose to her feet, but Mix left her in the dust as she made quick pursuit.

"Let's be reasonable here, Kittycannons! You realize me and the Prince's Guard don't exactly see eye-to-eye, right?! Get back here!"

Mix was already wheezing. *Holy crap*. This priestess was running off sheer adrenaline. How could that fat stray move so fast?

Gwen started to take off after them, before realizing the stiff breeze. With a yelp, she covered herself as best she could, even in no one's presence.

But... then, the horror dawned on her.

As she moved her arms, her breath caught in her throat.

Every single rune... was gone.

Her body was devoid of markings.

Everything. Everything she'd worked so hard for... *gone*.

Gwen could feel tears at the corner of her eyes.

No. She'd have to worry about that later. She didn't have time for grief right now.

Instead of letting her mind fray, she took a deep breath, and quickly grabbed her clothes from the coffin. She wouldn't have time to put them on, so with her outfit tucked under her arm, she made chase.

"GET BACK HERE!" she cried out.

Mix may have had a headstart, but Gwen knew every pass and shortcut down here. Catching up to the bumbling felines wouldn't be a problem... if it weren't for the fact that her legs felt like jelly.

Trying to run left her muscles in such a strange, tingling sensation. Her every movement made her body feel as though it wasn't under her control. Nerves that didn't feel like hers. Muscles that wouldn't listen to her own brain without a delay.

The speed with which she tried to move made her nauseous. Gwen had to lean against the wall and catch her breath between sprints.

"Where the hell are you, Bumperbags? Come out, come out, wherever you are!"

Gwen's ear perked as she heard the smaller stray's voice. She was on one of the catacomb bridges just below Gwen. The vampire peered over the edge of where she stood, stalking the feline without being noticed.

Got you now...

She lunged from above, and Mix barely got out the first squeak of a yelp before she was brought crashing down to the floor.

Dazed, Mix blinked her eyes. Her blurred vision honed in on the shape atop her. Holding her by the wrists, a naked vampire snarled as she pinned her down.

Mix's ears lay flat, her cheeks burning red.

"H-...Hi..." Mix stammered sheepishly.

Gwen scoffed, shaking her head. "What the hell are you two doing in the palace catacombs? What happened to me?!"

Mix's lovestruck expression faded to confusion, an ear perked. "*Palace...?* Lady, I think you might be confused. You're not in any *palace*." she explained.

Gwen opened her mouth to retort, before she could hear voices ahead.

"*Shit!* She found the Prince's Guards!" Mix exclaimed, scrambling her way out from under Gwen as fast as she could. Gwen huffed at the stray's surprising strength in spite of her size, tumbling off. Or, perhaps it may have been that her muscles still hadn't adjusted to being alive again yet.

Wait, the 'prince'? What prince?

"But... Queen Morgana doesn't have a son?" Gwen insisted, confused.

Mix gave her a strange, questioning look. The stray opened her mouth, but before she could speak—

"Aeria chalarum!"

Fwiiiiiff... –THWIP!

All at once, Gwen and Mix were suddenly suspended into the air. Their bodies struggled and twitched, but it was as if an unseen force held them lodged in place by their limbs.

Only the most subtle wisps of foggy wind magic could be seen coursing across their wrists and ankles, binding them like ropes.

Grunting, Gwen tried to turn her head enough to look towards where the faintest rays of sunlight managed to pierce the dark of the catacombs. She saw the silhouette of several creatures that walked into view.

Carmine stepped forward sheepishly, leading a group of armoured guardsmen forward.

“Th-There they are, M-Miss Captain.” she stammered.

From the crowd, two individuals made their way closer to the apprehended suspects. The first was an enormous hulk of a gnoll. Gwen had seen a few gnolls visit the palace before. While they weren’t quite as sophisticated as many races, some had been smart enough to form tribes and towns that wished to ally with her mother’s empire.

However, Gwen had never seen one like this.

He was gigantic. Hulking muscles bound in a pelt of dark fur that practically bulged out of armour that was three sizes too small for him. He looked like a walking mountain of protein. He had canine features on a head that looked almost disproportionately small for his gargantuan body.

No gnoll Gwen had ever seen was anywhere near this big. It had to be a spell of some sort. She closed her eyes to concentrate on any magic aura coming off of him, and could sense a strong trace of transformation magic.

He’s using a spell to maintain this size. A gnoll mage? Interesting...

A metal helmet covered the upper half of his face, but his sneering grin and wagging tail was enough for Gwen to get a read of his demeanour. She didn’t need to see his trailing eyes to know that she was being examined like meat on a butcher’s table.

She snarled as she felt his claw trail up her body, suddenly keenly aware of just how exposed she was before the crowd, her cheeks burning.

“Quite the catch, Katarina. Maybe these priestesses aren’t as overpaid as I feared.” he growled with a chuckle.

“Calm yourself, Warden. A catch this rare isn’t to be marred by your prodding touches.” a stray warned as she stepped from the crowd. With a begrudging growl, the gnoll took a step back and bowed in respect.

Gwen narrowed her eyes at the woman. She had a slick, purple-furred coat to her pelt, and downright noble features. Her sharp face was jeweled with bright eyes that pierced Gwen and studied her like an experiment. She wore an elegant guardsman's uniform... but not the armour of the castle's guard.

