Jenine sighed tiredly as she followed closely behind the two warriors in front of her. Another day, another E-rank handling quest. It was *SO* boring! But it wasn’t like she had much of a choice. Rules were rules, after all. *Tch*.

At least her party was finally warming up to her. In front of her, Karidon cast a glance back and gave a friendly smile. Jenine smiled back. Hopefully they didn’t get *too* warmed up… this was only a temporary arrangement until Jenine finally managed to get to D-rank, after all.

From ahead of Karidon and Rami (the other warrior), the party’s scout emerged from the shadows of the cave. The party stopped. “What’s up, Glass?” Karidon asked.

Glass, the scout, pulled down her hood and so the others could see her face. “There’s… well, good news and bad news.” She said carefully, tucking a strand of silver hair behind a pointed ear.

Rami crossed her arms and grunted, “When *isn’t* there bad news? Wha’ izzit this time, huh? Salamanders? Echo wraiths? Horny ogres?”

“Please don’t remind me about the ogres,” Glass pleaded, shivering. She shook her head, then looked at Jenine. “There’re no slimes today.”

Jenine just stared at Glass. “... Come again?”

“I scoured the cave to its end. There were no slimes, cave-born or otherwise.”

“Oh, please. There are *always* slimes,” Jenine scoffed. “Some of the older ones camouflage themselves pretty well. You’ll need to use a-”

“Echolocation skill. Yes, I know,” Glass said bluntly. “You’ve been picking up slimes with us for a few months now. I know the drill. And the drill says that there are no slimes in this cave.”

Feeling her blood pressure starting to rise, Jenine took a step forward to get into Glass’s face, but Karidon stepped in between them. “Hey now, no need to get testy. We’ll see about tracking a forest slime down on the way back. How’s that sound, Jenny?”

Jenny? Who the fuck was Jenny supposed to be? Jenine barely bit back a curse as she said, “It’s *not* fine, *Karidon*. A single juvenile depths slime is worth at least TEN oaken slimes! And I don’t have the potions or skills to handle venomous or carapace slimes! How am I ever going to get out of this Helms-forsaken rank if I can’t even get a decent slime!?”

“That’s not our problem,” Rami said, side-eying Jenine. “We’re only lettin’ ‘ya tag along since ‘ya know healin’ magic. It’s not our fault that there’s none of the squicky bastards ‘ere, so why do we ‘afta listen to your bitchin’?”

“Eh? *Eh*!?” Jenine spat, leaning around Karidon to get into Rami’s face. “Tell me, you little gender-swapped beard monger- who was it that reattached your stubby fingers last week after a mantid took them off, huh? And who mended your *WHOLE FREAKING FACE* after you decided that an acid slime was just as harmless as a fern slime, huh? And I’m just tagging along, am I?”

“Shove it up yours, ‘ya waerod breathrumm.”

“I swear to *fuck*, I’m gonna learn dwarvish just so I can-”

“Hey, moss-for-brains,” Glass interrupted, obviously fed up with the bullshit going on beside her, “Do you wanna hear the good news or not?”

Jenine huffed angrily but quieted down anyways. It's not like squabbling with Rami for the millionth time that week would do her any good. “Fine. What is it?” she asked.

Glass glanced over her shoulder. “I found something I’ve never seen before, some kinda… sparkling rock. No clue what it is, but it’s stunning to look at. It’ll probably be worth a fortune, whatever it is. Maybe you can afford some of those potions or whatever with your cut after we pawn it.”

“What could be *that* valuable that it’s been left alone in this low-level cave? And seriously, a *ROCK*!?” Jenine bitched.

“C’mon Jenny, calm down already,” Karidon cut in, crossing his arms. “Glass definitely knows her gold from her fool’s gold, so if she says something’s valuable, then it’s valuable.”

“... Fine,” Jenine relented.

Karidon breathed a sigh of relief, then nodded to Glass. “Show us the way then.”

The light of Rami’s torch flickered on the cave walls as the party followed their scout. It was a winding path, but with only the occasional branching path, there was little risk of getting lost - especially since Glass had marked off the right path. She loathed to admit it after getting snippy earlier, but Jenine had to admit that Glass was more than competent at her job. Maybe this… whatever it was would be worth today’s venture even with the lack of slimes.

