



A STRANGE SUMMONING

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Part 1

I struggled to sit from the awkward position I was in. Locked somewhere in between laying and sitting. It was very uncomfortable. I did not like it. Or ... Maybe I did like it?

I wiggled a bit, trying to find a more comfortable position. No good. Jostling back and forth, I rocked myself until a metallic clang sounded, bringing me just slightly more upright. Yes. Now this was better. I shrugged, content with the slight change.

Unable to remove the sleep from my eyes I gave myself a little shake and pondered as to why I was strapped naked to a La-Z-Boy. These things just don't happen you know. Or maybe ... They do?

Who am I to judge?

I glanced about the room, curious. It was not my bedroom, though the weird, comfy torture chair kind of gave that away. The room was simple, bare. There was one window, set high in the room, that allowed a stream of light.

And then there was the chair I was in and a table covered with glittering objects. I made a quick realization. God, I was in someone's weird fetish dungeon!

I shivered, but in a comfortable way. Seriously: this chair had fantastic lumbar support. I snuggled in. It was soft too.

As I was getting comfortable, a series of bangs alerted me to the door. It was plain like the rest of the room. Whoever was coming was making quite the noise.

From the door emerged three people. No, five? There were five. Two women and three men, and all in various states of undress.

Awkward, but I could roll with this.

They surrounded me in a loose circle, Leering down at me with a mixture of lust and anticipation, looking as if they were poised to strike. Whatever they had planned seemed to involve me.

Sure, that made sense. I was kind of like a prisoner, wasn't I? I decided to break the ice, get that awkward "Oh no! I'm victim to a Psycho Sex Cult!" out of the way. "Oh, hey guys." I smiled. "I would ... Wave. But yunno, I'm tied down and all." I wiggled my fingers for emphasis. They exchanged looks of incredulous puzzlement. I looked to their faces and frowned.

"Was I not supposed to do that?" I asked, unsure. "I've never actually been kidnapped. It's so hard to be sure of these things. What's the proper etiquette for these situations?" I carried on. "I've seen the movies. I could start screaming if you want." They looked at me still, one woman actually leaning away, as if repulsed by my sudden banter. Maybe I should try harder? "I could go all raspy, maybe. Like, really commit to the whole victim thing. What's your stance on snot? Not very attractive, mind you. But it makes a great visual ... If you get off on that sort of thing, anyway."

Silence. Oh boy. That's never a good thing. The group gave each other worried glances, which was concerning, considering I was the one tied up.

“So...” I started searching for a topic. There weren’t many things one could converse about in a situation like this. Well, things that didn’t venture onto strange or uncomfortable subjects. It wasn’t like I could ask them how many people they caught and took advantage of, now could I? I mean, I could. But that would just be weird. It’d be interesting though, wouldn’t it? I wondered where I would fit into such a statistic?

This is a weird thought.

So far this exchange had been terribly one-sided. What to talk about?! Oh! The chair!

“Where did you get this incredible chair!” I beamed at the group, as I really dug into the comfort. “My back has never felt this much joy.”

“Right!?” The younger guy piped up with excitement. “We got it from a place down on ninth. Got a great deal on it, too!”

“No kidding, I’ll definitely have to get me one. It is very relaxing. I may just stay down here forever.” I stopped, suddenly horrified. They probably had other plans. I quickly amended: “Just a suggestion, though. Not to take away from current thoughts of maiming or torture.”

The woman in front glared daggers at the young man and he coughed awkwardly before putting up his grumpy mean face. Though, I could tell his heart wasn’t in it. Poor thing. We all can’t be strapped to a wonderfully comfortable chair.

“Enough.” The woman continued, her voice grave and

serious. I wonder if she had wrinkles from being that serious all the time? “We have come to take of your flesh. To give sacrifice to the great Demon of Debauchery-”

“Er... sorry. Did you say Demon of Debauchery?”

The woman gave an irritable sigh. “Yes.”

“Oh. Good, good. Just making sure I have the facts right. I don’t want to insult any ‘Great and Dark Force.’ I assume they get kind of touchy about titles.” The woman stared at me. She stared at me like I was the most tiring force on the earth, as if summoning forth some Dark Demonic creature took less effort than listening to me speak. I felt the need to apologize.

Also, do you know how hard it is to make quotations without hands? Um, very. You’re welcome.

“We shall take of your flesh,” she continued her lips pressed into a thin line. “To give sacrifice to the-”

“Great Demon of Debauchery. Yes, you’ve said this. Does this Demon have a name? It would seem rude to simply refer to them as Madame or Monsieur Debauchery.”

The woman growled in frustration. “We, these chosen few have been granted great power.” She pressed on speaking quickly. Choosing to ignore my question. Which was kind of rude. “We can glimpse your desires and from it: draw it within us to give to our Great Master.” She came forward seductively.

