

Sultana

Sultana

By : Megalanthropus

Set in a place that is reminiscent of ancient Arabia - Sultana chronicles the turbulent adventures and sexual intrigue in an ancient kingdom, ruled by a powerful, ruthless and beautiful woman.



Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/Megalanthropus

Copyright © Megalanthropus, 2015
Publish your writing on Booksie.com.

Table of Contents

The Nubian

The Hellene

Python

Security and insecurity

Fucked

Colors

Plans

Passion, punishment and a Persian penis

Character

Eavesdropping

Petitions

Dark explorations

Battles

Darkness imminent

Breath

Threads

Intrigue

Energies

Pivots

Vendettas

Beginning ending

Changes

Sultana

Troubles - present, past and future.

Stars

Searches

Chapter 1: The Nubian

The whole palace had the smell of myrrh. The myrrh was a decoy, a mask, a facade. It masked a subtle odor that one would not want to associate with such an esteemed part of the desert land.

The emperor sat on his throne, leaning forward, trying to pay attention to what his vassals were saying. He didn't really need to, nor could he hear that well. He had been a powerful man once. He stood several inches over six feet in height, and had been a great warrior. He had felled many rival claimants to the Sultanate through fell swoops of his bronze sword. Then he had lost power by degrees to the Sultana. First he lost his loins to her. Then his heart. Then his throne.

His bushy beard was more black than silver, but the silver would soon claim a victory. His gray eyes were tired from the heat and grime of so many battles of sword and state, and kept drooping while hearing out different appeals from citizens of his kingdom. His face was smooth, but it had faint lines of age showing up as though the desert winds were gently uncovering some hidden structure under his skin. His raiment was the traditional robes of the monarch, a deep scarlet shirt with emeralds for buttons, and black pantaloons that were laced into his dark brown sandals. A red and black turban sat atop his head, and had been passed to him by his father, who had received it in turn at the end of a long line of succession.

She was force personified, in comparison to her 'lord and master'. She sat in a seat that was modest compared to his jewel encrusted throne. It was still luxurious to an extreme degree, with orichalc and rubies weaving a brilliant bejeweled tapestry around its edges. Nothing in the room was as dominant as the Sultana.

She was of average height for women of the Sultanate. She was a sturdy specimen of womanhood, and was built like the Venus de Milo. She had gorgeously defined bosom that many a man lusted after, but would be put to sword for expressing any lust. She had raven hair that was thick and braided into one plait that fell down her back, all the way to her regal and very luscious buttocks. And she was a force to behold.

Every man, woman, animal and inanimate object in the throne room was enthralled by the sheer force of her personality. It was this one quality that many attributed her current position to. She presently conferred in whispers with a trio of nonagenarian advisers, who had been serving the kingdom for well over fifteen decades between them.

There were whispers about how she got the Sultan under her spell. She was very talented in the secrets of the perfumed chambers, where the royal babies are sired. She had birthed four sturdy children, three girls and one boy. Still her beauty hadn't paled an iota. She hadn't become thicker at the hips than the day their Sultan had announced his undying love for her in front of all the kingdom.

Many wondered what her secrets were, but they were only hers to know. What was clear was that there were days when the Sultan could barely stay awake, while the Sultana had an excess of animal vitality. Many whispered that she sucked his very marrow into herself, so that his span of years were added to hers. None knew the truth of it.

Younos walked up a less explored corridor in the Sultan's palace. He was in a room that connected several secret chambers to the Sultan's chambers. His goal now was to discover the subterranean secret passages of the palace, so that he could learn actual secrets of state. As a humble errand boy who had recently found favor in the palace kitchen, he knew that the only way to power was through control of information, and he was searching for information.

Sultana

He never heard anything from the so-called Sultan's chambers. A couple of groans and moans, which vaguely sounded like lovemaking, but no words. Today, however, he had discovered something that made inroads even into the so-called 'Sultan's chambers'. These were a labyrinth, and he wasn't even sure how many chambers he'd have to cross before he actually reached the vicinity of the Sultan and the Sultana.

He was keenly aware of one thing however. To be caught snooping would mean instant decapitation. No tribunal, no court, nothing. He would be executed in front of the Sultan by his guards if the Sultan but snapped his fingers. If the Sultana snapped her fingers, he would be executed in half the time and with twice the brutality.

He was playing a dangerous game though. He knew that great rewards come to only to those who are willing to undertake great risks. So he plodded on, ever alert and ever cautious. His keen sense of navigation kept him from losing his way within the labyrinth. His bold meanderings would have made him the envy of Theseus.

Then he heard a sound. It was rhythmic sound. There were frantic moans that were deliberately hushed. He slowed down, sensed the direction - and tiptoed. The moans and grunts became louder, but only slightly - and then he found that he was in cluttered storage area filled with earthen amphoras and bronze statues from distant Rome that were gathering dust. All statues were of well endowed men, or of buxom women - in different states of lovemaking. The moans and grunts were coming from an adjacent room.

A brick wall with a stone grill built into it separated the storage room from another storage area that was much smaller. Here Younos saw what he sought - the source of the sounds.

It was Mediha, the eldest progeny of the Sultan and the Sultana. There was no mistaking her twenty two year old body, or her long, oval face, or her dusky skin and her jet black hair. She was buxom, curvy, thick - and very desirable. Right now the one desiring her, other than Younos and so many other young men and women, was a giant Nubian slave.

Younos felt horror at what he saw. The princess Mediha was fucking a common slave. The slave was running the grave risk of execution so that his cock could get its due. Younos could see what attraction he held. He was giant in his own proportions - he must have been close to seven feet tall. His member was gigantic - and currently princess Mediha was straining to contain it in her vagina. The Nubian was taking her from behind.

Her face was a contorted and wore a mask of sheer ecstasy - and occasional pain that she was clearly loving. Her dusky face was the picture of someone who has just experienced heaven, and her luscious lips drooled as she reached behind her and caressed the Nubian.

Younos suppressed his urge to cheer them on. It was splendid lovemaking. His horror and the fact that he didn't want to be discovered shut him up. Of course that didn't stop his cock from becoming very, very hard.

The Nubian's balls were the size of small oranges. Younos wondered if he was a soldier. Where had the princess found him. There was not one hair the entire length of his ebony body.

The princess in stark contrast had a luxuriant forest between her legs, and in her armpits. Thick, black brambles that served to both accentuate her beauty, and to provide some sort of cushion in the frenetic activity she was engaged in now.

He heard her moan something in a throaty rasp. The Nubian grunted, and pulled his penis out of her. He rose to his full height, and she turned. Now he lifted her, while standing, and placed her on his cock. They continued their lovemaking in this manner.

Sultana

Younos was hard as a rock now. He hid, turned on and yet daring scarcely to breathe. He desperately wanted to pull his cock out and join the action. That wasn't an option. The second option was to pull his cock out and quietly masturbate while watching the scene. He knew that this was a bad idea also. But he was compelled to do it when he watched the Nubian plunge his cock into princess Mediha's for the hundredth time as he leaned against a wall. Their gasps and moans were too hot for anyone to ignore.

Younos pulled out his member, rock hard as it was, and started pumping it. The sect that he belonged to did not believe in circumcision - so he had his foreskin to play with. He pumped his foreskin up and down the head of his penis - watching the action in front of him. He restrained his movements so that his hand didn't knock into any amphora or bronze statue.

The Nubian's grunts became more frantic - as did princess Mediha's. She was bouncing like a rag doll as the Nubian plunged his member into her with increasing mania. Her lovely large breasts bounced with the rhythm they had established. She started moaning with increasing urgency. She moaned something into the Nubian's ear. He grunted, and put her down, and lay down on his back.

She lay on top of him, and took his giant cock in her mouth - almost choking on it when tried swallowing it to the hilt. Not even close - she was gagging when only two thirds were in her. The Nubian reached down and fingered her dripping pussy. He was too tall for them to give each other oral happiness at the same time - so he had to settle for using his fingers.

His ebony fingers darted in and out of her lovely folds, and were lost in the black brambles down there. Her actions alternated between gagging on his cock, and mouthing his giant balls one at a time.

Younos was having a tough time keeping his climax away. It appeared he would climax before them - as he beat his cock. He lusted after the princess - imagining that her lovely pink-brown lips were sucking his own cock, and that he was rubbing his balls all over her lovely face.

Very soon he felt his balls quiver, and his cock exploded in his hands, as his body spasmed. He let out a low moan - very low. As the semen erupted out of his cock he heard the slightly louder moans and grunts - and saw that the Nubian's cock had exploded in the princess's mouth as well - and he shot a geyser of love juice all over her lovely black hair and her face. She was dripping from her pussy in spurts as well - and had reached orgasm. Both of them were straining to keep their cries muted.

Younos took the semen he'd collected in his palm and dripped it into the nearest amphora. He didn't know what it contained - dark as it was - but he was sure it would be improved by his seed.

The Nubian and the princess were done for now, and he heard them whispering to each other. They scanned the room and the grill behind which Younos was with suspicious eyes. His heart almost leaped into his throat - thinking that they had heard his moan. They didn't investigate further though. They went back the way they must have come - the way that led away from him. They remained covered in each other's fluids, and stark naked, as they went.

Chapter 2: The Hellene

The clang of steel interrupted the afternoon post prandial stupors of all palace personnel. It was the Sultana training her children in sword fighting. Everyone stayed clear of the practice arena except designated personnel. The only designated personnel were the ancient Zaran, a sword master who had been teaching the royal family for two generations now, and a young lady Zoya who was his granddaughter and who was the only outsider allowed to spar with the royal children during practice sessions.

The practice arena was an open courtyard surrounded by the palatial quarters on all sides. Rose bushes that were imported from a far off land bordered the arena, creating a gentle, romantic perimeter to a place that saw combat and bloodshed on a daily basis. The Sultana's training of her children was fiercer than most parents would visit upon the children of their enemies. She wasn't shy about plenty of nicks and scratches and cuts even - so long as they learned their lessons. Not one of these wounds was even remotely life threatening, but they did reinforce in her children the value of proper timing and plenty of practice.

The seriousness with which the Sultana took this time with her children had been tested a few times. Most notably a sweeper had continued his chores in the practice arena even after the Sultana had announced session commencement. They retrieved his head from a stone urn that guarded one of the exits of the indoor arena.

Princess Mediha was good with sword fighting, but her younger sister, the princess Lubna was the best and the fiercest of the Sultanlings. At the tender age of twenty, she was matching her mother stroke for stroke, and offering as many scratches and nicks as she received. In the course of the next couple of years, it was clear that she would emerge the superior swordswoman. Her eerie resemblance to her mother was also noted by many.

The third princess, Yasmin, was also quite the tomcat, at eighteen. Her main rivalry was with her twin brother Osman. They looked similar in broad strokes, but had plenty of differences. Both had their father's gray eyes and their mother's olive skin, and jet black hair like their mother. They had lean physiques, much like panthers, and they had reflexes to match. They needed these, in order to measure up to their elder sisters' battle prowess.

The fact that she could perform as well as Osman, and even beat him on occasion, was the pride of Yasmin's life, much to her mother's disapproval. The Sultana was a liberated woman in every sense. She did not see it as the central role in a woman's life to measure up to men. She did not think that equality of men and women was even something that deserved discussion or mention. It was natural to her, and there were more pressing matters to focus on. While many in their opulent land did not share her views, and women were treated as chattel in corners of their kingdom even, she didn't approve of women treating equal status with men as an achievement. It was something that was a birthright. The absence of a disease is not health. So also, being equal to men, is not the same thing as any sort of real accomplishment. What comes next is what each woman, or man for that matter, accomplishes with the rights given to them.

They used scimitars that were similar to later Arab Muhaddab in their training. This was one of the few kingdoms that employed curved swords, something that was practically unknown in the ancient Arab world. The curve was the Sultana's specialty. Using that curved edge to convert near misses into fatal blows was something that she did with ease. In battle, she had torn out numberless jugulars with the curved tip, just as her adversary was sure that she had missed. With her children, she used the same curve to pull her punches, so that she could demonstrate that they could have been killed, while they only suffered a scratch.

Many wondered what this brutal training was for. Again, perhaps it had to do with the Sultana's mysterious and unknown past. Whatever it was, it was clear that the Sultana wasn't going to trust her children's safety to

Sultana

anyone but themselves. It stayed within the family.

Rawer knew he was being tailed. He had too much battle training to ever completely drop his guard, and this constant alertness made him constantly aware of threats, potential and real, in his vicinity. Now he knew that he was being tailed. He didn't sense immediate danger, but the idea of it was ever present.

Not many would mess with Rawer. He stood close to seven feet tall, which was tall even in his country. Here in the Arab world, he was a giant. Not a scrawny rack on which people hung their furs and animal skins - but seven feet of muscle and sinew and sheer battle ready reflexes. Still, someone had the gall to tail him.

The market in the kingdom reeked of lamb, beef, a melange of spices, perfumes, flowers and tobacco smoke. A camel could be heard barking in the distance, its bark interspersed with the barks of a multitude of dogs. It appeared that the camel was trying to keep the dogs at bay in some form or fashion.

Rawer passed a flower stall, manned by an ancient lady with parchment for skin, beads for eyes, and a plate of matted silver for hair. She reeked of hookah and jasmynes. Rawer winked at her, and ducked next to her stall, hoping that his tail would come into sight. He paused with bated breath.

A young man, who looked like he had Hellenic origins, with olive skin and black curls, emerged from a crowd that perpetually blocked this busy concourse. His eyes were searching for someone, his quarry perhaps. Rawer knew it was him, the moment he saw his eyes. This man wanted something from him, and he wasn't sure what. He decided to take the plunge, and figure out what the problem was.

The young man walked in the direction of the flower stall. The owner of the flower stall was now trying to get the Nubian's attention from within the stall, and asking him to buy something or leave. He tossed her a coin to shut her up, and put a finger to his lips and a warning in his eyes to let her know that he had other business here. She winked conspiratorially and shut up thankfully.

The young man was confused, but as Rawer suspected, walked in the direction of the flower shop. He walked right by Rawer, who seized him from behind in a viselike grip and hauled him a foot off the ground. The young man struggled, as the Nubian cutoff his air supply and allowed him some time to become intimate with fear.

He hauled him away into an enclosure that was surrounded by thick foliage behind the shop, and dropped him on the floor. The man fell coughing and wheezing, and rolled at Rawer's feet clutching his throat. The Nubian stood poised for action, knowing that size and a surprise attack didn't mean that the young man wasn't capable of deadly violence - even to one such as himself. It was what distinguished those who returned from war from those that didn't. There were more that fought like Rawer in the Sultana's army than one would think possible, but most were overconfident. What kept him alive was his ability to stay alert even when some part of his mind told him that relaxing was okay, and that there was no apparent threat.

The young finally turned and looked up at Rawer, prompted liberally by the Nubian's boot. He winced, and cowered when they made eye contact. He started to say something and then shut up.

"Why were you following me, Hellene?" Rawer asked, kicking him in the ribs again.

The young man doubled down from the pain, and Rawer realized he had just broken one of his ribs without meaning to.

Sultana

"I - I just wanted information," the young man managed to say.

"What information?" Rawer said.

He stopped the kicking for now. The young man was in no condition to take any more abuse from him.

"I heard in the royal kitchen that you have information about the royal family," the young man said, a very cautious and measured look sharing space with the fear in his eyes.

Rawer tensed. He knew that this young man would either lead to both their deaths, by pursuing this line of questioning, or that he sought some simple favor from the royal family, and was a fool in how he approached them. He prayed that it was the latter.

"What did you hear, Hellene?" he said, staying alert, and scanning the foliage for accomplices, and for eavesdroppers.

"You are close to the princess," the Hellene said in a measured voice, as though he were saying something that someone else had asked him to say.

Rawer knew that the young man was going to lead them both to their deaths, if they went much further. He backed away a pace.

"Choose your next words carefully, Hellene," he said. "Such statements can be misconstrued."

There were no Royal guards converging on them. He hadn't heard any rustles in the foliage. He knew that the old woman was chatting with some customer, and nothing in their voices indicated caution or alarm or anything that a person does when they see something that is a deviation from daily routine.

The young man must have been obtuse, or else he had been given lines to say. His next words were the exact ones Rawer had been dreading.

"The princess is sucking your cock, Nubian," he said, glee and triumph entering his eyes.

Rawer broke the Hellene's neck with one well aimed kick. There was no point in going through the information gathering process with this young man who was out of control. Now he had to dispose off his body.

The only possible witnesses were the shop keeper and her customer. He could hear them well enough, but he had very sensitive hearing. He wondered how much they had heard. He decided that he would hide the body in the foliage for now, and return at night to finish the task. He would have to dispose it off in a wadi or a well. The best option would be to take the body and leave it in the desert, but that would be akin to suicide. There were other dangers out there that were far worse than being found out in the kingdom.