Glass stopped at what seemed to be a dead end. Jenine was about to ask what was up when the faint sound of running water caught her ears. The elven scout nodded upwards, then began to scale the stone wall before her. Rami raised her torch, casting the light higher. Sure enough, where one would’ve expected a ceiling was instead a raised alcove that lead off deeper into the cave.

“Nice catch, lass!” Rami laughed. “Would’a never noticed that miself!”

Rami handed her torch off to Karidon, who could hold the light higher for a better view of the wall, then started scrambling up. Jenine went next. It was tough work. The stone walls were damp but had enough crags and rough surfaces that Jenine could haul her light frame up despite the slickness. She pulled herself onto the alcove, panting but otherwise fine.

Karidon tossed up the torch to Rami, then climbed up himself. The three continued on. There wasn’t much need of a guide now as the tunnel was both straightforward and narrow enough that the flame’s light easily clearly both walls. No paths could be missed, so the way forward was unmistakable.

Before long, Jenine noticed that there was a source of light some ways down the tunnel. Karidon must’ve noticed it as well, as he asked, “What’s that ahead?”

“Glowmoss and azure mana crystals,” Glass responded. “There’s enough of both that it’s as bright as day up ahead even though there’s no skylight.”

Before long, Jenine was able to see clearly even without the assistance of Rami’s torch. And with her newfound sight, she saw that the tunnel opened up into a large cave up ahead. Glass stopped, holding her hand out. “Ok, the pricey thing is just up ahead. Be careful though; my Sense Creature spell picked up on something alive in that cave earlier, but I couldn’t find it.”

Jenine and the other two nodded. She dropped back behind Karidon and pulled out her tome, gripping it tightly. She didn’t know any offensive or defensive magic at all, only healing magic, so the tome wouldn’t do her much good in an actual fight. But it made her feel safe to hold it at the very least.

Slowly, the party advanced into the cave. Before anything else, Jenine noticed exactly what Glass had seen that she would describe as ‘stunning’. It was a giant prismatic rock next to a small stream that was flowing through the cave. The bright yellow moss on the walls and the blue glowing crystals made the cave sparkle with light, and that light shone through the almost translucent rock and made its colors swirl and spiral. In fact, from the way the colors seemed to be moving, it almost seemed like…

Jenine gasped. She almost dropped her tome, but barely caught it with the tips of her fingers. Karidon whipped around, eyes scanning the area around Jenine. “What’s wrong!? What-” But upon seeing that Jenine was fine, he sighed and shook his head. “By Dromas, Jenny, I thought something was wrong. What was that for?”

“That… that’s not a rock…”

“Huh?” Karidon followed Jenine’s gaze. “Yeah, it’s really pretty, isn’t it? It’s gonna be a pain to get that crystal all the way out of here, though. Damned things bound to weigh a-”

“It’s not a crystal either.”

Karidon looked back to Jenine, visibly confused. “What? You know what that thing is, then?”

Glass and Rami had noticed something was off and had stopped their searching to come closer, though tehy were still looking around wearily. “Look, ya flighty beanpole, we still gotta find what’s hidin’ from Glass in ‘ere ‘fore we can-”

Jenine pointed at the prismatic ‘object’. “It’s not hiding. It’s right there.”

The other three stared over at it, then back to Jenine. “... You’ve really lost it, haven’t you?” Glass asked.

“No, I haven’t!” Jenine hissed. “That’s a slime! And a mythical-rank one, at that!”

“M-Mythical!?” Karidon breathed, taking a step back. “What the hells is a mythical-rank creature doing in a beginner’s cave!?”

“You’re not really believin’ her, are ya?” Rami asked Karidon. She raised an eyebrow at Jenine. “Seriously, what are ya on about? There’s nothin’ slime-like about that thing. It’s a crystal, though and through.”

“It’s a *slime*,” Jenine insisted, walking closer to the prismatic creature. “It’s an effulgent slime, specifically. And it’s not dangerous. Mythical creatures aren’t graded based on how dangerous they are, just how rare they are. And *THIS* little beauty is one of the rarest breeds of slimes out there!” She whipped around, eyes sparkling. “Glass, you really DO know your treasures!”

Glass rolled her eyes. “Riiiight. So what can we expect for this one, huh? Fifty silver? A gold?”

Jenine crouched down next to the slime, running a hand up one side. It quivered under her touch. It was responsive, which was a good sign. If it had entered hibernation, it would’ve been just about immovable. “Three plat, minimum.”

