

The Lodge of Sasquatch

One of the diaries of Leilani Hawkins, by We're All Mad Here

There's just something about the Pacific Northwest.

The green forests. The rain.

Bigfoot.

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I swirled the stir-stick in my Zombie, then took a sip. The sweet, potent, rum cocktail caressed my taste buds in a delightful manner.

Aaah! The perfect end to a long week!

It was midterms at Arcanum University and every student seemed to be practically living at the library from the moment it opened until we kicked them out.

Sometimes literally.

Now midterms were done and I was enjoying a much-deserved break. I was also stewing a bit. I swear, if I found out who left a coffee stain on the cover of the *Libris Occultae*, I'm not going to be held responsible for the ensuing carnage.

Rum makes me poetic.

The Dark Spirit was the perfect tiki bar, in many ways. It had that whole faux-tropical jungle motif along with fake grass hut decor in the booths, dim lighting, and many, many, delightful cocktails on the menu. The bartenders (sorry, *mixologists*) were very good at their job and I was less-likely to have some drunken shitwit hit on me here.

“Well, well!”

I blinked out of my reverie and prepared a sharp retort for what I assumed was a drunken shitwit intent on hitting on me when I focused on none other than Isobel Hawks herself! One of the youngest associate professors of archaeology at Arcanum University, Isobel got stuck with all the crappier classes to teach.

“Pull up a chair, Proflosser. Pesser. Proflesser.”

I frowned, sorting the word through in my head.

“How many of those have you had?” Isobel asked me.

“Oh no more than two,” I insisted.

“Four,” Darren the mixologist corrected.

I glared at him as he cleaned a glass, showing off forearms covered in tattoos. He stared back behind his horn-rimmed glasses and frowned through his artfully-trimmed hipster facial hair.

Isobel sighed.

“Can I get a mai tai and a pitcher of ice water for the island lush here?”

“She knocked the last one all over the floor,” Darren said, giving me a sour look.

I opened my mouth and he jumped in.

“Water, not a mai tai!”

My mouth clicked shut and Isobel sighed again.

“I’ll take charge,” she told him.

Darren nodded and bustled off to tinker with his rum-alchemy. Rumchemy? I do love the sound of barte-sorry-*mixologists* at work!

“So what’s with all the booze, Lushlani?” Isobel asked.

I straightened indignantly.

“I am a grown woman, Ishobel! I can drink if I want!”

And really, how was I to explain to Isobel - or anyone, really - the sorts of things going on in my life? A pretentious-sounding secret society of assholes dedicated to summoning up Old Ones and using me as a sacrifice was just a lot to absorb, y’know?

Also I *really* like rum drinks! And two Zombies was a lot to drink. It *was* two, wasn’t it? Hm... a memory of someone saying differently tickled my brain. I was aware Isobel was saying something and the thought drifted off like a butterfly.

“What?” I asked.

Isobel sighed.

“I was saying, lush-girl, that I think you need to get out of town for a bit. Away from the library and into the open air.”

And that’s how I found myself camping in the Pacific Northwest.

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Isobel was kind enough to give me a day to recover from my ill-advised binge. During that time, she came by and helped me pack. It’s a testament to the potency of those drinks that I wasn’t even aware I was packing until late that afternoon.

Rum drinks. Ooof!

The campsite was well off the beaten path. And by that, I mean we left paved roads way the hell behind us *ages* before we got to Isobel's intended campsite.

The campsite smelled of pine and damp. It had been raining a few days before and the ground was still soft.

"Aaaah!" Isobel got out of the car and spun around, arms outstretched. "The great outdoors! Don't you love it?"

"Oh yes," I muttered. "Squatting to take a piss in the woods is so much fun! Wasn't the whole point of civilization to get *away* from the 'great outdoors'?"

Isobel rolled her eyes.

"Stop snivelling and help me get the tents set up, city girl."

"Snivelling?" I squawked. "Who says 'sniveling' these days?"

"Fine, whinging! Whining! Bitching! Moaning! Kvetching! Better? Now get your ass over here and help."