As he went back the way he came, he looked at the shopkeeper and her customer. The shopkeeper didn't glance at him, and the customer, with her back turned to him, seemed to be a thin, waif like woman with black hair, and wearing a full length dress. He couldn't make out her face. He needed to find out who she was. He knew that he would strangle the shopkeeper at night. But he needed to know who his other future victim was.

Chapter 3: Python

Khalid sneered. He saw his lieutenant Mustafa inserting his cock into the folds of the red skinned beauty with perfectly formed breasts and thick, curly black hair that fell to her shoulders. She nodded, feigning pleasure on her face, and oohed and aahed more than Mustafa's wife must have in bed.

Khalid felt he had gotten the best of the lot. She was light skinned, and appeared to be of Teutonic stock. He wondered where their procurer obtained such stock. She had flame red hair, enormous and magnificent breasts with nipples that reminded him of daggers. Her hips were broad and fecundity was her middle name. He ordered her to take his cock in her mouth. She obeyed.

She was straining to fit all of it in there, and he saw tears appear in the corner of her pretty blue eyes, threatening to mess up her mascara. That was none of his concern. Women are too soft, he thought to himself, ramming his cock down her throat further, while she strained and pleaded for mercy through her actions.

After she had made several choking noises, he pulled himself out, and asked her to part her legs. She nodded, looking down, pretending she wasn't crying. He hated whores who cried. These bitches existed to serve him. If they couldn't swallow his cock properly, why should he allow them any mercy.

She winced as he invaded her, and he caught a flash of fear on her face. He slapped her. He decided that he would pay her half the market rate. She wasn't doing her job.

They heard a commotion outside. Soldiers were screaming something about a python. There was a series of crashes and yells, and the sounds of bodies being mangled.

Khalid wanted to finish up with the whore before he got to the action, but things seemed to be escalating too soon. He pulled out and shoved her to the floor and spat on her. He told her to stay there until he returned.

His lieutenant was already dressed, and his woman was shivering in a corner. Mustafa must have tried out his usual brutality. Khalid grinned. A man after his own heart.

They nodded to one another, and stepped out with their swords drawn. They used straight swords, unlike the scimitars that the Sultana had popularized throughout the kingdom. Straight, bronze, and very easy to handle.

Khalid was in front, while Mustafa was right behind him. They saw two soldiers run past them. Khalid yelled to them that he would have them quartered for being cowards and deserting their posts, but they paid no heed and vanished.

Then they knew why the soldiers were running. They had no time to run, and wished they had. She struck Khalid across the face. It was a gentle slap with her right arm, and his head flew off his shoulders and landed on the roof of the very structure they had been fucking the prostitutes in. Khalid's body slumped down, his sword hand still curled around the hilt.

Mustafa turned ashen white, simply looking at her. She towered several meters in the air, the height of at least one palm tree. Her body was that of a python, but she had the breasts, shoulders and upper body of a woman. An astonishingly beautiful woman, if she were not so terrifying. Her hair was wriggling, as though it were thousands of tiny black snakes. Her eyes were blue sometimes, green at other times, and red at others. The 'whites' of her eyes were black as coals. Her skin was porcelain, and seemed to shine like a mirror that was reflecting a burning torch. Her breasts were humongous and had large nipples with sword like extensions leaking a crimson slime from them. She had powerful shoulders for a woman, yet it did not detract one iota

Sultana

from her feminine voluptuousness. Her torso ended in the body of a python that was the same porcelain white as her upper body. The reptilian lower portion of her was constantly wriggling, and danced as though she were responding to some invisible snake charmer. She fixed Mustafa with one final death stare, and when her dance slowed, he knew his time was up. His last thought was of his lovely wife, and how he should have treated her better.

Younos sat back. He could hear sister fucking her two customers as though screaming out every dirty thought that came to her mind, and amplifying every moan so that it could be heard all over Arabia was her only goal. He grimaced. He enjoyed hearing it in some perverted sense, but still she was family, and he was angry with himself for always being someone who couldn't control his cock. It didn't help having a whore for a sister.

He had important news for her. He was sure that she would be happy, and that she would play his game so that he could collect more information. He still needed more information on the Nubian, and he knew that she could collect it for him.

He heard their groans presently, and knew that the customers were nearing their climaxes simultaneously, while his sister expertly pretended to near hers. He could almost believe that she was having an orgasm as well, hearing her yell as though a volcano was exploding between her thighs. He knew her too well though. This was what the customers paid her good dinars for. Her specialty was the sound, and nasty talk.

A whole orchestra of orgasmic groans later, after a good ten minutes of silence, two rotund Arab men came out holding hands, dressed like merchants. Younos didn't understand how men casually held hands in this part of the world, but he was clever enough to keep his mouth shut about it. Now he awaited the emergence of his sister. She took her time readying herself. She looked as though she had just bathed, although that was impossible, given the time it took for her to emerge. There were no traces of the strenuous intercourse that she had just been through, and her brown hair looked freshly washed. There was no male fluid anywhere on her either. Younos wondered how she did this. She must have some private washroom in there - that had to be the only explanation.

She greeted him the usual way, and he was prepared for it. She found the nearest pottery and hurled it in his direction, hoping to crack his skull. He ducked, and ran a few steps away, and called out to her from the distance, as the pot she hurled shattered a few feet to his left.

"I love you too, sister dear," he said, grinning at her.

"What do you want now, Younos?" she said in her testiest voice. "You never returned the money you 'borrowed' last time."

"I don't want money, Hypatia," he yelled. "Peace, peace."

"Fuck you Younos," she said. "You always want money, or you want sex. Thankfully you've never asked your sister for it, but I know some day you'll come right up and do just that."

She retrieved a tiny flower pot while she kept talking as though she had simmered down, and then suddenly hurled it at his forehead. He was very alert today, and he dodged it yet again. He heard it smash against a stone wall directly behind him.

"Calm down, Adelphe," he said, using the Greek term for 'dear sister'. "I bring great news."

Sultana

"Fuck you Younos," she said. "Lies come easily to you. Say what you will and get out of here."

He grinned at her from a distance.

"Agathon," he said, deciding to dole out the news so that she had to put up with him for the longest possible time. It was a special treat annoying his older sister.

Her face showed surprise, and expectancy. He knew he had her attention, but mentioning the name of her vile husband.

"What about Agathon?" she said.

He knew what she was thinking. She hated her husband as much Younos hated her husband. The guy was a drunkard, and abused her, and took all her money. She would do anything to get rid of him.

"Agathon has had a small accident," he said.

Her face showed some serious promise. She gave him a dangerous look.

"If you're lying, Younos, I swear your body will disappear into a Wadi somewhere!"

"Adelphe," Younos said, speaking in a serious tone with lots of gravitas suddenly, "there are far more important matters than your silly fears of your brother."

She looked confused, but continued listening.

"Agathon is dead," he said, noting a smile break out on her face as he said so. "That is why I am here. I need your help in gathering information."

She smiled at him the way she used to when they were back in the Greek isles, sitting next to each other and looking at the night sky and dreaming big dreams of being princes and princesses and living in palaces.

"What sort of accident?" she said, looking around, caution replacing the smile on her face.

Perhaps she was nervous that women of her trade should not involve themselves in idle gossip, especially since customers came here with sensitive information, and often shared it in the throes of passion, and expected their coital confidences to never be discussed again.

"I am not sure," Younos said, "but I think he was murdered by a Nubian."

He grinned again. He actually knew that Agathon had been murdered by the same Nubian who was fucking princess Mediha, but he wasn't going to tell his sister that. He wasn't going to tell her either that he had convinced his vile but stupid brother in law to confront the Nubian, telling him that he would pay any amount of money if confronted with blackmail over his clandestine affair.

This was what he called two birds with one stone. Agathon would finally leave his sister alone, and the Nubian would be on his guard, and would make some mistake in being too watchful.

Hypatia nodded slowly, and pondered her new status as a free woman. She enjoyed her profession, so she would continue that, but now she could keep all her money. She may even have enough to give Younos some for occasional requests - within reason, after he paid back his debt to her.

Sultana

"What do you want from me?" she said.

Younos gave her a conspiratorial wink, the very kind that had changed her life many years ago. The last time he had winked like that, her life had changed from being a housewife and woman of the arts, to someone who whored for a profession. Now he had another crazy idea again, and she wondered why she was paying attention to him.

Chapter 4: Security and insecurity

Men were the only targets. There were three of them, against the whole male population of the land. They were immune to swords, scimitars, cannonballs, ammunition of all sorts, and they were prescient in battle. They anticipated every attack a minute ahead of time. It is as though they were in tune with the army's every thought.

The Sultan and the Sultana and their battle council were using every tactic they had learned of. Every Arabian battle manual had been used. Indian, Chinese, Egyptian, Mesopotamian and Nubian battle manuals were consulted, and their battle formations and strategies were adapted to suit the needs of the hour. Nothing worked.

They called them the serpent sisters. There was a small percentage of women in the army, but they were shown more leniency. Unless they repeatedly attacked the sisters, they were disarmed and spared. It appeared that the sisters wouldn't harm women. Men were a different matter.

Men suffered every indignity and every measure of brutal death when faced with the sisters. The sisters flicked their wrists and decapitated men. One battalion had been body slammed by one of the sisters with disastrous results. Every single individual in the battalion had been either completely or partially crushed to a pulp like ripe grapes when crushed between the thumb and forefinger. Some had stayed alive with their organs and appendages having been crushed to a pulp, witnessing their own death in excruciating horror. Several soldiers had somehow launched attacks from towers and obelisks on the sisters, and had found themselves in the sudden vicinity of the multitude of serpents that adorned each sister's head. The next moment they had simply been swallowed whole by these serpents, as if they never had existed. It was a magical sight - to see a whole man swallowed by a tiny black serpent that was no larger than his penis. But it was common sight in these battles.

They had goat cheese, figs, olives, warm toasted wheat cakes, grilled lamb, a delicious cactus curry, and rare spices from Mesopotamia to flavor everything. They even had dates and imported lychees for dessert, along with a sweet wine that was reminiscent of their village. It was a feast fit for the royal family. Younos grinned viewing the feast, and wondered how much money his sister really made.

Hypatia enjoyed having family with her, now that her dastardly husband had joined the realm of Hades. Actually she wondered whether he had been banished to vilest realm of Tartarus, given how he had lived his life. She wasn't thinking of him now though. Why ruin a lovely meal thinking of bastards!

She actually enjoyed seeing her brother stuff his face. He was her little brother after all. She wondered what had gone wrong with him. He was talented at reading people, and almost as shrewd as her, and yet money fled from him, and he was always looking for loans. She wondered if he had a gambling addiction, or some other more heinous addiction.

"Younos," she said, sipping some wine, and watching him wolf down a wheat cake with grilled lamb and goat cheese stuffed in it, "why are you always short of dinars?"

It was a sensitive topic, but she had to broach it. If not for the topic of money, she was glad for her brother's company. He was the one person she could confide in. She was too shrewd to confide everything to even him, and suspected that he kept many secrets from her as well, but he was her only family.

Sultana

His face took on a sly look. She could see his eyes darting, as he employed his imagination. She sighed. She would be hearing more lies.

Mediha sighed. Rawer hadn't come, and neither had he sent a message. She waited in the designated spot for an hour. He was worth waiting for. The itsy bitsy princes she was supposed to consort with were more delicate than her. She was sure she could snap their necks in unarmed combat within the first five minutes.

Rawer was the one she craved, but he hadn't come. Something was wrong. She tried to reason it out. Their last session had been lovely, and he had not changed one bit. It was true that he had been suspicious that someone had witnessed their lovemaking. She had suspected as much herself, as though some part of her knew that she had heard something strange. Still it was only a feeling.

Rawer didn't come. Instead a tall Nubian woman came. She was as bodacious a woman as the princess had ever seen. She stood six feet tall, and was voluptuousness herself in the person. She had a lovely face that somehow reminded the princess of royalty. A nose that was both broad and sharp at the same time. Her skin was a few shades lighter than Rawer's, and was the color of a Ghaf* tree.

Her jet black hair was wavy and well oiled and was tied in a thick plait that was bound by what appeared to be silver bands and threads. The plait fell well beyond her buttocks.

She had breasts that were the envy of women everywhere, whose shape was in no way compromised by the sheer audaciousness of their size. It is as if her breasts were issuing a challenge - best me if you can. She wore a gold white linen gown that hugged her person. Her buttocks showed steatopygia to a certain degree, and evoked lust even in the princess. She had a narrow waist and hips that were broad to the correct proportion, as if she had been designed by a sculptor who was looking to titillate his audience.

Princess Mediha felt that if ever there was a time that she could become a lover of women as well, this was that time. But she also felt irrationally jealous. This girl was Nubian. There was no doubting that. She must be connected to Rawer in some way, and hence had come to give her a message on his behalf, perhaps. She was also very disappointed, because she really wanted Rawer's cock.

"Who are you?" she said, in as peremptory a tone as she could manage, given the formidable presence of the Nubian girl.

"I have a message from Rawer," the girl said, insolent enough to ignore a royal question.

The girl was using their private code. The code that she and Rawer used in case they were overheard. Every third word was Arabic, every third was Nubian and the final third was Mesopotamian spoken backwards. Words at prime numbers were always backwards Nubian, to break the pattern and make it even more difficult to decode. This girl had mastered their code, and that made the princess livid. She was too proud to openly show her jealousy though.

"You have a name, girl?" she said, determined not to cede control.

The girl gave her a dismissive stare, as if that wasn't important. She gave her name though.

"People know me as Tuya," she said. "Now the message. Rawer says that this is too dangerous. Someone tried to blackmail him about your friendship with him, but he has silenced that threat. He will send further word soon."

Sultana

"When?" asked Mediha, hating the fact that she had to rely on this Nubian woman for information.

The woman batted her eyelashes while rolling her eyes, as though she were the royal and Mediha a commoner.

"Whenever he thinks it fit," she said, and whirled around and marched off into the darkness.

Mediha glared at her luscious buttocks, and wondered if she should punish this insolent girl. Then she wondered when she would see Rawer's cock again, and returned to her desperately horny state. She needed his cock.

* The Ghaf tree - or *prosopis cineraria*, is an arid climate tree that also grows in the Saudi Arabian deserts. Whether the people of ancient Arabia called it this, or whether it even grew back then, is something I haven't been able to figure out.

Chapter 5: Fucked

The first reports they had of the snake sisters were from the north. They had attacked the northern security post, appearing from what had been Persian territory. Their envoys to Persia hadn't returned yet, and they hadn't the slightest clue whether they would ever return.

The Sultana was pacing the conference room. It was nearly a palm tree long, and half a palm tree wide. There was plenty of room to pace, even though a gigantic central conference table dominated the room. She knew that a solution would have to be found soon, and solutions usually came when you weren't looking for them.

She didn't have the luxury of not looking however. She was wearing a traditional linen gown that was crimson in color, to reflect her martial thoughts. Her allure was ever present, and her matronly bosom was straining against the gown, threatening to seduce every person in the room. Many in the room quietly followed her movement with their eyes. Her comely raven hair that fell to her buttocks was plaited and swung forward, so it fell around the outer periphery of her right breast. She walked fast, lost in contemplation of what they had just gleaned from a company of messengers.

The sisters were not invading their kingdom. Not yet anyway. They were instead systematically destroying security posts along the circumference of their kingdom. This was just as much cause for concern as a full scale invasion. It made her think that the sisters had an agreement with someone else who would launch a full scale invasion once all the security posts had been demolished.

Why bother with tactics? This was what confused the Sultana. The sisters appeared to be powerful enough that they could batter their way through her entire army, and there would be no opposition to them. Why would they bother with tactics of any sort? Somehow the key to defeating them appeared to lie in this.

The Sultan was sitting at the head of the conference table, with one of his nonagenarian advisers giving him advice on the situation. Whatever they were discussing, their minds were partially shut down, given the horrors that had just been described to them. Unlike the Sultana who simply sieved out the part of the missives received that were most important to strategy, most people in the room were preoccupied with the horror of what they had heard.

The latest attack at a security post had been particularly brutal. Two thousand soldiers from their army had been wiped out in an encounter with only one of the snake sisters. The messenger, who had actually been at the outpost, and had witnessed the destruction from the distance of several miles, had reported hundreds of soldiers being swallowed alive by the python woman's hair. He had also reported that she had paralyzed a contingent of the army with some sort of venom that made them await their death, while she battled others. She had left them paralyzed thereafter, without allowing access to them for several hours, while they died from the slow acting and painfully excruciating lethality of the venom. His descriptions didn't leave out any of the gory, heartrending portions. He described the cries he had heard for hours, while the sister having simply polished off the rest of the post, simply guarded so that nobody could help the paralyzed soldiers.

Again, the casualties were all men.