“Um... not to interrupt or anything.” I squinted at her as if trying to see where such power would come from. Her face, maybe? Inner ear? I was confused, how would

someone access such a power? “But if you can really read my inner most desires then you must be mistaken.” I shrugged then added: “Not that I’m doubting you or anything.”

She threw her hands up in defeat before crossing them in a huff. “Are you serious right now?!” She demanded.

“Well, yeah.” I told her. “I mean. I’m pretty sure I know what I desire. Not that you’re not attractive or anything. Because you are. Oh boy, I’m rambling again.”

“What could you possibly want more than an orgy?!” She exclaimed. Well that was simple.

“What would I want more than an orgy that will siphon my life force to an unholy demon who feeds on sex?” I tilted my head up to ponder the question. It would have been more dramatic if I had use of my hands. But you have to go with what you’ve got, right? “Well, there are a few things. But right now I could really go for a cup of hot coffee. Yes. That’s totally what I desire most. Plus, imagine how good it would go with this chair!” I exclaimed.

“He has a point.” the young man mumbled quietly. I nodded my head at him it bobbing up and down vigorously in agreement. I looked back toward the woman who was shaking her head. Completely thrown, her mouth open slightly, as if she were struggling to find words.

“I give up.” She said finally and made a somewhat hasty retreat back the way she came.

“So, that’s a no then?” I frowned looking after her. I couldn’t help but feel dissatisfaction about the turn of

events. Isn't there, like, a last meal thing that your suppose to get before you go up to the electric chair?

Sure the situation was different. But honestly when you're getting sacrificed to a Demon of Sex you'd expect at least a cup of coffee. Mmm, coffee. How I miss you so!

As I reclined, I allowed myself to muse about the steaming goodness as the rest of the group filtered out, leaving me to the ill lit space.

I smiled at the younger guy as he left, giving me a little wave as he went.

After they left I let out a yawn. It was rather tiring trying to pry answers out of unyielding cultists. But now that they were gone I could really ponder the more important things. Like if this store accepts credit cards. Or did they prefer cash? Maybe a down payment? Do their chairs come in red? Or would I prefer a cerulean blue?

I yawned. Alone in the embrace of the comfy goodness, thoughts of warm coffee whisked me off to sleep, where dreams of discounts awaited.

Part 2

What was that noise? I lifted my head groggily. My stomach knotting from hunger. It had been a substantial time since I last partook of food.

Ha, partook. Such a weird word.

I should be a poet. If, yunno, I don't get savagely murdered. That WOULD put a damper on any writing. Maybe I should muse about a different profession. Like: couch manufacturer.

I smiled.

Craning my neck I watched curiously as the cultists continued their chanting. They were kneeling on an inverted pentagram. Though as you can imagine it's terribly difficult to gage the the orientation of something when your looking out of the corner of your eye.

Around the circle candles were glinting brightly and the light from the window was now gone.

I sniffed. Was that vanilla? My stomach grumbled, notifying me that I was hungry. So, so hungry.

“We summon thee, Old One. Great Demon of Debauchery. Come forth to partake of our offering.” They continued to chant. I snickered. Partake.

“Whatcha cookin’” I asked, craning my neck. My curiosity was getting the best of me. The woman from before made a grunting noise and ignored me. Focusing instead on the circle of pretty candles. I got another whiff of vanilla, and my stomach once again growled.

The five members swayed, chanting in time as they did so, like some creepy version of an acapella band. Only less cool and more demon-y. Maybe this Demon was also the lord of pound cake. The vanilla kind. Not a total stretch, considering.

As they chanted a growing cloud took form in the center of the ring. It twisted and coiled until it formed a human shape. An attractive human male. Not even kidding. We're talking supermodel status here. No wonder they used good smelling candles.

I gasped. Did the use of such candles produce higher quality demons? Would adding something like cinnamon hinder or enhance such a summoning? Or would they simply become a cinnamon cake? My stomach groaned at the thought. God. Please, feed me!

The Demon leveled its eyes at me, sparkling red against his snowy skin. Turning the chair with relative ease it looked me over carefully. The same way someone ponders how to cook a steak. I shrugged. I guess being a sizable portion of steak could be a good thing. I mean, I never complained when handed free food.

"Such a fresh offering." he snickered reaching out to brush my face with his fingers. "What shall I do with such a canvas." He—or it—chuckled, a deep throaty laugh that was smoother than chocolate. Part of me should have been quaking in fear. Part of me should have been screaming at the top of my lungs. Hell, some part of me should have even been turned on. Because ... well ... Demon Conjuring is a thing, and it summons extraordinary sexy creatures. But, apart from all of that I simply could NOT get past that intoxicating smell.

