

Eyes on the Dragon

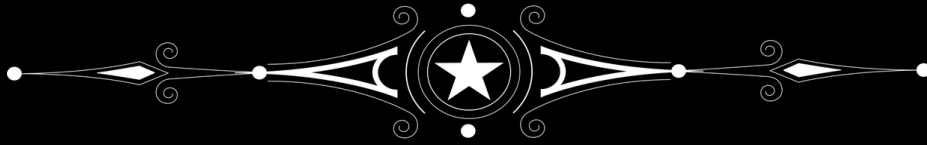
Commission for Postie

By

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The following contains: Female Au Ra to anthro dragon TF, hyper, macro growth, corruption, destruction

Read at your own discretion.



Coerthas Central Highlands was home to some of the best winter hellscapes in Eorzea. The Steps of Faith, an expansive bridge leading to the great city of Ishgard, was no exception. Its length crossed numerous trenches and canyons that cut deep into the star's crust. From that inhuman depth lurked nightmares beyond a person's imagination constantly struggling to survive the element's brutal whims. An adventurer would need a god's courage or a complete lack of wits to venture into such a place.

"Misha! This is the stupidest thing you've ever done. By far!"

Angry affirmations of that notion from her companion didn't stop Misha from repelling down one the last rope. It had taken no small amount of coin and preparations but she was finally here. Hearing boots landed upon the great chasms floor with a crunch of snow filled the dark skinned Au Ra with a fire no cold could extinguish. It was hard to see what the big deal was. The winds had been mercifully calm for most of their descent.

"Don't be such a scaredy cat." Misha giggled at her own pun, waiting for the green haired migo'te to finish repelling down safely beside her. Considering how the feline featured woman was more interested in trying to hug herself warm, the attempt at a pun went unappreciated. "We just got done with the dangerous part. It's just a simple fetch and carry from here."

"Assuming we find the bloody things." Sorsha fell into step behind Misha. The pair began walking in seemingly a random direction since their enclosed canyon only offered so many. "The Steps is a pretty damn long bridge. The warrior of light could have tossed them from anywhere."

"Trust me. I got a nose for this." The Au Ra's serpentine tail wagged rapidly with her bouncing steps. "Besides, it'll be totally worth finding them. I know what I'm doing."

"Preeetty sure white mages aren't supposed to seek out cursed relics of destruction. Doesn't that go against a healer code or something?"

"The real crime is what mankind did to dragons that started the whole dang war." Misha pivoted on her heels to glare at Sorsha with hands on her hips. "Are you just going to complain the whole trip, cabbage head?"

Sorsha's pink furry cat ears drooped as she brushed at her bangs in a huff. "This is more like a lime green. Thank you very much. And I'm all for helping out the dragons. This just seems a bit, with all respect, crazy."

"I didn't make you climb down with me." Misha gave a raspberry and resumed her marching. "Besides, you're the one that suggested this."

"My mistake was underestimating your obsession with dragons. Aren't you people, like, descended from them or something?"

"Far as biological studies are concerned, I'm as much a dragon as you are a house cat." Misha couldn't help souring her tone with a surge of indignation. Given her tail, scales, and the curved black horns on the sides of her head were all draconic in appearance, such brash comments had plagued Au Ra for generations. This despite no conclusive evidence they were remotely related to the great wyrms that fought Ishgard in over a thousand years of war. Even someone talented in the crucial skills of healing magic often found themselves getting short changed to near poverty.

Sorsha didn't seem to notice their anger, having gotten distracted by a rusty shield half buried in the snow. "Some of my best friends are house cats."

"That makes way too much sense."

The pair of humanoids continued their march through the canyon with little more to discuss. In the months since Sorsha had appeared, offering unconditional aid in Misha's dragon research, she'd learned a lot about her Au Ra friend's admiration for the big, powerful creatures. It was only rivaled by their secret disdain for Ishgard and its people that'd tried exterminating Midgardsormr's children.

"You know, you really act like a dragon sometimes?" Sorsha said after getting bored of listening to their snowy footfalls.

"Great!" Misha called without looking back. "I wish I was a dragon. Those brutes in the market square aren't brave enough to taunt something bigger than themselves."

"You're cute when you're grumpy." Those words finally broke Misha's stride, if only for a second. Sorsha was sadly disappointed the darker skinned woman continued to stomp through the canyon more tense in her refusal to look back. "So how do we find these things anyway?"

"Hell if I know! The bridge the warrior of light tossed them from is over a malm above us. We'll have to find a safe place to camp and start systematic surveys through the canyon for irregular aether. Maybe we can triangulate a rough landing zone by..."

"There they are!"

Misha whirled to face the miqo'te completely dumbstruck. Her wide eyes followed Sorsha's pointed finger up the canyon walls to a ledge only a small walk from their position. They were already encased in layers of ice from facing months of the elements, but just seeing them made her reptilian tail quiver. Even from a few building floors worth of distance they oozed a furious power that'd overwhelm most novice mages.

“Okay.” She took a deep breath trying to curb her excitement. “That saves us a lot of time and rations. Here’s hoping we can get a refund on the months’ worth of supplies we dragged down here. I don’t see any other ledges we can use to climb up there. We’ll have to try finding solid rock in the ice to anchor our way...”

Hot air blasted at the back of Misha’s head, eliciting a startled squeal as her hair got tussled. Before she could start shouting an irritated threat the searing ball of fire that flew over her head left the Au Ra’s jaw hitting the snowy ground. It held a perfect trajectory that struck the ledge with a small explosion of steam. Such force proved enough to knock the two icy objects bouncing down the rocky cliffside.

Sorsha sheathed her black mage staff with pink furry ears pridefully erect. “There! I saved you a ton of time and work on this obsession. Feel free to thank me graciously.”