The Sultana continued to pace, concentrating, and pausing now and again, as if some important point occurred to her, as she tilted her lovely head from one side to the other. The sisters attacks were very logical for an army that wanted to weaken border defenses, but not very logical for forces of destruction such as the sisters. Then the ministers in the room gathered hope, as they saw a gleam in her eyes.

Sultana

Rawer didn't kill them. They were innocent women, and he didn't know that he could kill them. They may or may not have heard the reckless Greek man, but that did not make his murder of them justifiable. The Greek had been out to blackmail him, and his murder was not only necessary to ensure his own safety, it was also a good thing, because he seemed to be a nasty piece of work.

Rawer instead delivered a message to the princess. He lay down that night, dreaming of her. His lovely Mediha, and her lovely, luscious breasts, her lovely, long, black hair, and her astonishingly inviting love tunnel. He ached for it, but knew that tonight he would not get to fuck her.

They had to find a way. Convincing the royal family that they were a match was impossible. The only other available option seemed to be to flee to Nubia. He didn't like uprooting the lovely young princess from her people and her land, but this was the only option where they could be together.

His playmate Tuya was there for company until then. She was a distant cousin, and she could be trusted within reason. Somehow he felt that he could trust her with his affair's knowledge. She'd always had a thing for him, and he knew that she wouldn't allow the secret to leak since he would be executed the moment that happened.

Tuya sucked his cock tonight, and he enjoyed it, but she wasn't the princess. He loved only the princess. He didn't ever think of what he did with Tuya as infidelity. He had fucked hundreds of women, and in all those cases, it had been the pure carnal pleasure, just as it was with Tuya.

Tuya stood up, and positioned her vagina over his erect cock, as he lay supine. She lowered herself onto it, and gasped.

"Oh Rawer," she said, sighing, as she worked herself up and down his shaft.

He grunted, and added the motion of his own groin to the action, making the thrust more explosive. After a series of rapid strokes, they both neared climax. Rawer's balls exploded and he felt the juices from her cunt meeting his own juices. He rose as they climaxed and plunged his cock deeper into her, so that every spurt of his was buried deep within her womb.

He didn't mean to make a baby with her, but if it happened, it wouldn't be the first. He had lost count of how many women he had made pregnant, especially when he had been a mercenary soldier for hire. Tuya buried her face against his chest, and moaned as their mutual orgasm neared its natural conclusion. Then they fell asleep like that, with his shriveled cock inside her satisfied cunt.

With the princess Mediha, Rawer felt he shared the same heart, so it was different from this. He was sure the princess would understand what he did with other women, and accept it.

Hypatia went about her business like the businesswoman she was. Today's client was an Arab trader in his forties, and he had a special request, for which he was paying her twice the amount her rich clients usually paid her for hardcore action.

He wanted something that was very rare in these parts. He wanted her to abuse him, with nasty words, nasty treatment, and to piss on him. She didn't enjoy the piss part, but it was great money.

He was especially ugly. He was colored like caramel, and had pock marks all over his face, and warts in so many different places that she check his privates slyly for signs of diseases. There were none of the telltale

Sultana

scabs, rashes or genital defects that would transmit a disease to her. She decided it was worth the risk.

She thought of what Younos had told her earlier. The princess was having a secret affair with a Nubian soldier, and he wanted to use this as leverage somehow. Her first counsel to Younos had been to steer clear of palace politics, especially things that involved secret affairs. He was adamant though, and insisted that this was the opportunity of a lifetime. She knew that they would both be executed or doing time in the Sultana's dungeon, if anything went wrong. So she decided that she would steer clear of it, but she would give her brother the best advice she could. Or rather the second best advice she could, since he had ignored the best advice.

"You like that, cur!" she screamed, pressing her foot down on the temple of the trader.

His cock hardened even more. She slapped his cheek with her foot, and pressed into it.

"Yes, your highness," he whispered.

If Younos approached the Sultana about it, she would know that he knew, and knowing how brutal she was when it came to family, Hypatia was sure she would have no family left. In fact she suspected that the Sultana would have her killed as well, for the crime of being Younos' sister.

If Younos approached the Nubian, he would probably get himself killed. She knew that Younos knew more about her late husband's death than he was letting on, and that the Nubian's affair had somehow played a role in his death.

She squatted over the trader's face and squeezed a fart into his nose. She heard him moan as if it were the biggest turn on in the world. She wrinkled her nose in disgust, and rubbed her pubic triangle over his face.

"You piece of filth from the sewers of Egypt," she yelled, "are you enjoying that!"

She felt him nod against her pussy.

"Lick it, bastard!" she yelled.

He nodded, and licked her pussy.

It appeared to her that Younos had reached a stalemate in some sense. He couldn't approach either party without getting killed. Perhaps he could approach the princess, but Hypatia somehow felt that that would lead to his and her instant demise as well. So there were no ways forward.

"Is that how you lick it, shit face!" she yelled, and sat on the trader's face, hearing him gasp in protest.

She sighed inwardly. This was how some people spent good dinars. She could finally get the extension to her flower garden built with what she earned today. It was time for the pissing part.

"Drink, you piece of garbage," she said, slapping the trader's face with her butt cheeks, and letting go of her bladder.

Chapter 6: Colors

The Sultana sat down next to her husband, and cleared her throat. Everyone in the room was paying attention, including her 'lord and master'.

"They are using battle tactics," she said. "Even a cursory examination of their sheer power will tell any of us that they could decimate our kingdom if that was their purpose. This means one of three possible alternatives. One. Someone inimical to our kingdom who has designs on its resources has managed to control them. Two. These creatures seek something valuable within our kingdom which must not be harmed, and which must not be at the receiving end of their war machine. Three. There is something within our borders that these creatures actually fear. Or perhaps some combination of some or all of these three alternatives. Can anyone think of another reason for their disabling border security, when with their might, they may as well destroy our kingdom?"

The conference room was silent. An errand boy, of Hellenic origin, who almost appeared to be hiding within himself, coughed slightly. In the stony silence his cough sounded like an explosion. Several ministers gave him looks that were different proportions of irate and annoyed. The Sultana looked at him quizzically.

"If you have anything to say, boy, say it now," she said, her face assuming a stern expression.

He coughed again, and stepped forward.

"Your last alternative sounds the most reasonable, your majesty," he said, his voice trembling. "Perhaps there is some real threat within our kingdom that they perceive."

She considered his words for a moment, and then spoke.

"What manner of threat would that be, boy?"

"It must be something that we are unaware of, ourselves, your majesty," the boy said, his voice sounding barely braver. "We must have something within our borders that is so powerful that the snake sisters dare not challenge it openly, and yet we have no knowledge of it."

"And why is this alternative superior to the other two," she asked.

The boy was still trembling, but he found the courage to speak up.

"Your majesty," he said, "Iâ" i"

He paused. He wanted the Sultana to give him permission to go on, before he pointed out something she had missed.

"I beg your pardon, your majesty, it is not for someone such as myself to suggest so audacious a thing," he said.

"Say what you will, boy," she said, giving him a look that mixed impatience and reassurance. "You have my word that you will not be held accountable for any words you say to me now, since you say it in the interests of the kingdom."

He sighed a breath of relief, and went on.

Sultana

"The creatures converse in a code, your majesty" he said.

"He speaks a lie, your highness," a general piped up. "None has heard the creatures speak a word."

"Answer the charge, boy," the Sultana said.

"They speak with their eyes, your majesty," the boy said.

The conference room erupted with laughter. There were calls to make the boy a court jester, and other calls to throw him out on the street and whip him so that he never displayed such insolence again. The Sultana didn't laugh, and raised a hand to silence the room.

"The next words you say, boy, will determine whether you stay in my presence or not," the Sultana said. "I've given you my word that you will not be harmed, so you will not. But I will have you thrown out of the palace, and removed from royal service, if your next words don't make sense."

"Your Majesty," the boy said, "I have been following many of the missives and stories since the battle with the sisters got underway."

"Hardly a battle," the Sultan said, giving a tragic chuckle, and nodded at the boy to go on.

"Their eyes change color, your Majesty," he said, now including the Sultan in his gaze while he spoke. "They change color in a specific pattern, and different army amanuenses have noted the order in different attacks. I glanced at a report that compiled all these descriptions while I was cleaning General Mohal's room."

The boy gave a frightened glance at the Sultana. He had just confessed to snooping, and that meant that he had just surrendered himself to the Sultana's mercy for the good of the kingdom. She smiled at him as though she were his mother, and asked him to go on without being afraid.

"The color codes when placed together form the Aramaic alphabet," he said. "Their eyes change color very fast, and the sisters use shortcuts in their communications, but every series of color changes indicates an alphabet."

The conference room listened in stunned silence. This was information from a humble errand boy who was here to serve them hot vanilla and saffron tea and a sweet made from fava beans. A number of the ministers and generals looked at General Mohal as if he were responsible for the boy's cleverness at the expense of notables in the room.

"Why was I not informed of the color change in their eyes?" the Sultana asked, looking at General Mohal.

He fumbled and said something, but couldn't meet her gaze. She dismissed him from her attention and turned back to the boy.

"If what you claim is true, boy," the Sultana said, "that means you have decoded what the sisters are communicating with one another?"

The boy nodded.

"I know a little, your majesty," he said. "The sisters never discuss things such as battle strategy. They are completely self assured that they can destroy any human army. Instead they discuss something far more powerful that they fear. Of this much I am sure. Over the course of many battles, they have been having one

Sultana

very long and slow conversation about how to deal with that something."

The Sultana knew that she had a new potential appointee to her council of ministers. The boy was perceptive beyond anything she had known. She also knew that this something that the sisters feared was on her mind. She leaned forward and paid closer attention to the boy.

The Persian satrap's emissary paused. It wasn't a missive from the Sultana, but it was a royal missive. The princess Lubna had summoned him, and she wanted a secret alliance with the satrap. It was an invitation to attain power from within the kingdom, and no politician or king worth his seat of power would turn it down.

The princess asked him to take a seat on a dewan and ordered some coffee and some of the Sultana's famed dolma to be served. Dolma as prepared in the Sultana's kingdom were grape leaves that were stuffed with a mixture of rice and minced beef, and flavored with a rich mix of spices, and cooked in olive oil. They were served with sauteed carrots and fried potatoes on the side. The emissary politely stuffed himself while he waited, pretending that his diet didn't matter when on state business.

A maid who appeared to be from a northern land because of her unusually light skin, brought in a veiled painting. She placed it on an easel that was setup just for this purpose, a few feet away from the dewan on which the emissary was wolfing down his fourth pastry.

"You said your name was Erach?"

"Yes, your highness," he said, making sure the food in his mouth didn't alter his pronunciation.

"You will understand my summons when you see this painting," she said.

"Yes, your highness," he said.

The maid unveiled the painting. Erach, the emissary, was both stunned and surprised.

Rawer sat down and thought. Meeting the princess one on one in their usual spot was out of question. He expected trouble. If the Hellene was the only person who knew of their clandestine tryst, he would be okay. If there were others whom he had confided in, or perhaps others who had confided in him, then expecting trouble was the right thing to do.

Tuya's breasts rose and fell with her even breathing, as she slumbered on. She had played messenger once. He wondered if she would do it again. Even if she agreed, would it be safe? People notice a tall, buxom, Nubian woman in an Arabian palace. It didn't matter that she had the proper security clearance on her. Tuya was built to be noticed.

Plus, she wanted him for herself. He didn't expect her to cheat him, but then jealousy can lead to unpredictable behavior. Then he thought of something. The princess went horse riding on the fourth day of the week, in the early morning, before the sun became harsh. He knew her usual routes. She went with an instructor, and with some companions, and sometimes with the other princesses. But they didn't all stick together at all times. Perhaps he could find some way to intercept her without attracting attention.

Sultana

It was either that, or trusting Tuya. She shifted in her sleep to face him, and somehow the proud look on her face as she slept didn't inspire confidence. Rawer made his decision.

Chapter 7: Plans

Erach was looking at a likeness of their very own prince Rustum. The princess Lubna was showing an image of the Persian prince, and he deduced that she had painted it herself. The implication was clear.

He didn't know how he should tell his poor girl that Rustum was a rogue who slept with every woman who crossed his path. The fact that he looked stunningly handsome helped him satisfy his lusty appetite. To seek an alliance with Rustum would mean that the princess' kohl would soon be smeared across her cheekbones, and her eyes would be puffy.

Erach kept quiet just then. A hand in the Sultana's kingdom was something they had wanted all these years. The Persian satrap wanted to either make an ally of her, or wanted to control her in some manner. If Erach made either possible, then he would attain rare royal favor. Royal favor at the expense of one foreign girl's happiness. It didn't prick his conscience that much.

"That is prince Rustum, your highness," he said.

Lubna's eyes lit up.

"Rustum," she said, sighing, and running her hand over the painting.

Erach's suspicions were confirmed. The Arab princess was in love with his prince, and this was something that would place the Sultana in their hands. Never mind the princess' happiness. He wondered when the princess had seen the prince.

Rawer raced his steed at a safe distance. Arabian horses were the best. He didn't remember finding such good horses back in Nubian country. His horse was a mare, and she not only responded to his every thought that translated into subtle muscular pressure on his part, but she also accelerated and decelerated with such smoothness, that he barely felt tired riding her. He patted her mane affectionately as they raced parallel to the princesses retinue, staying just out of sight.

She had the distinctive wedge shaped head with a broad forehead that distinguishes Arabian horses. She was stocky and surprisingly strong for her size, with large eyes, large nostrils and a smaller than average muzzle, even for an Arabian. The jibbah (bulge between her eyes) that gives desert horses additional sinus capacity that is invaluable in the dry heat, had a black splotch on the fur. That was a mark that Rawer made on his steeds with a traditional Nubian paint, to mark them out as special steeds that carried a soldier of his caliber. The rest of her was a breathtaking rust red.

Rawer was awaiting the bend. Once they reached the bend, where the horses would have to go single file, he would take a lesser known shortcut so he could see them from high above, and intercept Mediha and head her off to the shortcut. Her sisters and retinue would think she was up ahead or back below them, if he got lucky. Even if they raised the alarm, he only needed a few minutes to set up a rendezvous with her.

She was right at the head of the equestrian retinue. That was not the best place to be when you want to not be missed, but Rawer decided that he'd be taking his chances, no matter what.

She saw him from his elevation, as his mare whinnied softly. Their eyes met, and she knew that she had to get away. She nodded, and led her horse off the path. The person behind her was her sister Lubna, who had just

Sultana

appeared in Raver's line of sight. He was sure that she wouldn't be able to see where her elder sister had vanished.

Chapter 8: Passion, punishment and a Persian penis

Rawer kissed her on the lips, running his fingers through her long hair that had been tied into coiffure that hid under a riding hat. He wanted to undo it, but they had only two minutes before the other members of princess Mediha's retinue would start searching for her. So he left the hair alone. Their lips were interlocked for too long a time, searching each other, locking their tongues together, and forgetting the pressure of limited time. Then Rawer forced her back, knowing that they had to talk.

"Princess," he said, "we must meet elsewhere, away from the palace. We need to make plans, if we are going to be together."

"We must meet, but not only to make plans," she said, running her finger down his thigh, with an evil look in her brown eyes.

Rawer smiled.

"That too, but I was tailed by a Hellene who knew our secret."

The princess nodded. Tuya had mentioned someone being aware of their secret. Princess Mediha was keenly aware that she may be reprimanded if their affair became public knowledge, but Rawer would be beheaded.

"A Hellene?" she said, trying to work something out in her mind.

"He was out to blackmail me," Rawer said, "so I had to silence him."

The look in his eyes was unmistakable. The princess understood. Rawer was a soldier. Taking human lives was nothing to him. She hadn't killed people herself, but she knew her mother had. Her mother was always exhorting her to understand the necessity to be ruthless when required.

"The palace sewers open outside the palace walls," he said. "For you it will be a walk that is at least six palms long, but it will seem longer, because you have to walk unseen, under the ground."

She wrinkled her nose in disgust.

"You're asking me to walk the length of the sewer!" she said.

"I will have to meet you outside palace walls, my love," he said. "You must understand; I wouldn't ask if there was an easier way. Our usual meeting spot is not appropriate. If you are tailed in the sewer, my best chance to get away is outside, where I can observe you from a distance before I come to get you."

She maintained her look of disgust, but nodded nonetheless.

"We must make plans, princess," Rawer continued. "If we are to meet, then we must plan for our future together."

The princess nodded, a thoughtful look entering her eyes.

"Cover yourself from head to toe, my love," he said. "Nobody must see you when you enter or emerge from the sewer."

Sultana

She nodded. She didn't like the plan, but she liked what she'd get out of it.

The Sultana was pleased with the Hellene. He had given them plenty of information on what the snake sisters were thinking. She may have been giving him too much credit, but she knew that there were plenty of lads who could serve coffee and sweets at meetings. Someone with his talents was better employed elsewhere.