In fact, none in the crowd wore the uniforms of Morgana's militia.

The crowd all wore iron helmets shaped for strays' heads, and their tabards bore a strange emblem that Gwen didn't recognize. A bronze silhouette of a feline head against green cloth. Who were these traveling soldiers? And what were they doing here?

The only woman who did not bear that helmet was this 'captain'. As Katarina stepped forward, she inspected the two carefully.

"Excellent work, Daughter of the Church. You've not only caught a wanted thief, but a living vampire as well. Though, I must ask, what were you doing in the forbidden catacomb grounds?"

"O-Oh!" Carmine's voice cracked as she fumbled for an excuse. "I-I... was simply on a walk when I heard rumbling from deep below and needed to see the cause for myself. I understand it is against the Prince's law, Miss Captain, but I—"

"*What the hell?!* That is *not* what she was doing at all!" Mix snapped, snarling and flicking her tail as she shot a nasty glare towards the cleric. "Tell her the truth!"

Katarina raised a brow, turning to Carmine. "Is there more to the story, Miss Cleric?" the officer spoke in a matter-of-fact tone.

Guilt shone across Carmine's face. For a moment, it seemed as though she'd crack under everyone's gaze. But with a shaky breath, she shamefully shook her head.

"N-No, Ma'am. That is the whole truth of it." she said quietly, her head down.

Gwen's ear perked as she heard the growl that came from Mix. The stray struggled against the magic and extended her claws, trying desperately to reach out for Carmine. "*You fat-titted backstabber!! Come here, so I can—!*"

Her struggles were cut short as the enormous gnoll seized her by the wrists and locked a pair of cuffs around her.

“That’s enough bite out of you, runt.” he snarled in her ear, his enormous claws trailing down her body towards her legs as he began to fasten shackles around her ankles.

However, as he grabbed her left leg, he snickered as he held it up for Katarina to see.

“Looks like we got a return customer.”

The guards all laughed as they noticed the broken-chained shackle already dangling from Mix’s last arrest. A lingering souvenir.

“Ah, yes, that’s right. The petty thief known as ‘Mix’. How many times have we housed you in a cell now? You think you’d have learned better.” Katarina taunted with a sharp-fanged grin.

Mix let out a mirthless laugh at that. “I never learn because I never serve my full sentence.” she returned with a smile.

Katarina’s eyes narrowed, and she leaned down to grab the stray by her chin.

“That changes this time. You’re not going anywhere.”

“I think you said that last time too...”

Mix didn’t let her smile fade. However, Katarina’s amusement died into a sharp glare, and she removed one of her gloves.

SMACK!

Mix gasped as she felt a sharp sting in her cheek, her eyes wide. Katarina grabbed hold of her ears, and yanked her head up as she addressed the small stray.

“Don’t you dare speak to me like the commoner trash you rob in the streets every day.” Katarina hissed in her ear, before leaning back and turning her attention to Gwen.

“And you. What are you doing in our city, vampire? You’re quite the walk from the Darklands.”

Gwen's face went blank at that question. "I beg your pardon? *Your city?* This is my mother's empire. You seem to be confused." she insisted with a scoff.

Katarina wore a face somewhere between impressed and irritated. Such disconnect from reality paired with such confidence seemed to stun her for a moment.

"Fine. Play dumb all you'd like. Interrogation will get answers out of you one way or another."

Katarina clasped shackles and cuffs onto Gwen, and left the two for the warden to haul.

"Bring them along, Maw. And as for you..." Katarina addressed Carmine at last. "The Healing Church will hear of your heroism today. Excellent work."

Carmine tried to conceal her shame with a shaky smile at the commendation, and a bow—but that didn't stop her from catching Mix's glare as the two were carried past.

'*I'm sorry.*' she tried to mouth to Mix, but the stray just gave a hiss as her response.

As the guards passed through the gate to the catacombs and out into the streets, Gwen winced as her eyes had to adjust to the blinding brilliance of the sun above. Gwen never went outdoors any sooner than dusk, and the brightness of the day sky burned her eyes. Having these fresh, newly-resurrected eyes certainly wasn't helping, either.

But as her vision adjusted, she gasped at what she saw.

Everything around her was different. The castle... was gone. Her mother's palace was nowhere to be seen. The barracks. The servants' quarters. The stables. All of it—vanished.

And in its place, a bustling city.

The town flowed with activity in every direction. Town criers in the streets. Performing entertainers. Merchants selling wares. Businesses opening their doors for the day. Guards marching along streetsides. Centaur-pulled wagons rolling up and down the roads.

Gwen had never seen so many strays in one place before.

Wh—... Where did this all come from? How long was I—...?

None of this made any sense at all.

Gasps came from the crowds in the streets as the new prisoners were paraded. Onlookers and passing commoners watched in awe as the Prince's Guard brought the two towards the jailhouse.

"Yep, that's right! They finally got me! But don't worry, they can't keep ol' Mix down for long!" Mix announced to her fans, giving smiles and waves to the vast audience.

But no one was looking her way.

"What is that?"

"Is that a vampire?"

"I thought they were all wiped out years ago..."