Once the tents were pitched, our bedding spread out in it, and a fire started, I began to relax into the entire scene and enjoy the peace. The sun was beginning to set, casting a beautiful light across the trees.

Despite myself, I accepted a beer from the cooler and clinked glasses with Isobel, then relaxed into one of the folding lounge chairs.

"Right, I have to admit," I said. "This is pretty cool."

"Told ya!" Isobel smirked, sipping from the bottle.

And that's when we heard the howling.

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Throughout the night, we heard this bizarre howling coming from... I don't know what. The sound was unlike anything I'd ever heard (and given some of the weird shit I've been through, that's saying something). Isobel pulled a shotgun out from the car and kept it with us in our tent, just to be safe. As I'm not a big gun person, I settled instead for a honkin' big Bowie knife that Jonas Thorne (a lover-slash-friend-with-benefits) had given me as a gift after one of our previous adventures along with a very-illegal balisong knife that I always kept with me.

A gal's gotta be prepared these days.

We didn't exactly get a lot of sleep that night, but it wasn't like we had to wake early for anything.

It was late morning by the time we got moving. After a breakfast, Isobel got that determined look on her face.

"Let's go find out what the hell that was!"

I had to admit, I was curious myself. So we slipped on our hiking boots, loaded a couple of packs with the essentials, and trekked out. Me with my big ol' knife of doom (and my balisong knife) while Isobel hauled her shotgun. Along the way, I used the big ol' knife of doom to hack a branch off a tree and carve myself a nice, big, sturdy walking stick that would make an excellent club.

Me Leilani. Strong cave-girl!

So it turns out Isobel's really good with the whole being in the great outdoors. She can track and do all that fun stuff.

"Something big made its way through here," she murmured, indicating some broken branches and a bit of fur dangling from some. "Probably a bear."

"A bear?" I squeaked.

Yeah, fine. I'm afraid of bears. And clowns, though who *isn't* afraid of clowns?

"Relax," Isobel said dismissively. "I doubt..."

Click! Click!

We both spun, me with my stick-club raised and Isobel with the shotgun brought smoothly to her shoulder. Behind us, a man stood wide-eyed. He raised his hands, letting the expensive-looking camera dangle by a strap around his wrist.

“Easy there, cowgirl! No need to be pointing guns!”

The man was about six feet tall, with a smoothly-shaved head. He was clean-shaven as well. He wore a dark, multi-pocket field jacket and jeans with heavy hiking boots. He had a leather satchel slung over one shoulder that would have made Indiana Jones proud.

“Good way to get your head blown off, buddy,” Isobel growled. “What are you doing here?”

“Yeah, sorry!” the man said. “I was following the trail and heard you two. I started taking pics before I realized you two were just hikers. Armed, paranoid hikers. Any chance you can put that gun down?”

Isobel sighed and lowered the shotgun. I lowered my stick-club, feeling very foolish. The man didn't seem to notice my reaction. He lowered his arms, treasuring his camera and exhaling in relief.

“You're following a bear? Unarmed?” Isobel shook her head. “You're not very bright.”

The man tilted his head.

“I'm not following a bear.”

Something in his voice gave me pause.

“What *are* you following?”

The man strode forward. Isobel and I both took an involuntary step back, but he was intent on a patch of mud on the ground. He pointed to it.

“I’m following *that*.”

And there in the mud was a huge footprint. The kind made by - God help me - a big foot.

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We returned to our camp after that, the guy with us. He introduced himself as Jack Wilder and claimed to be a freelance photographer. With a name like Jack Wilder, I expected him to be out wrestling bears or something, but I guess photography was cool too.

Jack had picked up a pack he’d stuffed high up on a tree, affording him more mobility through the woods, then brought it with him to our campsite. He claimed his own campsite, and vehicle, was another day’s hike.

“So you’re a Bigfoot hunter?” I asked as we sat around the campfire.

“I’m a photographer,” he replied in the weary tone of someone who has explained this before. “With the recent Bigfoot sightings, I figured I’d see if there was a chance of getting the elusive fellow on film.”

“Bigfoot sightings?” Isobel’s brow furrowed.