Misha’s response was a high-pitched squeal that, in the canyon’s acoustics, almost sent Sorsha collapsing in a heap clenching her feline ears. Ignoring their friends cursing, the Au Ra rushed forward towards her falling prizes. A buxom woman’s figure in heavy winter gear worked against her. In the panic clunky steel toes tripped over each other, leaving her to scramble the remaining distance on all fours.

“Oh, thank the gods!” She cried after collecting both of them for a thorough examination in the snow. The thick ice encasing both objects had ended up serving as armor against the fiery blast. While there were lots of cracks and chips, the insides stared back perfectly unharmed. Just having them in her hands, frozen over or not, made her scaled tail begin wagging atop her raised haunches. “They’re still in one piece. That’s such a relief!”

“You do realize you’re hugging giant eyeballs?”

Misha sat back on her knees, shooting a burning glare of hate at the cheerful miqo’té. They had wisely decided not to follow and maintain a safe distance.

“These are the eyes of the great Nidhogg himself, you uneducated bimbo. He was one of the great seven wyrms born of...”

“Yadda yadda yadda! You really love going on history speeches. Can we just pack your boyfriend’s remains and climb out of here?”

Misha resisted the urge to use her companion for a fire, recalling her supposed role as a white mage. A loud crackling made both girls look up and promptly scramble back the way they’d come. The ledge Sorsha blasted so casually had knocked loose a bunch of other canyon pieces. Thanks to the aid of harsh winds blowing in, the Au Ra found herself narrowly dodging boulders carrying frozen eyes the size of melons under each arm.

“Oh great!” Howling whistles running through the deep pit made Sorsha’s voice hard to hear, even when Misha managed to get within a few feet of them. “This is why I hate visiting Ishgard. Another cold storm is coming in.”

“No kidding!” Misha found herself nearly shouting already as ice whipped at her clothes. Her white hair got thrown forward into her face making it even harder to trudge through the snow. “We need to find cover. No way we’re climbing out of here in this.”

Whatever Sorsha said became near incomprehensible in the mounting flurry around them. Not that Misha was paying much attention as she stuffed the dragon eyes into her traveling pack. When she straightened up again the miqo'te had clambered a short distance ahead to stand before a gaping black void. It took Misha a second to realize Sorsha gestured towards a cave in the frozen cliffside.

The miqo'te conjured a ball of bright green light in her palm once they'd managed to get inside its mouth. It was more of a sharp groove than a cave; barely the size of a luxury master bedroom. However, it did cut out the storm whistling behind them, so Sorsha happily stripped her pack and excess gear against one of the stone walls. “It ain't the Rising Stones, but it'll keep our fat asses warm.”

Misha could only scowl in response as she likewise removed her climbing gear. She was almost certain this bimbo of a cat girl only followed her around exactly because of her plump Au Ra rear. If anything, they were about as scholarly as a rock with half the intelligence. Though it pained her to admit they were batting three for three on usefulness during this excursion.

Before long the pair had a small fire going with some magic imbued logs they'd brought. A single one could burn for hours and in the small insulated space provided ample warmth. Not much was said while they prepared for a prolonged camp out. Sorsha was content reading some trashy novel about interdimensional travel as a form of afterlife. Whatever kept them silent was fine for Misha. That gave her plenty of time to admire Nidhogg's lost eyes. The frozen body remains had been placed by the fire in hopes of thawing off their ice shells.

Lifeless slit irises stared back into the Au Ra's soul. Her tail swiped rapidly across the cave floor where she sat. It was easy to imagine all that pure hatred still resonating inside those eyes. That poor wyrm must have endured centuries of watching his kin suffer at the weapons of Ishgard. Misha's years of bullying probably looked like a minor ache in comparison, yet still felt like a common ground between them.

Her irate thoughts became so deep Misha never realized she'd fallen asleep. The storm had long grown silent outside the cave, having added a good few inches of fresh snow to hike through. Although in the evening dark it was still hard to see anything past the cave's mouth. Their log only had a few pathetic embers still going on its charred husks.

A loud rumbling vibrated off the stone walls, which Misha realized was Sorsha's snoring. Figures something idiotic would snap her back to reality. Fat lot of good it does being wide awake during the night time. Climbing these canyons is dangerous enough with perfect vision and calm weather. Dang dragons have it easy when they can just fly anywhere.

Suddenly remembering why she was camping in a snow hell cave drew Misha's attention back to Nidhogg's eyes. Just as the Au Ra had hoped, the passing hours next to a fire had completely melted their ice prison. They sat right where she left them staring back with a soft shine in the waning light. Somehow it made them look more alive. She scooted closer, feeling goosebumps break out across her ebony smooth skin. Now that they were out in the open the sheer dense aether radiating off the large orbs made her horns tingle.

"Baby. The things we're going to do." She giggled while scooping an eye in each hand. Being next to the fire had made them incredibly warm to the touch. Up close their glow only seemed to intensify. "What? GAAAH!"

The force crashed upon Misha's body like a boulder; pure, seething hate. Her hands became engulfed in black magical flames along with Nidhogg's eyes. Not that they burned in a traditional sense, but power beyond a person of the Au Ra's limited lifespan rushed through her veins filling her every curve.

Misha's serpent tail snapped straight up as she struggled to gulp a breath. No wonder the Azure dragoon himself couldn't handle both eyes. Her form began to visibly steam from sweat trying to handle the rushing torrent. But beyond the aether she could feel it; the flailing emotions of a dragon that'd been wrong by so many. Nidhogg's will still lived on in a faint way through the wyrms pain, agony, and sorrow.

And she accepted all of it.

Part 2 coming soon to my [Patreon](#).

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Afterward

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