"Where on earth did you get these candles!" I exclaimed looking past the demon towards the cultists. "Because, seriously. I can barely get my oil diffuser to fill half my bedroom." The angry woman's head dropped suddenly in

her hands, and she let out a pained tired groan.

“He just had to speak,” she muttered. I passed her a confusing look and then returned my attention to the Demon before me, who had gone from seductive grin to ghastly appalled. Maybe even irritated. I shrugged and looked back at my favorite cultist who was amused by the exchange, but was trying to hide it. Before he could give an answer however the demon’s deep voice rumbled.

“Claire. I told you to find me someone worthy. Or at the very least sane.” The angry woman, or rather Claire shot me a furious glare. I shivered. Maybe it wasn’t the Demon I was suppose to be afraid of.

“Oh, Great One.” She started carefully. “Please accept my humblest of apologies.” She bowed deeply. Her face touching the stone floor of the basement. The Demon was not having it however. It loomed over her looking menacing and powerful.

“I’m growing weary of your failures. Three times you’ve called me, and three times your sacrifice has been...” the Demon turned back to look me over. I smiled at it and shook my head in an energetic hello. He let out a sigh, deflating. “Underwhelming.”

I frowned. I was underwhelming? What a terrible thing to say. Looking at the Demon I spoke up.

“Hey! I am a magnificent catch, I’ll have you know.” I told It—or him. “I work out. I have a stable nine-to-five. Or... well at least I did. I have no idea how long I’ve actually been down here. So I could be fired. Which I sincerely hope not. I do have a chair I need to buy.” I

paused searching myself for more positive traits.

“Oh! I don’t smoke, that’s good right?” Recalling his entrance I doubled back. Had I gone too far? Were demons touchy about the whole fire and brimstone thing? Was it something they chose in order to perpetuate the stereotype? Makes you wonder how much of the Demon realm was suffering from emphysema. “Though,” I chewed over my thoughts “I’m not sure if that is a turn on or off for you. So, like, I could totally start smoking. I may not be very good at it. I mean, it doesn’t seem terribly comfortable to breath in a cloud of hot noxious smoke, but then again you might know more about it. Not that I’m judging you or anything. To each his own I guess. I-”

“Please, stop talking.” Claire hissed. The Demon looked at me. Or rather through me. it’s face was slack with disinterest and carried a spark of self-loathing.

The Demon turned to Claire. It’s/his (to be honest I have no idea what he/it prefers to be called so I’m sticking “The Demon” from now on. Do demons even HAVE genders?) eyes were burning like red coals against a snowy hillside. She flinched away from The Demon’s fiery gaze and bowed deeply once again.

I frowned at a sudden thought.

“Please your Greatness. I-”

“Whoa. Whoa. Whoa. Hold on a second. Go back a moment.” I interjected. The Demon turned to me, surprised. “Not that I mind if you eat Claire.” I shrugged in her direction. “I mean, you’re kind of a bitch, and you DID kidnap me.” She nodded slightly to herself. Upset,

but couldn't actually deny it.

“Did you say I was the third sacrifice? Like, why were the last two bad? What happened to them? Did Claire freeze them with her chilly ice queen powers. Did you, Mr. Demon, eat them? Did you let them go. Like, Hello! You can't just drop a bomb like that and simply leave a person hanging. I'm going to end up getting savagely tortured. You could at least tell me what happened and if, yunno, you want to get some vanilla pound cake too to share around while you tell the story. That would be great.”

The basement went silent and all around gazes settled on me. Some were bewildered and some were angry. Yes, Claire. We know all know it's you!

And suddenly the Demon smiled.

“Let me tell you of the last two who sat in that very chair.”

Part 3

I nodded, horrified, turning towards the demon with great interest. A spoon hanging halfway from my mouth. “You've got to be kidding.” I muttered, savoring the taste of vanilla on my tongue. “So she threw herself at you?”

The Demon gave a tired nod. His face fell. “Yes. Even now I can hear her yearning screams. As she pleaded for me to take her.” He paused, shivering slightly to himself. “It was horrible. S-she just kept throwing herself at me.

Like some mad beast.”

“You poor thing.” I muttered. Patting the Demon on the back, I turned to Claire. “Look what you did! You gave him nightmares. Surely you can’t find more compliant people.”

She glared at me. “Trust me, I’ve tried,” She hissed. “The problem isn’t me, it’s the people.”

She gave me a pointed stare. I felt kind of wounded by that. I was a catch! I mean, surely she had to see that. I shook myself and forced a glare back at her. For that, Claire, you’ve gained the Hateful Bitch status! I then made a shushing sound, as the demon choked down a sob.

“She’s right you know.” The Demon sniffed.