“You haven’t heard?” Jack looked surprised as we both shook our heads. He shrugged. “It’s been in the local news. Lots of sightings of a big, hairy man, or men, in the woods. Sometimes after strange howling. I figured it was some kind of local hoax, but wanted to check it out.”

“Howling?” Isobel and I exchanged glances.

“You heard it last night too?” Jack looked thoughtful. “I’ll be honest with you. When I saw you both, I figured you two were pulling the hoax. I was really interested in what you guys may have done to make that weird sound.”

“So you took our photo ‘cause you thought we were pulling a con?” Isobel’s mouth twisted.

“Well,” Jack looked sheepish. “It was that or maybe you two were going to have a topless pillow fight in the woods, or something like that.”

“*Pillow fight in the woods?*” I stared at him incredulously.

“Stranger things have happened,” he shrugged again.

I couldn't help it. I burst out laughing. A moment later, Isobel joined me and Jack a moment behind her.

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Jack turned out to be alright. He had with him a couple of flasks containing expensive whiskey, which he liberally shared as we sat at our campfire. He had some funny stories about his travels and was generally relaxed.

As we turned in for the night, Isobel caught my eye.

“He's kinda cute. We could let him share the tent,” she murmured.

I rolled my eyes. “We are *not* letting the stranger into our tent while we sleep, cute or not.”

Isobel adopted a thoughtful look, tapping her lip as if pondering an idea.

“Well then, what do you say to a pillow fight?”

I smacked her upside the head, then moved to turn off our lantern. Jack, sleeping outside, was keeping an eye on our fire.

No sooner had I closed my eyes when the howling sounded again, causing me to wake. I fumbled for the lantern and saw Isobel was awake as well. In moments, we scrambled outside the tent to see Jack was up already. He had a camera with a huge lens set on it.

I suppressed an urge to roll my eyes. Photographers.

“Where's it coming from?” Isobel asked, the shotgun in her hands.

“The woods,” Jack replied, waving vaguely. “Hard to tell where we are. The woods make the sound travel oddly.”

Suddenly there was the snapping of a twig from behind us. We spun to see three men emerge from the shadows.

They had that rough, unshaven look of would-be mountain men. They had that sort of army surplus “tactical” gear that so many survivalists buy in bulk.

And, of course, they were armed.

“Well, well, this is a surprise,” one of them, a narrow-faced fellow with dark eyes and a leer I didn’t like. “Didn’t know there were supermodels camping ‘round here.”

Isobel didn’t raise the shotgun, but turned to face the trio with the gun not exactly low.

“What’s your business here?” she demanded.

“Easy there, girlie,” said the second man, a thick-set, dark skinned fellow with a beard that he was clearly quite proud of.

The trio also didn’t *quite* raise their hunting rifles and point them at us, but I got the sense we were on the edge of a shootout. And only one of us had a gun.

I heard a clicking sound and saw Jack step forward. He had a very functional-looking semiautomatic pistol in his hand. He wasn’t quite pointing it at the trio either, but... yeah, you get the idea.

Okay, *two* of us had guns. Also, what the fuck?

“Yeah,” Isobel snarled. “Call me ‘girlie’ again. What’s the idea of you three coming up, armed, in the middle of the night to our camp?”

Narrow-face opened his mouth to say something when the third fellow stepped forward, putting a hand on Narrow-face’s shoulder. As the third fellow did so, I was suddenly struck by how *big* this guy was!

He was maybe a few inches shy of seven feet tall and looked like someone had taken essence of linebacker and mixed it with the Hulk. He was not a good-looking man by any stretch of imagination, but radiated a sort of power that caught the eye.

Also his arms were probably bigger than my legs. Yeesh!

“Easy boys,” he rumbled, slinging his rifle over one shoulder. “The lady is correct. Apologies for startling the three of you. We’re doing a bit of night hunting, as you might imagine. We saw your fire and wanted to make sure everyone’s okay.”

“You’re following the howling?” Jack asked, lowering his pistol but not putting it back to where ever he had obtained it.

The huge fellow smiled. It wasn’t the sort of smile that comforted me.