"She's dressed like a mage..."

"Do you think she's hiding her runes somehow?"

"Don't get too close! Don't you know they can smell fear?"

"I thought the only vampires left were in the Darklands?"

Being paraded through the streets like a trophy was hardly Gwen's idea of a fun experience. But doing so *naked* was even worse. Her face burned a bright crimson with every step and every eye she felt watching her.

As the hushed murmurs were left behind, Mix's ears fell, and a sigh escaped her. She elbowed Gwen as she caught up to her, shackles clattering.

"Looks like someone's the new celebrity around here." she teased, the slightest hint of annoyance in her tone.

Gwen just shook her head. "I don't even know where *here* is. What the hell is this place?"

"You seriously don't know? New Whiskerton, dummy. *Helloooo*, capital of the stray kingdom?"

“Stray... *kingdom*?” Gwen blinked.

“Holy crap... how long were you asleep for?”

“I... when I—... It was winter. Winter of the year 424. That’s what I remember.”

“Oh! Okay, that’s not too bad! That was just a year ago! It’s 425 of the Third Era. For a second there, I thought—”

“*Third Era*? You mean... the Second Era?”

“N—...No? 425 SE was like a thousand years ago...”

The two shared a blank stare as they walked.

“*Oh shit...*” the two whispered in unison.

Gwen gasped as she was shoved unceremoniously into the dirty old cell. She stumbled, and caught herself on the bars. As guards came in to lock her shackles to the wall, she took a moment to look around.

The space was littered with broken wooden stools and tables that looked as though they’d been smashed over someone’s head, and a single bucket in the back for—... *oh, by the gods...*

Gwen’s stomach turned. The smell of the cell was... less than desirable, to say the least.

She looked down at herself, keenly aware of the lack of clothes she was given to cover herself with.

“*Uhh, excuse me?* Warden? I had some clothes that I’d like to be given! I was carrying them when I was apprehended! If you could—”

She didn’t even finish her request as Mix was tossed into the cell alongside her, almost barreling into her.

Gwen glanced over at the dazed stray as they chained her to the wall next, noticing she'd been stripped nude as well.

How lovely...

"Not sure how they do it back home for you lot, vampire. But around here, plenty of scum like you tryin' ta hide shivs under your shirts and skivvies. Can't be too careful."

Warden Maw growled with a pleased sneer across his muzzle as he looked the two girls up and down.

Gwen glanced down at the pants of his uniform. Even with the spell subsided and Maw at a much smaller size, the enormous bulge was easily noticeable. The gnoll practically wagged his tail with a satisfied smirk as he caught Gwen peeking. She just gave him an unamused look in return.

"What a brilliant solution." she snorted.

"Aye." he barked with a harsh chuckle. ***"Now, you girls get comfortable. Just a matter of time before the Prince's personal men get here to pick you up for questioning."***

With that, the enormous canine lumbered off towards the doorway, throwing himself into a seat and lounging with his feet up on the table. ***"And don't make too much ruckus. Katarina said I wasn't to damage the goods. I'd hate to have to disappoint her."***

Gwen shook her head, sliding down the wall and wrinkling her nose in disgust as she had to sit on the mystery-stained stone floor with her bare rump.

Mix yawned and followed suit, practically sprawling out on the floor with little concern as to what diseases might be crawling across the surface.

"What a crappy day." Mix blurted out with a huff.

Gwen glanced over. "Okay, you'll need to fill me in. Who is this 'prince', exactly?"

Mix stuck out her tongue distastefully. "Eugh, the ***Prince***. Just a pompous, spoiled little mama's boy who's got the entire city lining his precious pockets." Mix mocked, laying her head back against the wall.

“He basically calls the shots on *everything* these days. His mother lets him do whatever he wants, and has basically relinquished the throne to him ever since King Catsmane died a few years ago. So now—”

“W-Wait, what? Did you say King *Catsmane*? As in... the Catsmane Family from the northlands?” Gwen interrupted, sitting upright.

“I... guess so? Dude, I don’t know! You expect me to read history books? You have any idea how expensive those are?”

Gwen was only half-listening to the stray’s complaints. She pinched Mix’s lips shut. “This is *good*. I was friends with a Catsmane. Their bloodline was loyal to my mother. Perhaps I can convince him to pardon us, or—”

Mix burst out with laughter, practically rolling across the filthy floor.

Gwen raised a brow, annoyed. “And what is so funny?”

“Sorry! Hah! S-Sorry! It’s just... *seriously*? You think Prince Catsmane would have mercy on a *vampire*? Holy crap, you really *have* been out of the loop a while, huh?”

Gwen sighed. “Listen, while my mother was alive, she served your people well.”

“*While*? Uh, pretty sure Queen Foulheart *is* alive.”

In an instant, Gwen’s entire world was shattered all over again.

“But... you said it’s been a millennia? That would make her well over a thousand years old...”

“Do all vampires not live that long?”

“*No*! I-I mean, we live for a long time, yes. Especially compared to lesser races like you strays—”

“Hey!”

“—but never *THAT* long! How is that even possible?”

“Don’t ask me! *You’re* the vampire here.” Mix reminded her.

