

(100 years after the events of *Serpent*, Lord Vicon suffers in silence about how much he misses his wife whenever she goes away on business in the countryside.)

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"Will you miss me terribly?" Came the first of her usual questions, after he'd finally managed to end the festivities and draw her to their bedroom — to the balcony, where they could look out over the sea together in brisk, serene darkness.

It was a toying, smug question, in direct spite of the demure, sincere way she asked it. Vicon knew this tone very well. One *had* to, with a wife as conniving as his. Being too *passé* or toying back when she was throwing out lures almost always led to a power struggle, and the last thing he wanted was for anything to distract the evening from progressing.

"Of course I will." He answered, nothing if not obedient. Still, his chest fluttered at the way she lit for even the anticipated, *correct* response. He put a palm to her cheek, marveling always at how warm she was. "I always do."

"Do you promise?" She tittered, eager for his rare, tender agreeability. "You'll dream of me every night?"

"I promise."

Juliette shifted contentedly, twitchy with girlish affection. Her fingers scuttled over his bare skin, and she pulled herself closer, her head on his shoulder. She looked up at him from beneath her lashes, falsely bashful.

"Your eyes are all black, my lord." She purred. "Tell me what you're thinking."

"...I'll show you."



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Vicon found himself hypnotized by the way her ass rippled with every thrust of his cock — how she squeezed round him as it twisted and squirmed inside of her. He'd have stayed that way for a hundred years if she'd let him — but she was always the more subdued of them, more coy and teasing with her affections, and he worried she'd find the thought profane and wicked, if not simply unrealistic, and so never deigned to pitch it.

"Oh — blessed so I am." She was babbling — *praying* — her hands clasped, her forehead pressed to her pillow. "Great Eye, o' heaven's watcher — take my thanks — *ooh* — my body for tithe — how glad I am to give it —"

*The minx!* He felt a wave of intoxicating power roll over him, buzzing at the base of his spine. Worship always jolted him some — like absorbing static in the dry winter — and hers was so potent and so thick with cruel, seductive intention that it brought him to near-finish every time, no matter how inappropriate the scenario. She'd learned without him teaching it willingly, like most things — murmuring under her breath while watching him dress, etc. Juliette was nothing if not experimental, so much of her free time dedicated to *tormenting* him.

Why, then, was she going to leave again so easily? It wasn't fair! Ten months of bliss for six of misery, *if* he was lucky. Sometimes she'd hole up in her cottage for a year or more, or spend a summer godmothering the newly-born prince or princess when she could have been here, sleeping in their bed, dining and reading and swimming together like she really ought to. He'd have rather been kept chained beneath the Spire the whole while. At least then he could be distracted by the contempt of the raging ocean. Otherwise he simply laid, useless and wayward, sleeping alone in his study until she returned, hoping *this* would be the time she stayed forever.

Damn propriety, and damn the court! He deserved his marriage rites! He deserved the simple pleasure of living always beside his heart and soul. Why Juliette cared so much what they thought was beyond him.

And oh, how he missed her, even pressed tight beneath him — her bags were packed, her route planned. She was practically already gone! This was *always* her way. Pointedly ignoring his discontent in the days leading up to her departure, then finally sidling up to him on her final night, in a new thin sleeping gown, asking foolish questions she already knew the answers to. She'd only asked in the interest of humiliating him, he was sure — to bring his mourning to the surface where she could eagerly drink it in.

"*Blessings.*" He grunted, and came hard inside her. His claws dug into her waist, thrusting sloppily into the great mess he'd made. She fluttered around him as he pulsed, the rest of her prayer muffled and warbling into her pillow. He leaned down and nuzzled into her jaw, the soft pads of his fingers sliding down over her belly, to find her clit and swirl lazily round it.

"Did you come?" He panted, his forehead against her cheek.

"Three times." She laughed, her lids heavy, her breath catching again when he pressed a little more firmly to her.

His stomach burned still as he pulled out of her — now that his momentum was building he wanted to *keep* fucking her, as late into the night as fate would let him.

He flipped her with ease, delighting in the shocked sound that it stole from her. How pretty she was when she was caught unawares! Rare and precious -- how often had she done this very thing to him? And so smug for it, too. How many times had she surprised him into hot, pliant submission? Had she thought him just as pretty? Did she think so now?