“We are.”

“What *is* making that noise?” I found myself asking.

The huge man looked at me. His gaze was intense, making me feel like I was standing naked before him instead of in my sleeping sweats. I was also suddenly very glad I had chosen to *wear* sweats to sleep, as I prefer to sleep in the... wait, this is off-topic. Nevermind.

“We’ll leave you to the rest of your night,” the huge man said. “Apologies for disturbing your evening.”

At an unseen signal, the huge fellow started walking off into the darkness. Epic-beard and Narrow-Face followed, with Narrow-face glancing back, his expression looking hungry. Yeah, that guy needed a crotch massage with some steel-toe boots. Ick!

“Well that was something,” Isobel said, exhaling. She glanced at Jack. “What’s up with the gun, cowboy?”

Jack blinked in surprise, glancing down at the gun, then looked sheepish.

“There’s folks who have strong views on property boundaries up here, real or imagined,” he said, stuffing the gun in a hip holster under his coat. “Pays to be prepared.”

Isobel opened her mouth, but I cut her off.

“Glad you had it,” I said, flashing him a warm smile. “It’s late. We’ll need our beauty sleep. C’mon, Isobel.”

Once inside the tent, Isobel frowned at the entrance.

“I don’t like it,” she muttered. “He’s hiding something.”

“Maybe,” I agreed. “But if he meant to do something, he had lots of opportunities. I’m more worried about the Duelling Banjo Trio out there. We’re fine in here. We’ve got your rifle if things get ugly. Let’s get some sleep.”

Isobel nodded reluctantly, and turned off the lamp. Sleep, however, was long in coming.

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The next morning, we awoke to the smell of coffee and breakfast. It seemed Jack had some food in his pack and was happy to share. Mmm... a man who can cook!

After a delicious start to our morning, Jack stood up and stretched.

“Well, thank you ladies for the kind hospitality. I’d best be off to get to my own campsite.”

“Giving up on Bigfoot?” I asked.

“I’m not keen on stumbling across three heavily-armed guys in the woods,” he admitted. “They don’t look like the sort to react well to seeing cameras.”

I had to admit, I had no rejoinder to that. I felt vaguely sad to see him leave.

“Maybe we *should* have had a pillow fight,” I muttered.

“Slut,” Isobel nudged me.

“Ho!” I retorted, shoving her in response.

“So,” she said, rummaging for a toothbrush. “We’re going to go check out what those guys are up to, right?”

“Hell yeah!”

When will I learn?

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We trudged into the woods an hour later. Isobel was doing her tracking magic. She’s like the daughter of Aragorn and Lara Croft.

Okay, that was a weird thought. Moving on...

The three guys had made no effort to mask their trail. Hell, there were points when / could tell they’d gone by. We continued on through wood and brush. I was, at this point, completely lost and turned around. If Isobel had fallen down some dark mine shaft, there was no way in hell I would find my way back to civilization.

“Uh, lz?” I said finally. “I think we should...”

“Sssh!” Isobel hissed. “I heard something!”

She raised her shotgun and looked around intently. I couldn’t see anything but forest and plants, though I was suddenly aware of a very powerful, pungent odor. For a moment, I thought of asking if Isobel had a reaction to lunch and then helped as Bigfoot stepped into view.

At least I think it was Bigfoot. What do you call a nine-foot-tall hairy man with legs as thick as my waist, huge hairy arms, and massive feet?

Oh, how did I know he was a “he”? Well, I’ll give you a hint. My first impression was that he had three legs.

Yeah.

The stories didn’t mention *that!*

Anyway, Isobel yelped and raised her shotgun. Bigfoot moved faster than I could imagine. He yanked the gun out of Isobel’s hands and bent the barrel a good ninety degrees.

“I think we should run,” she said faintly.

“I think you’re right,” I agreed.

We both spun and started to take off. I could hear pursuit. Big pursuit. Then something hit me in the head and everything went black.