Gwen deflated. Her mind was racing, and she was... too tired to organize her thoughts. She may have been asleep for a thousand years, but it certainly didn’t feel like it. She felt like she just woke up from a nap that hadn’t lasted nearly long enough.

“Say, aren’t vampires supposed to be, like... *crazy* powerful wizards? Where are your runes?” Mix asked finally to break the silence.

Gwen’s eye twitched.

Salt to the wound.

“They’re... gone. When I was resurrected, the runes left my body. A fresh form does not bear the markings of the gods’ power.” she explained, her voice weak and wavering. She felt as though she could cry just at the thought.

So many years of work... down the drain.

Mix winced. “Oh... *crap, s-sorry.*”

Gwen took a deep breath. “It’s fine.” She glanced over, raising a brow. “Speaking of which... where are your runes?”

“Huh? Oh, me? Don’t have any!” Mix chimed, seemingly unbothered.

Gwen looked perplexed. “What? But... your kind was becoming infatuated with magic in my time. Every stray had *some* runes.”

“Oh... then things have *definitely* changed. The Catsmane family put a ton of anti-magic laws in place over the years. Nowadays, it’s practically illegal to have *any* runes unless you’re using them to serve His Majesty. So, if you’ve got runes around here, you’re either a civil servant, or a crook.”

“And you’re... what, a saint with a clean record?” Gwen inquired with a snort.

“Oh, *far* from it! Trust me, it wasn’t for lack of trying! I spent *years* trying to learn conjuration magic! But it just... never took, I guess.” Mix shrugged.

Gwen tilted her head. “Years without results? What the hell were you trying to conjure?”

“Money, duh!” Mix answered with a giggle.

“And... what were you eating to try and achieve that spell, exactly...?”

“Money, duh!” Mix answered in almost an identical tone, holding up a single coin that she fished out of... gods knew where.

Gwen reached out a hand. “Let me... see that for a second.”

Mix looked uncertain, but begrudgingly, she handed the coin over. Gwen turned it over in her hands, tapping the surface.

Copper.

She sighed, holding it up with a disappointed face.

“You realize this is *copper*, yes?”

“Uh, yeah, *duh*. What else would it be?”

“And you realize copper has anti-magic qualities?”

Mix’s ears perked, and she tilted her head. “So?”

“*So*, you spent years swallowing coins that were literally stripping your body of its capability to channel magic. No wonder you haven’t gained a single rune.” Gwen finally explained, tossing the coin back.

Mix took a second to register the logic, slowly nodding. “*Ohhhhhh... that... makes sense.*”

Gwen couldn’t help but snicker. Dear gods, how did this stray get dressed in the morning without hurting herself?

“So... my mother. She’s still alive?”

“Yep! Queen Foulheart’s something of a bedtime ghost story around here. The vampire queen of the Darklands.”

Mix turned to tell the story as if she were looming over a campfire in the dead of night.

“When the mortal races of the Mainland banded together to chase her to the outskirts of the world, she brought the world’s nightmares and monsters with her, and built herself a bastion of evil. For centuries, she has lied in the dark, waiting for her time to rise again and bring the Mainland to its knees... or something like that! Honestly, my guess is she’s just living out her retirement in comfort. Old lady must have all the treasure she could ever want.”

Gwen shook her head at that. “No.... My mother’s ambitions know no bounds. She is not simply resting. She is biding her time. Waiting for when she deems the opportunity arises. If she is still alive, she is still a threat.”

Mix wrinkled her nose. “*Yeesh, way to be an optimist.*”

“I will not cling to false hope. As long as she draws breath, the world is in peril... That’s why I need to be the one to strike her down.”

Mix’s eyes widened. “*Damn! Your own mom? That’s stone-cold.*”

Gwen had a distant look in her eyes, but her face set into one of determination. “Only fair. She gave me the same courtesy.” she spat.

Mix’s ears laid flat at that, but she didn’t press further. She could tell there was a fire inside Gwen. One that would spread if she didn’t handle it with care.

Gwen glanced towards the doorway. She could see Warden Maw at the table, feasting on trays of poultry and meat.

No wonder he could hold that spell for so long. The gnoll was an utter glutton. Gwen watched the straps of his armour grow taut as his stomach bulged between the metal plates as he feasted.

“We need to get out of here.” Gwen stated plainly.

Mix snickered. "Good luck with that. Warden Maw is as big and bad as they come. No way in hell we're busting out with him on guard."

"I thought you said you'd escaped before? How did you do it last time?"

"He wasn't here last time. The Prince's Guard was all strays before. I'm assuming they started bringing in gnolls as guard dogs after the, uh... last escape. Heh... s-sorry about that." Mix gave a sheepish laugh.

Gwen sighed, pinching her nose.

Think, Gwen. Everyone has their weakness. Exploit his. You don't need magic. Just use your brain.

The vampire hit her head to try and kickstart her brain into a plan. As she did, she opened her eyes, looking down at herself.

Or... use something else.

She smirked. She remembered exactly how he'd looked at her. Katarina may have trained this dog to act civil, but he was a slave to his own feral desires, just like any gnoll.

It wasn't the most dignified plan, but if her mother had taught her anything, it was to use all resources at her disposal. So be it.