He had told them about a center for power in their own kingdom. This was a center for power that had been gathered through ancient magic, too ancient for anyone alive to remember. The center housed something that frightened the sisters. Their communiques that had been recorded using the changes in color in their eyes hadn't mentioned precisely what was there at that center for power.

She got these double checked even as their war council progressed. Nobody was allowed to step outside the conference room, until they had some decision, except for the trusted errand boys who brought them notes and information of happenings from around the kingdom, or things that had been ordered.

The Hellene was standing in place looking reasonably secure. They knew that the center of power was approximately a day's ride away from the palace. From what the sisters spoke, it was between a Wadi and a section of woods that were shaped like a star, which was very unusual. The Sultana didn't remember such a place very well, and she extensively toured her kingdom. If this were an ancient phenomenon, she was sure she'd have remembered it.

A minister coughed. It was one of the nonagenarians, and he was called Aman. He was cranky at the best of times, and now wasn't the best of times. The Sultana gave him a cautious look that told him that his advice was important to her, but it must be measured and to the point.

"Your Majesty," he said, "the boy was caught spying for whatever purpose. The punishmentâ!"

The implication was clear. The Hellene had confessed to snooping in General Mohal's quarters when he was supposed to be cleaning them. If she allowed him to get away without punishment, her reputation would be stained, and reputation was something that the Sultana took very, very seriously.

Spying against the kingdom meant beheading. The boy had been spying for no particular reason, it appeared, other than idle curiosity. Still, the minimal price for spying was imprisonment until one had three character references, and had donated a sum of five hundred dinars to the kingdom, and had agreed to clean public baths and toilets for a period determined by where one had been caught spying. If the offender couldn't do any of the three, their time in prison would be for a whole year, and they would work for the kingdom in prison as well.

The Sultana glared at the minister. The boy's spying had won them major information. That must count for a lot. They didn't have laws for spying that favored the kingdom. So she made them then and there.

"The minister Aman makes a great point," she said, appearing to ponder it. "The boy spied, and yet it was the curiosity of a boy. It cannot be condoned, and yet the boy's curiosity has given us what may be our only hope against the sisters."

The conference room was filled with a mixture of ayes and grunts that indicated nays. Many of the latter would see the boy beheaded for having made them lose face. Particularly the General Mohal, who wasn't saying anything, but had flashed the boy many dangerous looks.

Sultana

"In lieu of his service to the kingdom," the Sultana continued, watching the dissatisfied faces in the room in sweeping glances that wouldn't arouse their suspicions, "I say that the boy must only pay a fine of a hundred dinars, or clean public baths and toilets for a period of two weeks, to be determined according to how the kingdom requires his services."

There was silence in the conference room. She had done away with the prison term, and reduced the service and fine significantly as well. Two of the nonagenarian ministers, whose vote counted for a lot in such meetings, nodded their approval. Aman made a sound like a camel choking, but said nothing else. General Mohal gave the boy another dangerous glare, as though he were beheading him mentally. There were enough eyes in the room that the Sultana felt reassured.

The boy looked worried, but he appeared satisfied. He gave the Sultana a grateful look.

The maids scurried out of the room. Prince Rustum's unsteady gait was audible down the palace corridor. Only Imi didn't make it, and hid behind a curtain. She trembled. She had heard about the prince. It was a closely guarded secret, but no amount of close guarding can make a lecher something else.

She gasped, as the prince staggered in. He was handsome beyond all description. He was a Farishta - an angel from heaven, and it was clear why all women agreed to sleep with him without any hesitation. Even when they knew his reputation.

She trembled behind the curtain, almost willing him to find her. She knew that she must hide, and yet she wanted to fondle his ivory skinned, oval face, and his dark hair. She wanted to suck his cock and take it inside herself, wherever he wanted to place it.

The prince's movements were unsteady, and he appeared ready to drop. She couldn't restrain herself any further. She stepped out from behind the curtain, and revealed herself.

"Well, well, well," he said, grinning at her, "you're what - Egyptian, my love?"

Imi nodded.

"Come here, darling," he said, swaying to and fro, barely able to stand. "Come help your prince dress for bed."

She felt a thrill within her. He was beautiful beyond anything she had known. His pale hand ran through her hair, while she supported his hips, and allowed him to unlace his pants.

"You know what they say about royal cock, my Egyptian beauty?" he said, dropping his pants and revealing his turgid penis and hirsute testicles.

She shook her head, to indicate that she didn't.

"Neither do I, love," he said. "Now do your duty to the kingdom and suck it!"

She smiled and swallowed his cock, enjoying her duty to the kingdom. The cock tasted lovely.

Chapter 9: Character

Younos was worried. He had to arrange a sum of a hundred dinars, unless he wanted to smell like the sewer. The Sultana actually had thought he was a boy, although he was in his early twenties. It smarted. Such a ravishing woman, and she thought him a boy. Of course his first thought when he thought of the Sultana was not ravishing. It was terrifying. Her personality was something else. It was as if she carried an enormous reserve power just beneath her surface, and if anyone got too comfortable, she would blast them to smithereens with that power.

Maybe he could allow himself to smell like the sewer for two weeks. His sister would complain, but he was sure she wouldn't give him a hundred dinars. Then, there was the character reference. The Sultana's personal scribe had been ordered to give Younos the details. He was supposed to get a person of repute in the city to vouch for his character. He did not know anyone of repute.

He did not know where he'd get that character reference. Hypatia was a whore. If she vouched for his character, he suspected that she would be insulted in the Sultana's court as well. Perhaps a soldier in the Sultana's army with a secret to keep would be a good character reference? Almost as soon as he thought of it, he dismissed the idea. The Nubian would break his neck the moment he approached him with any idea of blackmail. He had suspected as much a while back, and had used Agathon as the bait to confirm this suspicion.

He could approach a customer of his sister's. Someone with a unsullied reputation, who clandestinely asked for fetish favors from her. He was absolutely sure she wouldn't tell him anything. Which meant he had to ferret this information out himself.

Imi crawled out of the prince's chambers. Her loins were sore, and her anus hurt. Her jaws had been overworked. Her entire nervous system had been excited beyond all comprehension many times in the night, and now she required rest. It almost seemed as if every single nerve and particle in her body was aching. It was a gentle ache, and one that made her fondly remember the night, but it was an ache nonetheless. She was both happy and exhausted.

The prince was more of a Dev (devil) than a Farishta (angel) when it came to carnal indulgences. The previous night had started with a simple session of cock sucking, that had descended into games of trying out different postures, and the prince teaching Imi how making love in different orifices in the human body felt.

The prince had shown her how a large male member can be housed in a female mouth for extended periods of time. He had coached her on how male testicles must be treated in sex play. He had also initiated her into the pleasures of having a penis stuffed in the anus. There had also been plenty of regular lovemaking, with the prince fucking her vagina from different angles.

Now Imi knew two things. First, that she would rest all day, and perhaps the next day, but she would come back to give the prince more company. Second, that there must be a way in which a serving girl can marry a prince, no matter how much of a lecher he is. After all, his sheer good looks seemed to make up for any flaws in his character.

Sultana

Rawer gave the lips of her womanhood another loving kiss, and felt her mouth the head of his penis. He smiled, and continued loving the princess. Again they climaxed simultaneously, and his seed spilled all over her face, and her juices wet his face. It was their favorite shared experience, to lose themselves in the throes of mutual orgasm, forgetting the cruelties of a world that would attack them from all directions if their affair came out.

The crawl through the sewer had been worse than the princess had anticipated, but she had done it. Rawer had observed from a hidden vantage point for a good quarter hour before calling out to her, and taking her on horseback to a secret lair which he had set up. Even Tuya wasn't privy to the existence of this lair.

He had gathered water in a bath near the lair, so that the princess could bathe and refresh herself. It wasn't the same as bathing in a bath, as she was used to, but it was the best that he could arrange given the secretive nature of what they were doing.

After the lovemaking session, he spoke to her about his plans to take her to be his wife to another country. The princess was both happy and dismayed. She was attached to her people and her family, and would lose all of that, for the sake of gaining his love.

He told her the truth about him, and she was pleased. He was royalty just as she was, and she would live like a princess if she were to accompany him to the Kushite regions. They were powerful allies of the Sultana, and once she was adopted by them, even her mother could not do anything about her marriage. He told her all this. She was happy beyond anything she had ever dreamed of. She told him this. She spoke to him of how her heart leapt, every time she thought that he was the only man she wanted, and how she was the only woman he wanted.

Rawer's eyes reflected something in addition to the joy she felt. It was subtle, but disturbing.

The star shaped section of the woods had been scouted. An entire section of the Sultana's army had gone there, including the princess Lubna herself. She was the adventurous one, and once she knew of her mother's plans, she had prevailed on her to accompany the party.

There appeared to be nothing there of consequence. There were simply woods, and peculiar star shape. The entire length between the woods and the Wadi had been scoured inch by inch, with many pairs of eyes scanning the region for signs of that secret something that they needed to survive the onslaught of the sisters. The general consensus was that this something was buried deep within the ground, and that they would have to start digging the entire length between the woods and Wadi to uncover something.

The Sultana was given this information and contemplated it. She was sitting with two of her nonagenarian ministers, the ones that had aged well and were wise and not cantankerous. They had wanted to reflect on it the earlier night, and had met again to think about it.

The section where the secret lay was approximately two miles long, and they were thinking through whether this was the most efficient way of dealing with the challenge. Were there any clues in the missives they had received from the army from their reconnaissance of the place?

Nothing appeared definitive. The Sultana read through them multiple times, as did her excellent ministers, and then they together reached the conclusion that the hidden messages of the sisters didn't give them enough.

"Send for the Hellenic boy," the Sultana said. "He may have missed something in giving us his information."

General Mohal stood up. The two slave girls shivered. They were bleeding from the whipping he had given them. Their blood was mixed with his semen and his excrement. He had not only whipped them, he had also forced them to suck his cock and had made them a dumping ground for every vile substance that came out of his body.

The girls were in their twenties, and were both native Mesopotamian beauties. Now their physical beauty was marred by the hours of abuse they had tolerated at the hands of the general. He slapped both of them in turn again, and pressed his balls against the one, while he read a missive from a messenger.

"Enjoy it when you can, slave," he told her, "one day you can tell your grandchildren that the great emperor Mohal wanted you for his amusement. This is the most exalted night of your life.

The girl whimpered, unable to breathe. He continued sitting, ignoring the look of alarm on the other girl. The girl he was sitting on lost consciousness, and fell, while the General righted himself with a expression of disgust.

"Mesopotamian girls nowadays don't have stamina," he said. "Isn't that right, my dear?"

The other girl was crying, but she nodded through her tears.

Chapter 10: Eavesdropping

His private request was to be slapped and abused, and spoken to like he was her sex slave. She got triple rate from him. Hypatia didn't pass any moral judgment on the trader. If something is your fantasy, it is your fantasy. If you're willing to give me lots of money for it, and all I have to do is yell, scream and abuse you willy nilly, so be it.

He controlled all the water systems in the city, and was paid a portion of the water taxes that were paid to the state. He was on the Sultana's business council. He had been one of those instrumental in drafting the kingdom's trade policies. He was renowned for his intelligence when it came to matters of trade. He had a veritable goddess for a wife who was known for her feminine charms and her torrid affairs. He was the ever forgiving husband who was respected in society.

Now Hypatia knew why he could afford to be ever forgiving. He had fantasies that she would never fulfill. He needed some outlet for them. Her reputation for being more discreet than a carcass in a charnel ground was serving her well. Of course it was also true that the more secrets she learned, the more people would feel threatened by her. This worried her sometimes, but she worked her charms on them, and made sure they reached her whenever they sought her.

People don't appreciate what it takes to be a popular whore. It isn't enough to know carnal secrets. One must also be a good scheduler, and sensitive about human emotions, and great with gentle haggling. Post coital haggling worked great with some men, and foreplay haggling worked much better with others.

Whatever the case, the trader was having the time of his life. Hypatia slapped him for the fifth time in this session. With Suleiman, her sessions had gotten more and more dominant. Now he didn't even approach her as the trading genius that he was. He called her mistress H or mistress or mistress Hypatia the moment he walked into her residence. He usually got onto his knees the moment he was indoors, and crawled to her.

She was a master at role-playing, and turned nasty the moment he got on his knees. Today was no different.

"Your slutty wife isn't taking care of you, so you come crawling to me, you sewer rat," she said in her usual charming way.

He whimpered.

She slapped his cheek again.

"Look up when I talk to you, Suleiman," she said, "I am not a healer or a wise woman here. I am your mistress."

He looked up, completely in his role as a slave. She slapped him again, and caught his hair and pressed his nose into her pubic bush.

"You haven't eaten yet have you Suleiman," she said, "my nether hair is a delicious meal for a disgusting creep like you. Do you like it?"

He nodded into her pussy.

"Good, now lick me down there," she said, rapping his head with her knuckles, "and do it like you mean it you worthless piece of shit."

Sultana

He licked her between the legs.

It was a long session that day, and by the end of the session, she had treated him to a lot of his favorites. She slapped him enough times that his light brown cheeks were orange. She dragged him all around the room on his knees, with his nose between her buttocks. She made him lie down while she walked on him, and slapped every part of his body with her feet. She spit on him many times, and told him how disgusting and vile he was, using synonyms and metaphors that would make a poet in the Sultana's court jealous and embarrassed. She abused him, his position and his wife, according to previous arrangement. She sucked his cock and balls viciously, biting them, slapping them, pulling his ball sac until he yelped in pain. She sat on him for a while, while she tugged at his cock, and slapped him with her buttocks, screaming abuse at him all the while.

When he came two hours later, for the second time, he was one very satisfied trader, and he fell asleep, snoring. She smiled. Sleeping in her chambers during business hours meant it would cost extra. She left him and went back to her next chore, designing the next part of her partially built garden.

A pair of curious and gleeful eyes had seen her entire session, and now thought about the proper angle with the trader. Writing one character reference shouldn't take that much convincing. Oh, maybe a couple of hundred dinars shouldn't be too much of a problem for such a trader either.

Rawer was conflicted. He never thought of relationships with women as exclusive. Sometimes he wanted to fuck a Mesopotamian woman, and sometimes a Nubian. Sometimes it was Egyptian and sometimes it was Hellenic. He never considered this improper. Now the princess clearly wanted him to make love only to her, for the rest of eternity. He knew that wasn't him. He didn't know what she would say when he broached this particular subject.

Right now he had seen her back to the mouth of the sewer, and asked her to be alert and vigilant until she was safely back and had her bath. They also made plans for the next visit.

He considered themselves lucky, because the Sultana was preoccupied with the snake sisters attacking the kingdom, apart from her usual workload as the people's magistrate and multiple engagements.

He didn't know that hot, angry eyes had watched him kiss the princess. Hot eyes that were brimming over with jealousy, and would do anything to get between him and the princess. The eyes glared even now, as he sat in a pensive pose, a few feet from the mouth of the sewer, having just heard the last of Mediha's steps receding in the distance.

Soldiers scurried in all directions. The attack had come at night, and they were taken unawares. It didn't really matter though. Day or night, they were still decimated. This time all three sisters were attacking the eastern border post, and their attack was far more vicious than the earlier ones.

They were chasing down men even when they ran several miles into the kingdom, and crushing them, decapitating them, swallowing them using the armies of snakes that framed their lovely yet terrifying heads. Again, no women were harmed.

Twenty woman soldiers who were working border security had attacked the sisters, but were firmly repulsed thrice, without any casualties. On their fourth attempt to attack, the sisters decapitated one among their number, presumably as a warning, and flung the rest of them half a mile interior. There were plenty of broken

Sultana

bones, but only that single casualty.

These serpentine forces of destruction swept through the entire post in a mere half hour, having destroyed every last man in the post, and a few male civilians who were foolish enough to engage.

The sisters were agitated, and soldiers had orders to note every color change they saw. This time however, they had left no witnesses. Even the army scribes who didn't engage had been crushed beyond recognition.

The contingent of women soldiers noted some color changes, but memories that are gathered in the heat of battling a vastly superior force are not the most reliable. So what the sisters told one another almost stayed a secret.

One young girl, perched high on a tree, had been observing everything in the battle close to her, and it was enough for her to record a number of their ocular communiques. Besides, she had an excellent memory. She leaped down from the tree, now that the danger was past, and ran back home to tell her father what she had learned.

Chapter 11: Petitions

Suleiman glowered down at the boy.

"You're blackmailing me, you mangy cur!" he screamed.

"Don't think of it as blackmail, esteemed one," Younos said, trying not to smile while he thought that 'mangy cur' was something his sister had called this gentleman a short while ago. "Think of it like a gift to a well wisher. I promise you two things. One, I will not approach you with a request like this again. Two, the Sultana values my services, so if you should want to harm me, your life will be forfeit."