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When I came to, I was completely unsurprised to find myself naked and tied hand-and-foot. I looked around and realized I was in some kind of wooden building. Light, probably sunlight, was coming through cracks in its not-very-tight construction. I blinked a bit and looked around some more. Isobel was off to one side, also naked and tied like I was. In a corner, I saw torn bits of cloth and discarded leather: our clothes. I didn’t see any sign of my big bowie knife, which made the thought of getting untied a bit more complicated. I wondered if ol’ Bigfoot knew what a balisong knife was? Assuming Bigfoot was who knocked me out.

And that’s when the door opened.

In strolled the creepy hunters. Yeah, those were pretty much exactly three guys I didn’t want to see again, especially tied up, naked, and helpless. Narrow-face pasted his leer back on and took a step forward.

“Now *this* is what I’m talkin’ about!” he said gleefully.

“Not the time, Robert,” the really big fellow said, pulling Narrow-face Robert back.

I looked up and batted my eyelashes.

“I don’t suppose you’d help a lady out?” I asked, not really expecting a ‘yes’.

“I’d be tempted,” the big man said. “But then, you’re not much of a lady, are you Ms. Hawkins? Nor, really, is Professor Hawks.”

I saw Isobel stir and sit up. I tried not to feel self-conscious about the fact that she’s got a *really* magnificent rack. Yeah, I’ve never had any complaints about mine, but *damn*, y’know?

“And who the hell are you supposed to be?” Isobel demanded. “And what’s all this about, anyway?”

“My name is Caliban Styx,” the big man said. “And I...”

I couldn’t help myself. I burst out laughing.

“*Caliban Styx*? Seriously?” I chortled. I think I even guffawed. “What are you, the backup drummer for an Eighties Hair-Metal band? That’s not your *real* name, is it?”

Caliban Styx looked down at me with a patient expression and a half-smile that did wonders to dampen my own amusement.

“Ah, the famous wit of Leilani Hawkins,” his smile widened. “I must say, I’ve looked forward to meeting you. Paul, if you would?”

The beard-guy strode past to the far end of the room. Damn, this building went pretty deep in. He walked up to a big, thick, wooden table set before a huge wooden X-frame.

X-frame. Oh shit!

He picked up something off of the table. It looked like some kind of decorated stick. It looked vaguely Native American to me, but not anything I could specifically identify.

“It’s here,” Paul said. “They must be willing to trade.”

“Excellent,” Caliban Styx - oh God, what a stupid name! - said with a satisfied nod.

“Oh shit,” I muttered. “Is this some kind of altar? *Again? Please* don’t tell me you’re one of those Over-baiter wonks.”

Caliban raised an eyebrow. “So you know of the Overseers? I shouldn’t be surprised. You’re said to be resourceful.”

He stepped forward and picked me up off the floor with one hand wrapped around my forearm. Damn this guy was big!

“No,” he said looking me over. “You’re not being sacrificed here. You’ll be coming along with us. The only thing I enjoy more about making a pretty girl scream is making a pretty girl *scream*.”

I blinked. “I don’t get it.”

He frowned at me. I turned to look down at Isobel.

“Do you understand what he said?” I asked her.

“I think he was implying something about his penis and sadomasochistic tendencies,” Isobel mused. “Which probably means there’s not much to impress a girl with said male member.”

“Wait, really?” I asked.

Caliban Styx - I am *never* going to *not* find his name funny - growled and tossed me to Robert the Leerer.

Is “leerer” a thing? It feels like it should be a thing.

Anyway, Robby-boy made it a thing. He grabbed me and let his hands get familiar.

“Gag them both,” Caliban instructed. “And then get Professor Hawks up on the rack. She’s going to be the guest of honor.”

“Watch your hands, asshole!” I snarled, and then head-butted Robert the Leerer.

He stumbled back, his nose bleeding. “Bitch!”

I twisted and fell as though I lost balance, rolling on to the pile of torn clothes. Robert stepped forward, a fist raised.

“No!” Caliban-with-the-hair-metal-name commanded. “Gag her! We have plenty of time for Ms. Hawkins to learn manners later.”