Gwen stood up, and with a deep breath, she pushed her ass against the bars, letting a deep moan tear from her throat.

*"Fuck, pleeeeeease. I **need** someone, **anyone**... now! I've been in that catacomb so long... I'm so pent up I could just **burst!**"* she whined, throwing her head back with a whimper.

Mix's face flushed red, and she raised a brow. "What the **hell** are you doing, Ears?" she whispered, confused.

"Shut up and kiss me. Hurry." Gwen spat back, reaching down to grab her by the wrist and pull her in.

There was a clattering of shackles as the two met, locking lips. Mix let out a brief whimper that melted in her throat as she closed her eyes, leaning up to let the vampire's long tongue push past her teeth.

Gods above... this is amazing... It was the only thought that flooded Mix's mind.

While Mix melted in the vampire's hands, Gwen glanced behind her towards the warden, who stirred from his seat, wiping the grease of his claws off on a handkerchief.

"The hell's going on in here? What did I say about making noi--"

His warning faded as he got an eye full of the display, a smirk passing Gwen's lips as she noticed the immediate **visible** excitement on the hound. She pulled herself from the kiss, throwing herself at the bars as a love-dazed Mix fell to the floor, practically with hearts around her head.

"Please, sir! I've been so needy ever since they pulled me from the catacombs, and I just can't hide it anymore! You simply **must** relieve me at once!" she begged, going weak at the knees and practically dragging her claws down her body to present herself in temptation.

It was working like a charm. Warden Maw was slobbering like a common mongrel, trying to wipe his mouth as he looked around.

"I--... L-Listen, I'd love to, but--... K-Katarina said--"

"Oh to **hell** with what Katarina said! She's not here right now! And I am! Please! Help a damsel in need!" she cried, reaching a hand out through the bars at him.

"I--... Oh fuck it, you're right!" he practically roared.

Hook, line, and sinker.

Maw dug his claws into his uniform, ripping it off his body with a burning need. He reached a paw behind his neck.

"POLYPHA ARDURIO!"

Bffssssshhh...

Gwen swallowed nervously as the figure began to grow before her eyes. The gnoll, already massive, loomed higher and higher, until he cast a shadow over Gwen. All he wore now was tatters of torn cloth and the iron helmet that covered the top of his enormous head, hot breaths puffing from the sneering fangs that dripped with hunger.

Maw fumbled for his keys, and quickly flung the cell door open.

Mix's eyes widened, and she tried to reach for the keys as the warden passed her, but she huffed as she noticed no keys for their shackles, only the cell door.

Mix growled in frustration, but Gwen gave her a subtle motion to be patient. All part of the plan.

The warden finally put his enormous claws on Gwen's waist. With saliva trickling down his lips, he started to bend her over.

From a safe distance, Mix gasped at the sheer size of him as his length rose. It was half the size of *her!*

The knot at its base was swollen and throbbing, and every vein across its girth practically bulged in thinly-veiled anticipation. Gwen gave a shaky gasp as she felt him push against her ass, spreading her out, and she quickly held a hand up.

*"W-Wait! P-Please, at that size, you'd surely split me in half. How about **here** instead...?"* Gwen suggested, turning herself around and holding her mouth open, her long tongue lolling out from her lips.

Warden Maw was sold. He didn't need to be told twice.

"Mnnfh!"

Gwen let out an involuntary muffled yelp as the sheer volume of the gnoll's cock made itself known. Even just at the tip, she was struggling to fit her mouth around it. She felt like she was unhinging her jaw like a serpent just to slide it across her tongue.



She held her mouth open as wide as she could. She tried to keep her fangs out of the way. The last thing she needed to do was end up nicking him and losing the one opportunity she had to get out of here.

She looked up at Maw past her own snout with half-lidded eyes, and she watched him lick his fangs as he leaned down.

“That’s a good girl.... Give it everything you got.” he mocked.

She took a deep breath through her nose. She needed to sell the act. She needed to perform.

It was silly to think, but her freedom really did depend entirely on just how good she could make this for this barbaric gnoll. And so, she closed her eyes, and concentrated. She ran her tongue up and down the length of it. She relaxed the muscles in her throat, and let him spear further and further down her gullet.

She felt like she was being used as a bun for a sausage that was twice the size it should be. She could barely breathe once he plugged up every inch of her throat.

She winced, trying to breathe through her nose as she gently led him inch by inch with her hand, trying to take as much of it as she could.

"Hnnnfh!"

Another muffled yelp as she felt a warm spurt hit the back of her throat. It felt as though a mouthful of seed just shot down her, and yet, Maw made no face of satisfaction. He bit his lip, holding on the edge.

That... was just pre-cum? Gods above, fuck me...

That made Gwen all the more nervous. She glanced down as she worked him back and forth, her eyes wide as she saw just how swollen his balls were. He looked like a prized breeding centaur that had been kept from a mare for far too long. She felt queasy just imagining that much emptying down her poor throat.

And yet, as she stopped her motions in a moment of hesitation, trying to consider an alternative plan, her eyes went wide as she felt Maw thrust his hips forward with a grunt.