“THREE PLAT-”

“Shut it!” Jenine hissed, turning to glare at Glass. “If you scare it away, then it *won’t* be worth *anything*!”

“*S-Sorry!*” Glass squeaked.

Rami stepped closer, then squatted down next to Jenine. She examined the slime intently. “Well, I’ll be an elven whore…” the dwarf relented, watching a droplet of moisture slide down the creature’s side until it got absorbed through its membrane. “This thing really is alive. Why’s it actin’ so calm when we’re right next to it, eh? ‘Specially if it can get spooked like ya said?”

“We’re *extremely* lucky,” Jenine breathed. “It’s just eaten, so it’s resting. And because we don’t have any powerful casters, it doesn’t see us as threats since its only predators are magical beasts. But one of its main predators uses sonic magic, so loud noises will still make them seek shelter.”

“You know…” Karidon started while walking up to get a closer look. “I kinda already noticed this, but you *really* know a lot about slimes, don’t you?”

“Of course I do,” Jenine sniffed. “I’ve been studying slimes for almost my entire life. It’d be pathetic if I *didn’t* know much about them by this point.”

“O-Ok, so what do we- uh, *you* need to do to bring this three-plat bad boy home with us?” Glass asked. Jenine rolled her eyes. She could almost hear the elven scout drooling. Seriously, high elves were all so damned greedy. Jenine was *so* glad she had been born a wood elf.

“Some time to get myself and my body ready. Also, your prayers that I don’t explode. This will be my first time trying to transport something this big.”

“Explode?” Rami coughed. “Aren’t ya trained ta be able ta take massive things in the mouth?”

“First, fuck you. Second, yes, but not *this* size yet. It takes decades of practice and practical experience for most handlers to be able to transport slimes this size, and even *then* it all depends on the volatility of the slime. Effulgent slimes are so rare that there’s only been a few ever successfully caught, so not much is known about handling them yet.”

“Wait a minute! If this is dangerous, then maybe you shouldn’t-” Karidon started.

“If you think for a *second* that I’m passing up an opportunity to bring a slime this rare in, then you’re lacking for anything resembling a brain,” Jenine scoffed. “I said *most* handlers. *I* am NOT ‘most handlers’. I just… need a minute to prep myself mentally, that’s all.”

Karidon opened his mouth to argue, but Glass slapped a hand over his face. “*Noooo* problem, Jenny! We’ll just be over here, rooting for you!” She grabbed Karidon by his ear and dragged him away, quietly cursing him out in elvish.

Rami chuckled, then stood up and patted Jenine’s shoulder. “Hey, if nothin’ else, ya got guts, string bean. Don’t get ‘em all over the place by poppin’, y’hear?”

“You better get yourself warmed up, monstress,” Jenine retorted, smirking. “I’m gonna need help lugging myself out of this cave and you’re the only one with enough beef to do it.”

The dwarf let out a bark of laughter, then went to join the other two. As far as dwarves went, Rami seemed tolerable, Jenine admitted to herself. She shook her head, clearing her thoughts. Right. Time to get to work.

The elven woman ran a cupped hand up the slime’s side, collecting a small pool of its liquid-gel coating. It shivered again but did nothing. She poured the gel into her mouth, letting it flow down her throat. The gel would do a better job coating her throat than her natural saliva would, and it would help encourage the slime to go in if it felt more of itself inside.

Jenine took deep breaths, settling her heart. Ok, she had been bluffing a bit before. It would be closer to a miracle if she managed to fit this whole thing inside of herself. Seriously, the thing was the size of a young horse, yet she was going to try and fit the whole damned creature inside of her stomach? She still couldn’t believe that others had managed to swallow something so large, let alone believe that she herself could do it, but… if she *could*, then the prestige would be immense. Screw D-rank- she might even go all the way up to A-rank from this one handling alone! And her cut would pay for potions, gear, books, and still have enough left over to pay for inn costs a year! She COULD *NOT* let this opportunity pass her up!

The slim woman took one last deep breath but kept breathing in and in. First rule of handling: *never* open your lungs while taking in or releasing a specimen. That meant training to have a massive lung capacity. Jenine had timed herself at being able to hold her breath for about ten minutes before; she *really* hoped that would be enough time for something this big…

Finally, with her lungs sealed, her throat lubed up, and her mind focused, Jenine tickled the side of the slime. It wobbled slightly. She opened her mouth wide and licked the side of the slime, feeling long tendrils of its gel coating sticking to the side of her mouth as she did.