Snarling wordlessly, Robbie-boy took what was left of my tank-top, knotted it, and gagged me. Paul the Beard used some dirty bit of cloth to do the same to Isobel. Ew. Robbie-boy then dropped me on the floor while he and Paul-the-Beard struggled to get Isobel bound on the huge X-rack.

I was puzzled. Why were these guys bothering with the X-rack?

“You’re probably wondering why we’re putting Professor Hawks up on the rack,” Caliban said, looking down at me.

Wow. If he was reading my mind, this was going to get complicated quickly. I glared up at him.

“Mph ph phk amph uuf uph phu?” I demanded through my gag.

“What am I up to?” the huge man asked.

Oh great. He understands gag-speak.

“I can see you know nothing of the history here,” he continued. “So a little lesson while my associates work on their knot-tying skills.”

Oh God, he’s going to monolog!

“You see, this lodge was built by Abner Campbell in 1870. Campbell is not noted in conventional history, but well-known in the occult, as you are aware. A skilled magician, exiled from his home in Scotland for... indiscretion, he came to the United States and settled in the Pacific Northwest. Gifted in what we now term cryptozoology, he became fascinated with the stories told by the natives of large ‘hairy men’ living in the woods: what we now call ‘Sasquatch’ or ‘Bigfoot’.”

I snorted into my gag. “Indiscretion” indeed. I knew the story of Abner Campbell. He was a thief and a pervert.

“Campbell managed to befriend the Sasquatch as he established himself in this region. He learned their ways while he continued his own researches in magic.”

Research that almost always involved some pretty girl as subject to old Abner’s depravity, from the stories I’d read. I appreciated the time Cali-bone-head’s speech was giving me but not liking the direction this was taking.

I glanced over at Isobel. The other two thugs had her tied tightly to the rack. Robert the Leerer was amusing himself by playing with Isobel’s magnificent tits.

What? They *are* magnificent! A girl can be appreciative. Oh yeah, Caliboob is still talking...

“... got on his trail,” the huge jackass was saying. “He knew his time was running out and lacked heirs, so he turned over his library to the Sasquatch for safekeeping. A library they hold still and will present to one who knows how to reclaim it.”

Oh. Shit.

“Yes,” Caliban nodded, seeing understanding in my eyes. “The Sasquatch have... appetites. They’re lusty creatures. Slow to actually procreate, from what we know, but that doesn’t stop them from trying. Indeed, while intelligent, they dedicate the vast majority of their lives on... hedonistic pursuits. The males are insatiable, by all accounts. The females, while tremendously lusty, have expanded their own repertoire.

“Their society is masterful at remaining hidden, due in no small part to their own magics. They interact with humans primarily out of entertainment. They lure humans into traps and then... well, I *did* say they're lusty creatures. While the males are direct in their pleasure, the females enjoy *toying* with their new guests.”

He glances over at Isobel.

“The totem was an indication that the Sasquatch are quite willing to trade for the library. Professor Hawks will be the payment and - ahem - ‘enjoy’ a very long time of large attentions. We will gain the library of Abner Campbell and you, Miss Hawkins.”

Huh. I'd thought the Bigfoot we met was the one who took us down. It made sense, though. These bastards lured us into following them. When we encountered the big hairy fellow... oh wow. I remembered how - uh - well-hung Bigfoot was. And they were offering Isobel up to that?

I wasn't sure if I was a little envious or really worried for her. A little of both?

What the hell is *wrong* with me? Leilani Hawkins, the sex-toy of Bigfoot is *such* a porno title.

Okay, time to be out of this shit. I managed to cut through the last of the cords holding my wrists bound with the balisong knife I'd plucked from the remains of my clothes. Thanks for the grope, Bobby the Leerer.

I looked up at Caliban Styx with my best helpless-maiden-in-distress look. It must have had some effect, as he straightened, crossing those huge arms, and grinned. With such an open pose, I brought my bound legs up and kicked straight out into his groin.

And with that, I got to see that old saying in practice: The bigger they are...

As Caliban hit the floor, doubled-over to cradle his precious boo-boo, I cut my ankles free just as Paul the Beard came at me. I introduced Paul to a free lesson in how to block a Tae Kwon Do kick with his nose. He thanked me for the lesson by hitting the floor with a satisfying thunk after his nose broke.