Suleiman seethed, and cursed in Egyptian under his breath. Younos thought quickly. So the city's water lord had Egyptian connections. How could that be? He was Arabia's foremost son, and people knew him as being the model Arab. They didn't have the best relations with Egypt at that point in time. How could this be? He wondered whether this would give him more leverage over the trader.

"Very well, bastard," Suleiman said. "Two hundred dinars, and I'll give my reference on your wonderful character to the court scribe, and we're done. I know about your performance in front of the Sultana's court. Everyone is talking about it. So your life is safe. Go in peace, and keep your lips sealed. If my secret should become known to any one soul, remember that I can have you killed discreetly. Sultana or no Sultana, then I will have you devoured by desert scorpions. Do you understand that, boy!"

Younos shivered.

"Yes, my lord," he said. "You will not see me again, unless you ask for me, or you happen to come to the Sultana's court."

Suleiman dismissed him from his attention. Younos tiptoed out of his presence, knowing well that the trader would try to kill him sooner rather than later. The dinars and the reference were just him buying time until he hired the right assassin. He wondered whether he had done the right thing. Sewer cleaning appeared more palatable just about now.

Imi prayed to Nut. She was after all the mother of the Gods. She was the sky. If anyone could give her her beloved, and make her dreams come true, it was she. She raised her arms to the sky, and uttered ancient chants that not many knew.

She had a talisman that she held sacred. Her grandmother had bequeathed it to her mother, and her mother to her. For simple slaves, they had knowledge of their lineage for several generations, which others in their community considered surprising. They had been slaves the last twenty generations at least. The talisman showed a cow inside a pot. The pot was the hieroglyph that represented Nut's ancient name. The cow was her depiction. She was a gigantic cow whose body formed the sky and heavens, who suckled the stars on her celestial teats.

If the Sky Goddess heard her petition, perhaps she would have her handsome Persian prince. Great is the power of prayer, she thought, remembering her grandmother's training, as she felt the talisman resting on her palm now.

Sultana

Give me this one prayer, O mother of the Gods, she said to herself. This one prayer, O coverer of the sky.
Grant this little serving girl one wish. Surely you, who hold a thousand souls, can do that.

Chapter 12: Dark explorations

Younos had completed all formalities at court, and knew that the Sultana had asked for him. She was preoccupied for the moment with affairs of the kingdom, but he had an appointment with her later in the day. In the meanwhile, his mind turned back to his explorations of the palace labyrinths. His mind would never stay still, so he slunk out of the royal scribe's office and disappeared into a dark corridor that led into the labyrinth. This time he would try to see if he could get closer to the princesses' quarters. Mayhap something that would excite his fancies would be sighted.

General Mohal knelt down on one knee. Something akin to a vast abyss of velvet black stretched out in front of him, and yet he was inside his quarters. His eyes were on the floor. For all his ambition and arrogance, in the presence of this being he was terrified, and according to the ancient legends, he knew he must not look up.

A voice that sounded like pregnant clouds rolling against one another crashed out of that abyss and instructed him. He nodded, while staying penitent.

Her name was Nadia and her friend's name was Nadira. They weren't sisters, but they may as well have been. They looked very different. She was light skinned, as if her Arab ancestors had actually been Teutonic barbarians. Nadira was colored like light caramel, as native an Arab color as there ever was. But they were so alike in behavior, and their names were so alike, that people often wondered if they were one mind. Yet she had survived and her friend had succumbed.

The general's unceasing cruelties had broken her friend's spirit. Her body had been bruised and battered, but it was when she had given up in her mind that the general's usual asphyxiation game had claimed her life.

Nadia was kneeling down, bleeding, dirty, with pain and soreness and anger pervading every pore. The general Mohal's sexual games became darker each night, and she knew that she had to escape.

She touched the earth, and uttered a prayer. The nourishing earth was a mother, after all. She asked for only one request. One very vengeful request. She felt the spirit of her late friend in the air. She smiled, and asked her friend's spirit to witness her terrible prayer to the earth mother.

Chapter 13: Battles

Mediha felt the warm, new water against her skin. All the grime from the sewer was gone, but now she simply stayed in the bath for the pleasure of feeling this fresh flow of water in the bath. They had placed a trace of some exotic fragrance in the bath. She didn't know where it was from, but she loved it.

Her lovely raven hair looked divine when dripping with the bath waters. It was undone and floated partially on the surface of the bath, as she massaged a bath oil into her breasts, kneading her nipples, and enjoying the supple feeling the oil gave her skin.

The bath was a great place to think. She had a lot of thinking to do. More so because what Rawer had told her left her confused in so many ways, and her emotions were doing a circus act right now. She didn't know whether she wanted to leave her people, her family, her race, and her comforts. On the other hand, there was Rawer. She had so many more questions for him, but he had given her so much information in one viscous dollop. She giggled. The way he gave information was exactly the way his big, ebony cock spurted out his seed. That one visual image made her decision for her.

Two pairs of eyes watched her. It was her most private space, her sanctum sanctorum, but someone had gained access to spy on her here. One pair of eyes was simply ogling her, while another pair was glaring.

As the princess dipped her beautiful head under the bath waters again, a masked female figure that was dressed in black from head to toe, including a black mask, leaped out of her hiding place, and launched herself into the bath. She landed right behind the princess, and forced her to stay under water.

The princess struggled and panicked. The assassin was strong, and she didn't have enough oxygen to last more than a few seconds, having already been underwater a half minute before the attack, just to test her breath. She wriggled and thrashed, and pushed her feet against the foot of the bath, unbalancing herself and the assassin.

The two of them sank backwards, both their torsos facing upward, well under the surface of the water. The assassin's hands were clamped around her throat, and she knew that she had to change that somehow. Her lungs were struggling now, and she felt her life slipping away.

She wriggled some more, using the slipperiness from the bath oil to good effect, but the assassin's grip remained powerful. Her mind screamed in alarm, and the fragrance of the bath waters that had been the last thing on her mind seemed a laughably trivial detail now.

Her lovely and powerful mother's face came to her mind. When she thought of someone saving her, she didn't think of Rawer, and certainly not of her father. It was her mother, who had taught her all she knew, that appeared in her mind's eye. Her mind cried out for her mother. The assassin's grip was powerful beyond measure, and the princess started losing consciousness.

The Sultana started. She was worried, but she didn't know why. She was adjourning a meeting where she oversaw different provincial magistrates as they addressed petitions from citizens. It was a review process that they went through each year.

The panic that the sisters were causing in the kingdom weighed everyone down, but that was no reason to pause the important affairs of state. Besides, the Sultana was well versed with how the human mental mechanism worked, and knew that taking some time off from a problem was sometimes the best way to deal

with it.

Now though, some worry for her children entered her mind. She did not know why, but she felt that her eldest child was in danger. She wondered if she was just panicking for no reason. Then she dismissed the thought. It could surely wait until the meeting was done.

Chapter 14: Darkness imminent

The bath oil made her torso slippery, but not slippery enough to shake the assassin's hold on her throat, that kept her beneath the surface of the water. Mediha's life force was ebbing, and she saw scenes from the high and low points in her life flashing before her eyes. Her father was calling her across the field, having just returned from a tour. He was grimy from battle, but looked young and virile. Her mother was astonishingly beautiful and even more buxom back then. She ran through the tall grass and the desert roses and felt her father seize her under the shoulders and toss her up in the air, as she squealed with delight. She felt herself fall, but instead of falling into his arms, she fell on her feet, and was a twelve year old girl, exploring the palace's highest point, it's tower, along with her sister Lubna, and finding what they thought was a treasure chest. They were laughing and excited and were about to open it, when her mother intercepted them. She heard her scolding them now, asking them to behave, and not disturb their most sacred possessions. She felt angry and turned around and stormed out of the tower, and felt herself as a nubile twenty year old, eying Rawer taming an unruly horse from the distance, wondering why she felt as she did. She experienced that powerful stirring in her breasts and her loins again, as she saw his rippling, ebony sinews in the late morning sun.

Just as she lost consciousness, she fancied she saw the face of an ancient woman, a wraith, a spirit, a mother. She also fancied she saw a boy.

The entire northeaster borders of her kingdom were without protection. No neighboring kingdoms had made any moves yet. The sisters were traveling at superhuman speeds along her kingdom's eastern border, decimating army posts and thousands of men as they traveled.

But the bloody bitch was still holding court and attending to other duties. General Mohal spat on the Sultana each night in his mind. He imagined that each of the servant girls that he abused was that royal bitch. It was his fondest wish to force the Sultana into submission, sexually, martially and politically.

In order to accomplish his designs, he needed the aid of a force that was beyond the ken of human comprehension. The general wanted to hit the Sultana with so much power and force at his beck and call that she was decimated at first stroke, and if she stayed alive, it was at his mercy.

This is why, in league with sorcerers who had been exiled from the kingdom, the general had invited an enormously potent entity into the human realm. He now wondered at the wisdom of his course. The entity was like a thousand desert storms rolled in one, and when he spoke, the entire room quaked as though it would fall any moment.

This entity was the general's ticket to saving the kingdom and then usurping it. At least in his twisted mind it was. He trembled as he addressed the abyss that yawned in front of him, willing himself to force each word out of his mouth.

Chapter 15: Breath

Her consciousness returned, and she knew that someone had pulled her out of the water. She could still hear the sounds of a scuffle and she opened her eyes and looked in its direction.

It was a Hellenic boy dressed in commoner's dirty linen clothes, and he was soaked from head to toe. He was wrestling the assassin the best he could, but the assassin was gaining. The boy's back was arched back, while the assassin was pushing him back against his shoulders and his hips simultaneously, in an attempt to break his spine through the application of sheer strength. The boy was well aware of his predicament, and was no warrior. Terror danced on his face, as rivulets of sweat threaded down his cheeks.

The princess leaped up, in all her naked glory, and ran behind the assassin, who tried whirling while maintaining her grip on the boy. The princess used both her hands' index fingers and stabbed the eyes of the assassin in one sharp, very improbable jab. The assassin reeled, and dropped her hold on the boy, and fell back screaming in a strange tongue. She turned and ran into the dark corridor that led to the secret passages of the palace.

There was no point in giving her pursuit personally. The princess knew she'd have to call her guards. The princess whirled around from the direction of the assassin's flight, and faced the boy, who had fallen to his knees, and was panting. He flashed her a grateful look. She nodded. He had saved her life, so he owed her nothing. Then he looked down at her body, and she glared at him, willing him to look away, while she covered her breasts with one hand and her nether region with another, while looking for her clothes. He pretended to look away.

General Mohal looked very worried. After his secret meeting, he returned to his quarters and slept for several hours. He didn't even have the stomach for his usual sexual games. He was told by someone that one of his young slave girls had died. Somehow he didn't remember that, but it didn't matter. Slaves died every day; such was their lot.

All he could picture in his mind's eye was the gigantic abyss that he had been facing, and the sheer monstrous power of the entity that he had sought the aid of. He was very worried. The presence of this entity was something else, and there was absolutely no question of denying this entity anything.

The entity's demand was terrifying. The general knew that denying it wasn't an option. If he acceded to it, however, he wasn't sure that he would retain any shred of himself. The entity may consume him as part of the process.

He slapped the slave girl who had lived through his nocturnal sadism, venting his frustration. He was surprised. She looked a lot more resilient today, and seemed to have healed more than humanly possible. He grinned to himself. He was surprised for a second. He thought he saw the girl smiling. She wasn't now. She was looking down.

Chapter 16: Threads

The Hellene worked at the court. Princess Mediha knew him because of the palace gossip about a boy outsmarting the Sultana's council. Now he had saved her life.

She didn't fancy the boy's apparent fascination with her, but she was well bred and was as far from an ingrate as a human being could be. She knew that she was bonded to this boy, and as someone who had saved his life, and who had had her life saved by him. They were akin to family. It was the ancient law that no man or woman had written but everybody followed. Water dripped off both their persons, as they had shared something that makes humans far more intimate than making love. They had been in the presence of near certain death together, and that from the same foe.

The boy's presence in her quarters had been unexplained, but she allowed him to go unchallenged. He told her he had been lost in the labyrinth that the shadows of the palace housed, and she pretended he was telling her the truth. The sly and lusty look in his eyes bothered her, but he seemed a harmless boy.

She had screamed for the palace guards, and her private retinue of female warriors streamed into her chambers, each giving the Hellene a look of surprise and almost assaulting him before the princess stopped them and explained what had happened.

The warriors fanned out into the dark, internecine depths of the palace labyrinths, hoping to cut the throat of the assassin before the hour was up. A few stayed behind, staying close to the princess, and eying the boy as though his presence offended them.

She dreamed of him, night and day. The name Rustum was on her lips at all times. Her mother noticed that her sparring had deteriorated, and she received too many skin wounds as sharp reminders to be alert and attentive. She spent more time staring into ponds and taking solitary walks than she ever had, and this was terribly out of character for someone who was as socially active as her.

Princess Lubna was awaiting word from the Persian satrap. She wondered whether she should tell her mother what she was doing, but decided against it. Their relationship with the Persian kingdom wasn't specially warm, and she hoped that her initiative and her love would bring the two kingdoms together. Her mother would receive a gift of allies, because her daughter employed the power of love.

Every woman who crossed his path thought he was a boy. He was in his twenties, but his accursed baby face undid him every time. Younos cursed silently, while enjoying the princess's hospitality.

It was difficult. The princess's beautiful form was just a few feet away from him. She had personally supervised his afternoon snack, and checked on him, and she asked him to come back when he desired. She also told him that he was family now, because of his action. It was an ancient law of the Arabs.

Younos loved it. He planned to come back to ogle to princess, of course. He also knew that he could learn so much more about palace politics through sly inquiries from someone as powerful as her. He was beginning to like his life. The Sultana trusted him, and now her daughter trusted him. He hadn't been trusted a whole lot in his life before, so it made him feel astonishingly light on the inside.

Sultana

Her female warriors turned him on even more. One of them looked Hellenic, and he tried stealing glances at her dark blonde locks and the bronze armored bust that covered her breasts. She glowered at him, catching him at the precise moment he stared at her bust.

The boy turned red in the face, and turned his head away. He turned to face the princess, and excused himself, because he had to go and meet the Sultana on urgent business. He heard a soft chuckle behind him as he left.

They went over the sisters' messages with the Hellenic boy again. He had nothing to add that the palace scribes had not sieved from the messages. This boy had his wits about him, however, and the Sultana was hoping that he would think of something she hadn't.

Her frustration for so many years had been that finding a good adviser was close to impossible. Her nonagenarians were wise, but they no longer thought well on their toes, and completely alien situations challenged them in ways that they were not prepared for. A boy such as this one was a godsend.

The messages were clear. There was something within their own kingdom that the sisters were mortally afraid of. Something of enormous power. That something was hidden in the area between the woods that were shaped like a star and a Wadi that was nearby.

The Sultana's soldiers had scoured the entire region multiple times. She had made one visit to the region herself. Now it was deliberation time. She had already debated digging up the entire region. Perhaps there was some gem or treasure that contained enormous power that could control these sisters. Perhaps an entity of enormous potency was hiding beneath the earth, and they would have to dig to get to it. Perhaps there was some plant in this two mile region that was poisonous to the sisters.

She ran these ideas by her council members, which now included the sharp Hellene. The boy shook his head at every suggestion, and then was lost in thought, much as the Sultana was. Her advisers were lost in thought as well.

The boy wondered aloud whether they knew the origin of these snakes. Nobody knew where they had come from, and it was a sound enough suggestion that they attempt to uncover their origins. It had been one of the Sultana's first thoughts, however, but there had been no information forthcoming. She had sent spies and soldiers to the Persian border, from whence these sisters had appeared.

Her spies reported nothing of substance. The sisters had decimated some Persian outposts, but that was only because they had been attacked. Their intent was to disable the Sultana's border security.

Even this didn't logically add up to any person who was capable of thought in the council room. The sisters were mortally afraid of something within their kingdom. It would have made more sense for them to turn tail and run, or to simply launch an attack on that something in order to get it over with, but they were disabling the kingdom's border security.

It was almost as if the sisters wanted to get the attention of whatever they were mortally afraid of.

Chapter 17: Intrigue

The satrap wondered how he should receive this news. Tushna, his chief consort was against the proposal. First, it had been made by the Arab princess, and not officially by her parents. Second, may the Ahuras protect his immortal soul, her son was no model of virtue, and would ruin a foreign girl's life. It appeared that such a proposal would lead to personal and political grief on so many fronts. She advised him to ignore such a proposal for now. If the Sultana made an offer, they could rethink it, even if it cost the girl her happiness. But this didn't make sense.