Gwen coughed and sputtered. She felt bubbles and gurgles in her throat as every inch of her gullet flooded with hot, warm seed. The bubbling cream filling made bulges pass down her throat, and she made desperate efforts to get her throat muscles to swallow it all down so she wouldn't choke.

Fuck. She wasn't sure how much longer she could keep this up. All she could do was whimper and take a moment to catch her bearings as Maw caught his breath in ragged, bestial pants.



Gwen's hand idly reached below her, touching her stomach. Her eyes went wide at the curve she felt. The bulge of a sloshing belly, just from a single load.

Fuck, this gnoll could probably ruin a figure and make someone look pregnant if he got them alone for ten minutes. How long was she supposed to keep this up for?

Before she could even have a moment to reconsider, she felt Maw's enormous claw touch the back of her head. She whimpered, looking up at him with worry written clear across her face.

“Good girl... you’re doing just fine...” he growled with a toothy grin, pushing her mouth down the shaft inch by inch.

She yelped and gave a muffled protest, but there was little she could do. She felt her throat stretch and forcibly relax just to accommodate his size. Her eyes rolled back. She couldn’t even breathe, much less resist. As he forced her back and forth, all she could do was lazily groan and drool on him as he came again, and again...

Minutes ticked by that felt like hours, and Gwen felt her throat abused over and over.



It felt like her throat was slowly turning into little more than a condom for the abrasive gnoll at this point, and she felt overstimulated tears stinging her eyes as cum bubbled from her nostrils and lips. It was as though she were overflowing.

After about twenty minutes, she felt too heavy to concentrate on anything except trying to breathe through her nose. Her belly hung below her and sloshed noisily with every movement. Her arms and legs shook just trying to hold herself up. Her throat bulged nauseatingly with how much of his length was stuffed inside her.

Every time she was brought all the way across the thick shaft and kissed his swollen knot, Gwen winced as she felt his bloated stomach push into her snout. He'd gorged himself on so much meat that she practically had to feel the consequence of it bump against her every time he pushed all the way down her throat.

The warm bubbling of the gallons of cum that filled her was audible, even for Mix. The stray could do nothing to help, simply watching in disgust as this brute defiled Gwen in front of her.

By the time she was finally allowed to pull herself slowly off of the hulking gnoll, strings of cum trailed from her snout to his knot, her lips having left several warm kiss prints across it in the rivers of hot seed that trickled down him.

She groaned lethargically, feeling every agonizingly heavy slosh inside of her with each movement she tried to make. It was an effort to even get the enormous cork of meat out of her throat. As she finally felt it pass her lips, she choked and sputtered, gasping desperately for the air she'd been denied.

The gnoll gave a victorious chuckle as he pet her ears back. *"Precious little thing~..."* he taunted.

Gwen took a second to get her bearings, her thoughts feeling jumbled and flooded away on a sea of cum that filled her all the way up to her brain.

She looked Maw up and down. He'd shrunk in size. He was about a foot or two shorter now, and his churning stomach was starting to look less bloated. Not only that, but he was dripping with sweat. Between holding the spell active *and* the notable workout after such a heavy lunch, Maw was overheating rapidly.

The plan was working. He couldn't keep this up for much longer.

The only issue, however, was that Gwen felt ready to pop like a balloon. She couldn't take even one more round with the monstrous gnoll. She needed Mix to tap in.

Groaning, with cream filling dripping from her lips, she turned to Mix with a pleading expression.

"You need to tap in." she whispered to the stray.

"Are you crazy?! You could barely take him! He'll split me in half!" Mix argued as quietly as she could.

"He's gotten smaller. The spell is wearing off. You should be able to take him. It'll be a tight squeeze, but you'll be fine. You want to get out of here, don't you?"

Mix looked over at the goliath, wondering if it was worth it. She looked back at Gwen. The vampire was reduced to quite the pathetic sight, but... something about her in that state made Mix's heart flutter. Her cheeks were warm, and she was weak to those pleading eyes.

Mix sighed, and nodded, standing up and trying to lure Maw in for his next round.

"Hey big guy! How about-EEP!"

She didn't even finish her sentence by the time the gnoll picked her up by her ears, ignoring her hissing and squirming as he pulled her as far from the wall as her chains would allow.

It seemed he was certainly ready for the next round.

Begrudgingly, Mix opened her mouth wide.

"Alright, come on in for a landing, Mister Protein!" she invited, closing her eyes. Maw rolled his shoulders, ready to take that offer, before noticing the missing fang that Mix had replaced with copper.

Mix gasped as she felt herself spun around, and felt Maw's muscular arms lock her legs spread and her arms behind her, rendering her helpless.

"H-Hey! What are you—"

"I'm not fucking your copper-toothed mouth, you little rat. Trying to fuck with my magic, eh? This'll teach you." he snarled.

"W-What?! No! I wasn't even—AAHHHHNN!!!"



Mix's squeal echoed through the cell as Maw dropped the stray down, her pussy suddenly stretched and corked as the oversized cock buried inside of her.

*"Hold on, hold on, **HOLDONHOLDONHOLDON**—"*

Mix grit her teeth and moaned, suddenly feeling as though her stomach was being pumped as she looked down to see the enormous bulge from her womb.

Her lips quivered. Her eye twitched. She opened her mouth to speak, just to feel her entire body lifted up and dropped again and again, her limbs completely pinned as Maw took full control.