Snarling, Robert the groping-leerer, charged at me.

“I’m gonna make you pay for that, bitch!” he growled.

So, rule one: never call Leilani Hawkins the b-word unless you’re one of her BFFs and there’s history there.

What I did to Robert was far less-nice.

Leaving Bobby-boy on the floor in a mangled pile of pain, I spotted my bowie knife on the far side of the floor. I grabbed it and, with a flourish, drew it and cut Isobel free.

Isobel yanked the gag free and grinned.

“Damn girl! Good job!”

I made to reply and remembered I still had my own gag in my mouth. Damn! Am I getting *used* to being gagged? Hell’s bells!

I yanked the cloth out of my mouth and grinned in return.

“Just another day in...”

The door opened.

“Oh... shit,” Isobel said faintly.

In streamed a half dozen huge hairy Bigfoots. Bigfeet? Sasquatch. Damn names are hard. One of them was carrying a large burlap sack. Each of them was as big, hairy, and well-hung as the one we’d seen in the forest.

And seeing a pair of naked ladies, they started to respond. Daaaaamn!

There was suddenly a crashing sound. I saw that Caliban Styx had somehow gotten his bulk through one of the shuttered windows and fled. Wimp.

I dropped into a crouch, knife ready. Isobel fell into a boxing pose. I'm all for a good time, but a gang-bang with six giant, hair monsters was a bit outside of my comfort zone. These guys were not taking me without a fight.

"Chill out girls," the lead Sasquatch said.

I swear I almost dropped my knife. Isobel's shocked expression was likely a mirror of my own.

"You... speak English?" I asked stupidly.

"Duh!" the Sasquatch rolled his eyes. "So I'm guessin' these guys aren't in a position to do a trade. Fair enough. Guess we'll be going."

"Just like that?" Isobel demanded.

I kicked her. "Do *not* bait the big hairy men, Iz!"

The Sasquatch gave Isobel an amused look.

"We deal in trade, babe. Our code doesn't let us do what you're thinking. If these guys were offering you up, that's between you and them. Now your destiny is your own. We don't mess with that."

"So... what?" Isobel asked. "You can take tied up girls as offerings, but you don't abduct them yourself?"

"Pretty much," the Sasquatch nodded. "Makes more sense after some pipe weed, really. If you wanna try some, we've got a stash."

"Uh... no thanks," Isobel shook her head.

"And *that's* the library of Abner Campbell?" I asked, gesturing at the large sack.

"Yeah," the Sasquatch said. "Was kinda glad to be rid of it, truth be told. The missus was on me over the space it was takin' up, but that's that. Anyway, we'll be going..."

“Wait!” I called out.

They paused.

“How... uh... what would you take for the books?” I asked. “I mean... neither of us are going with you to be sex toys or anything.”

“Bummer,” the Sasquatch said. “What’re you offering?”

“Well...” I glanced at Isobel.

I made a wait gesture to the big hairy fellow and took Isobel aside. I told her my plan.

“No way!” Isobel hissed. “Are you *kidding*?”

“Can you think of a better solution?” I demanded. “If those books wind up in someone else’s hands...”

Isobel worked her jaw and glared at me. I looked at the Sasquatch. Sasquatches? I worked my own jaw.

“So, I figure you want to be rid of the books, and you came all this way,” I said. “Here’s what I had in mind...”

And that’s how we gave Bigfoot a blowjob. Bigfoots? Bigfeet?

I couldn’t wait to get the hell out of the woods.

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Jack Wilder peered through the telephoto lens and smiled to himself. With his free hand, he keyed the satellite phone.

“Yes?” the voice on the other end said.

“Confirmed,” Jack said. “The Campbell books are in play. Hawkins managed to pull it off.”

“You’re shitting me!”

“I’m not. At this point, I’m calling it.”

“Are you sure...?”

“Yes,” Jack said decisively. “Leilani Hawkins is the Chosen One. We need to adjust plans accordingly.”

~\*~

Leilani Hawkins will return in **The Demon’s Tower**