He wasn't so sure. The Sultana's kingdom had deep coffers, and her power was to be feared. He knew that they had cold relations, even though they were neighbors. He wanted that to change, if only to learn more from her and her reign. Besides, it would be an interesting challenge to pit his wits against the Sultana.

He also learned of disturbing news of monsters attacking every military outpost along the Sultana's borders. He wasn't sure what he should make of it, especially in light of the fact that these monsters had first been sighted in his kingdom, albeit close to the border.

Their emissary Erach was a shrewd one. He had brought back such a cornucopia of information that it took several hours to hear and discuss it all.

The chants were in a tongue Nadia didn't understand, but she paid attention to every syllable, and how it was uttered. The general knelt in front of fire pit as he chanted, and thick clouds of smoke wafted up and enveloped him.

Her throat hurt from observing him from her vantage point, inhaling all that smoke, but she had to do it. If she died the moment after she obtained her desire, she would die happy. She learned every chant the best she could, and observed his actions as he did them. He was becoming subservient to some higher, deeper, darker force, and she had no idea what to make of it.

He dragged goats in there to make dark sacrifices, and her heart bled for the goats. He watched him pull their still beating hearts from their breasts, making a quick incision and killing them with a precision that was surely practiced. He brought thousands of minute stones that reminded her of sapphires, but must have been something else for they were consumed by the flames as he offered these into the fire pit. A fierce blue flame marked the pinnacle of their consumption. He even brought a series of human skulls and chanted as he arranged them in different configurations.

Whatever vile calumny had corrupted the general's heart, that did not interest her. What was of chief purport, however, was the fact that it was his heart. She visualized herself carving out his throbbing, pulsing heart, even as he was alive, and then recoiled at the horror of her own frenzied fantasy.

She went through ups and she went through downs, but she learned every syllable. For sometimes it takes a thorn to remove a thorn.

The young girl was worn from too much travel. For farmers to travel half the breadth of the entire kingdom took a full twenty days, given that they traveled by camel, and traveled mostly before dawn and after dusk to escape the merciless sun. They couldn't travel too late into the night either, to steer clear of whatever dangers

Sultana

lurked about in the darkest folds of the night.

Her father beamed down at her. They were sweaty, covered with sand and grime, and people looked askance at them, as though they were beggars, but her father knew that his daughter would do him proud one day. Today she was going to save the Sultana's kingdom with what she had learned.

Three hundred wives and concubines. His father had been the man he looked up to, and he had three hundred women who shared his bedchamber regularly. That was where Rawer's sense of fidelity came from.

His father had only twelve chief wives, but he religiously made sure he slept with one different member of his three hundred women every night. It was his sacred duty, as he saw it.

Rawer had seen his step mothers and learned that a man has a right to women from every corner of the globe. He had step mothers who were made from Nubian soil, and whose skin glistened ebony like his own. He had step mothers who were Arab, with light brown skin, and raven hair, who resembled his own precious Mediha. He had step mothers who were from the far orient, with slits for eyes and porcelain skin which offered a stark contrast to his father's skin. He had step mother's who were Teutonic with golden hair and pale skin whose barbarian fathers and brothers had allied with the Kushite lord.

So Rawer understood that a man may love many women. He felt no discomfort in bedding Mediha one day and Tuya the next, and perhaps the princess Lubna another day. It was, after all, his sacred duty. Even as his plans with the princess were solidified, he climbed onto Tuya again, as she slumbered, and awoke her by placing his gigantic member between her thighs.

Rawer was at full length, and his ebony balls slapped her thighs, as he crushed her nipples with his lips. Tuya gasped, and allowed herself to completely surrender to him. His fingers played with her hair, while his lips and tongue explored her caramel breasts, and his giant, black cock tore her nether region.

She smiled and allowed him to grind his thighs into hers. She suspected that she held enough comforts within her loins that Rawer wouldn't miss the pesky Arabian bitch.

Chapter 18: Energies

Priests are allowed to make love. They may be dedicated to their priestly profession, but they are allowed to make love. Especially if they were as handsome as him. He wore golden curls on his head, and had a bronzed body that was reminiscent of the Sun God. Lust inundated the very foundations of her mind when she glimpsed him for the first time. And the second time. And the third. And every time hence.

So they made love everywhere, whenever he was free from his priestly duties. He performed his sacred rites when the time arose, and then exited the temple and came to her. His cock was always hard and always seeking the dripping tunnel between her thighs. They always reached their climax together, while playing with each others bodies in fantastic new ways each day.

One day, however, the deluge of lust stormed those last foundations of mental reasoning, and there was both sex and trouble at hand. She ran into his temple, when he was preparing for his ritual, and entreated him to take her then and there. He wouldn't hear of it at first, but she begged him, and told him how she would die if she didn't enjoy union with him just then.

Then as he stormed her sanctum sanctorum with his penis, a pure form that radiated energy and wisdom stormed the sanctum sanctorum of the temple where they were making love. The being of pure energy who was the Goddess expected her priest to be worshipping her, but he was making love to a woman inside the holiest of holies.

It was then that the terrible words came upon the lips of the Goddess. They heard a thunderclap when she spoke, and she pointed at her priest and converted him into a creature that could be compared to Leviathans from the deepest recesses of the netherworld. She pointed at her, and converted her into a being whose serpentine form would inspire terror for all eternity.

Then, as quick as a beam of light, the Goddess vanished, and their entreaties for forgiveness rang through empty air in harsh tongues that sounded more like tempestuous roars than their erstwhile human voices.

Hypatia saw something hidden within her brother's robes that he had secreted away in his quarters. This was her house after all, and as his elder sister it was her duty to keep him out of trouble. So she checked his quarters.

It was parchment. It was ancient parchment written in a tongue that she did not understand. It wasn't alone however. He had nearly a hundred such parchments with different designs and images on them. She didn't know what to make of it.

There were images of fire breathing serpents, and red skinned beings with horns and tridents. What caught her attention, however, was a striking image of a being that was a woman until her waist, and a serpent below.

Chapter 19: Pivots

The sheer splendor of the palace hall blew all sensations of grime and hunger away from the farmer and his daughter's minds. The dazzling field of orichalc, rubies, sapphires, emeralds, gold, silver and bronze that assaulted their eyes was surely a creation of the Gods. Their awe of their Sultan and Sultana increased at the sight, and they wondered what sort of reward they could expect.

She was called Aya, and he was called Nuska, and they were named for ancient Gods. For the young Aya it meant that the fields she traipsed in would no longer be green; they would be emerald colored. The bright red hibiscus she adorned her hair with on occasion would no longer be red; it would be ruby red. The sky would no longer be blue; it would be the color of an aquamarine.

For Nuska it meant that he may not have to farm once his daughter reported her findings. It was going to be something that would gain them the favor of the royal family for this lifetime. It meant an end to backbreaking labors under the merciless Arabian sun.

They had been barred entry until the girl said that they had deciphered a message from the snakes and she would tell the Sultana alone. Nuska was doubly proud of his daughter for holding her ground against the giant guards who tried to get her to spill her news to them. She simply repeated ten times, in succession, that her words were meant for the Sultana's ears alone. The guards were forced to be content with her answer, and gave in to the determination of a child. Her determination had earned them entry into the grand hall, where all their cares were momentarily forgotten.

They waited in the hall for a good half hour before the Sultana found time for them, and entered the royal hall. They had heard so much about her, and about how she had magic powers and was more powerful than a dozen wizards combined. Seeing her mien confirmed this to them. The air of dominance in her presence was remarkable.

She asked her attendants to bring them some Sherbet, which was something they hadn't expected from a queen, no less a Sultana. It tasted far sweeter than water they were used to, and seemed to nourish their tongues, throats and indeed every fiber within them as they consumed it.

"You are from the east," she said.

"Yes your highness," Nuska replied.

"And you are a farmer from the east," she said.

"Yes, your highness," Nuska said, nodding happily, as the Sherbet brought his sallow and bristly cheeks to life.

"I am very fond of farmers, and of eastern farmers in particular," the Sultana said, giving Aya a warm smile that just seemed to melt inside her heart. Aya was in love with her queen; she is so much more than mother, she said to herself. If only she was my mother.

Eastern farmers harvested the best bounties in their kingdom, and indeed provided grain for all the kingdom to sup on. So the Sultana's statement was transparent to Nuska, and even to bright little Aya.

"What is your name, darling?" the Sultana asked her.

Sultana

"Aya, your highness," she said, and bowed again before her monarch.

"You've bowed ten times already, girl," the Sultana said, laughing. "Now tell me what is this secret you can tell only me."

Little Younos was practicing magic of the darkest kind. This was the only conclusion that Hypatia could draw from the sea of ancient scrolls that greeted her in his room. She understood now why he was short of money. She knew that procuring such scrolls was an expensive endeavor, and was indulged in by only those quirky and mysterious individuals who were rich and who had a stomach for the supernatural.

If Younos had been able to gather these many scrolls, it meant he was doing perfectly okay financially. He had earned enough money through whatever odd jobs he deigned to perform to get him all these. And he had spent every last pie of it on these scrolls of magic. Now, living under her roof, he had to answer her.

It was late at night, and Younos wasn't back yet. She wondered if he was out collecting scrolls. She heard a gentle patter of rain outside. Rain was rare, so she stepped out under the awning outside her front door to see it fall. She saw a form slinking through the shadows coming at her. She worried for a moment that she was vulnerable, and that it was someone who wished her harm. Then she heaved a sigh of relief, seeing her brother emerging from the shadows, dripping wet.

"Where have you been, Adolphos?" she said, trying to make him feel welcome, tired as he must be from his labors.

She led him indoors. He looked tired and happy, and very wet.

"Sister," he said, "I have found favor with the Sultana, and now with her daughter."

Younos was beaming, and genuinely above board and honest in his words this once. She smiled at him, handing him a towel to dry himself.

"Her daughter? Which daughter, and what sort of favor?" she said.

Younos told her about how he had chanced upon princess Mediha being strangled by an assassin, and had saved her life.

"Where was this?" she asked.

"In the palace," he said, meeting her gaze.

She smiled. He appeared to be telling her the truth at least this time.

"Go on," she said.

"The assassin was female as well," he said, "and had a hold on her throat, and had immersed her in water."

"Water?" she said.

"A pool in the palace," he said, keeping an entirely straight face, as he started rubbing the towel on his head vigorously.

Sultana

"What was the princess doing in a pool?" she said.

"How should I know?" he said, "It was lucky I was within hearing distance and heard their struggle."

Hypatia understood from her brother's eyes exactly what had happened. He had been hiding and trying to get an eyeful of the princess while she was bathing, which had opportunely for him, been precisely when an attack on her life had happened. She asked him to go on, telling herself that he was mostly a good boy, even if he went around sneaking looks at naked girls.

"The assassin had a hold of her and was holding her under the water as they floated with the assassin on top," he said, "and I leaped in the water on the assassin, so that my feet struck her back, and had to let go of the princess. It was frightening Adelphe!"

Hypatia knew that his account of his struggle was true. He wasn't this good an actor.

"I lost my balance also, but the princess was free," he said, tossing the towel aside, and giving a vague glance towards her kitchen. "The assassin tried attacking me, while the princess floated in the water. I was worried she had died, but I tried to counter the assassin's attack."

"What happened?" she asked.

"Ouranos and Gaea are watching over me," he said. "The assassin lost her balance again, and I pulled the princess out of the water. I even had a moment to pump her chest to rid her of water."

"You must have enjoyed that," Hypatia said dryly.

Younos turned red, and then went on.

"So, the assassin attacked before I could get the princess entirely back, and she tried to break my back!"

"Oh!" Hypatia said. "You're a great fighter as well? You fought her off?"

"That I did," Younos said, "I pivoted in a manner even I don't remember and poked her in the eyes, so she had to let go of me."

Hypatia noted the cheeky look again on his face. Some sort of embellishment was going on here, but she had to live with it.

"What happened next?" she asked.

"Well the assassin got away, but I gained the princess's favor when she regained consciousness," he said, "and to reward me you gave me some delicious dates and sweet wine for dessert."

She laughed and lead him into the kitchen.

Holy Nut didn't seem to hear her prayers just yet. Imi saw a girl with porcelain skin and red hair stagger out of prince Rustum's room. Her prince Rustum's room. The girl was walking like she had a few days back, and appeared sore from too many carnal delights. Dark rings stood guard around her eyes, and her hair was disheveled. Her gait suggested a soreness in her loins, and she held her jaw as if she had overworked it. Her azure linen gown was in disarray so that one of her bright pink nipples was drinking in the sunlight, and she

Sultana

didn't even bother to adjust it.

Imi felt disgust in her stomach. Disgust not for the girl, but for the fact that she had shared delights that only she ought to have with her angel. She still wanted the Farishta for herself, but she wondered if she could reform him. If the mother of the Gods didn't hear her prayers, what would she do?

She thought she would make herself available to the prince again, and wondered whether her honor was completely lost in doing so. She turned her head upward, and sent up a mute prayer once more. The mother of the Gods was surely kinder than this.

Chapter 20: Vendettas

Princess Mediha stood with arms akimbo, looking at herself in the mirror. She glared at herself. Her lovely dark brown eyes flashed fire at herself, in an attempt to stoke what was already a raging fire. She brushed her long raven hair that glistened with almond oil back so that she could view her earrings again. She wore rubies that were set in ornate silver casings on her ears now as a symbol of her mission. The ruby necklace that adorned her slender yet voluptuous neck had smaller rubies playing soldiers with a central fiery red queen who was perched where her breasts formed a deep set cleavage line that so many lusted after, but only Rawer had access to.

The fires in the earthen and metal braziers in her room burned a crimson red, after the addition of specially procured salts for the purpose*. The fiery glow was the color of the blood she sought to spill, and she had taken every measure to remind herself every moment of her purpose.

It was a personal vendetta. Someone tries to kill you, and you go after them with every last iota of your power. The princess was in love, and was making plans for moving to another country with her dear Rawer, but an attack on her life could not be left unanswered.

She had sworn her guards to secrecy. She didn't want her mother involved. The moment her mother learned of such a thing, she would turn over every last stone in the palace to find and destroy the assassin. The princess didn't want that. She wanted to strangle the assassin personally, and she planned for it.

She met with Rawer another time in the month, and they decided on plans to elope. Two crawls through that sewer were two crawls too many, so she was waiting for the time when she would end this charade once for all. It would be at the month that she would fly from the home of her ancestors with alacrity that was fueled by a rare passion. They would be riding for nearly four days, and would have to make several stops. To go by themselves would invite less prying eyes, but it would also make them ready targets for bandits and robbers. A party of two is a pleasure to attack, regardless of Rawer and her own battle prowess. They would have to deal with plenty of skirmishes.

What they needed instead was a large party that would make good time. This was where she was convinced that Rawer and her were watched by both Arabian and Nubian Gods. Rawer had secured the friendship of a horse trader who had to deliver Arabians to the Kushite capital. This was unexpected good fortune, but in retrospect it seemed altogether too mundane an occurrence. Arabians were prized for their stamina and steady nature, and were in high demand all over the world. That the Kushites wanted plenty of them was not very surprising.

She had personally attended at the forge, when she added rubies to her scimitar's hilt. She had laid it on a crimson pillow next to her mirror, ready to spill blood at a moment's notice. A caramel Nubian woman's face haunted her thoughts, and she wouldn't rest until she plunged her scimitar into those caramel breasts.

**Addition of strontium based salt makes fire burn red. Did ancient Arabians know how to chemically extract such salts from naturally occurring strontium sources such as celestite or strontianite? I can only conjecture on that.*

Nadia shivered again. The general had been at it for twelve hours. There was less smoke now, but she feared that she would die from inhaling all these foul exudations from the fire pit. It was a price she was willing to pay, but only if the general went with her.

Sultana

Dozens of goat hearts had been consigned to the flames as she watched. Two horse hearts had been consigned to the flames, and their terrible ends had scared her witless. The general was physically far more powerful than she thought. He had carved those hearts out of those Arabian stallions while avoiding their frantic and lethal kicks as they spun around this enclosure where his bloody and devilish rites were conducted. She would take revenge for Nadira, but also for these poor beasts that were slaughtered for some unholy reason.

As he sliced his own hand along its length and allowed his own blood to trickle down into the fire pit, a blackness that was surely of the deepest, most primal abyss swallowed the center of the fire pit, and then grew until it had covered the entire fire pit. A voice that caused her eardrums to tremble violently and reminded her of desert tornadoes shattered the silence.

The velvet blackness of the abyss flowed like a river of darkness, and moved one way and then another, and then crept towards the toes of the general. It paused, as though some intelligence was deciding its movement, and then started enveloping the general. His movements stopped, and he became still as stone.

Nadia stopped breathing. She knew that she had to act. The time for vengeance was nigh. She trembled, and crept towards the general, steeling her resolve. He looked formidable, even though he appeared to be catatonic. She knew that this was her best chance at vengeance, when some other higher force was consuming his attention. She also knew that if this process that he had started here was completed, all chances for vengeance may be lost.