PLAP—PLAP—PLAP—PLAP—!

Mix's shaky screams were somewhere between pleas for mercy and begrudging moans of pleasure, her toes curling as she felt him bury deeper and deeper inside with each thrust.

SPLLLRRRRRCH!

Mix's body bounced as she threw her head back, crying out with a yowl as her stomach visibly bulged outwards, bloating with cum as her womb flooded and filled.

She twitched in his arms, giving weak whimpers as the last surges of cream filling stuffed her like a pastry until it dripped from her overstuffed sex.

Writhing and gasping, Mix was ready to be dropped to the floor and collapse in a pile... until she felt Maw readjust his grip.

"W-Wait—... Wait, waitwaitwait—"

Again, her pleading fell on deaf ears. She gasped, having to arch her back as he pushed his bloated gut right against her, holding her tight as he bucked her up and down mercilessly.

Only this time, she sloshed heavily with every movement. Her belly full of cum churned and glorped with every up-and-down motion she was forced in.



Again. And again. And again.

This time, Gwen watched from a safe distance, eyes wide, as the gnoll pounded mercilessly into the poor stray.

Mix's paws dangled helplessly as her belly ballooned in front of her little by little. Every time Maw filled the poor stray with another load, he'd barely give her any time to catch her breath before he started pounding into her again.

He filled her again and again, and as the minutes ticked by, Mix stopped resisting.

Every struggling movement grew slower... heavier... more lethargic....

All she could do was groan, her tongue hanging lazily from her lips. Suddenly, as Maw thrust into Mix one last time, Gwen's ears perked.

She could hear a bubbling coming from the stray's belly. A rumbling.

Gods above, was Mix about to burst?



Her cheeks puffed. Her belly lurched and shined an angry red, taut and bubbling. Her throat visibly bulged, and Gwen watched as spurts of cum trickled down her nostrils and from her lips.

All the overstuffed feline could do was whimper, her body creaking on the verge of splitting apart at the seams, bloating outward and outward... just for the final load to finally come to an end.

Maw gasped, his mouth hanging open in a satisfied smile. His fur was slick with sweat, and his arms shook.

Gwen glanced his way, and watched him stumble. He was barely able to hold his own weight up. The rune on the back of his neck flickered and flashed. The spell was giving out. *He* was giving out. He was overheated.

Gwen quickly scrambled to her knees, winding herself with how fast she moved. She reached out to catch Mix as the gnoll fell like a tree, wheezing at how heavy the stray felt.

The two girls sloshed as they hit the floor, and they both covered their heads as the looming shadow passed over them.

THMPFH!!

Maw hit the floor with a thunderous crash, his body collapsing from exhaustion. Gwen and Mix both took a moment to catch their breath, and peeked over carefully to the pile of gnoll.

Their ears perked as they heard the faintest snoring.

Mix lifted his arm up, and let it drop back down. He was out cold.

The two let out a shared sigh of relief, and took a moment to rub their aching midsections. Mix made a disgusted face as she could feel the sensation of hot cum leaking out of her from between her legs.

"Nnngh... t-this sucks..." she whined, laying back.

Gwen shot her a look. “Oh, stop—*UUURP!* —*ngh...* c-complaining. At least yours will drain out.” she huffed, looking down and holding the sides of her distended stomach. “What the hell am I going to do with *this?*”

As the two lamented their woes, Mix finally snapped out of it enough to remember about their impending escape.

“Okay, so... *why* the hell did we just do that?” the stray finally prodded.

“For this...” Gwen replied, leaning over with some effort. She gestured for Mix to lend a hand, and together, the two of them pulled Maw towards the wall where they could better reach him.

Gwen knelt down, looking over him and turning his head to see the back of his neck.

Mix’s eyes went wide as she watched Gwen.

“Whoa! Are you going to turn him into a vampire right in front of me??” she blurted out.

Gwen gave her a strange look, raising a brow.

“W—... *What??*”

“You were gonna do the neck-biting thing, right?”

“Yes, but... that doesn’t—... That doesn’t turn people into vampires.” she sighed, pinching the bridge of her nose.

“What?”

“That’s a myth. It doesn’t turn people into vampires.”

“Then... what *does* it do?” Mix asked, cocking her head to the side.

“I’ll show you.”

Gwen leaned down slowly. Baring her fangs, she moved towards the rune. Carefully, she sunk her fangs into where the rune lay, and began to drink.

She felt her shoulders shiver at the strange sensation. A chill ran down her spine as the sheer power of pure arcane flowed through her. She felt a tingling on the back of her neck and watched as the rune she bit into began to disappear.

Draining it little by little, Gwen finally pulled her fangs away as she felt the transfer of magic complete. She sighed, one last shiver passing through her. As she looked back, the fur where the rune had been was unmarked. Completely blank.

“There.” she said with a deep breath.

“You... stole his spell?” Mix asked, mouth agape.

Gwen nodded, and slowly stood up. “That’s right. And now..”

She cleared her throat and braced herself.

“Polypha ardurio.”

Gwen snapped her eyes shut and prayed. *“Let’s hope this works..”*

“Hope? You mean you’ve never done this before?” Mix interjected

“W-Well... no? But my mother did it all the time. So I figured it can’t be too hard..”