"*Again?*" She asked, dazed and half-serious.

As if she didn't already know! That smirk pulling at the corners of her mouth. If this was the game, then so be it. He'd never dare *ask* her to stay, let alone give that order — though he had every right — but *maybe* she would cut her journey short for the want of him.

Her cunt was dripping with cum and her wetness alike, her legs shaking as he pulled her flush again. Her skin was dewy with sweat, her lips purple and bitten. How he'd missed her perfect face, even after so short a time!

His cock wriggled useless and wet between her thighs. He took it in hand and pumped it once, twice — and shuddered, a few pitiful spurts of cum pooling on her belly. He ground hard against her, his swollen cunt kissing hers, and she mewled so sweetly with contentment it hardened him again in an instant, his cock surging smoothly back inside.

"*Vicon.*" She managed, somehow, before his tongue found its way back down her throat. Closer, *deeper* — he wanted them so intertwined she'd never dream of leaving. He couldn't kiss her, always, the way she really liked — tongue to tongue, sucking and nipping -- his maw a complicated obstacle, but this was so much better. He could taste the back of her molars, feel her moaning as she swallowed him down.

*Perfect bliss!* Wet and hot and soft on all sides of him, plush beneath his hands, pliable where he pressed his claws. He dragged them down the dip of her wide hips, thinking greedily of her hissing when she sat — the sore little pinpricks sending a shiver up the base of her skull and a crawl of warmth between her legs. *How terribly she would miss him then!*

He set a grueling pace, pressing her knees to her ears, her soft middle cradling him. Every stark, powerful thrust made her gasp and whine and laugh, delight bubbling out of her. She came twice more, wordlessly, her throat bared as she threw her head back.

If he was proud of anything, in two thousand years of wretched life, it was how he had learned so to please her. They had taught each other, clumsy and desperate and equally inexperienced. He'd dedicated much of their wedded century to memorizing every little thing that made her twitch. And of course, in turn, she had watched with rapt attention for his own tells. It took a great deal of concentration and cunning to truly surprise her — competencies in short supply any time he was inside of her, but he put his absolute best into it, much as he was able.

"Take it — take all of me —"

"Yes! Ah!"

"My girl — ha — so tight —"

"*Fuck, ah — Vicon! You — what's — ah — gotten into you?*"

(Conveniently, nothing struck her more than his own unraveling.)

Making a great show of it, he scrunched his brow and keened — *Juliette, Juliette* — he pulled nearly all the way out, only the tapered head clinging to the glorious heat of her, and slammed forward in such a way that had both of their backs bowing. He heard her teeth clack together at the sheer, crackling force of it, physical and telepathic and everything in between — she cried out once with only the little bit of air she'd managed to take in. She twitched and settled around him, looking past her heaving breast to where they joined. He was coming again, thicker and hotter and spilling over it was so *much* — his legs shook, taugth and pressing with the desperate instinct to stay together.

"Put your legs up. Keep it in." He whimpered, his own words so raw and foreign they made him shiver. He'd never asked such a thing of her.

Her eyes, when she finally met his gaze fully again, were sparkling with wonder and shock. *Point.*



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And so it continued, perhaps three or four more times until the night was pitch black, and she had become so boneless and slack that it felt cruel to tempt her any further. Still, he indulged a moment longer, slipping his fingers against her undoubted soreness, reveling in how utterly he had claimed her.

“Ah — *gentle*.” She scolded, scrubbing the damp baby hairs away from her cheeks.

Normally she’d be already up and about, pulling him to the baths where she could perform the sisyphian task of wiping him clean so she could make an even worse mess of him. Delightfully, this time she only remained solidly planted in the crevice she’d made in their mattress. She had nothing left to give, and certainly no energy left to take.

“You should sleep.” He kissed her temple, even and subdued — with one gentle swipe of his finger they were both washed and dried, saving her any need to rise before the sun to do it herself. “You’ve an early morning.” same. Suspicious of his usually quite readable intentions, but so inarguably satisfied she didn’t dare question them.

“Aye, my lord. I will.” She answered, playing along with the silly little fantasy of dominance he’d crafted for the evening. “You will see me off, won’t you?”

“If I can bear it.”

One thing would always remain true, sweet and unchallenged no matter how much he hated to part. *You’re mine*, he could see her thinking. *And you always will be*. And so gladly he was.