She leaped down from the rafters that had given her her vantage point and raced around the general. The velvet abyss was behind her, and her skin crawled from the cool breath of the abyss. She saw the liquid blackness take his feet, and creep up to his knees. Her time was severely limited.

The cold ivory blade that she had stolen from the general himself had been hidden in her ragged gown all these hours. It was in her right hand now, and she reached up and plunged the blade into the general's chest. His skin was tough like leather from a field ox at the prime of his muscular life. Nonetheless the blade plunged in and got stuck there. The general stayed catatonic for a minute, while Nadia struggled to move the blade within his chest.

Then his eyes snapped open, the whites of his eyes red from all the hours of exposure to unholy fumes of smoke. He glared at her, and his stony grip nearly broke her wrist. She yelped in pain and felt him lifting her using her broken wrist. The pain was beyond description, and the tiniest thread of will power stitched together all the vast patches of pain that comprised her field of experience. Her left arm flailed around wildly, with a will of its own, searching for some weapon. She was now fighting for her life, as she knew that the general aimed to toss her into the abyss.

Chapter 21: Beginning ending

It was only after filling Younos up with sweet wine, cheese and dates that Hypatia broached the subject of his clandestine studies of the paranormal. Spirits were a good way to get young Younos to talk in a manner that was less than circumspect.

"Are you training in the old magic, brother?" she asked him, deciding that a direct approach was for the better.

He looked shock at her question, but his guard wasn't completely up, as he was tending to inebriation.

"Where did you get that idea, Adelphe?" he said.

"I've looked at your scrolls, Younos," she said, simply.

He started, and then was lost in thought for a moment.

"I know you practice magic, but I want to know what your designs are, brother?" she said.

He had a look that Arabian horses often got when they sighted packs of jackals in the desert. It was a look of panic mixed with determination.

"You entered my room?" he said.

"This is my house, brother," she said, keeping her voice even but very dangerous.

Younos understood veiled threats, so he towed her line just then.

"Okay, okay," he said, making a conciliatory gesture with his palms. "I'll tell you about those scrolls, Adelphe."

She nodded.

"I have been spending all my dinars on obtaining a certain strand of magic all these years," he said.

"What strand would that be?" she said.

"It is called Inanna's charm," he said simply, and then looked down at his feet.

She gasped. Inanna was the ancient Sumerian goddess of love. Love, not marriage. She was particularly known as the goddess of extramarital liaisons and sensual affairs. The goddess herself was supposed to prowl the streets and taverns in search of carnal adventures. Inanna's charm was a mystical amulet that endowed the owner with infinite sexual potency and a hypnotic hold over whomsoever he or she desired. Younos was blushing after admitting this. No wonder.

"Brother!" she said. Her tone was a mixture of consternation, condemnation and admiration. Consternation, for she hadn't expected that to be his target. Condemnation, for he appeared to be frittering away good money over something that was probably only a myth. Admiration, because he had backed his ribald ambition with everything he materially owned. "What have you been doing with your life!"

It was rhetorical question. He stayed silent for a moment. Then he went on.

Sultana

"Adelphe, it is my dream, and I mean to accomplish it," he said.

Why? Why this dream? She saw no point in asking him out loud. Of course her brother was always ogling pretty girls, and his baby face didn't really make him a much sought after suitor among the opposite sex. That could be the one reason. He was always looking at girls but never sleeping with them. She wondered whether she should talk to a lovely Arabian prostitute she knew about 'helping' her brother with his confidence. The girl was known for her succulent breasts, and even had people in the Sultana's court as her clients. She decided against it. She had to learn more about his progress in the mystical arts.

The general's grip felt as though the hardest stone in all of Arabia had been carved into a deadly collar for her. Nadia felt her life force ebb away. He was moving his hand away from his torso with the lethal intent of tossing her into the abyss behind her, and in front of him. Her left arm, with a will of its own, found the general's scimitar sitting in its sheath. It was only an inch too low for her arm to reach. She struggled, sensing that she was moving further away from it every blink of an eye.

She took a chance and leaned towards the general, feeling his foul, demonic breath on her face, and found the scimitar's hilt within reach. She pulled it up with the nail of her middle finger, and then grabbed the hilt fully in her palm. The general saw what she was doing. His evil eyes shot out beams of pure hatred in her direction. His arm moved fast, but hers moved just as fast and she sliced the scimitar in a horizontal arc in front of her. The curved blade tore his throat into shreds, even as his arm let go of her. He screamed in disbelief, as his lifetime of effort in wedding the darkest depths of hell were sliced away in one moment, at the hands of a mere waif of a girl. Dark blood poured out in a viscous stream out of his shredded throat, and flooded his mouth, and she heard him choking on his own blood. The anger and the sense of having been cheated in his eyes was ample reward for Nadia, as her feet plunged into the abyss.

Chapter 22: Changes

The assassin had not been apprehended. She had vanished entirely into the secret labyrinth that played secret mistress to the palace's vast halls and bedchambers. Princess Mediha realized that whoever had tried to drown her knew the palace catacombs intimately. She also had her suspicions as to who instigated her assassination plot.

The Nubian bitch was at the center of her web of suspicions. The assassin had been female, and she had been a few inches shorter than the Nubian, but she could have been hired by her. Alternately, it was entirely possible that her own impressions during the brief and violent struggle with the assassin were mistaken, and that the woman who had attacked her was indeed Tuya, but her memory betrayed her presently. She did not know the truth of it, but her conviction that Tuya deserved to die grew by the minute.

Her scimitar was gripped in her hand, and the princess paced her bedchamber, turning thoughts over in her mind. She had sent several of her personal guard to look for Tuya, after giving them a detailed description. She had issued orders that Tuya be dragged to her chambers alive. She must be alive, so that she could mete out her justice personally. There were only five more days to the end of the month, when she left this palace for good in order to accompany her Nubian prince into a foreign land and into a new life, and she wanted to anoint her new life with the blood of the Nubian bitch.

Habiba, one of her guard, returned presently. She was Arab and stood a good six feet in height, with an absolutely erect posture and powerful shoulders and arms, great breasts that hid behind her bronze armor, and muscular thighs and hips that could easily be employed to crush an opponent in unarmed combat. She removed her bronze helmet and saluted the princess.

"A woman of that description was found several miles from the palace, my princess," she said, meeting the princess's gaze.

Habiba was a proud warrior. She didn't bend the knee to anyone except the Sultana, and Mediha felt trepidation and an equal amount of glee in ordering her around. She maintained eye contact, knowing the rules of the game of dominance. Mediha wondered at the irony of her name. Habiba meant 'darling' in Arabic, while Habiba was nobody's darling, except perhaps her birth mother's. Still, the princess couldn't bring herself to associate her guard with anything feminine, given her mien and her attitude.

"Bring her to me immediately," she said, keeping her voice sharp, and making sure Habiba understood who was boss here. She felt glad inside. The Nubian bitch was finally hers, after two days of waiting and enduring. The fruit of patience is indeed sweet, as went the ancient saying.

"Drag her into my presence," she said.

Her mother was still unaware of her actions.

The Teutonic whore was called Olga. Imi followed her to her quarters and saw her enter her home. She smiled to herself. Sometimes prayers just don't cut it. The girl was an immediate rival. Imi's lovely brown eyes filled with hate seeing the whore. She would share her angel with nobody.

She was holding a little wicker basket in her hands throughout. She opened the lid. Hor peered out. His hood trembled for a moment, and his body that was mix of red and pale gray slithered out of the basket. Imi smiled.

Sultana

Her pet hayya* was a very useful tool at disposing off rivals. Her farishta had many lovers, so she would eliminate them all, one at a time, with gentle Hor's gentle venom. She could almost feel Olga's lungs collapse even before Hor bit her. An Egyptian cobra is such a lovely pet.

*Arabic for snake

The blackness of the abyss had a cool feel to it. Not the soothing coolness of the shade, but the creepy coolness of the serpent. Nadia felt the sensation of coolness creep up her legs, as she slipped into the velvet abyss. The abyss was somehow supporting her, and she wasn't falling fast. Instead the abyss was creeping up into her.

The voice of a thousand desert storms whispered in her ear now, and she trembled in fear. The voice was sibilant in one syllable, and rolling thunder in the next. She paid close attention.

"The fruit of a thousand dark hearts was his that you sacrificed, young onnnnnnnneâ !"

She shivered, the voice was no longer in her ear, it was in her head. The thousand desert storms were in her head and there was nothing she could do about it.

"But he was your sacrificccccccceâ !"

She felt the voice dart from one corner of her mind to another, exploring her memories, becoming intimate with her love and compassion for her 'sister' Nadira, and leaping into her mothers' arms many years ago when she was a toddler. The voice spoke, but as it did, it opened up Nadia's store of memories, so that they spun out as though they were compelled by the haboob*.

"So yours is the greater fruitttttttâ !"

Every one of her identities, as daughter, as friend, as slave, as a girl turning into a young woman - came rearing up, asking her to own them, and as she did, they dissolved as if they were castles made of sand that were in the path of a sandstorm.

"We are yours to command, mistressssssssssâ !."

The thousand desert storms went silent, and Nadia felt pure power inside her head, heart and solar plexus. She looked around her. She was exactly as she was before. A girl who was going to become a woman in a few months. All her wounds had healed, but she was the same. Except that her brown eyes were a velvet black, and if you looked into her eyes, you were liable to lose yourself. That, and she had enough power at her beck and call to wipe out all of Arabia if she so chose. Or perhaps she could help it.

She put her right foot forward on General Mohal's head, and his skull shattered to smithereens from the power of her touch.

*Summer sandstorm that occurs in the region around Sudan

Chapter 23: Troubles - present, past and future.

The true desire for vengeance is a cold and spine chilling affair. It is a far cry from the passionate and hot idea of vengeance that much of the world entertains. Princess Mediha's desire was more the latter. It wasn't the calculated vengeance of someone who has planned for years to have deliver cold comeuppance. It was rather a royal hothead making plans while she was driven by her naturally passionate nature.

Such hotheaded vengeance can be turned around, if the right person is there to do it. Unfortunately the right person wasn't there to do it just then. Tuya was dragged into the princess' chambers. Her caramel face was fired up with fury. She had no idea what the princess' idea was, but she had been dragged here when she was attending to the most private business a human being can conduct. Needless to say she was outraged, but she was also smart enough to know that she was in trouble and that the princess was the one with the power right then and there.

What was clear to the astute observer was that Tuya was genuinely nonplussed. She had no idea why she had been dragged to the palace by the princess' guards. Her first impulse had been to fight, being a warrior herself. However one look at Habiba, and at the size of the contingent that came to get her, told her that she may lose her life in such a fight. So she came along nicely, but she was clear about her confusion to them.

Princess Mediha accused her to her face, as she was dragged in.

"This is the Nubian bitch who tried to assassinate me," she said.

"The princess is mistaken," Tuya said, knowing that she had to be cautious in controlling her own temper. "I did not make any such attempt."

Habiba struck her across the cheek, and Tuya staggered from the blow. She glared at the muscular guard, but kept quiet.

"Are you sure it was this woman, princess?" Habiba asked the princess.

Mediha was furious, and her immediate desire was to take her scimitar and open Tuya's throat ear to ear. But she hadn't seen her assailant's face, and that woman had been smaller proportioned, something befitting someone who was more lithe and light on her feet. She was sure Tuya had been the person who hired her though.

"It was her," she said, hoping that immediate execution was something that they could carry out then and there.

Habiba nodded.

"This is a serious charge princess," she said. "Her majesty the queen must be informed of this, and this assassin must be tried in court, unless the Sultan or the Sultana decide otherwise."

Mediha felt panic rise up within her. That would mean lots of delay, and she was going to run away from the kingdom at the end of the month, which was only a few days away. She wanted instant justice, delivered via scimitar. That is how hotheaded vengeance thinks.

Her guards were here though, and princess or not, murder is a serious affair which would detain her in the kingdom. Her mother would increase her guard and have her under observation around the clock, at the very

Sultana

least, when she learned of the attempt. She could not afford that. She had taken a stand though, so she couldn't backtrack and allow it to be known that she wasn't sure that it was Tuya. She knew deep within that she wasn't, but she also knew deep within that she wanted to carve the Nubian bitch's heart out.

Princess Mediha started thinking hard, while her guards awaited her next words.

Olga's body broke down rapidly. Envenomation by an Egyptian cobra is a terrifying affair. Her nervous system was compromised rapidly. Nervous signals were not being sent to her muscles initially, and her limbs wouldn't obey her commands. She dropped flat on her face in her own home's courtyard. There was nobody around, and terror flashed through her mind.

Then the nervous signals were denied to her vital organs. Her heart and her lungs were no longer under the control of her central nervous system. She witnessed her own lungs collapse, in mute horror, trying to cry out - not wanting it to end.

A smile broke out on Imi's face. If the sky goddess, the mother of gods didn't help her get her angel, she would find her own methods. She saw Hor slithering in her direction, and moved the basket towards him. The next on her agenda was a Persian whore who had slept with prince Rustum a week ago. Her lungs would be next.

The horse trader was called Kasim. He was in his forties, and looked gaunt, with dark rings around his eyes and sunken cheeks. A salt and pepper beard grew in an irregular fashion on his chin and cheeks, showing just as much as it hid. Rawer had learned early that a gaunt and emaciated look wasn't the easiest to trust. A lean and hungry look often indicates the character of a jackal. It indicates someone who may stab you in the back and make off with your spoils. Kasim was also a shifty character who kept telling everyone around him how old his business was, and how many decades his family had been selling the best horses, but his body language was all wrong, as if he wanted to fit in in the business. Rawer studied him carefully once more. Nobody was this bad an actor. If he truly was some sort of spy, his acting would have been better. Rawer had reached his conclusion on Kasim earlier. This was a profoundly insecure individual, who must have faced a specific kind of turmoil growing up. He was horse trader all right, but he couldn't really be trusted with keeping his mouth shut. That could be a problem.

Rawer thought some more. Kasim was insecure enough that it would be easy to manipulate him into revealing information. They had many nights travel ahead of them, and if he invested complete trust in the horse trader it could mean betrayal at some point. The seeds of a rough plan made themselves known to his mind. The princess would no longer be a princess and she would wear a veil throughout a journey. He thought up some reason for that as well, wondering whether Mediha would play along. Then he knew that he needed someone else he trusted to come along with them. They needed more numbers in their favor, so that they could watch Kasim's movements. Information was the key.

At the end of his meeting with Kasim their travel plans were confirmed. It was to be the end of this week that he would uproot the princess from the life she was accustomed to. He wondered what the future would hold for them, and whether the Kushites would welcome him back, or whether he would viewed with suspicion.

Chapter 24: Stars

Aya's report showed how precocious she was. She had recorded the messages from the sisters' herself, from a far distance. Seeing their eyes in the night wasn't the biggest of feats, given that their eyes glowed in the dark, and could be seen changing colors if there was a good enough vantage point. But having the presence of mind to realize that these were messages, and committing them to memory was something else. For someone as young as herself to commit a seemingly random series of reds, greens and blues to her memory added to the glory of her feat. What marked Aya out as prodigy though, was the fact that as a farmer's daughter, she had realized that they stood for the letters of the Arabic alphabet, having only learned the alphabet herself. She had also translated their meaning when she had memorized them.

The Sultana decided immediately that this girl's entire education would be under her supervision. Her father Nuska would be paid well, and even his farm would be taken care of, if he permitted. The Sultana's good mood was not solely due to a delight in her recognition of the little girl's intelligence though. The girl's message also brought them a ray of hope.

The sisters communications had been about their long term plans as earlier, and not about the battle they had been engaged in when they were communicating ocularly. The message was short, but promising.

"Let us visit the star on the full moon," said the first sister.

"If the star prevails, we will die," said the second.

"If we prevail, we shall be free," said the third.

"We find the key and we can prevail," said the first.

Every interpretation of these words arrived at the same conclusion. The star was the star shaped section of the woods. The sisters had to conduct their visit there on the full moon night, and it would affect the courses of their lives immensely. They somehow referred to that section of the woods as though it were their nemesis. Somehow that nemesis was all that stood between the men in the Sultana's kingdom and those sisters. So the next step would be to find out what that nemesis was. Then the key, somehow the key had to be found. Perhaps there was something in the star shaped section of the woods that was referred to as the key. Or perhaps the sisters knew that the key was somehow hidden along the borders of her kingdom? Perhaps there was no foreign involvement, and the sisters did not have any alliance with any other king. They were simply hunting for the key.

The Sultana had never understood why the sisters only killed men, and never harmed women. That was very strange behavior for creatures that were more or less monsters in appearance. Why go out of their way to leave women alive. Perhaps their being female themselves made them feel some level of empathy towards all other females, irrespective of species? It was a mystery that would have to be solved much later.

