

THE QUARRY

The Girl Who Knew Too Much

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'A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

So is a lot.'

—Albert Einstein

Okay, I know this looks bad. And very much illegal. But really, what else was I supposed to do other than to whack it on the head and drag it here? Don't roll your eyes at me like that. It *saw* me; and we all know what could happen if the humans ever found out we *still* existed. Poof, gone, we'd be wiped out before Bob ever became anyone's uncle. And is that? Urgh, ew, it's bleeding. Human blood is so gross. You can pull that face all you like, but I'm *not* touching it again. Yes, I could've just let it go, but then what? I really didn't want The Order to find the human and *then* they'd have found out about...well, you know. Not that I'm hiding anything. Why am I telling *you* anyway? I bet you're just another filthy human, prying into, no, *invading* everyone's business like usual. *You* should really take a good long look in the mirror, idjit. You're the monster, not me.

But seriously, why the fuck is it so cold down here?

Jinx tugged at her jacket, the wool from her gloves snagging on the brass buttons.

Great.

This was why she never came down to the cellar. Aside from the fact that, well, it was a freezing shithole, she could've sworn she'd seen a pair of eyes, glinting from the jade bottles that lined the walls. It must've just been from the dust that choked this place. Hallucinating on dust was the least of her worries right now though. She had...*that* to deal with.

Jinx grimaced, her eyes gliding over the human's wilted head. Copper curls hung meekly down its arms; the hair having twisted itself around the metal of the chair. Freckles decorated its cheeks, along with smudges of thick, sticky blood. The lingering stench of damp and blood made Jinx want to gag. It was a Fae's worst nightmare all right.

'Is she...can I...is she awake yet?'

A blonde head slowly peered around the nearest door, his sheepish eyes darting from the curly mess to Jinx. He seemed to whimper at the sight of her, as though he might collapse under her gaze alone.

Jinx rolled her eyes, extending a gloved hand towards him. 'Hand it over Seb,' she sighed. 'If you'd taken much longer, the Queen would've been dead and buried by now.'

Seb's tawny eyes widened. 'Oh yes, yes, I have it. It's just,' he scurried through the door, ducking under its frame. 'It's just, I had to...had to make a few alterations.'

Jinx looked at him blankly and snatched the burlap sack from his bony fingers. 'I hate looking at its face,' she said, screwing her own up. 'At least now,' she stepped forwards, throwing the sack over the human's head, 'we won't have to, and I can actually think.'

The sack did not land with great accuracy, and instead, sat horribly slanted with what appeared to be—

'What are those?' Jinx swivelled to Seb who recoiled instantly, shielding himself with his teal overcoat. The sack stared at them; two large cotton eyes were stitched in the middle, with a matching, happy, but wobbly mouth.

'I did-did say that I made a few alterations, there were quite a few hole-holes in it, in all the sacks.' Seb had faltered against the wall now, his fingers clutching the crumbling brick. 'I think a family of moths had been enjoying it, perhaps a little too much,' he mumbled, barely audible. 'Maybe they smelt the potato residue? Did you-you know that Gypsy moths can lay up to one thousand eggs per—'

‘I don’t care about the ruddy moths Sebastian, fucking hell!’ Without warning, Jinx swung around and punched the wall behind her. The dusty bottles, thankfully empty, tumbled to the floor and clattered into silence.

The two Fae paused, the stillness engulfing the space between them. Seb gulped. Jinx examined her bleeding knuckle. And the sack gawked stupidly.

‘Well don’t just stand there!’ Jinx snapped back to Seb, her pupils tiny. ‘Fix the damn sack and pick these bottles up! Why do I always have to do everything? Why did *I* get stuck with a fledgling rather than a real healer?’

Seb had paled to the colour of sour milk, his lip quivering slightly. ‘If you allowed me to heal her, Jinx, she would recover. It would take a m-mere few minutes.’ He side-stepped to the sack, adjusted it gently over the human’s head and skirted around her to the fallen bottles. ‘She’s b-bleeding Jinx. We need to alert The Order.’

‘We’re not *leaving* Sebastian and *it’s* not going anywhere. It stays until I figure this out. I’m thinking a Gravel Grot could wipe its memory? But they charge a fortune...’

‘But if we—’ He grabbed a bottle, wiping its dusty body on his sleeve. He was avoiding looking at Jinx, studying the bottles instead with deep concern. ‘If we took her to The Order, they could erase her m-memory.’

Jinx glared at him, kicking a nearby bottle with a booted foot. ‘Yeah, and I’ll be striped of my ranking for having ‘maimed’ a human. Fat chance of that.’ She took a step forwards, leaning towards the unconscious girl. ‘No, I’ll deal with it myself. This piece of filth will go straight—’

But then the sack twitched. And Jinx practically flew straight into Seb. Seb, admirably, caught her, but she shoved him back hard, leaping away with a growl.

The human began to thrash around now, nearly toppling off its chair with a scream. But Jinx was there, her hand stuck out in its direction, tensing. It stopped moving instantly, but that didn’t stop its muffled cries.

Seb had retreated into a corner, clutching a Rosé bottle desperately. ‘She’s awake, she’s awake! Ah! What do we do? What do we do?!’

‘Will you shut up?’ Jinx spat. Her hand trembled, still pointing at the very-much-awake human. ‘I don’t know! I was hoping it was dead! These things are so fragile! I thought a good whack on the head would’ve killed it, but apparently not!’

Seb's eyelids fluttered in disbelief. 'But you said it was an accident. *You* said you didn't mean to hit her. That you panicked. What were you doing Jinx?'

'None of your damn business fledgling!'

'I HAVE A GUN! YOU TRY AND LEG IT AND I'LL SHOOT YOU, WHOEVER YOU ARE!'

The pair froze, their eyes jolting towards the stairs to the cellar: the only way in and out.

'If you've hurt my sister, I swear I'll kill you!' cried the mysterious, quivering voice. It was getting louder. 'DON'T YOU TOUCH HER!'

Jinx and Seb looked at each other then, both equally as terrified as the other.

Oh fuck.