“I guess that makes sense why yours looks different from his.”

Gwen’s eyes went wide. “W-What?! It’s not supposed to! How different??”

“Uhh... some of it is missing?”

“HOW MUCH IS MISSING??”

“Like... half...?”

Bffssssh...

Gwen gasped as she felt the spell begin to work. Thank the gods, it seemed even with an incomplete rune, it was still going to—

BWOOOMPH!

Gwen *YELPED* as she felt her body grow... but not like Maw's had. The transformation certainly affected her, sizing up her body in volume and mass... but only so far as to her waist.

Her legs and ass grew disproportionately enormous, and her eyes went wide as she suddenly felt miniature atop her own lower half.

CRRRK-SNAP!

Gwen grunted as she felt the sharp pain of her shackles snapping off her ankles, her legs suddenly far too thick for the clasps to hold.

Sweating, Gwen took a second to catch her breath and think.

Okay... this can still work.

"Mix?" she called to the stray, turning to see the feline's eyes practically glazed over and locked onto her oversized rear.

Gwen's expression soured, and she tried to cover herself up with an indignant huff. "Mix!"

"H-Huh? Wha?"

"Just come here and hold on tight." Gwen snapped, picking up the hefty-bellied stray.

Mix just took the time to enjoy where she was, Gwen's bloated belly against her back as the vampire grabbed the chains on Mix's shackles tight and braced her feet up against the wall.

Straining and pulling with all the strength she had left in her body, Gwen's enormous legs shook as she tried to push the wall away, pulling the chains tighter and tighter.

The metal groaned. The rusty chains bent and shuddered. Gwen screamed as she put everything she had into one final pull, and—

CRAAAAAA-AACCCCK!

Rather than the chains bursting open like she'd intended, instead, a chunk of the wall hurdled towards them both as it pried free.

With a gasp, they both hit the floor. The debris flew overhead, yanking Mix from Gwen's arms and slamming her to the wall as it pulled her, knocking the wind from her with a huff.

"Nnnnnnggh.... Did it work...?" Mix groaned groggily.

Gwen sighed. This was... less than ideal. Mix wouldn't be able to walk around properly with that hunk of stone dangling from her shackles. As much as she wanted to help the stray escape too, she'd have to leave her behind. No sense letting them both get captured.

Gwen slowly dusted herself off, and made for the open door.

"Wait! Where are you going?" Mix asked as she picked herself up, trying to pat down her ruffled fur.

"I'm sorry, but I need to leave. I can't risk more guards coming and finding us, and you'd only slow me down."

"But—"

"Listen, I thank you for everything you've told me about Queen Foulheart. But what I have to do is far too important to put at risk by staying here any longer." Gwen explained. *"I really am sorry."*

With that, she jogged towards the exit, wrinkling her nose at the feeling of her enormous thighs clapping against each other with each stride.

"Please! Please take me with you! I did everything you asked! And—... And I can help you! I'll show you where they keep the prisoner belongings, and I'll show you how to get out of New Whiskerton and get to the Darklands! Just... please don't leave me here!"

Gwen's pace came to a halt, and she turned. Mix was a pathetic sight. She gave a pleading look with doe eyes that would have appeared like the picture of innocence to anyone who didn't know her.

But it wouldn't work. Not on Gwen. If there was one thing her mother taught her, it was how to have a heart of stone.

"Right here!" Mix chimed as they rounded the corner.

Gwen was panting and gasping now. They'd been running through the alleyways for nearly half an hour, climbing through trash and boxes just to travel undetected by guards. Not to mention, it wasn't exactly easy to carry this bloated stray in her arms with a chunk of *wall* hanging from her ankle.

"Right here? *What's* right here? It's empty!"

Mix giggled. "Yeah! Get climbin'! Empty is *good*! The less eyes, the better. Now your big butt can climb up onto the rooftops without anyone seeing!"

Gwen grabbed Mix by the arms and held her out in front of her to glare. "*Climb onto the rooftops!? Are you kidding me!?*"

"What?! *YOU* said we needed a way out of the city that wouldn't have us surrounded by guards! Were you expecting a magic safety tunnel?"

"*YOU PEOPLE BUILT THIS PLACE ON TOP OF MY MOTHER'S CATACOMBS. YES, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WAS EXPECTING!*"

"Okay, well that—"

"*Shhh!*" Gwen's ears perked, and she immediately covered Mix's mouth as she whipped around towards the other end of the alleyway.

Her heart sank as she watched guard after guard cover their only escape, pouring in until a dozen armoured strays encircled the Guard Captain who sauntered towards her.

“Katarina.” Gwen said matter-of-factly, trying to speak with as much dignity and refinement as one could with their fishnet leggings digging into their enormous legs so tightly that it made her want to sob.

“Well, well. If it isn’t the thieving runt and the vampire survivor. You’re both looking... rounder than I remember.” she stated bluntly, a brief laugh choking out of her.

Snickers and hushed laughs passed through the guards behind her.

“Let’s not try anything stupid, hm? You’ll both be coming with me.” she warned, pulling her glove down to reach for the rune on her wrist...