The slime wobbled again, then ever-so-slowly began to shift. A tendril of colorful, condensed slime began to poke out of the large creature, extending along the strings of coating still attached to Jenine’s mouth. It reached her lips and slid past. The tendril explored the damp contents of her mouth, then continued in further and found the back of her throat. There it found the slime she had swallowed earlier and, just as planned, eagerly began to follow the trail deeper inside of her.

Jenine was thankful that Effulgent slimes were, apparently, just as easy to lure as basic species of slime. Now all she had to do was hope her body held together. Ha. Simple. Haha. *Haaaaa*.

A droplet of sweat ran down her back. Oh boy.

The elven woman could feel the slime poking around in her stomach once it was all the way down her esophagus. Then she felt her stomach start to fill up as the slime continued pouring itself inside, condensing inside of her gut at a fast pace. Effulgent Slimes certainly didn’t waste time, apparently. Good. If it took too long, Jenine was liable to either suffocate or drown - neither of which was something she had been looking forward to.

She sat back on her haunches, one hand on the wet stone behind her and the other resting on her stomach. It was already starting to rise, her lovely trim waist rounding out with precious slime. She pulled apart her cloak and rolled up her shirt, baring her midriff. The cave was uncomfortably cold, and the slime was the same temperature, but the extra minute of having her belly covered wouldn’t be worth the embarrassment of having it rip when her stomach grew too large to be covered anymore.

The slime kept sliding in. Actually, it seemed like it was entering… faster? Jenine relaxed her jaw a bit and found that it didn’t close much anymore. Her throat seemed to be more full as well. Hey, still good- faster was better right now, after all.

She kept one hand on her bare belly, monitoring her size since she couldn’t exactly watch. She had a sizable paunch now as if she had eaten seconds after an already hefty dinner. But it was swelling underneath her very fingers. She could physically feel her skin sliding under her hand as her stomach expanded from the onslaught of candy-colored slime. Before long, she had bypassed any reasonable meal and felt like she was closer to being pregnant than well-fed. And still, she grew.

The effulgent slime kept going on going, endlessly filling her stomach. Jenine had never gone beyond handling a trio of oaken slimes before, which amounted to maybe half of this massive beauty. She’d *practiced* about three-quarters of this slime’s size with water, roughly, but she’d felt like she was about to burst by the end, and this slime was for sure denser than water. But hey, that was over a decade ago when she last pushed her limits! Surely her capacity had increased in that time, right? Right?

Either way, Jenine was going to find out real soon. It looked like the prismatic blob had shrunk by around half, which meant all that wobbly gel was inside of her now. She… well, to say that she was fine would be a lie. Her skin felt tight and her stomach was pressing hard on her lungs, making it difficult to keep her breath held. Her guts were rumbling angrily as well, making a bodily chorus with the squelching of slime against her lips.

Jenine grunted as her jaw got forced open even wider. She brought a hand up to her throat and felt that it was wider than usual. The slime was even more impatient than she was, but she couldn’t blame it. Slimes of this size had a much harder time finding damp, cramped spots that fit them well without spreading themselves thin. But *damn* if her jaw and throat weren’t going to be sore later.

The brunette elf grunted again, but this time due to her gut. She was rapidly approaching what she figured was her old record for size. Her gut had long since passed the realm of natural sizes save for the species of beastkin who lay large litters. It completely enveloped her lap, her soft flesh pressing heavily against her entire thighs. The lukewarm stone felt cold to her skin, which she only knew since the peak of her bare lower belly could just barely touch the floor over her knees.

The slime forced a large glob past Jenine’s teeth, eliciting a painful moan from the elf as her stomach nearly visibly bulged from it. Her skin was taut underneath her fingers, offering next to no give. She rubbed it in the patterns she had learned but even the knowledge passed down from generations of handlers couldn’t save her now. Either her belly would hold or it wouldn’t.

Helms help her. She may have truly bitten off more than she could chew.

Jenine’s lungs burned. Her belly was shoving them hard into her own ribcage, increasing her need for air more and more with each passing second. Her stomach was expanding slower now, but not from the slime slowing down. Her flesh was running out of elasticity, her body running out of space.