The Sultana organized another trip to the woods, and included herself, one of her ministers, the Hellenic boy in the party, along with hundred armed guards. They left that afternoon to explore the woods once again. This time every last ounce of effort would be concentrated at the apex and in the arms of the star. They would keep their eyes open for clues, and for a key. Perhaps they could find something this time around.

Sultana

Nadia walked out of the royal palace. She was absolutely free. She had no master any longer. When the master of a slave died, unless that master had family, the slave was free. She was free.

She walked down to a well that stood outside the confines of the palace walls, with the intention of getting some water from it. It was one of those deep wells that was open, and wide enough that a stairway had been carved into its side. Her plan was to get herself some water to quench her thirst.

She recognized her thirst, and then, as though she had commanded it, rain fell from the sky. It was an arid region, with barely a handful of days where it rained. It rained just then. Nadia didn't need to enter the well. She just raised her face to the sky, and drank the rainwater. Just a drop quenched her thirst, and she enjoyed the subsequent drops simply because they felt great.

The rain stopped a minute later. She felt surprised, but thought nothing of that great coincidence. She walked toward the city. A marketplace loomed in the distance. It was early afternoon, and she simply wanted to walk, and be a nomad within the kingdom for a few days. Something within her compelled this wanderlust, and she yielded to it.

She saw an infantry soldier from the Sultana's army slapping a prostitute. The woman had thick kohl around her eyes, and she was dressed with a small dark red blouse that displayed her ample cleavage, a very obviously bared midriff, and a dark red skirt below. She looked like she was dressed for belly dancing. Her hair was black and had been plaited and fell behind her to her buttocks. As if in some strange irony of her dress sense, her lip was cut as well, from the soldier's blow, and was bleeding.

She walked up to them. The soldier turned, about to hit the woman again. He sneered at Nadia.

"Get lost child," he said.

"Do not hit her," Nadia said.

Her voice was calm, steady, and almost a whisper.

The soldier laughed, and raised his hand some more.

"Do not hit her," Nadia said.

Her voice was like a thousand desert storms.

The soldier's hand fell to his side, and he looked at her in abject terror. The prostitute looked at her with the same terror. They ran as though they had both lost their minds. The soldier ran down the street while the prostitute ran inside the house at whose threshold they had been standing. It was where she plied her trade.

Younos felt lighthearted. Sometimes when you make a clean breast of things to someone close to you, it feels wonderful initially. That was what he was feeling just now.

He knew Hypatia would not give him money in furthering his pursuit of Inanna's charm. But at least she knew his secret and could give him resources. If he wanted a scroll and she knew someone who knew someone who knew the owner, that wouldn't hurt his chances. He had caught the sliver of admiration in her eye. She was his sibling after all. They both admired people who staked their entire existence on a single idea, and were willing to sacrifice all for that idea.

Sultana

He walked back to the palace presently. Gaining more favor with the royal family was always at the top of his list of things to do. Maybe he could go and pay the lovely Mediha a visit. He could still remember her wolfing down an ebony cock. His was a few shades lighter. Perhaps she would oblige when he had fulfilled his wondrous quest. What woman or man could resist the lure of Inanna! He could pretend he was checking on her health.

It took some courage to go there. Her outer guards allowed him access. They knew about his role, and the princess had treated him like an honored friend, so he was persona grata here. The approach from the front was so much better than the bloody labyrinth that he usually used to get to the royal chambers.

He passed an ante room whose main attraction was a painting that depicted the Sultana in full battle gear, poised to strike an enemy who was dressed like a barbarian from the Teutonic lands. She was dressed in a shining bronze armor, with a bronze helmet, bronze breasts housing her own flesh and blood ones, and bronze plates protecting her midriff and limbs as well. It looked heavy. He paused and admired it for a second. Mediha certainly inherited a modicum of her fiery mother's beauty.

Her spear had an iron bit at the end, and was piercing the chest of the Teutonic barbarian, with a healthy splatter of blood surrounding it. The barbarian's armor lay beside him, and was a blackish green in color. He wore white rags on his body. The Sultana had one foot placed on his shoulder, and another on his genitals, and an expression of fury on her face, playing the perfect complement to the look of abject terror on his.

Younos forced himself to move on, and crossed a hall that was filled with gold and bronze thrones, with weapons on the walls and Persian silks and rugs adorning different corners of the room. Then he heard commotion a few rooms to his left, and slowed down.

The princess' royal guards were everywhere. All women, and all tougher than iron. The outermost ring of them saw him, and one of them nodded. They didn't part, and he squirmed. He expected them to part for him, but realized that he'd have to ask, and they may say no. His fear of rejection came roaring to life, and he started sweating.

"The princess," he said, stammering.

The guards nearest him ignored him.

"Can I meet the princess?" he said, raising his voice.

One of them looked at him. He heard a commotion from inside, as though the princess Mediha was having an argument.

Younos decided to be less picky. He had come for the sake of ogling after all. He lost the staring contest to the guard in front of him, and looked down at her breasts. Ogling. Mission accomplished. Lovely Arabian breasts. Then he felt her eyes glaring at him. She had noticed.

He looked back up briefly, and couldn't meet her gaze, and looked in the direction of the commotion. The guards parted, and for a moment he thought they were parting for him. Then he realized that someone was coming through.

He saw the princess along with a guard, the scary one, Habiba, at her side, and a caramel skinned Amazon behind them, being held by two guards, with eyes downcast. The princess saw him, and alarm flashed in her eyes, as though he were the last person she wanted to see. She had that look because he was indeed the last person she wanted to see.

Sultana

Princess Mediha nodded at him, but her eyes had a warning written in them. She was trying to tell him something. Younos thought fast. He wasn't sure what she was saying.

The guard Habiba spoke.

"Boy, you saved the princess," she said. "You will be glad to know that the miscreant has been apprehended."

She nodded at the beautiful Nubian woman who was captive, behind her. The warning in princess Mediha's eyes became more pronounced, but Younos mouth was faster than his mind for once.

"Where is she?" he said, and then the look in the princess' eyes told him that he had failed her. The black skinned beauty's eyes shot up to him, and he saw hope there.

"You blind, boy," Habiba said. "Her."

She pointed to the black woman. Younos knew he couldn't change his story, but now he knew that he was doing right. This woman was innocent.

"That is not her," he said, simply, not daring to look in the princess' direction.

The guard Habiba had twisted look on her face when she heard this, as though she had known all along. The princess looked at her feet, saying something under her breath.

Chapter 25: Searches

Rawer had planned another meeting with princess Mediha the next day. It was another two days till the month ended, and they had to make good their escape. He had half reluctantly selected Tuya as their third travel companion. She was jealous, but she was very loyal to him. Besides, she was a warrior, and knew how to fight. When the occasion arose, if the occasion arose - she would be the one to have at their side.

She was nowhere to be seen though. She had gone to the palace on some errand of her own, and she hadn't returned, and that got Rawer thinking. He headed out in the direction of the palace. There was always the danger of being apprehended, if whoever had witnessed his making love to the princess had shared that information. But he had to find her, since she was going to help with the final rendezvous two days later. It was a very inconvenient time to go missing or get killed.

He trotted into the palace grounds, and given his soldier's dress, he was asked only minimal questions. He was still part of the Sultana's army, and they had sworn an oath to serve and protect the royal family through any means necessary. That one oath was inviolate, and everyone treated those that had taken the oath as though they would obey it. The oath was like a key into the palace grounds.

One of the gardener's eyed him with a lot of pride, and told him about how beautiful his own daughter was. He sounded as though he were pimping his daughter, and he described her long dark hair, her shining black eyes, her round breasts and her voluptuousness. He was even crass enough to tell Rawer that his daughter had a very long and facile tongue. Rawer was tempted for just a second to go see this daughter, who sounded as though she were the goddess Isis, but then knew that being a gardener's son in law wasn't part of his plans. He smiled and carried on with his circuit.

He explored the grounds, pretending that he was doing a circuit of the entire grounds, and checking them for safety. No one questioned him on it. He scoured the palace kitchens, asking them for water, and stopping for a quick meal of coarse bread and a lentil soup that was delicious by the standards of being an army soldier. The palace kitchens served many purposes, and while soldiers didn't usually stop here for a meal, they were never turned down. It was one of the unspoken accords between those that comprised the serving class. You serve as a soldier, I serve as a cook. I serve you a meal, and you prevent my daughter from being raped. It worked out well enough. Besides the kingdom's granaries and coffers were overflowing, so there was no dearth of food.

After scouring every possible place on the palace grounds where she could possibly have business, Rawer understood that the only places he hadn't explored were the only places he was forbidden to explore - the private and business chambers of the royal family. That meant Tuya was absconding, and doing something secret, of her own. What business she was secretly conducting was not something he could fathom right then, but he did know one thing. This meant that his plans had to change.

Rawer walked fast, and soon found the labyrinth that connected the outer world to the rooms of the palace residence. He had mastered only one route in there - the one that took him to the princess's private bedchamber. It would do no good to be seen with her, but he sensed that he could at least tell her about a change of plans. It would just be the two of them after all, and some part of him heaved a sigh of relief. Perhaps this was all for the better.

Their brutality was growing. The sisters were now hunting down men with increasing ferocity and their methods had become truly demonic. The last border camp had seen men being murdered through castration, or through being physically crushed together until the foot of one man had been literally mashed into the rib

Sultana

cage of another. Some had been left alive in the throes of their agony, and later put out of their misery by compassionate peasants or passersby, if they were the luckier ones. In spite of all of this, the sisters still harmed no women. It was an oddly quirky way to commit savagery. It was like a typhoon or a sandstorm choosing to leave out all the mathematicians in the crowd, while it whirled away everyone else.

The sisters were now headed in the southeastern direction just then, when Mahmoud's battalion saw them in the distance. They were headed right at their security camp. The soldiers didn't see the sisters in the distance. What they saw was the telltale cloud of dust that they raised as they moved at breakneck speeds, and the terrifying symphony of hisses and slithering sounds that foretold the direst of dangers.

The soldiers knew that they stood no chance. Not one of them. A healthy third of them started breaking ranks and ran in the opposite direction, but Mahmoud was a soldier through and through, and orders were orders. He ordered his archers to shoot down those that ran. The fifty men who had run now fell writhing asynchronously, with arrows piercing the back of their necks or in the small of their backs, crying out in agony. The stench of death came to the camp, even while its biggest deliverer bore down menacingly on it.

Those that shot and were shot at had eaten from the same plate an hour before. Now their entire world had changed, all because these accursed snakes were headed their way. Mahmoud cursed out aloud, and turned his eyes back to the approaching dust clouds.

They resolved themselves into one figure. Only one of the sisters was attacking them tonight, while the others were perhaps attacking other places. Perhaps the sisters knew that this camp wasn't enough for three bestially voracious appetites. Mahmoud braced himself, holding his sword high above his head. He brought it down, giving his archers the command to fire all in synchronization at her.

A hundred arrows sailed through the air, gleaming metal vehicles of death, that bounced harmlessly off her gleaming porcelain skin. Some arrows were swallowed up some of the thousands of serpentine mouths that wriggled in a seeming mix of torment and delight on her head, while some arrows appeared to skewer some of these jet, black serpents, only to disappear along with that which they had skewered. The fearsome female being whose head played host to them betrayed no notice of being shot at however. Her progress was not checked even by a moment.

Mahmoud, like all men, noticed how splendid the beauty of this agent of death was. She had a supernatural beauty to her that was eclipsed only by the sheer terror that her presence instilled in those facing her. She tilted her head upward, as though facing some imaginary friend in the sky, and her eyes flashed a rapid sequence of reds, greens and blues. She was sending out some message to her sisters. Everyone had been informed throughout the kingdom and beyond about how the sisters communicated. Every army camp had people ready to record these messages in one manner or another.

Then she retrained her eyes and as though she knew the ways of men, she looked directly at him, seemingly telling him 'I know you - you are the leader of the pack.' Mahmoud shivered, and commanded his archers to fire arrows at will. Another row of archers simultaneously fired shrapnel in a higher arc from behind. It was a heavier load, and usually it should have been fired from front, but Mahmoud wanted it to be a surprise attack that she wouldn't see coming until she had come closer, and when her momentum was considerable. Simultaneously a detached group of six soldiers fired off two cannonballs into her flanks. Mahmoud had the guts for the greatest glory, and he was using every last bit of them in this battle. He had used his every last of his available ordnance to hit her from as many sides as possible. The only side they hadn't tried was from behind her, which was almost impossible.

The snake woman was faster than they expected. Portions of the shrapnel hit her, and bounced off her steely porcelain skin with loud thunks. Some of it appeared to shave off some of some snakes on her head, but those

Sultana

disappeared even as they were seen falling to the ground. She had evaded most of the shrapnel however, and ducked below the line of fire. She had also simultaneously allowed the twin cannonballs to give her glancing blows off her opposite palms. Mahmoud thought initially that they were near misses, but then realized with increasing horror that they were deliberate deflections. The cannonball aimed at her left flank deflected off her right palm, as she ducked out of the way, and traveled straight on to the cannon company that had aimed at her right flank. The cannonball aimed at her right flank was deflected by her left palm and traveled to the company who had aimed at her left flank. It was as if they had aimed the cannonballs at each other.

Six good soldiers were shattered into smithereens of bone, flesh and blood at the same time on her two sides. The whole evasive maneuver took her a moment, and she didn't even wait to gloat at the destruction she had wrought. She bore on, headed directly for Mahmoud at the center, while her python lower half did a dance that was terrifying because of its reptilian abruptness.

Hypatia had the oddest customers she had had in a while. There were three of them and they were Arab merchants, with swarthy complexions, and a near resemblance to one another. All had classic Arabian features, with the same pointed noses that had a hook in them, the same jawline, and the same thick eyebrows and beady and intelligent eyes. She initially assumed she was going to play whore to three brothers all at once. It was very popular among her customers to have many men take her at once. Soldiers, especially, came as a small group. Only last week she had had a group of four soldiers, who had all fucked her at once. One in the mouth, one in the anus, one in her cunt, and another who rotated.

What was odd about these three brothers who came to her was their request. They had come there with their wives. Three brothers, and three wives. That in itself was very strange.

The wives were all Arab girls, with varying skin tones. One was light skinned, a shade darker than olive, and she could even pass for a Hellene, if not for her distinctive Arabian features. Another was a medium brown, the color that everyone around was. She was the prettiest of the bunch though, with features that men would kill for. A sharp nose with a hook in it that gave her a proud appearance. Eyes that were seductive in a manner that Hypatia wondered why her husband wanted anything more than her. And a mouth that was luscious and powerful. The third wife was darker still, and had thick curly black hair, and a bosom that would be the envy of women all over the world. She had blunt features, and Hypatia imagined that her late mother would have approved of the girl as having the proper childbearing attributes. A solid girl who would serve as a mattress for her man, with broad hips and big breasts, perfect for bearing and rearing children respectively. They told her that they would pay her exactly twice what was paid when a man was allowed to make love to her in all of her orifices. What they wanted her to do was probably worth the same effort.

They wanted her to allow their wives to fuck her with little leather cocks that had been built for this purpose. Who knew where these men got their fancies. They would not participate, and they said that they might masturbate themselves while watching, but they would not get involved. Their wives, however, would subject Hypatia to every last debauchery.

She agreed, but when it was done she wished she had bargained some more and taken thrice the price. These women were the spawn of the demons. They had clearly practiced brutal fucking with leather cocks, and they gleefully subjected her to it. It was as though they were punishing her with their cocks, and as a consummate professional, she bore it, but she didn't like it completely.

The beautiful wife took her in the mouth, and she was grateful for that, because at least she was the most appealing of the three, and Hypatia admired women sexually just as much as she did men. In fact, given that most of her customers were men, she preferred to lust after women these days. The wife with the body that

Sultana

was built for childbearing took her between her thighs, and tore up her vagina. The other wife with the pale skin made her anus hurt. They took turns at grabbing her hair and at slapping her, and at slapping her tits, but Hypatia did not complain. It was very consuming and time consuming, but these women turned her on plenty.

The three swarthy complexioned husbands sat at different corners of the room, and watched this debauchery, while they rubbed and teased their own cocks. While she was still in the infancy of her abuse with the leather cocks, she heard the sound of one of the husbands screaming out that he was cumming. She smiled to herself, wondering how it was typical that men came early, and then turned their attention away from their woman.

In fact all three brothers ejaculated before she was even halfway through her own orgasm. The wives were very determined though, and between them they took her to climax in the allotted time. When she was done, they quickly washed themselves up in the washing room that she had specially designed for her customers, and then came back and paid her the price, and departed. Then her anger returned. She was waiting for her worthless brother to come home, so she could give him a piece of her mind.

Created from Booksie.com

Generated: 2015-02-01 16:41:18