Oh great, now the demon was being mean! I couldn’t be THAT bad, could I? Meh. Maybe I am ...

“The world used to run screaming at the very mention of demons. Now they simply question my existence. Do you know how hard it is to find good people? Followers that will follow your every word? Such devotion is lost among these new generations.”

“Hello! I’m a Devout Follower!” Claire shouted balefully.

I waved at her to be quiet. She didn’t count. Claire made daggers at me and the Demon chuckled.

“Oh yes, and so far you have brought me a nihilist, a nymphomaniac, and ah ... what are you?” He looked to me.

“Who knows, I just woke up in a comfy chair. Really, I’ve been confused since the beginning. At this point I’m just going with the flow. Do you have any coffee?”

The Demon shrugged, conjuring a cup of coffee. “At least you listen to me.” He gave his finger a swirl and the black coffee lightened. I smiled at the aroma.

“What!?” Claire’s face paled, aghast at the suggestion. “We listen! Have we not done everything you have asked of us!” she demanded. “Have we not gone out to fulfill your needs?”

The Demon pointed to me.

I looked up between the two of them, a spoon sticking out of my face.

“Nof wreary.” I shrugged, talking around my spoon. I wasn’t bothered. I had cake. What more could I ever want in life anyway?

Was that sad? Did my life really spiral this out of control? When did cake supersede the need for survival? Oh right! The whole cult thing ... Wow, this whole thing has really changed ... Whatever! Cake, coffee, and a comfy chair! Life is pretty interesting when you’re about to die!

“This insufferable fool!?” Claire shouted throwing her hands up. She pointed her finger at me. “All you’ve done is talk and stare off into space as if you’re having some long drawn out conversation with yourself. I’ve done everything for you. I even sacrificed my favorite cat!”

“Whoa!” I gasped, stopping her right there. “That’s pretty dark. You’re a bad lady.” I told her, shaking my head

disapprovingly. The Demon nodded in agreement.

Claire's mouth dropped. "Seriously?!"

"Well yeah...I mean- ah" the demon stuttered. "You seemed pretty desperate--"

"Maybe it's an attention thing" I interjected, then looked at her. "Did you get enough hugs as a kid."

"What-" She started.

"Maybe she was always this way? Tell me, did you enjoy picking the legs off of spiders? I read an article that that is a trademark behavior of a budding serial killer."

"Ooooh, I read that one too. Fascinating read." The Demon nodded vigorously. Claire let out a scream of frustration before running out the door, tears streaming down her face.

"Poor thing." I muttered. The Demon nodded, shaking his head.

"I know. She tries too hard. She just needs to relax I think. I mean, even my cousin Theo had a few followers who-" He shivered and stopped himself as if the idea frightened him. "Writers," he muttered. Wiping himself of his previous thought he turned to the remaining cultist, who gave him a dramatic bow. "This has been all fun and dandy, but I can no longer indulge of this offering. Your attempt was... well..." he paused awkwardly, frowning. "Quite frankly it lacking in many ways. But! I do applaud your efforts. May I suggest you go after someone more pious. Someone, perhaps, a bit more afraid of hellfire and brimstone?"

The cultists said nothing, their eyes shifting uncomfortably under the Demon's scrutiny. This was awkward. The Demon felt it too.

"I will dispose of this offering." He proclaimed suddenly. "Do not call me again until you have attained someone worthy!" He finished with a roar.

Wait. What? Did he say dispose!? I looked over and suddenly the Demon grew bright and hot, like a supernova about to explode. Before I could utter a word of protest white fire shot outwards in a great arc of heat. I threw up my hands, crying out. But I could do little against the force; I screamed as the fire overtook me and darkness clouded my vision. This was it. I felt myself falling, the sensation driving me downward and then forward, until the sensation stopped.

But I knew it. I was dying. Engulfed in the aforementioned hellfire. Left to burn for eternity, a personal purgatory of pain and despair ... Thrust out of reality and into incredible darkness aloft a bed of something soft.

Soft?

I opened my eyes. The Demon stood several feet away from me. Looking at me the same way you looked at something questionably unstable.

"Now," he started. "I know mortals haven't traveled much through dimensional rifts. But you've been screaming for a solid twenty minutes."

"Oh." I muttered, chuckling nervously, wiping my hands on the chair. "Er...well. It was terribly frightening." I told

him.

“That was a lot of screaming.” He reiterated.

“You ARE a demon.” I told him. He shrugged.

“So I’ve noticed.”

I paused awkwardly. “So ... want to watch Golden Girls?” I threw out the suggestion, eager to change the subject.

The Demon’s eyes lit up. “Betty White is the best thing ever. We are rooting for her to live forever.” He beamed and settled on the couch. The TV flicked on by itself, followed by the intro to Golden Girls filling the living room with its happy tune.