She couldn’t see the remaining slime anymore past her own gravid gut. There couldn’t be much left but it hurt so badly. Her stomach ached, her flanks twitching. A foreboding rumble echoed from within. The flustered woman desperately wanted to cry out, to moan, to cuss and yell and beg someone to please, *please* rub her belly and slap her ass and- wait, what was that last thought?

AH! Tears clouded Jenine’s vision as her stomach throbbed. This was it- it was too much after all! She couldn’t hold herself together! The top of her domed belly was starting to turn pale, her skin stretching thinner than she thought skin could even be. The elven woman desperately caressed her sides, hoping to soothe just a fraction of the pain and turmoil.

Too much! It was too much! She was going to pop! Her belly would burst! Her roaring gut was full to the max! She couldn’t- Ah! AH! *AAAH-*!

“*OOOOH FFFFFFUUUUUUUUUUUCK* ***ME!***”

Jenine’s mouth knew only how to jettison stale air and curses as it was finally freed of viscous slime. She felt the need to belch, to try and relieve even a minuscule ounce of pressure from her turgid belly, but there was nothing to release. The slime had left no room for air, for water, for food, for *anything*.

“By the deep, ya actually did it, lass,” came Rami’s voice. Jenine barely even had the sense left in her body to roll her eyes over far enough to look at the dwarf. She was staring speechless at Jenine- or, more specifically, at her titanic gut. “Ya did it, but… what are we supposed to do with ‘ya now?”

Karidon too was staring at Jenine, apparently enthralled. But Rami’s question made him snap to. He stepped forward quickly but stopped just short of the heavily overstuffed elf. “D-Do you need anything, Jenny? Do you, uh… uh… hey, are you… *glowing*?”

Glowing? Jenine rolled her eyes back to herself. Huh. Her stomach was no longer pale, but rather, had taken on the colors of the effulgent slime. They were dimmer and less vibrant, but still distinct. Neat.

Glass wearily approached Jenine and knelt down, looking like she wanted to touch but was afraid to. “Is this… the colors of the slime showing through? Can skin even do that?”

“It can if it’s thin enough,” Rami responded. “Y’see it sometimes when ya come across a dead, bloated carcass.”

Jenine coughed at the vivid imagery. She was glad she didn’t have any lunch to lose, especially since her stomach muscles couldn’t physically contract right now without ripping her in half. “R-Rami, please- *AH*! Please d-don’t…”

The dwarf rolled her eyes. “Back on track, what are we gonna do with ‘ya now? You look fit to burst if we so much as nudge ya, let alone walk ya anywhere.”

“N-No, I- I can do it, I just- oh *FUCK*- I need a minute! I just need a- OH!”

“It’s fine, we can take our time,” Glass said, gathering the courage to run a careful finger down Jenine’s side. Even that slight tension was enough to send spasms of pleasureful tension throughout her body- ok, wait, pleasure? What? Why in the name of Helm was *THAT* kind of feeling mixed in here?

The elven scout stretched out on the floor next to Jenine. “We have until Jenny here needs food or water to get her to town, right? So we’ve got time.”

“Hmm…” Karidon still looked extremely concerned. He was pacing behind Jenine, his footsteps loud in the small cave. “Yeah, but shouldn’t we be trying to get that thing out of her as soon as possible? Isn’t her skin going to run out of strength at some point and just-”

“DON’T SAY IT!” Jenine cried. “That’s bad energy! Don’t even fucking *THINK* it! Just- AH! Just DON’T!”

Rami sighed and flopped down next to the cave wall. “Yeah, whatever. This thing better be worth as much as you said it was, boulder-gut. ‘Specially if you’re riskin’ this much for it.”

It *definitely* would be. Jenine panted as a fresh round of cramps ran through her middle. *FUCK*, what she wouldn’t give for an ale and an orcish whore right now-

Ok, she was going to have to work out these horny thoughts at some point, but now *REALLY* wasn’t the time. That time was later, once she’d digested enough of the effulgent slimes rich body to make up for the energy she’d lost taking it in and her skin had recovered enough to where it wasn’t nearly paper-thin. And when her cargo was something significantly less valuable as well. Maybe if she pumped herself full of water instead, *then* hired a strong orcish woman to rough up her painfully full belly and-

AH! Again, NOT the time! FUCK HER NEW DUMBASS FETISH! *FUUUUUCK*!